

WAVERLAND

here, with all their uncles, aunts and cousins, until the whole settlement seems one family of kin folk. They are from the north of Europe, where they have been trained to unquestionable obedience and plodding industry."

"How much did it cost you to bring them here?" I asked, as we were riding from place to place on the estate.

"Seven dollars a head," he answered, as though speaking of a herd of cattle.

"I see you have been in America long enough to have learned some of her shrewdness."

"How so?"

"You could never have brought people here without some previous arrangement. How did you manage it?"

"Very easily. You see I had bought large tracts of lands from the railroad company and they were under some obligations to me. I asked for honest rates to bring settlers in. At first I could not get rates that would justify me in bringing them. But after a great deal of consultation, we arranged with different railroads and line of steamers, until the fare was just seven dollars per head by the family."

"These buildings, how did you arrange for them?"

"There again the railroads helped me. I got rates for everything. Each house as it stands cost me fifteen dollars. The tenants built them, themselves."

"How will you ever get your money back?" I asked.

"Each man is hired by the year, until the land begins to produce something, then they will rent. Whatever I pay for building or living expenses is kept from the wages."

"What do they live on? I see the land has just been broken."

"You have seen the little provision store and postoffice; well, that is kept by my agent and an account is kept with each tenant of the amount of provisions he is in debt for. It is brought here from various places."

"Do you furnish the farm implements?" I asked.

"Yes, I furnish everything; but I get a discount on large purchases and reduced rates on railroads, so it is not so expensive as it seems at first sight."

"You see this is fine soil," he said, lifting a handful and examining it.

"It is a fine, rich, sandy loam," I said.

"Then this is the fine country where the great desert used to be. The home of the buffalo and roaming red skins has been redeemed and is now being purchased by English and American landlords at a rapid rate."

"It has not been three years since I first located these lands. Then I was far in advance of civilization, but now it has gone way beyond me. If Lord Sanders had not come with me I should never have got possession of so much land all in one body as I have it now."

"I was just going to ask you how you got possession of so much land."

"There are two classes of land open to settlers: railroad lands and government lands. The railroad lands I bought by the section. I was told that no foreigner could obtain lands from the government in any form, but Lord Sanders understood the ways of the land office and helped me. There are three forms by which government land can be obtained, homestead, pre-emption and timber claims. Homestead laws give to each head of the family a right to enter a quarter section by living on it five years and then proving up. The pre-emption laws require the applicant to till the soil and pay from one dollar and twenty-five cents to two dollars and fifty cents per acre, according to the location. And the timber claim allows a quarter section to the qualified man or woman who pays fourteen dollars and breaks five acres the first year, cultivates it the second, and plants either seeds or cuttings for timber until he can show some six thousand living trees on the land he claims."

"Well, you could not comply with any of those requirements, could you?"

"That is where Lord Sanders helped me. We thought of every name we could and then went to the land office, and, with the aid of a good bonus, we had names enough entered to take up the alternate sections. Then, as soon as my tenants came, each one was placed on the desired quarter section and began to cultivate it. When the time comes for proving up it can be shown that the lands have changed hands and are in the hands of actual settlers. I shall enter it in each tenant's name and pay all the fees and rent the lands to them, while they transfer to me the fee simple."

"Now I see how you manage it. But I should think the American people would object to foreigners coming here and holding so much land."

"They are always glad to have foreigners come and make actual settlement and my tenants will qualify just as soon as possible; then there can be no objection to them. And the railroad lands we can buy as much of as we like; though some wild fanatics are making a fuss about it."

"I understand that Englishmen now own about twenty million acres in the United States."

"I believe that is true. We are gaining the lands our fathers lost without fighting any bloody battles for them."

"I remember reading in an English paper before I left home that 'no matter what course Congress may take to prevent it, the inheritance of the American people will yet come into the possession of the English nobility.' Now I see what it meant. But some are working to defeat your plans."

"I do not wonder that the American people are waking up to the truth of the situation. English and Scotch landlords already own as much land in America as the entire state of New York."

"Here is a piece of ground that must have been under cultivation before you saw it," I said, as we came to an old log cabin.

"Yes, Waverland, that I bought of an old man who had lived here a number of years. When I fenced my property he found himself without a highway."

"But you had no right to do that."

"The cow boys I had here herding my stock made him feel uneasy."

"Then you forced the old man to leave this beautiful piece of ground where he had toiled to start a home?" I asked.

"I bought him out," said the duke, wincing under the word force.

"Did you pay him for his improvements?"

"No, I could not afford to do that. I paid him the same that I paid for railroad lands."

"Then his two or three years hard work went for nothing."

"He had one or two good crops from the land."

"I think the 'equal rights to all' clause in the American constitution has been abolished and 'might makes right' has

been inserted in its stead."

"You are right in that, Waverland. The boasted liberty of America is only in the name, when they submit to being governed by money, backed up by physical force. Just look at Jay Gould; he counts his wealth by the hundreds of millions! When he wants to steal anything by law he finds plenty to help him. Liberty, indeed! It's all bosh!"

"I do not wonder that we hear of riots and strikes. No one would object to his great wealth if he would allow fair wages to his employes. But when, month after month, he cuts down their wages a few cents at a time, until starvation is at their doors, I am not surprised that they rebel. Then I have heard that his men are compelled to pay a monthly tax to establish and maintain a hospital fund, under Mr. Jay Gould's finely organized system of tyranny," I said, as we started for our little boarding house after a long ride in this dukedom.

Thus riding and chatting from day to day, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on wheels, but always in hunting suit, with game bag, dogs, servants, and guns, we spent two weeks on the duke's great estate. It is in extent about twenty-five miles wide by fifty long, equaling in size about two counties of the common size in Kansas, Illinois, or Nebraska, a medium principality in Germany, or a small dukedom in England. It is a huge joke on the American theory of liberty and equal rights.

Denver, the quaint city of the West, was our final resting place. It lies at an altitude of 5,375 feet, and about fifteen miles from the mountains.

Going to the Windsor Hotel, we engaged rooms, had dinner and went out to see the city. We passed down one of those long, straight streets, shaded on either side by beautiful trees. On each side of every street flows a constant stream of water, often as clear and cool as a mountain brook. The water is supplied to the city from the Platte river, by means of an open channel. The fountains and water works are supplied by the Holly system of pumping the water from the river. It is sent with such force through the pipes that in case of fire it sends a strong stream of water through the hose.

"The muttering sound of water is refreshing this warm day," I said, as we were passing along the shady street.

"Denver never seems to me oppressively warm. The number of its trees and fountains and these little rills always insure a refreshing temperature," said Melvorne.

"This city, with its wonderful development of art, the unexpected intelligence of its people; their refined method of thought and handicraft; their knowledge of science and their great material wealth, exhibit the beautiful theorem of Emerson when he says 'The powers of a busy brain are marvellous and limitable.' Once this was a sterile waste. But mind, probably the mind of one man, if we could trace it home, was what conceived the possibilities of this mighty city," I said, after spending hours looking at the wonderful things brought into use in the few years since this was known as the great desert of the West.

"Why, Waverland, you are quite eloquent in your praises of this new world. But it is wonderful as you say. It is like the fairy palaces in the Arabian Nights."

"Do you know how many inhabitants this city has?"

"About seventy-five thousand."

"How clear and pure the air seems. It is a luxury to breathe it," I said.

"The climate is one of the things that Denverites are very proud of. Do you see that man with the hose watering his plants?" asked Melvorne, calling my attention to a beautiful yard where a fountain was sending up its silvery spray, that glistened in the rays of the setting sun.

"Yes, I see him. What is the use of his watering things? Everything looks as bright and fresh as those lilies at the base of the fountain."

"That's the secret of all this beauty. If it were not for the use of the ditches, pipes and hose, the sifting sand would choke everything in Denver."

"Why, are there never any showers to supply nature with the needed moisture?"

"Seldom any rain falls, though clouds often appear. The display of lightning is magnificent and sometimes very destructive."

"How clear and bright the sunshine is. What would they think in England or Ireland of this climate?"

"It would be hard to tell. But the clear blue heavens and the bright sunshine are among Denver's greatest charms."

"Where do they get their building material from, there is such a variety?" I asked.

"There are brick kilns in the suburbs of the city. Stone and other material is found near by. There is a great variety, and men of taste choose the material best suited to the style they intend to build."

"I have noticed that there seemed to be an individuality in the style and shape of the buildings. Not two are alike."

"Every one seems to vie with his neighbor in making his home the most attractive. Taste and wealth have worked with magic power in changing these wild cactus-growing plains into these charming homes, with grassy lawns and beautiful flower gardens."

"There is a fine building, what is it?" I inquired.

"That's their opera house; one of the finest on this continent."

"School houses and churches are numerous. The people believe in education and the cardinal virtues of morality. Here they seem to strive for the poetry of life—the higher thought."

"We find here the intellectual culture that makes life so attractive in well established society. It is made up of New York, Boston and the East, transplanted and developed into a more healthy state. Here even the Bostonians forget to say, 'I am from Boston.'"

We spent a most delightful afternoon, but when evening came we were so far away from our hotel that we were glad to take a street car for the return trip. These handy little horse power coaches travel the streets of Denver with as much pomp as in any of the older cities of the Eastern States. It was hard to believe that this proud city was little more than half a score of years old. Here was to be seen the wonderful electric light; and the telephone wires formed a complete network over our heads. The city was well furnished with gas. Every luxury or need of man's nature had been provided for.

When we reached the hotel we passed into the dining room. At a table to the left of our own was a group of happy people, if we could judge by their merry voices and mirthful laughter.

"What's the matter, Melvorne?" I asked, for his face was as white as a ghost.

"Great heavens! Can it be she?" he exclaimed, without hearing my remark.

While I was watching his face I caught

the sound of a familiar voice and exclaimed, "Stella!"

"Through my back was toward the table I was sure it was my long lost friend. Hope sprang to life and defied self-control. I was near the dearest object of my life. I soon should know if my future was to be bright or dark. Supper was of little moment now, the inner sensitive life was supreme. Melvorne left the table and I followed. We sought the hotel register. There we found the names of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Lillard, Lady Irving and Miss Stella Everett, all of London, England. Without a word we each passed to our rooms. There, like David Copperfield, we spent some time over our toilets. At last Melvorne came to my room, saying:

"Are you ready to go to the parlors? I have sent word asking the party to meet some old friends there. For I discovered that Miss Everett was your friend, and, no doubt, you recognized Lady Irving as mine."

I was ready in a moment, and together we entered the magnificent parlor. As I entered the door, I heard my name called, and I fancied in an undertone of gladness, I crossed the room, scarcely knowing what I did, and taking Stella's hand in mine said in an undertone of tenderness:

"Have I found you at last, my long lost darling?"

For a moment a glad light sprang to her eyes. But instantly it changed and she withdrew her hand. Turning to the gentleman and lady sitting near, she presented me to Mr. and Mrs. Lillard.

How can I explain the thoughts of the moment? Stella's voice and the glad surprise that beamed a joyous welcome from her eyes, had been so full of tenderness, and, I fancied, love, that my soul was agitated by the sweetness of the hope that love had been returned. But this repulse, what could it mean? For a few moments my thoughts were beyond my control. I neither spoke nor moved. But only for an instant. Composure returned and I was master once more. Turning to Mr. Lillard, I said:

"Are you intending to take a tour of the mountain scenery in Colorado, or are you just passing on your homeward journey?"

"We came to Denver, thinking of spending some time here. Are you at liberty to join our party?"

"Yes, sir," I answered, "that, I think, would be agreeable to both the Duke of Melvorne and myself."

"Then that is the famous Duke of Melvorne that I have so often heard of?" asked Mr. Lillard.

Melvorne and Lady Irving had left the room without presenting the duke to her friends. They were now enjoying a promenade on the broad piazza of the hotel.

"Yes, sir, that is the Duke of Melvorne. We have just been visiting his ranch in Dakota, and are now going to visit his smaller one in this state," I answered.

"He seems to have found a friend in Lady Irving," said Mrs. Lillard, a lively little brunette.

"It was very much surprised when he discovered her in the dining hall. And I was equally surprised to hear your voice in this strange land, Miss Everett," I said, turning to Stella as I spoke. "May I ask how you came to be so far from home?"

"I came with Lady Irving. We have been traveling together," she said. "How are your mother and sister?"

"My mother is dead. Myrtle is with Annie Wren," I said, watching her face as I mentioned Annie's name. Stella changed her position as I spoke, but I had found a key to her indifferent manners.

"Your mother dead!" she exclaimed after a moment's pause. "I have so often pictured her calm, sweet face with a look of welcome on it for me, when I returned, for I always meant to see her again, she was so kind to me." The tears glistened in her eyes as she spoke of my mother. "And little Myrtle, how I would like to see her, she was very dear to me."

"Mother died in the winter. I had been to London, and was called home suddenly on account of her illness. She lived only a few hours after my return." While I was

telling of my mother, Stella had forgotten her self-imposed task of appearing cold and haughty. While we had been talking, I had been thinking. The old adage came to my mind, "Faint heart never won fair lady." I thought that I would test her indifference, and said:

"Miss Everett, would you enjoy a walk on the piazza?" offering my arm as I spoke. For an instant she seemed undecided. Then she answered by placing her hand upon my arm. As soon as we were alone I asked:

"Stella, have you no words of welcome for me after these long, weary months of absence?" No answer.

"Do you know that I sought far and near for some news of my lost friend, and now that I have found you, when my heart is full of rejoicing, you have no words of welcome?"

Still no answer, though I paused a moment in our walk that I might listen.

"Darling, have you no love for me in your heart?" I pleaded, taking her hand that lay upon my arm in my own.

She would not permit even that, but turned from me, saying:

"Sir, I never gave you cause to take such liberties with me."

"I thought there was a sound of pain in the girlish voice. Once more I pleaded:

"Stella, Miss Everett, excuse me," I said, "for troubling you, but I must know the truth. My mother told me all she said to you that morning before you left Waverland. Did you believe that I loved Annie Wren?"

She turned her face toward me in the bright moonlight. It was full of reviving hope as she answered:

"Yes, Sir Loyd, I believed it and that was why I left Waverland."

"O, my darling," I said, taking her hand, "how could you believe that anyone was dearer to me than your own sweet self?"

"I believed it because your mother said it was settled long ago, that you were to marry Annie." There was just a quiver

of pain in the voice that made this confession.

"Was that the reason that you left Waverland?"

"It was."

"Then you loved me just a little, even though you left me?"

"Yes, Loyd, I loved you," came in a whisper too faint for aught but a lover's ear. But it was enough. I held her to my heart and kissed the sweet lips and pure white brow. My heart uttering all the time in a glad refrain the words of the old song, "My heart now sadly dumb shall speak to you alone."

How changed the world seemed! I had secured the love of the one individual in all the world that could inspire my heart with noble aspirations. We did not need words to tell the old, old story, for the sweetness and the honor of the new-found companionship had a language all its own.

"No more weary hours, my love!" I said, as I led her to a seat. "Did you think you could hide your love from me by assuming indifference?"

"I was afraid I could not, that was why I left Waverland."

"Do you know the anguish I felt when I knew that you had gone? Where did you go? How did you fare? Tell me all, my darling."

"I found Lady Irving, as you see, we have been traveling together a long time," she answered evasively.

"But did you find her at once?"

"I cannot tell you now. It would take too long. I have found friends continually."

"If I had known you were safe I should have been happy."

"I do not believe that," she said archly. "You would have tried to find me if you had known where I was."

"You are right. I never would have been contented until I had learned my fate from your own dear lips. If mother had not come to the library door just when she did, I should have known it then."

"I felt the impulse. And I knew that my life would be very dark without you. My hungry heart was ready to respond to the call of joy and hope."

"My hopes were rudely shattered when I came home and found that you had gone. What a dreary life I led for days and days. But one evening it seemed to me you came and said, 'If I were you I would not let my inheritance go to waste.' Then other words that you had uttered, words of comfort, and words of cheer, came to my mind. They inspired me with courage and filled my heart with hope. I was almost sure that sometime we would meet, and that I should yet win your love."

"How long was that after I left?"

"About a month. Why?"

"I remember one evening about that time I had been feeling that in all this great world there was not one individual that needed me, or that I could benefit by living. There seemed to be no place for me, no loving heart to claim mine in return. While I sat musing in that melancholy frame of mind, I seemed to hear your voice saying, 'I need you! I am coming for you!' From that time I never believed that you would marry Annie, or that you loved her. I remember thinking how pleasant it would be if mind could answer mind. It seemed almost as real as life."

"But this is real," I said, "mind can answer mind, and heart can speak to heart. But how came you here? I never dreamed of finding you this side of the Atlantic. Or have you been leading me on with your magnetic powers, to find you here so far from home?"

"We have been coming toward each other," she said laughing. "I have often thought of Waverland, dear old place; I have often sketched the Duke of Melvorne. But it would not be the same, now that your mother is not there. She was very dear to me. My heart went out in sympathy for her in her loneliness, and I sought to make her happy."

"And you accomplished more than you can ever know, my dear. My mother remembered you, and asked us to forgive her for the pain she had caused us both. She gave her dying blessing on our love and prayed that we might meet. She said that she had missed you more than words can tell. I believe that grief for you shortened her life. She had learned to love and trust you, and when you left her all was gone. But where have you been all these months?" I asked again.

"Traveling with Lady Irving," she answered again. "I am so glad she has at last met the man she has loved from childhood. Her father promised her hand in marriage when she was but a child. She obeyed his wish and became the wife of her father's friend. But all the while the Duke of Melvorne, or James, as she calls him, was her heart's idol. We have often talked of old friends, and how often she had hoped for a chance of meeting the duke since she had been a widow, for Lord Irving lived only a short time after their marriage, and what was very strange, her father died about the same time, leaving her alone in the world, with no nearer relatives than Sir Wren and his daughter. Her mother died when she was a little child. And now in this far away land she has found the happiness for which she longed."

"Not only Lady Irving and the Duke of Melvorne have found the longed-for friends of other days, but ourselves as well," I said, leading her back to the parlor.

When we entered the parlor we found Lady Irving and the duke engaged in quiet conversation. As we entered he came forward with the lady by his side, saying:

"Lord Waverland, allow me to introduce to you the Duchess of Melvorne!"

"Allow me to introduce to you the future Lady Waverland, now Miss Stella Everett," I rejoined.

"What part of the world have you been traveling through?" asked Melvorne of Lady Irving.

"We have been through parts of Italy, France, Germany and the East Indies. Then through the Sandwich Islands into California since last fall."

"You are only birds of passage, I should say from the short time you spent in each place," I said.

"We were there long enough to see the places of greatest interest but not long enough to become attached to any particular spot," said Stella.

"When did you reach Denver?" asked Melvorne.

"On the afternoon train from the west. When did you reach Denver?" she asked.

"On the morning train from the east," answered Melvorne.

"So you came from the east and we from the west, to prove that the world is round, by meeting in this queen city of the plains," said Stella. "There are a good many grand things on this round ball. In the past few months we have seen wonderful sights."

"Yes," said Lady Irving, "California alone is an art gallery of exquisite pictures, painted by nature's own hand. I wish we could have met there."

(Continued.)

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