

were thought to make the trip in an almost incredibly brief period. Now, the scene changes. We are no longer 'out of the world.' The telegraph, a sure forerunner of railroads, is here. And judging by the progress of the last four years, is it too much to expect that four years hence we shall hear the snort of the iron horse as he prances and charges up the Valley of the great Platte? 'There's a good time coming, boys, wait a little longer.' "

At that time there were no railroads nearer to Omaha than St. Joseph, Mo., on the south, and some point near the Mississippi River on the east.

The Missouri and Western Telegraph Company, C. M. Stebbins president and R. C. Clowry superintendent, constructed the telegraph line up the west bank of the Missouri River to Omaha, and thence to Julesburg, Nebraska. The Pacific Telegraph Company, Edward Creighton superintendent, built the line from Julesburg to Salt Lake City, and the California State Telegraph Company, James Gamble, built the line from Salt Lake City to Sacramento, where the wire connected with a line to San Francisco. When the overland line was completed, it was organized as the Pacific Telegraph Company from Brownville, Neb., to Salt Lake, and placed in charge of Edward Creighton. The Act of Congress required that the line should start from some point opposite the western boundary of the state of Missouri, hence Brownville, Neb., was made the legal eastern terminus, but Omaha was the real terminus.

I have another reason for being fond of Omaha, and for claiming the right to bid you welcome to its hospitality. It was here that I found my beloved wife, and here still live her aged and honored parents. In this good city also reside two men who deserve well of our fraternity—I have reference to Edward Rosewater, the true and steadfast friend of his old telegraphic associates, and John J. Dickey, whose heart and hand are always open to his fellow telegraphers.—From The Telegraph Age, September 16th, 1893.

THE DOOM OF FALSE SING LOW. Twenty years ago Sing Low had been a thin, meek, Chinese coolie, toiling in the rice-fields of the Soo-chow province. Insufficiently clad and insufficiently fed, he had many times been weary of life, and, but for the vows of his secret society forbidding, would have put a summary end to it—a double quantity of opium in the pipe is an easy way! But Sing Low had persevered and starved until, one day, there was an exodus of many of his own society (now renamed "Sons of the Silver Land") to the western coast of Mexico. With them journeyed Sing Low and his newly married wife, Fay Lee, for there was demand for Chinese colonists, and the promoters told it

loudly that there was plenty of money to be made in the "silver land." For once the truth had been spoken by a promoter! Had you, ten years after the exodus, known the Chinatown of Madre de Dios, and the restaurant and "tea-place" of Sing Low, you would better appreciate the fact. For the Chinese colonists had made unto themselves a place of their own in the western part of the city, out beyond the marshes; many narrow streets were filled with the shops of the Chinese, who were no longer colonists, but full-fledged citizens.

In the very centre of the Chinese civilization, and fronting a view of hot, blue gulf water, **The Shop.** Sing Low's name was blazoned in gaudy Chinese script over a tea-shop and opium-den; while uptown where Mexicans and mining men most did congregate, another building, made of yellow adobe and pine boards, bore the legend, "Chinese Restaurant of Sing Low: American Pies." In front of this restaurant generally sat Sing Low, but not the Sing Low of the Soo-chow rice-fields—far from it. This was a very fat and important Sing Low in full and flowing Chinese garments, pig-tail neatly wound about a sleek and shining head, and silk-shod feet thrust into flapping embroidered slippers. A large, gold, American watch dangled from his sash, and yellow Mexican diamonds glittered on his pudgy fingers—truly had Sing Low, head of the "Sons of the Silver Land," prospered and waxed fat in a far land.

Inside the restaurant many Chinese waiters and cooks rushed about, serving all sorts and conditions of men at the manta-covered tables. For Madre de Dios was a steamer-town, whence hides and silver and bullion were shipped to Lower California and even San Francisco, and many men of many sorts ate *chili con carne*, and *tortillas*, and "American pies," in the restaurant of Sing Low. There were dirty Greasers and swaggering, be-armed Mexicans, who drank bottles upon bottles of fiery *mescal*, and calm, deliberate, mining Americans, who consumed untold numbers of pies and American canned beans, while Sing Low smiled from afar, with a keen eye upon collections. For twenty years had he saved and toiled, but another year would see the end. Then, with Fay Lee, who was now old and fat, and the twenty thousand Mexican dollars that they had made, they would go to San Francisco. Back to China? No! Fay Lee had once timidly proposed it—for she had no children, and her heart was sick for her native land—but Sing Low said a decided "no." He had not yet forgotten the rice-fields. And, besides, in these American lands, even a coolie of low birth could be as mighty as a mandarin; he, Sing Low, had been of no import in China, nor would even

his twenty thousand dollars make him a mighty man there. In other words, better to reign in hell than to serve in Heaven, or one's native land.

To all of which poor Fay Lee had to consent, of course, Sing Low being a husband of no small persuasive power, particularly when aided with a bamboo stick. And he hesitated not to chastise the wife of his bosom when occasion needed, for did not even the laws of the Christians say "Wives, obey your husbands in the Lord?" Not that it often became necessary to impress this latter fact upon Fay Lee, for she loved the fat, pompous Sing Low now, in the midst of his prosperity, even as she had once loved humble Sing Low of the rice-fields. It is the way of many women. And, though there were few friends, and no children for her to caress with affection, she was content to live the life that her husband bade, embroidering his costly garments and waiting on him as though she were his bonded slave, instead of his wife. And during the long hours that he spent in the opium-house or in the secret lodge of the "Sons of the Silver Land," she consoled herself with many cups of tea, and admiring thoughts of the brave figure that her "honorable lord" was at that moment of a surety making as the head of his society. Poor Fay Lee!

I say "poor Fay Lee" with a purpose, as you will find. For, even as the best laid plans of mice and men go astray, so did the plans and hopes of Sing Low and his wife vanish into naught—through the fault of the man, of course. Sing Low, to make a long story short, fell in love one bright day. It is a thing that Celestials are not given to, for which reason Sing Low made a bad mess of it, and loved far more desperately than any other Chinaman on record—at least, so his sighing protests to the lady in the case ran. Not that he could be blamed overmuch, for Felipa was the prettiest girl, out and out, who had ever been seen in Madre de Dios—as well as one of the naughtiest. Her brother (a gambler from Mazatlan) had used her many months as a lure, and more than one hapless Mexican had come to grief for her sake, but Sing Low was the best game that she had ever caught.

There is in Spanish a proverb setting forth the same sentiment expressed in our own "There's no fool like an old fool," and never was there an old fool so deeply in love as Sing Low, who soon became the laughing-stock of the entire very mixed population of Madre de Dios. Fay Lee, of course, knew nothing, and supposed that her lord's frequent absences were due to secret society meetings. To be sure, Ah Toy, the sprightly young wife of Sam Lung, had considered it her duty to go to the deceived and neglected wife with a full description of the doings and misdoings