

are away back yonder in the heart of Kansas, where the cry from forty little throats was, "Five for five!" "Fi fo fi!" But maybe that was because the white boys have little black girls for competitors in the apple trade. But, be that as it may, the cry here is: "Three?" nickel; three?" nickel; three?" nickel, and a pear thrown in!" And such succulent and rich fruit too. Fruit like this could not possibly be had, with all its sweet freshness, in New York for love or money; and even the semblance of it, with all the soul and sense of perfume and blossom gone out of it, would cost easily five times what this cost here. Hurrah for the Rocky Mountains! And now we begin to climb.

We come to oil wells; an oil city. But you have enough of these near at home. Suffice to say, these wells are numerous and profitable. The city reaches right and left; and all the long and ugly lines of cars and tanks and the like that make hideous the oil towns of the States are gathered up and down and round about this oil town of Florence here on the savage foothills of the Rockies.

Pretty soon we break up our train, and put engines on each section of our long and sinuous "jointsnake." The engineer of the head division beckons me, and, under an arrangement made days ago, I climb into his red-hot little cab; and away we drive right into the narrow granite defile for Salt Lake City, five hundred miles to the west.

No room for orchards or apples or shouting little mountain-born Mormons with blue eyes and torn hair here!

The red granite rises two, three, four, five hundred feet on every hand almost instantly. The granite is not only of a royally fine color, but it is also of a very fine quality. The capitol of the State is being built of this red and gray and black granite here; to say nothing of other massive edifices already built. We have met freight trains with long lines of this granite on their way to Denver and other places. So you see there is little need of Aberdeen granite or any other granite here now. It would be coals to Newcastle. The Rocky Mountains make the granite quarry of the continent.

And now we observe that there is but a single track, a narrow gauge track, and the very scantiest room for that one little narrow string of steel. Hardly a hatful of earth along here now. Granite on either side, below, above, nothing but granite. Boulders big as a church on top of boulders that are bigger than barns. Steep and stupendous walls of granite so high on either hand that they seemingly tear the clouds in twain and knock their foreheads against the stars.

The little silver-threaded Arkansas River is still at our feet, under us most of the time. It has a famous reputation for its excellent fish, and we stop to let out a stout Englishman and party who will flag a down train when their sport is done.

I find myself asking how this chasm came to be. I am certain it is not the work of water. The world may be very old indeed, but

it is not nearly old enough for this little river to have washed this awful opening in the breast of earth. Besides that it is not smooth or sinuous, or in any sense a water washed canyon.

So I am persuaded from what I can see as I sit where my nose almost rubs the wall, now and then, that it is simply a split in the crust of the earth; a crack that was made when this massive wall and world of granite was in the cooling process, as was the case with the Yosemite walls. And the gray old engineer at my elbow with his hand on the throttle quite agrees with me.

At last we halt—a horse might halt a moment to take breath in a terribly steep pull. We are resting on an iron bridge above the tumbling little river that runs under us fierce enough. We are not crossing a river at all; we are simply trying to make our way up this fearful red granite canyon. But the precipitous walls have refused to let us pass to right or to left, and so it is that we are at this moment riding and resting on an iron bridge that runs lengthwise with the river. And the singular part of it all is, this iron bridge has not a sign of a pier, or block, or support of any sort beneath.

We are hanging in a basket here, as you would hang a bird cage! We are swinging in an iron platform that is supported by beams above. There are iron arches overhead. These iron arches or beams, coming together at an angle overhead, are at this moment holding bridge and train up in the air, while the little river rolls on entirely untroubled far below.

As we rest here and breathe a bit, out of the awful stillness above us I hear a pitiful cry; and as I look above an eagle rides down the canyon with a little cotton-tail rabbit in his claws. She must have a nest with little ones in these fearful clefts somewhere; for surely it is a fitting place in which to rear the fierce and liberty-loving bird that perches on the glorious banner of this brave land.

Whoever it was that built this road here or had the audacity to dare the thought of it I do not know; dead perhaps long since, and maybe forgotten. But to that man, or the memory of that man, I lift my hat. The spirit of yonder eagle, was his. He deserved to companion with these everlasting peaks of granite. He deserved to drink water from the same fountain with the grizzly bear. Living or dead, rich or poor, God bless the brave spirit that first dared set foot here and gird these granite steep with strips of steel.

But we must get off this swinging bridge and on and on and on. It is much alike now. One granite wall of a thousand feet is much like another granite wall of fifteen hundred feet: A continuity of this; the tumbling water; more eagles; a juniper tree on the cliff; some trees now, for the river is not so narrow; some Mormons burning charcoal—and so we pull up at sunset for the long promised supper of fresh trout.

Two of the grand old eagles caged!

There is no use protesting against it. But I thought I saw a bit of pity and pleading in the fierce black eyes of one of those birds. I offered to buy them, but they were not for sale.

The supper here was not a railroad supper! If it was it would not be news, or art, or literature.

We were all seated, and for the first time in my railroad life, had plenty of time to sit down, and time to spare.

Some of the men, notably a man with diamonds and a bent nose, began to pound on the table, when suddenly one! two! three! And they were so pretty and so shy and so rosy! Each had a hot plate on a napkin, and each plate was heaped high with trout, done in butter and crumbled bread. The perfume filled the room. Ah, that was a procession of nuns to live for! They laid a whole trout in your plate—a big, rich, read-meated trout, as solid almost as the read granite walls that they grew between, and then the pretty procession passed out and did not come back any more.

"Mormons, hey?" demanded the man with a bent nose; but a frown from right and left silenced him, and we had peace—and trout.

I was told after returning to the cars that the pretty women who bore the plates of trout were ladies from the East, who, having been very lucky in catching trout, took this method of seeing our party in disguise, and at the same time putting their rare catch of trout "where they would do the most good."

As night came on the moon came up. And I could hardly refrain from uttering the lines of Manfred in the Alps, where grand and gloomy Byron placed him. Ah these mountain passes here are waiting for the poet, their prophet. And they can wait; and he will come.

We climbed in sections to the summit under the grand round moon; and then we glided down under the air brakes, under the pines, under the moon, filled and thrilled with the tremendous memories of the day in the great granite bosom of the earth.

Then we came to a plain; a dimple in the face of the mountain. Stars and moon and mountain; a city in this dimple of the mountain; a great mining city and center; the city of Gunnison; electric lights, long lines of cars, the old confusion incident to all cities, and we begin to wish for the granite walls to shut out the world once more; we want to be back on the mountain-top with the moon and the stars and all the inspiring elements that make up the grandeur of the upper world.

But here we are down in the dust again; bowling away on the dead level of our dimple in the face of the Rocky Mountains for Salt Lake. There is another canyon above; some say grander than the red granite canyon through which we have passed. But I say this is impossible. For this other canyon is called "The Black Canyon," and, of course, cannot be nearly so fine; for it is the glorious color of the red canyon that makes it so surpassingly perfect. By Joaquin Miller in New York Independent.