

And he would tickle him so masterfully under the ribs that the creature howled and became quite hysterical.

Then Svengali would vent his love of teasing on Little Billee, and pin his arms behind his back and swing him round, saying:

"Himmel! what's this for an arm? It's like a girl's!"

"It's strong enough to paint!" said Little Billee.

"And what's this for a leg? It's like a mahlstick!"

"It's strong enough to kick, if you don't leave off!"

And Little Billee, the young and tender, would let out his little heel and kick the German's shins; and just as the German was going to retaliate, big Taffy would pin *his* arms and make him sing another song, more discordant than Trilby's—for he didn't dream of kicking Taffy; of that you may be sure!

Such was Svengali—only to be endured for the sake of his music—always ready to vex, frighten, bully, or torment anybody or anything smaller and weaker than himself—from a woman or a child to a mouse or a fly.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



### IN THE SIERRA MADRE WITH THE PUNCHERS.

BY FREDERIC REMINGTON.

ON a chill black morning the cabins of Los Ojos gave up their inmates at an early hour. The ponies, mules, and *burros* were herded up, and stood shivering in an angle, while about them walked the men, carefully coiling their hair lariats, and watching for an opportunity to jerk them over the heads of the selected ones. The *patron's* black pet walked up to him, but the mounts of my companion and self sneaked about with an evident desire not to participate in the present service. Old *Cokomorachie* and Jim were finally led forth, protesting after the manner of their kind. I carefully adjusted my Whitman's officer-tree over a wealth of saddle blanketing, and slung my Winchester 45-70 and my field-glasses to it. The "punchers," both white and brown,

and two or three women, regarded my new-fangled saddle with amused glances; indeed, Mr. Bell's Mexican wife laughed at it outright, and Tom Bailey called it "a d— rim-fire." Another humorist thought that "it would give the chickens the pip if they got onto it": all of which I took good-humoredly, since this was not the first time "your Uncle Samuel" had been away from home; and after some days, when a lot of men were carefully leading sore-backed horses over the mountains, I had cause to remark further on the subject. A Mexican cow-saddle is a double-barrelled affair; it will eat a hole into a horse's spine and a pair of leather breeches at the same time. If one could ask "Old Jim" about that saddle of mine, I think he would give it an autograph

recommend, for he finished the trip with the hide of his back all there.

Leaving the "burro men" to haul and pull at their patient beasts as they bound on their loads, our outfit "pulled out" on what promised to be plenty of travelling. We were to do the rounds of the ranch, explore the mountains, penetrate to the old Apache strongholds, shoot game, find cliff-dwellers' villages, and I expect the dark minds of the punchers hoped for a sight at the ever-burning fire which should discover the lost mine of Tiopa. We were also promised a fight with the "Kid" if we "cut his trail"; and if he "cuts ours," we may never live to regret it. Some tame Indians, just in from a hunt in the Rio Chico, had seen three fires, but they had "rolled their tails" \* for Bavicora so promptly that they had not ascertained whether they were Apache or not. The same men we were in the company of had run the "Kid's" band in to the States only two months before, but on our trip that very elusive and very "bad Injun" was not encountered. Much as I should like to see him, I have no regrets, since it is extremely likely that he would have seen me first.

Our little band was composed of the patron, Don Gilberto; my travelling companion from New York city, who had never before been west of the Elysian Fields of New Jersey; Bailey and Bell, ranch foremen, and as dauntless spirits as ever the Texas border nurtured; the ranch bookkeeper, a young man "short" on experiences and "long" on hope; Epitacio, an Indian hunter, since outlawed; William, the colored cook; four buckskin Mexican "punchers"; an old man who was useless for practical purposes, but who was said to be "funny" in Spanish; and two "burro men." We were that day to go to the farthest outlying ranch, called the Casa Camadra, and then to stop for a short hunt and to give the punchers time to "gentle" some steers for work-cattle. The puncher method of doing this is beautifully simple, for any animal undergoing this is gentle or dead after it. After scouring the plain for antelope until late, we followed up a creek toward the cabin where we expected to find the punchers and the burro men with their loads of creature comforts, and as we rode in, it was raining a cold sleet. The little log cabin was low,

\* Cowboy for travelling rapidly.



MY COMRADE.

small, and wonderfully picturesque. It was a typical "shack," such as one used to see in the Northwest when the hunters were there. Out in the rain sat two punchers, enveloped in their serapes, engaged in watching a half dozen big steers eat grass. Inside of the cabin was William by a good fire in a most original fireplace, glowing with heat and pride over his corn cakes and "marrow-gut." Between various cigarettes, the last drink of *tequila*, and the drying of our clothes,



PORPHYRY ROCK.

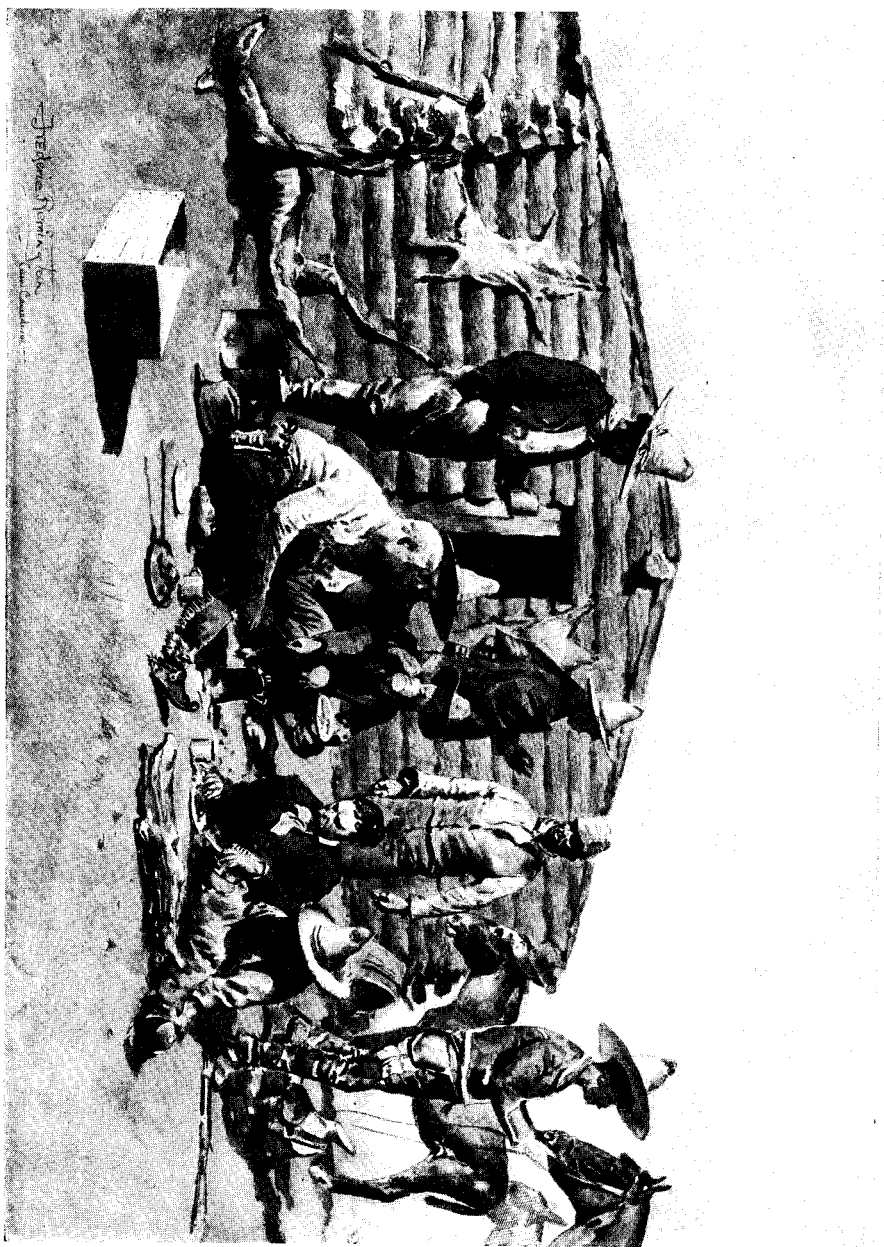
we passed the time until William had put the "grub" on a pack-saddle blanket and said, "Now, gemmen, fly in."

"Fly in" is vulgar, but it is also literal, for we did that: we did not dine—we

flew in. The expression and the food were both good. Outside, the cold rain had turned into a wet snow, and we all crowded into the little place and squatted or lay about on the floor. With fingers and hunting-knives we carved and tore at the mountain of beef. The punchers consume enormous quantities of meat, and when satiated they bring forth their cornhusks and tobacco-pouches and roll their long thin cigarettes, which burn until they draw their serapes about their heads and sink back in dreamless sleep. It is all beautifully primitive, and as I rise on my elbow to look across the blanketed forms packed like mackerel in a cask, to hear their heavy breathing, and see the fire glow, and hear the wind howl outside, I think how little it takes to make men happy. Tom Bailey and Johnnie Bell, the ranch foremen, had faces which would have been in character under a steel head-piece at Cressy, while the wildest blood of Spain, Morocco, and the American Indian ran in the veins of the punchers; and all these men were untainted by the enfeebling influences of luxury and modern life. A chunk of beef, a cigarette, an enveloping serape, with the Sierras for a bedroom, were the utmost of their needs.

The sunlight streamed down the big chimney, and William's "Good-mo'nin', sah," brought back my senses. Beyond his silhouette, as he crouched before the fireplace, I could hear the sputtering of the broiling steak. I repaired to the brook and smashed the ice for a rub-down. It was still drizzling, and the landscape lay under a heavy fog. Outside the cabin lay the dead body of a skinned wolf, and about a small fire crouched the punchers.

Breakfast over, the men rode off by twos into the fog, and as Tom Bailey and I jogged along together we reasoned that if we were to strike the point of the mountains and then keep well in the timber we might catch a bunch of antelope which we had "jumped" the day before on the plain below. So all day long we rode over the wet rocks, under the drip and drizzle of the mountain pines, up hill and down dale, and never "cut a sign." It was our luck; for on riding up to the "shack" we saw the bodies of deer, antelope, a



THE CASA CANADRA.





SHOOTING IN THE SIERRA MADRE.

big gray wolf, and the skin of a mountain-lion. We were requested to view the game, and encouraged to comment on it; but Tom and I sought a dark corner of the cabin to consume our coffee and cigarettes in silence.

At the Casa Canadra are two other log houses, and in them live some squalid, yellow-bided humans who are to farm a little stretch of bottom-land this year. They require work-steers to do their ploughing, and Mr. Bell has brought up half a dozen vicious old "stags," which are both truculent and swift of foot. The Mexicans insist that they are not able to handle them; and Mr. Bell orders his punchers into action. I strolled out to the corrals to see the bulls "gentled." After a lot of riding and yelling they were herded and dragged into the enclosure, where they huddled while seven punchers sat on their ponies at the gate. I was standing at one corner of the corral, near the men, when out from the midst of the steers walked a big black bull, which raised its head and gazed directly at me. The bull had never before in his stupid life observed a man on foot, and I comprehended immediately what he would

do next, so I "led out" for the casa at a rate of speed which the boys afterwards never grew weary of commending. No spangled *torero* of the bull-ring ever put more heart and soul into his running than did I in my great-coat and long hunting-spurs. The bull made a "fo'lorn hope" for the gate, and the gallant punchers melted away before the charge.

The diversion of the punchers made the retreat of the infantry possible, and from an intrenched position I saw the bulls tear over the hill, with the punchers "rolling their tails" behind. After an hour of swearing and hauling and bellowing, the six cattle were lugged back to the pen, and the bars put up. The punchers came around to congratulate me on my rapid recovery from a sprained ankle, when they happened to observe the cattle again scouring off for the open country. Then there was a grunting of ponies as the spurs went in, some hoarse oaths, and for a third time they tore away after the "gentle work-oxen." The steers had taken the bars in their stride. Another hour's chase, and this time the animals were thrown down, trussed up like turkeys for the baking, and tied to posts, where they

lay to kick and bellow the night through in impotent rage. The punchers coiled their ropes, lit their cigarettes, and rode off in the gathering gloom. The morning following the steers were let up, and though wet and chilled, they still roared defiance. For agricultural purposes a Mexican "stag" would be as valuable as a rhinoceros or a Bengal tiger, and I await with interest the report of the death rate at the Casa Camadra during spring ploughing.

In the handling of these savage animals the punchers are brave to recklessness, but this is partly because it seems so. In reality they have a thorough knowledge of bull nature, and can tell when and where he is going to strike as quickly as a boxer who knows by the "skim on the eye" of his opponent. But still they go boldly into the corral with the maddened brutes, seeming to pay no heed to the imminent possibilities of a trip to the moon. They toss their ropes and catch the bull's feet, they skilfully avoid his rush, and in a spirit of bravado they touch the horns, pat him on the back, or twist his tail.

After hunting for another day, with more success, we packed up and "pulled out" up the Varas Creek toward the mountains, leaving the last house behind us. Beyond was the unknown country. For many miles it had been ridden by some of the punchers, but the country is large, covered with vast mountain ranges, with wastes of stony foot-hills at the bases, while *barancas* yawn at your feet, and for a great many years the policy of the Apaches has been not to encourage immigration. In 1860 a heavy band of

Mexican prospectors undertook to penetrate this part in the quest of Tiopa, but they were driven out. It is now possible for strong outfits to travel its wilds with only a small chance of encountering Apache renegades, but very few have attempted it as yet. It is so remote that prospectors for silver or gold could hardly work a mine if they found one, and for other purposes it has little value. The most magnificent pine timber covers its slopes, but it would take a syndicate to deliver one log at the railroad. As we wound



ON THE MOUNTAINS.

our way up the Varras Creek we passed beetling crags and huge pillars of porphyry rock cut into fantastic shapes by water and frost, resplendent in color, and admirably adapted for the pot-hunting of humans as affected by gentry temporarily stopping at San Carlos.

In a dell in the forest we espied some "mavericks," or unbranded stock. The punchers are ever alert for a beef without half its ears gone and a big HF burned in its flank, and immediately they perceive one they tighten their *cincha*, slip the rope from the pommel, put their hats on the back of their heads, and "light out." A cow was soon caught, after desperate riding over rocks and fallen timber, thrown down, and "hog-tied," which means all four feet together. A little fire is built, and one side of a *cincha* ring is heated red-hot, with which a rawhide artist paints HF in the sizzling flesh, while the cow kicks and bawls. She is then unbound, and when she gets back on her feet the vaqueros stand about, serape in hand, after the bull-fighter method, and provoke her to charge. She charges, while they avoid her by agile springs and a flaunting of their rags. They laugh, and cry "Bravo toro!" until she, having overcome her indignation at their rudeness, sets off down the cañon with her tail in the air.

Thus we journeyed day by day over the hills and up the cañons, camping by night under the pines in mountain glades or deep ravines, where the sun sets at four o'clock, while it is light above. The moon was in the full and the nights were frosty, and many times we awoke to think it morning when only our heads had become uncovered by the blankets and the big white moon shone fair upon us. Getting up in the night to poke the fire and thaw the stiffening out of one's legs is called by the boys "playing freeze-out," and we all participate in the game. A cigarette at two o'clock in the morning, with one's back to the fire, while the moon looks down on you, your comrades breathing about you, a wolf howling mournfully from a neighboring hill, the mountains towering on every side, and the tall pines painting inky shadows across the ghostly grass, is a mild sensation and rather pleasant. Some of the men are on foot, from soring their horses' backs, and their buckskin boots are wearing out, so they sit about the

fire and stitch. We are all very dirty, and I no longer take comfort in watching the cook who makes the bread, for fear I may be tempted to ask him if he will not wash his hands, whereat the boys may indicate that I am a "dude," and will look down on me. The flour is nearly gone, and shortly it will not matter whether the cook's hands are rusty or not. The coffee and sugar promise to hold out. When William can no longer serve "bull gravy" with his fried meat I shall have many regrets, but they are swamped by the probabilities of a tobacco famine, which is imminent. We get deer every day, but to one not used to a strictly meat diet it begins to pall. The Indian hunter takes the stomach of a deer, fills it with meat, and deposits it under the coals. We roast it in slices and chunks, but I like it better when "jerked" brown, as it then affords somewhat more mystery to a taste already jaded with venison. In travelling with pack animals it is the custom to make a day's march before halting, and a day's march ends about four o'clock, or when water is found. Ten hours' march will loosen one's cartridge-belt five or six holes, for venison and coffee is not a strong food. By 12 M. we acquire a wolfish yearning for the "flesh-pots," but that shortly is relieved by the contraction of the stomach, or three or four quarts of mountain water will afford some relief. By nightfall one can "fly into" a venison steak, while cigarettes, coffee, and a desire to lie down restore one's equanimity.

We have passed some small ranges and worm our way down bottomless pits, but at last there rises ahead the main range of the Sierra Madre. From the depths of a great *barranca* we begin the climb. Never have I seen hills as sideling as these. It is terrible work for one not used to mountain-climbing and the short allowance of air one finds to subsist on. The feeling of exhaustion is almost impossible to overcome. The horses are thin, and Old Jim is developing more ribs than good condition calls for, so I walk to ease the old fellow. There are snow fields to cross, which intensifies the action. The journey is enlivened at times by shots at deer, and the rifles echo around the mountains, but being long shots they are misses. We passed the *cordon* of the mountains, and stopped



THE INDIAN'S STORY.





THE CLIFF-DWELLINGS.

on a knifelike ridge where the melting snows under one's foot ran east and west to the two great oceans. The climb from here over the main range was a bellows-bursting affair, but as we pulled on to the high *mesa* our drooping nerves were stiffened by shots, and presently deer came

bounding down the ravine to our left. Jack made a bully flying shot, and the stricken deer rolled many yards, until caught by a fallen log. My companion, who was in advance, had fired into some deer, and had shot a buck which was lying down, and he was much puffed

up with pride over this achievement in still-hunting. From there on we passed through the most wonderful natural deer park. The animals did not fear man, and stood to be fired at, though the open timber and absence of underbrush made the shots long-range ones. After killing all we could carry, we sat down to wait for the burro train.

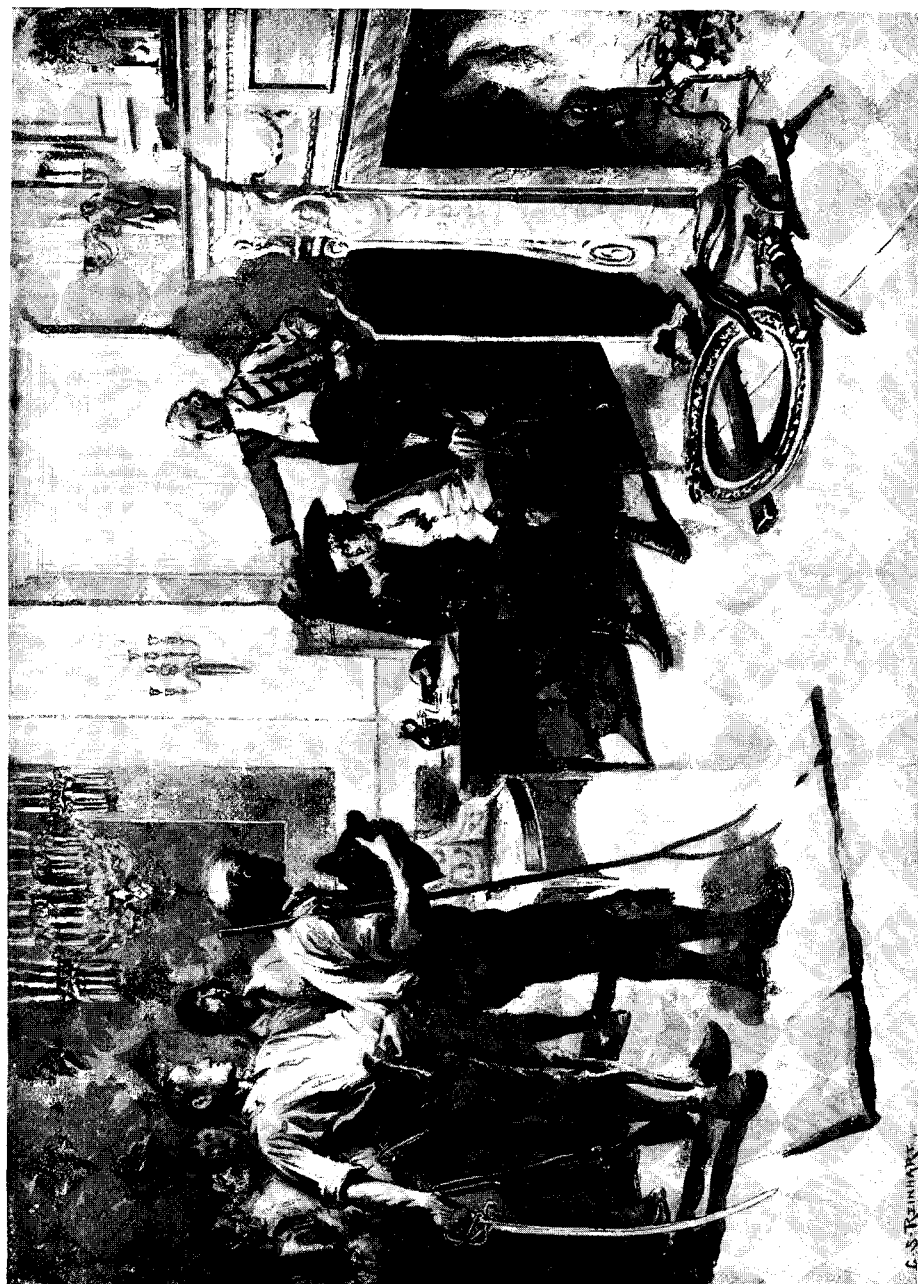
That night we camped on a jutting crag, with the water running in the *barranca* 200 feet below us. For a hundred miles the mountain and plain lay at our feet—a place more for an eagle's eyry than a camp for a caravan. The night set very cold, and from out in space the moon threw its mellow light down upon us. Before the camp-fire our Indian hunter told the story of the killing of Victoria's band, where he had been among the victors, and as he threw his serape down, and standing forth with the firelight playing on his harsh features, he swayed his body and waved his hands, while with hoarse voice and in a strange language he gave the movement of the fight. The legend of the lost mine of Tiopa was narrated by a vaquero in the quiet manner of one whose memory goes far back, and to whom it is all real—about the Jesuits, the iron door over the mouth of the mine, its richness, the secrecy enjoined by the fathers on the people when they fled before the Apache devils, and how there is always a light to be kept burning at its entrance to guide them back. It was a grand theatre and an eerie scene.

On the other side of the mountain we found the trail most difficult. I would never have believed that a horse could traverse it. To say that it was steep is commonplace, and yet I cannot be believed if I say that it was perpendicular; but a man could toss his hat a mile at any moment if he pleased. Then, underfoot, it was all loose lava rock, and the little ponies had to jump and dance over the boulders. When we had finally arrived on a grassy *mesa* I concluded that if ever again I did the like of that, it would most certainly be the result of a tremendous error in my calculations. The pack-train was here detached and sent to water, but we followed Jack to see his "discovery." After miles of travel through the dry yellow grass we came out on a high bluff, with a *barranca* at its foot the bottom of which we could

not see. On the overhanging wall opposite were Jack's cliff-dwellings, perched like dove-cots against the precipice. It was only a quarter of a mile to them, but it took two days to get there, so we did not go. There are also holes in the cliffs, and underground passages. The paths up to them are washed away, but Jack and some of his men have invaded the silent village. They climbed up with lariats, and he was let down over the cliff, but they found nothing left but dust and cobwebs.

We could not get down to water, and as our horses were thirsty and foot-sore, we "mogged along." On our ride we "cut the trail" of a big band of mustangs, or wild horses, but did not see them, and by late afternoon we found the camp, and William busy above his fire. After hunting down the valley for a few days for "burro deer" and wild turkey, we found that the tobacco was promptly giving out, according to calculations, and being all inveterate smokers, we "made trail fast" for the Neucarachie ranch. Our ponies were jaded and sore; but having "roped" a stray pony two days before, which was now fresh, the lightest vaquero was put on his back, and sent hot-foot in the night to the ranch for tobacco. He made the long ride and returned at noon the next day on a fresh mount, having been thirty-six hours in the saddle. This fellow was a rather remarkable man, as it was he who, on the beginning of the trip, had brought some important mail to us one hundred and seventy miles, and after riding down two ponies he followed our trail on foot through the mountains, and overtook us as we sat resting on a log in the woods.

How we at last pulled into the ranch at Neucarachie, with its log buildings and irrigated fields, and how we "swooped down" on Mr. John Bailey, and ate up all his eggs and bread and butter at the first onset, I will not weary you with, but I believe that a man should for one month of the year live on the roots of the grass, in order to understand for the eleven following that so-called necessities are luxuries in reality. Not that I would indiscriminately recommend such a dietary abasement as ours, yet will I insist that it has killed less men than gluttony, and should you ever make the Sierra trails with the punchers, you will get rather less than more.



[See page 302.]

"BUT HE LISTENED WITHOUT INTERRUPTION."