

**RAMBLES IN THE ROCKY
MOUNTAINS: WITH
A VISIT TO THE GOLD
FIELDS OF COLORADO**

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Rambles in the Rocky Mountains: with a visit to the gold fields of Colorado by Maurice O'Connor Morris

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MAURICE O'CONNOR MORRIS

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RAMBLES
IN THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS:

WITH A VISIT TO THE
GOLD FIELDS OF COLORADO.

BY
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PREFACE.



IN offering to the Public these extracts from a journal kept for the perusal of a few friends, and meant to supplement private letters, I feel that an apology is due for many insertions and omissions, which, under different circumstances, would have been as inadmissible as inexcusable. The region, however, through which my rambles have led me possesses so much of interest and importance in an age which may in some respects—though Janus' shrine yawns so terribly open—be described as a golden one, and which to us "Britishers" is pre-eminently so, that I trust the many imperfections of these "Recollections" will be pardoned, in consideration of their introduction to a territory which to the great mass of readers in Eng-

land is as imperfectly known as Timbuctoo or the country of the "Fanns."

As an instance of the small amount of geographical knowledge of Colorado possessed by even tolerably well-informed persons, I may mention that a very eminent banking firm of the metropolis addressed a letter to me while there superscribed thus:—

Denver, Nova Scotia ;

while a distinguished barrister, my learned friend and correspondent, would persist in locating Denver in the State of Kansas. And, indeed, considering the little light shed on this quarter of the globe by the maps in ordinary use, and the wonderful and almost portentous growth of this remote region, to which the ocean has washed no foreigners, as in Australia and California, this Cimmerian darkness is not surprising. A spot of this earth, however, which boasts—how truly I have no exact means of ascertaining—of having added twenty-five millions of dollars' worth in bullion during the past year to the national wealth of the Federal States, under circumstances little favourable to development, and with most inadequate resources of labour and capital,

cannot long remain ignored; more especially when, in addition to its auriferous wealth, Nature has endowed it with a store of minerals comprising almost every species known, in great affluence, and a climate favourable to their exploration, with a soil which, properly cultivated, is capable of great results.

I therefore hope that in the hurried descriptions of things seen *obiter*, I may at least claim the merit, *si qua est ea gloria*, of drawing attention to a subject of some general interest hitherto unexplored; while, in explanation of any and all major and minor errors of style, grammar, history, or physiology, let me confess that my faculties for writing are sensibly affected by the *genius loci*, and especially by the means and appliances for the purpose within reach, and that these pages had to be transcribed for the most part in the uncongenial atmosphere of a prophet's chamber-like bed-room in Denver, nearly as large as a ship's cabin, but too small for such a superfluity as a table, and where a washing-stand of small proportions, like Goldsmith's chest of drawers, was forced for the nonce a double debt to pay: under which untoward circumstances

my sheets were prepared for the post, with a haste very unworthy of the subject; the result of which, in the language of rebuked officials writing to their senior pundits of "the" department, "I acknowledge and regret."

RAMBLES
IN THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

CHAPTER I.

Westward the course of empire holds its sway.

To the West ! to the West ! to the land of the Free !
Where the mighty Missouri rolls on to the sea, &c.

BOTH words and air had somehow for a long time been associated in my mind with America, and seemed to be incorporated with the very essence and idea of that great country ; and yet, like the national anthem, which boasts that the "Star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave on the home of the free and the land of the brave," (or, as a sarcastic friend of mine parodied the latter line into the "Home of the free and the land of the slave,") who will be bold enough to assert that these inspiring words have not