faces, naturally dark, were rendered still more so by dirt. Their broad-brimmed felt hats, once white, trimmed with tarnished gilt braid, their short jackets and the heavy whip handles with long lash trailing on the ground, showed that they were Mexican teamsters, typical "Greasers". Differing from these more in activity than in dress or color were the Yankee runners for the various hotels, each man shouting at the top of his lungs the superiority of the house he represented, and pouncing upon the "gripsacks" of the strangers.

Our traveller, letting himself become the prey of the cleanest looking, was lead to the hotel bus. This had once been a handsome vehicle, but now, with its few remaining cushions torn, lining tattered, and decorated with large cloth sign, did duty as conveyance for the Palace Hotel. It was drawn by two large mules hitched tandem, by harnesses whose leather was gradually being replaced by bits of rope and bale wire. When the driver had secured a load he wedged in his passengers by piling in and around them their baggage and sundry supplies for the hotel, then mounted the lead mule and joined the procession of freighters' wagons and jack trains, slowly moving through the sandy road into town. Arriving at the Palace Hotel, it was found to be a good hotel for a mining town. It was built during one of those bursts of prosperity which suddenly sweep through the mining country and as soon die out. Its stone-trimmed brick walls were the pride of the citizens of this "the most lively city in the West." Having had his breakfast, and while waiting for the mountain stage, our traveller entered into conversation with the people about him. All were eager to tell of the rich strikes which were being made in the mountains, and described the country as destined to be the richest in the world. Each man had a number of good claims which he felt that he must sell, even at an enormous sacrifice, one man even going so far as to offer, in strict confidence, to sell a half-interest in his mine, which was a real bonanza, for five dollars.

Soon the stage which was to convey our traveller to a neighboring mining town drew up to the hotel door. On account of the snow, which, though now late in June, still lay deep in the mountains, a light open wagon was used instead of the heavy coaches, which run only when no snow is in sight. The wagon had three double seats and was drawn by four strong horses.

After leaving the town, the stage sped along over the dusty plain, the only thing apparently marking the road being a line of telephone poles leading to the mines. On all sides stretched the nearly bare ground, once probably a lake bottom, destitute of vegetation excepting an occasional patch of sage brush or Spanish bayonet. Here and there prairie dogs were seen sitting on their little mounds, attentively watching the wagon. On nearing the foot-hills ranches were passed, and irrigation ditches, leading the water from some mountain torrent down into town, were crossed. Beyond these the road began to climb one of the spurs of the mountain range, and ran for a long way on its crest, on each side gulches hundreds of feet deep, in places approaching so close that the divide was only wide enough for the roadway. Soon the stage passed into the timber belt; but the woods were very different from those in the Eastern States, very dark and gloomy, the trees being mostly tall evergreens.

Pointing to a little grassy opening the driver said that there the down stage had been stopped not long before, by road agents, and a large lot of bullion taken. Since then the large companies had not sent the bullion down by stage, but had a bullion guard who travelled between the mines and railroad station, every few days, none but the superintendent knowing when the precious metal was to be sent.

Before the stage had gone far the tramping of horses was heard, and the guard came in sight, eight young active fellows, well mounted, and carrying repeating rifles, besides the usual supply of smaller arms. In their midst was a light carriage, under the seat of which the bullion was placed.