great boulders in wild confusion. Repair was hopeless, and the road had been abandoned to blackberry bushes and alders.

I discovered the path late one August afternoon, and set out joyfully on an exploring expedition. The anxious speculation which I had been making in regard to the troubles of the X. Y & Z. Mining Company faded out of my mind, and the charm of the time and place gained complete possession of me. I picked my way carefully along the side of the deep gorge, where grass and wild vines had done their best to hide the ravages of the freshet. A little brook trickled along the bottom of the gorge, and I could smell the peppermint that grew upon its borders. Presently I came to higher ground, and the brook disappeared.

I strolled slowly along, now between tall pines, which grew up close to the walls on either side of the moss-grown road; now pushing my way through the birches, which had crowded up sociably, till there was nothing left of the highway but a narrow foot-path trodden occasionally by cows, or perhaps by boys on blackberry and fishing expeditions. Here the bushes disappeared, and a meadow, softly green in the afternoon sunlight, stretched away to the south and west. The brook, crossing the road leisurely, with a sublime indifferençe to the ruined culvert, flowed silently through the deep grass, its borders marked here and there by tall flags. Farther on, the road widened a little, and on a slight eminence, with an outlook over the meadow, stood an old, weather-beaten house. It had evidently been a tavern in old times, for it was quite an extensive establishment, but much of it was now in ruins. Lilacs were growing near the door, and "bouncing bets," blossomed under the windows.

I sat down upon the wall at a little distance, and gave myself up to fanciful speculation. Yes, I, a man of business, with a reputation among business men for keenness and practical sagacity, sat upon a wall, after the sun had gone down, and wove romances about the ruined tavern. The birds grew sociable, and a rabbit, which chanced to wander that way, after looking at me a moment with indignant surprise, pursued his course, disdaining any fear. I pictured the stage, with its four galloping horses, drawing up before the tavern door; the landlord bustling out to receive his guests and hear the latest news from the city; while the hostler watered the steaming horses. I saw the tavern-keeper's daughter stand in the doorway, and, shading her eyes with her hand, look eagerly down the road. I fancied her lover had been haying in the meadow, and she was watching for him to come to supper.

I was growing quite sentimental over the pretty daughter of the tavern-keeper (I was sure she was pretty, with yellow hair and a yellow dress), when suddenly I saw in a path a little way from my feet a small, leather-covered quarto. Stepping down from the wall, I picked it up cautiously. There was something witching about such a discovery in that lonely place, with the weird light of the setting sun and the rising moon falling upon the meadow and the ruined tavern.

It was a small manuscript book bound in alligator skin. I looked at it in a dazed kind of way for a moment; then, with the methodical habit of a business man, I turned mechanically to the fly-leaf for a name and address. The name was there—Millicent Armstrong—but nothing else. I turned the leaves. The book was filled with verses written in a clear, graceful hand. I read the first one, straining my eyes in the twilight. If I remember correctly, these were some of the verses:

"The same sun rose each day last year,
The same earth smiled back her delight;
But since you watched it with me, dear,
The dawn has seemed more bright.

'The wild rose bloomed upon the wall last year,
And shed its fragrance thro' the summer air;
But since you plucked and gave one to me, dear,
All roses seemed more fair.

'My life was very glad and sweet last year,
And earth was lovely, friends were good and true;
But earth seems fairer, friends more true, my dear,
Since knowing, loving you."