

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Schiller Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schilling Kralik Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
Gerstäcker Vulpus
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Mörike Musil
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving
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**The Award of Justice Or, Told in
the Rockies A Pen Picture of the
West**

A. Maynard (Anna Maynard) Barbour

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

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DEDICATION.

To W. James Barbour,

My co-worker in this pleasant task,
at whose suggestion it was undertaken,
and by whose inspiration it has been guided,
from inception to completion,
this book is affectionately dedicated
by the author,

A. MAYNARD BARBOUR.

CHAPTER I.

The Pacific Express was due at Valley City at 1:45 p.m. Within ten minutes of that time, a spring-board wagon, containing two young men and drawn by a pair of bronchos, suddenly appeared around one end of the dingy little depot. One of the men, dressed in a tweed traveling suit, jumped hastily from the wagon, while the other, who looked like a prosperous young ranchman, seemed to have all he could attend to in holding the restive little ponies, who were rearing and kicking in their impatience at being compelled to stand.

"I'm afraid, Ned," he said, "that you'll have to look out for your traps yourself; these little rats haven't been driven for four days, and they're feeling pretty frisky."

"All right, Tom," responded the other, diving under the seat of the spring-board and bringing out the said "traps," which consisted of two grips, a rifle case, a set of fishing rods, and, last but not least, a large, square case which he handled with great care, and now held up to his companion saying,

"See that, Tom? that's my set of cameras; they're fine too, I tell you."

"But why do you bother to take them around with you all the time, like that?" inquired his friend.

"Oh," replied Ned, "I do that so as to be ready to catch any choice scenes I come across; I'm making a collection of views, you know, and I expect to get a good many on this trip. By the way, I got some stunning views over there at your place this morning, just before breakfast."

"The dickens, you did!" exclaimed Tom, suddenly remembering a ludicrous predicament in which his guest had caught him.

"Oh, yes," said Ned, "and when I get away at a safe distance I'm going to develop them and send them to you. I've got an awfully fine--well, by Jove, if that isn't just my luck!"

Ned had just deposited his belongings on the depot platform and in doing so, noticed a piece of blackboard propped up against the

wall, on which were chalked these words, "Train 3 ours late." His eyes seemed riveted to the spot.

"What's the matter now?" asked Tom, who took in the situation at a glance.

"Matter! Why, that blasted train is three hours behind time."

"Too bad!" said Tom, with a grin; "if I'd only known that I needn't have driven my horses so hard."

"Oh, confound those little beasts of yours;" exclaimed Ned, "a little exercise won't hurt them, but to think of three hours in a place like this! and say, don't you know how to spell out here?"

"Well," said Tom, coolly, "I don't hold myself personally responsible for the wording of that blackboard, but I suppose that's the phonetic spelling they used to talk about when I lived east; you see we've adopted it out here, for we westerners have to rustle lively, and don't have time for old-fashioned ways."

"I see," said Ned, rather sarcastically; "perhaps you can tell me why they don't 'rustle' that train along on time."

"I suppose," replied Tom, "it's on account of that wreck two days ago; you know your train was ten hours late yesterday."

"Yes," assented Ned, gazing about him with an expression of intense disgust; "I got here after dark; that's how it comes about that I never realized until the present moment what a paradise this place is. Valley City! I can't see more than a dozen buildings here."

"That's probably because you're so near-sighted, my dear boy," replied Tom; and Ned, who was very sensitive on the subject of his near-sightedness, colored, and readjusted his eye-glasses, while he asked in a tone of despair:

"Well, what am I to do in this beastly place, anyhow?"

"You might take a stroll about the city," suggested Tom, "if you get lost you'll have to inquire your way of some of the police. I would be delighted to stay and keep you company, but work on the ranch is rushing and I must hurry back; so I'll wish you good luck and good-bye."

"All right, old fellow," said Ned, shaking hands in a slightly patronizing way, "if you ever get out of this country, and find yourself within the limits of civilization again, just take a run down to the 'Hub' and see me."

"Much obliged," said Tom, turning around for a parting shot; "I say, Ned, while you're waiting for the train, you'd better get out your cameras; you might catch some more 'stunning views' you know," and lightly snapping his whip, he started off, the bronchos standing on their forefeet with their heels in the air.

"Good-bye, Tom," Ned called, after the rapidly retreating spring-board, "if you ever had any brains to lose I'd be anxious about you, but I guess you're safe enough."

Tom's only reply was a crack of the whip, and he and the ponies soon disappeared in a cloud of dust, leaving Ned to survey his surroundings at his leisure.

In the foreground was the low, dingy depot, and on the platform, leaning against the building as though their spinal columns were unable to support them, were two specimens of the genus homo, which were entirely new to the young Bostonian. He gazed at them with undisguised interest, being unable to determine whether they were cow-boys or miners, these being the two classes into which, as he imagined, the western population was about evenly divided. That they immediately classified him, in their western vernacular, as a "tenderfoot," and a remarkably verdant specimen at that, was not owing to their superior penetration, as it was a self-evident fact.

Mr. Edward B. Rutherford, Jr., prided himself upon being a resident of Boston, a son of one of her best families, and a graduate of Harvard, and it is scarcely to be wondered at if he felt himself slightly superior to ordinary mortals who had not been blessed with these advantages. Nevertheless, the fact remained that Mr. Rutherford's personal appearance could not be considered especially prepossessing, even when moving in his own sphere where he felt himself, as he would have expressed it, "en rapport" with his surroundings; under other circumstances, as at the present time, it very nearly approached the ludicrous. He was small in stature, but his bump of self-esteem was developed in an inverse ratio to his size. He seemed to be making a constant effort to maintain his dignity at

the proper level, in which direction he was greatly assisted by a pair of eye-glasses, perched on a very large and decidedly Roman nose. It had been claimed by his college chums that the eye-glasses were worn for this especial purpose; be that as it may, without their assistance, his task would certainly have been a difficult one, as his eyes, which were very full and round, and surmounted by a pair of extremely high-arched eyebrows, gave him always an expression of exaggerated surprise and bewilderment, which, when intensified as on the present occasion, rendered his appearance very far from the *otium cum dignitate* to which he aspired. But upon very few is the "giftie" bestowed, "to see oursel's as ithers see us," and to many besides the junior Mr. Rutherford, such a vision would be anything but satisfactory.

At the present time, however, Rutherford's only troubles were his immediate surroundings, and the problem of how to pass the next three hours. The loungers, who by this time had changed to a sitting posture, and who were staring at him with an unwinking fixedness which made him rather nervous, did not seem very congenial companions. The town consisted of merely a few, straggling, unpainted buildings, while in every direction extended the apparently interminable stretches of undulating prairie, partially covered with sage brush and wild cactus. Though early in the season, the heat was intense, and the glare of the sunlight reflected from the patches of white, chalk-like sand, was so blinding as to seem unendurable.

The interior of the depot was even more cheerless than the exterior. A rusty stove, minus one leg, two or three battered benches, a flaming circus poster, and an announcement of the preceding year's county fair constituted the entire furnishing and decoration. No signs of life were visible, the window into the ticket office being closed, while from somewhere within the little inclosure, a telegraphic instrument clicked with a cheerful pertinacity that to Rutherford seemed simply exasperating.

In the course of half an hour, however, the monotony was relieved by the appearance of half a dozen soldiers, who strolled over from a neighboring fort, about two miles distant. Rutherford had soon introduced himself to them, with a formality which they considered highly amusing, and they entertained him with tales of

various thrilling adventures and hair breadth escapes, nearly all invented for the occasion, to which he listened with an open-mouthed astonishment that elicited many winks and grins from the blue-coats. Finally, two of them escorted him to a small Indian camp, about a mile distant, which was hidden from view by a sandy knoll, where, in some cottonwood brush, beside a small creek, they found half a dozen tepees, around which were squatted twenty or thirty disreputable-looking Indians, their ponies tethered in the brush near by. The bucks were sullen and uncommunicative, maintaining a solemn silence broken only by an occasional grunt. Their dress was a combination of Indian costume and articles purchased from the white people, the latter being put on to suit the individual taste of the wearer, without the least regard to the use for which it was originally intended. One, who seemed a leader in the camp, in addition to his native toggery of feathers, beads and brass rings, wore trousers of striped bed-ticking, two or three pairs of gayly colored suspenders knotted together for a belt and sash, and a flaming red necktie braided in his hair. The squaws in their blankets were quite socially inclined, and the wig-wams at a little distance looked very romantic to the young easterner, but the odors wafted from them were sufficient for him, and he declined to penetrate any further into the mysteries of an Indian camp; and after taking one or two views of the Indians and their tepees, he returned to the depot.

It was now nearly train time, and the number of loungers and loafers had increased amazingly, considering the size of the town. There were thirty or forty of them, all more or less resembling the first specimens, and Rutherford wondered where they stowed themselves away, not realizing that many came in from little shacks scattered over the prairies; for to them, the coming of the train from the east was the one great event of the day.

Among them Rutherford noticed a man, who, though clad as roughly as the others, yet had an individuality so distinct from them as to be noticeable even to a stranger. He wore an old soft hat and rough blouse, his trousers being tucked into a pair of heavy, hob-nailed boots that reached to his knees. He was tall and stooped slightly, but there was none of the slouching figure and gait that characterized those around him. His movements were quick, and, when standing motionless, there was something in his very pose

that conveyed an impression of alertness and of latent strength. His back was turned toward Rutherford, who was watching him under a sort of subtle fascination, when suddenly he wheeled, facing him. His eyes were keen and piercing, and as he looked for an instant at Rutherford with an expression of suspicion and distrust, and then seemed to survey his diminutive figure with a quick glance of contempt, that young man felt a sudden and violent terror in his inmost soul, which was not lessened when his eyes fell upon a sheath knife and huge revolver in the stranger's belt. Involuntarily Rutherford's hand went to his hip pocket, where reposed a dainty, pearl-handled Smith and Wesson, 38-calibre, but he immediately regretted the movement, for the blue-black eyes watching him scintillated for a moment with a cold, steel-like glitter, and the lips under the heavy, black beard curled with a smile of fine scorn, that made our young hero exceedingly uncomfortable.

The whistle of the approaching train afforded him unspeakable relief, and at the first opportunity he put himself and his belongings aboard with a celerity very remarkable in one of his usual dignity.

CHAPTER II.

As the Pacific Express was speeding westward across the prairies, a young man, half reclining among the cushions of the smoking car, was enjoying a choice Havana. He took no note of external objects as they flashed with almost lightning rapidity past the car windows, and he seemed equally unconscious of the presence of his fellow passengers. His dress and manner, as well as his nonchalant, graceful attitude, and even the delicate poise of his cigar, were all indicative of wealth and refinement, and of a courtesy innate, not acquired. His head was slightly thrown back, and with half-closed, dreamy eyes, he watched the coils of blue smoke wreathing and curling above his head, but his mind was actively engaged in planning the details of the new life opening up before him in the west. Walter Everard Houston, of New York, the possessor of a million in his own name, and prospective heir to many millions more, was en route for a small mining camp, far west, in the heart of the Rockies, where he was to fill the position of bookkeeper and corresponding secretary in the office of a mining company, at a salary of one hundred dollars per month.

Mr. Houston's parents had died when he was very young, and he had been tenderly reared in the home of his uncle, his mother's brother, Walter Everard Cameron. Even now, as he watched the blue coils above his head, his memory was going back to the time when he had entered that beautiful home. He recalled the different members of that lovely family, as they then appeared to him; the dark, patrician face of his aunt, with its wondrous beauty, which, in the following years had been so softened and deepened by sorrow that now it was almost saint-like in the calm look of peace and love which it wore, with the soft, snow-white hair surrounding it like a halo of glory. Then his beautiful cousin Edna, with her sunny hair and starry eyes, and her wonderful voice filling the home with music. She had married soon after he entered the family, and went with her husband to a distant, western city, often returning to visit the old home. How well he remembered the last visit! Her baby was then nearly two years old; he could not now recall her name, but she was a little, golden-haired toddler, with her mother's eyes and voice. His cousin was suddenly called home by a telegram that her

husband was ill; then, in a day or two, came the news of a frightful railroad accident, a collision and a fire which quickly consumed the wreck. Edna was rescued from the flames, unconscious and dying, but no trace could be found of the little one. Then followed word of the death of Edna's husband; he had died a few hours later than the accident occurred, ignorant of the terrible fate of his wife and child.

Next came the memory of his cousin, Guy Cameron, but a few years older than himself; dark and beautiful like his mother, proud spirited and headstrong, the pride of his parents, but through him came their most bitter sorrow. Through fast living and gambling he became deeply involved, and forged his father's name to several checks, amounting to nearly a hundred thousand; then, overcome by shame and remorse, he had fled in the night, no one knew whither. His father paid the full amount of the debt, without even betraying his son's guilt, and then for years employed the most skillful detectives, trying to bring back the wanderer to the love and forgiveness which awaited him; but in vain, no trace of him existed. The father had long ago given up all hope of ever seeing his boy again, and doubted whether he were living. Only the sweet-faced mother, strong in her mother-love and in her faith in God, believed that he would yet return, and was content to watch and wait.

Meantime, Everard Houston had become like a son to Mr. and Mrs. Cameron. After leaving college, he had been taken by his uncle as a partner into his enormous banking house, and intrusted more or less with the charge of various departments of business with which he was connected, and he had proven himself worthy of the trust reposed in him.

For a number of years, Mr. Cameron had been president of a large investment company, which, among other properties, owned a number of mines in the west which had been represented to be very valuable, and which, at the time of purchase, possessed every indication of being heavy producers of very rich ore. Lately, these mines had not been yielding the profit which it was reasonable to expect from them, and there were indications of bad management, if not of dishonesty, at the western end of the line. One or two so-called experts had been sent out to investigate, but they had after all so little knowledge of practical mining, that they were unable to pro-

duce any tangible evidence against the company who constituted their western agents, although their reports had only tended to strengthen Mr. Cameron's belief that there was underhanded and dishonest dealing somewhere, which could only be detected by a person on the ground whom the western company would not suspect of being personally interested. Happening to learn, through a Chicago firm who were friends of Mr. Cameron's, that the western company were desirous of getting a bookkeeper and confidential clerk, it was decided, after consultation, to send out Everard Houston to take this position. Accordingly, he had gone to Chicago, and the firm there had written a letter to the mining company, recommending him as a young man of their acquaintance, of exceptional ability, reliable, and thoroughly to be trusted in all confidential matters. The company had responded favorably, offering the position to Mr. Houston for one month on trial, at one hundred dollars, his traveling expenses to be paid by them. If he proved satisfactory, they would retain him as long as would be mutually agreeable, and if his services proved as valuable as expected, would increase his salary. Mr. Houston was, therefore, on his way to the mines to accept this position, together with the munificent salary, and hoped to prove so satisfactory as to soon be admitted to the "confidential" clerkship, in which event he anticipated being able to accomplish a nice little piece of detective work.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Houston was aroused from his pleasant reverie by the rather noisy entrance of a young man, who, with flushed face, and manner more indicative of self-assertion than self-possession, passed down the car and took a seat facing himself. This was none other than our friend, Rutherford, who, having secured his berth in the sleeper, and arranged his belongings to his entire satisfaction, immediately repaired to the smoking car to soothe his perturbed and agitated spirits by a cigar.

From under his heavily drooping eyelids, Houston regarded his vis-a-vis with concealed amusement, for he was an apt student of human nature, and possessed an unusual degree of insight into the characteristics of those with whom he was thrown in contact.

Rutherford, on his part, was watching Houston with his usual degree of interest and curiosity. Each was measuring the other from his own standpoint: Houston's prompt decision was,--"A good-hearted fellow, but something of a cad;" while Rutherford's vague surmises, summed up verbally, would have been,--"Nice looking sort of fellow, a gentleman; guess he's got the stuff, too; 'twon't do any harm to make his acquaintance."

An opportunity for this soon presented itself, for as the conductor passed leisurely through the car, examining tickets, Rutherford discovered that their destinations were the same, and hastily drawing his card case from his pocket, said:

"As we seem likely to be fellow travelers for a while, I should be pleased to make your acquaintance; allow me," at the same time offering his card.

Houston took the card, greeting him courteously, and giving his own in exchange. He half smiled as he looked at the diminutive slip of cardboard with its Boston address made unnecessarily prominent, while Rutherford, after scanning the card he held, bearing simply the name of W. E. Houston, remarked with a decidedly upward inflection,

"You are from--?"

"From Chicago," Houston replied promptly.

"Ah," Rutherford responded, "then I suppose you are quite familiar with this part of the country."

"Well, not exactly," replied Houston, smiling, "Chicago, I'll admit, seems inclined to embrace a small part of the state of Illinois within her city limits, but I never heard of her attempting to claim the prairies of the Missouri valley among her suburbs."

"Well, no," said Rutherford, laughing, "not quite so bad as that, I guess, but perhaps I didn't convey my meaning very clearly; my idea was, that living in one of the western cities, you know, perhaps you were out this way often."

"On the contrary, this is my first trip out here."

"Indeed! A pleasure trip, I presume?"

"No, I am out on business," replied Houston, not caring to state very definitely just then the nature of his business.

"Well," said Rutherford, settling himself into an attitude more comfortable than graceful, "I came out on a pleasure trip, but I must say that so far, the pleasure has been rather an uncertain quantity; for the last forty-eight hours, I haven't seen much besides dust, Indians and desperadoes."

"Forty-eight hours!" exclaimed his companion, "you surely have not been on this train that length of time."

"Not on this train; I stopped off last night to see an old friend of mine that has a ranch out here," and forthwith, Rutherford launched into a recital of his experiences of the last few hours, not omitting a description of the man whose appearance had struck such terror to his heart and expedited his departure from Valley City.

"I tell you, he was a man I wouldn't like to meet in the dark; he was armed to the teeth, and there was a look in his eye that was awfully unpleasant."

Mr. Houston judged from his companion's manner that he had not been particularly pleased at meeting this alleged desperado in broad daylight, but he courteously refrained from any such insinua-

tion, and as supper was just then announced, the young men adjourned to the dining car, and the experiences of Mr. Rutherford were, for the time, forgotten.

Nothing special occurred that evening, except that the monotony of the journey was slightly relieved by the train entering upon the Bad Lands. For some time, Houston and Rutherford stood upon the rear platform, enjoying their cigars, and watching the strange phenomena of that weird region; on all sides, vast tracts of ashen gray or black, as if burnt to a crisp, with no sign of life, animal or vegetable, the lurid lights flashing and playing in the distance, until it seemed as though they might be gliding through the borderland of Dante's Inferno.

Their cigars finished, they separated for the night, to be agreeably surprised by the delightful change that met their eyes the following morning. Houston was already at the breakfast table enjoying the scenery, when Rutherford sauntered into the dining car. They exchanged greetings, and the latter dropped into a seat facing his companion, exclaiming as he did so,

"Well, say now, this looks a little more like civilization, doesn't it?" and having ordered his breakfast and helped himself to fruit, he proceeded to watch the beautiful panorama flashing past in the sunlight.

They were passing through one of the most fertile valleys of the northwest. Away to the south, a beautiful river glistened like a broad ribbon of silver, and leading from it was a gleaming net-work of irrigating canals and ditches, carrying the life-giving waters over thousands of broad acres; some already green with grass and alfalfa, while others were dotted with scores of men and horses opening the brown earth in long, straight lines of furrows, or scattering broadcast the golden grain.

Far in the distance, faintly outlined against the blue sky, was a fleecy, cloud-like mass, grayish blue at the base, with points here and there of dazzling whiteness, which Houston had known at once as the first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains, but which Rutherford failed to notice.

"Well," said the latter, withdrawing his head from the window, and preparing to attack his breakfast, "it seems to me, after nearly forty hours of nothing but prairies, it's about time to see some mountains."

"They're in sight now," responded Houston quietly.

"What!" exclaimed his companion, dropping his knife and fork in haste.

"You can see them now; I've been waiting for you to recognize them," said Houston, smiling; "look off there to the southwest," he added, as Rutherford was readjusting his eye-glasses, preparatory to a careful survey of the horizon.

"Well, I'll be blessed!" ejaculated the latter, "I supposed those were clouds. My! but they must be mighty far away, twenty-five miles, I expect, at the least."

"Sixty miles, at least," said Houston, glancing at them, "perhaps more."

"Pardon me, gentlemen," said a bland voice across the aisle, and the young men, turning, saw a much-bejewelled individual, with a florid, but very smiling face; "I see you have not yet become accustomed to the vast distances of this great country of ours in the northwest. Those mountains which you are discussing are about ninety miles distant."

Rutherford's eyes expressed an immense amount of incredulity, while Houston simply bowed silently. The man continued:

"The wonderful rarity of our atmosphere in these altitudes is something that has to be experienced in order to be thoroughly understood and appreciated, or even believed. You tell an eastern man of the great distances here at which you can see and hear, clearly and readily; he will immediately doubt your veracity, simply because it is without the line of his experience. Now I myself, personally, with my own, unaided vision, have been able to count the mules in a pack-train sixty-three miles distant, and have repeatedly held conversations at a distance of fifteen miles."