

business-like view of the matter, but I confess I was charmed by all this uncertainty. It seasoned the day's prospects with a sense of mimic adventure.

The dining-room door was presently slightly opened, the red cap and the brown nose of Scotty showed themselves, and we listened to this announcement: 'The mules and the mule-man he here, sir; he say that we best start, for he not sure of the road.' There had before now been a good deal of talk about saddles, from which I gathered nothing except that I should find them peculiar. I was certainly not disappointed. Of the four animals which we found awaiting us in the street, two—those meant for the muleteer and Scotty—had nothing on their backs but squares of gaudy-coloured camel's-hair cloth, kept in place by two curved frames of wood, which were covered with crimson leather, and shaped like the merry-thought of a chicken. Across these were slung a couple of saddle-bags, and rude stirrups attached to a loose rope. Anything more uncomfortable it is hardly possible to imagine; but for myself and my companion, because of the hardness of our hearts, or perhaps because of the softness of something equally sensitive, the native fashion was modified in the following way: Over the saddle was thrown a thick species of feather-bed, which, though halved in size as well as doubled in thickness by being folded, left little of the animal visible, excepting its head and tail. Mr. Adam assured me I should find this arrangement charming; but he had hardly made