

Chapter 1.

Into the Primitive

"Old **l**ongings **n**omadic **l**eap,
Chafing at **c**ustom's **ch**ain;
Again from its **b**rumal **s**leep
Wakens the **f**erine **s**train."

Buck did not read the **newspapers**, or he would have known that **trouble** was **brewing**, not alone for **himself**, but for **every** **tide-water** dog, strong of **muscle** and with warm, long hair, from **Puget** Sound to San **Diego**. **B**ecause men, **g**roping in the **Arctic** **darkness**, had found a **yellow** **metal**, and **b**ecause **steamship** and **transportation** **companies** were **booming** the find, **thousands** of men were **rushing** **into** the **Northland**. These men **wanted** dogs, and the dogs they **wanted** were **heavy** dogs, with strong **muscles** by which to toil, and **furry** coats to **protect** them from the frost.

Buck lived at a big house in the sun-kissed **Santa Clara** **Valley**. Judge **Miller's** place, it was called. It stood back from the road, half **hidden** **among** the trees, through which **glimpses** could be caught of the wide cool **veranda** that ran **around** its four sides. The house was **approached** by **gravelled** **driveways** which wound **about** through wide-spreading lawns and **under** the **interlacing** boughs of tall **poplars**. At the rear things were on even a more **spacious** scale than at the front.