

As Some Things Appear on the Plains and Among the Rockies in Mid-Summer

I had been out of school just ten years, and on leaving declared my first intention was to take an extended prospective tour, but Cupid stepped in and led me to the hymeneal altar and thus deferred the time. On June 5, 91, I boarded the 5:30 a.m., train for Atlanta. There I arrived on time, and after spending a few hours in the haunts of my school days I took the E.T.V.& G. road for Chattanooga. I was inclined to stop over one day to meet a former schoolmate and recall associations of the past, but being angered at the espionage under which I moved (which I afterwards learned was characteristic of the "good darkie" of that place) I hastily procured my supper and a ticket and caught the 8 o'clock train for Cincinnati, where I breakfasted the next morning. There I spent several hours in search for a friend whom I failed to find and being anxious for new scenes I left on the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton road for Indianapolis I like that greatest inland railroad centre and there spent two days, two hours of which time I used at the Freeman office endeavoring to photograph the impressions of the editor and the manager of that great, Negro journal. They are non-similarities, contra-exponents in

business affairs and social intercourse. The one is of a nervous temperament, small, shrewd, piercing, deep-set eyes, features that would be round were they not hewn down with the edge of sarcasm and the research of a student. Small of stature and lithe of limb, his editorials are the epigrammatic embodiment of ideas born of a bigger brain and supported by a more corpulent body. The other is of a lymphatic temperament, large, inviting eyes, quiet manners, guarded in language broad minded and candid in opinion.

Leaving Indianapolis by the Vandalia about 12m. I, on the same evening, arrived at St. Louis. Aside from the great attraction offered by the most splendid car-shed I had before or since seen; the impressions gathered at the great negro journal office; the wonderment of the blind negro caricaturist of Indianapolis; St. Louis is the starting point where the emotions of my soul are aroused, the living fire of my spirit begins to kindle and double assurance swells the breast "a man's a man for a' that." The first acquaintance I had formed after leaving home, the scraping up of which is not accredited to me, was that of a white gentleman. Well, of course I did not first approach him and introduce myself, for that is audacious presumption on the part of a negro, but here while waiting for the train for Denver to be made up, a gentleman of Kansas City noticed my solitary surroundings came up and entertained me. After talking for some considerable time he presented his card and I made myself better known. For the first time since I have had knowledge of the outside world, for the first time since I have been old enough to know that the color of skin alters one's surroundings, circumscribes locomotion and abbreviates privileges, I felt like a man neither ashamed nor afraid to speak. To his surprise, I told him the negro of the South was progressing financially and intellectually, and that, I also thought, with less obstruction and fewer enticements held out to the hand of poverty, would progress morally; and that the blacks and whites were on amicable terms; and, aside

from politics, no friction existed. I opened the bright side of the picture to his view and reserved all that was dark, dismal, dreary. When his train pulled out, which was one hour before mine, he grasped me by the hand with a warm pulsation of friendly feeling and asked me to call on him should I make a stop in his city. On inquiry I learned that he was a leading physician, well supplied with this world's goods, with an humble claim on the next, living in palatial style, who prescribes to the poor gratis and with whom consultation is sought in other cities. Kansas City is a big, hilly, aristocratic place, free from much of the smoke, slattern and sum of St. Louis, though not so large. I also took a peep at St. Joseph, Mo., the birthplace and home of the out-laws--James brothers. What is left of the house and fence still stands and their counterparts are quietly resting in the homes of friends and curiosity-seekers as souvenirs of a heroic past.

I shall omit the narrative relative to my occupying a parlor reclining chair from St. Louis to Denver, a distance covering one thousand miles, and the courteous treatment I received at the hands of a white gentleman and his wife who asked me to lunch with them, which I cleverly declined.

I shall now, more rapidly than the cars took me, take you across the plains from the eastern boundary of Kansas to that of Colorado, thence among the Rocky, and in retracing my steps make a circuitous route so as to embrace the shaded groves of Minnesota and the fertile fields of Iowa with a grateful appreciation of the immense metropolis of the west, boasting of its park gardens and gigantic buildings, so far east of my terminus that there they call it "back east"--Chicago.

The states and territories through which I passed embrace an immense area. In traversing Kansas for hundreds and hundreds of miles in one direction, casting a sweeping glance across the plains there rise before the view fine pastures and boundless meadows tenanted

with cattle and stock; and on crossing into Colorado, as far as eye can scan, and even when the unbounded imagination has conceived a greater scope than the eye will warrant, there seems to be yet beyond an unlimited expanse of prairie that in the distance presents a picture of admiration and wonder. For miles and miles there appears to spring into existence a boundless scope of territory that in the far off approaches sublimity and recedes before the eye like a vast ocean green. Mile after mile after mile one rides without seeing sign of life from without excepts now and then a chirping bird or a prairie dog. The prairie dog is about the size of a common squirrel; playful and frolicsome, seems to realize that he is king of the field, and on the approach of the cars sits upright upon his posteriors and salutes the medium of civilization. The bird too, appears to understand that he, in some distant land, far from the habitation of man and music, must warble his sweetest notes when seeming danger is near. Withdrawing the attention from the prairie dog and bending a listening ear to the receding echo of the chirping bird one unconsciously lifts the eye to find the symphony broken by the ranch of a thousand cattle or the rugged hills of the Rocky towering in the distance above the surrounding country. A little farther westward still and he finds he has to down the window, and as day comes to a close he draws on his overcoat as though it were dreary winter. About two days and nights travel over the Missouri Pacific from St. Louis will land one in the beautiful and busy city. Denver. One may enter Colorado Springs and Pueblo with the same unconcern as he does St. Louis and Kansas City, but on coming into Denver he is first pleased, then delighted, last amazed!

Pleased with the idea of seeing the truly Queen city of the far west delighted with the artistic display of beauty and grandeur; amazed at the stupendous wealth, busy commotion, obstreperous motion of vehicles and conveyances, public and private.

Denver is built in a valley and has for her protection

the Rocky, receiving during summer the gentle breeze that fans the brow of the weary and in winter shelter from the stormy blasts. From that charming, enticing and rich man's city, I go with reluctance, climb the heights and leave discrimination farther behind. The next point of interest at which I find myself is Cheyenne, Wyo. Here I am informed that I am elevated to the height of about ten thousand feet above sea level. I don't wonder that the people are so high minded and benevolent, respecting alike the rights of all men, since they live in closer proximity to the God of equity than we. The atmosphere, light, cool, and thin, makes one pant lively shiver quickly and perceive objects miles away that appear to be only a few hundred yards in the distance.

This is a beautiful little city on the mountain scrupulously clean, and kept so by the constant gusts of wind pervading her streets, testing always the tenacity of life by interfering with the action of the heart. On leaving Cheyenne going westward, one passes through that fascinating town Evanston. After pulling out from that bewitching little town still westward bound gliding down a ravine a bracing breeze, an exhilarating draft, a chilling gust is experience that puts one looking for the crystal capped pyramid with its flowery valley and sparkling stream. Passing up this valley near Colorado River on the Union Pacific, an upward glance will reveal nature's stair-way known as "Devil Slide," exquisitely chiseled, beginning at the base and running toward the apex, as artistically cut as though designed by architectural skill and perfected with mathematical precision. A little yet beyond while gazing upon natures, admiring the reflection of the sun's rays on the snow above, enjoying a scenery enrapturedly grand, one is without warning, plunged into erebus, (Granite Tunnel.) This tunnel is cut through a portion of the base of the Rocky through which the Union Pacific runs. The longest one of these dark, shadowy vales through which I passed was between Butte City and Helena, Montana, requiring six minutes,

I am told to pass out. After being hidden from the outside world for about three minutes one becomes to be possessed of that strange, indescribable, mingled sensation--indifference and awe--with a peculiarly smitten conscience and an apprehensive dread that he may never more see light and continue the downward and darker road that he has for a life time travelled. The tunnels of themselves are not strange, but when everything connected therewith is considered the wonder lies in the fact that the hand of art is so used in adjusting the hills of nature to the adaptation of civilization.

Passing from state to territory and from territory to state, looking from art to nature and from nature to art, it seems that each tries to outview the other, but on reflection nature is without a peer, for she is but the haul of God.

One passes through the tunnel, looks down into the chasm below while passing from peak to peak suspended hundreds of feet from earth, studies closely the contrasted and yet symmetrical beauty of the canyon, gazes strangely up at the perpetual snow-belt region, and higher still he casts his eyes to the beautiful blue above with a feeling of fear and admiration.

These natural, crystal tipped pyramids grown toward the skies: the vast panoramic display of valley that seems to stretch from the foot of the mountain to the horizon: those refreshing streams that come down with impetuous haste to traverse the valley or to be divided into a thousand rills to irrigate gladsome fields and wondrous scenery, I leave behind and camp in the midst of these rapturous beauties.

For four weeks I move among the Mormons. Here it is not out of place to observe the characteristic tendency of the Mormons. Religion is no longer the propelling force of the Mormon church, nor does polygamy hold an enticing charm over the affections of its followers. It is nothing less than a political organization, welded by solemn oath to defend and protect the institution, and when the colonies will have grown as

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/murraybib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(lcrbmrp+t2103\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/murraybib:@field(NUMBER+@band(lcrbmrp+t2103)))

powerful and rich in Arizona, Nebraska, Adaho and Montana as they are in Utah, and will have had the balance of power in National elections just as they have in local elections of Utah, they will then dictate terms to this country and carry out the original designs of the Mormon church; and like some states whose ambition flies in the other directions "Mensuraque juris vis exit." The church is enormously wealthy and its followers are obedient. The priest is dictator. If he says leave possessions and go to Arizona and plant a colony they go; if he says go to South Carolina and proselyte, "there is not a murmuring word."

I was about to say how pleasantly I spent the time among the Mormons at Ogden, Salt Lake, Garfield Beach and Logan; Utah is socially the most liberal section of country I found. There I was as free as freedom and as white as honesty. To dwell within the walls of the city of Ogden is to live behind the walls of a natural prison with the freedom of locomotion and the violation of speech. The city is enclosed by walls of the eternal Rocky the city being the centre, whose radius is about three miles and the crest of her hills perpetually covered with snow. For attraction, commercial thrift and business enterprise, Salt Lake City is in lead of any city west of Denver within the Rocky Mountain region. Protected as she is on the the North and East by the Mountains and on the South by Great Salt Lake on an altitude of 4,300 feet, she possesses unsurpassed advantages for health. The atmosphere is dry an unclouded sun prevails and just enough moisture is imparted to the air by the evaporation of salt water to give wholesomeness to the breeze and energy to animal Life. Around and about Salt Lake the eye feast on beautiful gardens, tastefully kept orchards, charming valleys, admirable canyons and magnificent buildings. The great Mormon Temple is built of beautiful creamy granite, the massive proportions of which are 100x200 and her walls 100 feet high, whose tower is 100 feet higher than the walls. A slight idea of her magnificence can be conceived when it is known that

her foundation was laid in the year 1853 and more than \$2,500,000 have been already expended and yet the structure is not completed.

The most fascinating view I had of the lake was while passing just as the sun was shedding his last rays upon its placid surface. I have, during my life witnessed some beautiful scenery made picturesque by the subdued tints cast upon intervening objects by the dying rays of an unobstructed sun I have seen sparkling dew drops dance upon growing vegetation, reflecting their beauty came; but as I looked upon Salt Lake while the last glimmering rays of the sun peered over the Rocky, I witnessed the greatest natural beauty nature ever spread before my view. The evening was clear the atmosphere thin and the full force of lingering rays spread over the surface of the lake and at once each ray became a transparent jewel. The entire surface sparkled like myriads of diamonds flashing before electric lights. Imagine a cold winter's sky faultlessly clear, and the distance to the stars diminished by half; the stars twinkling, darting, dancing, now in full view, then receding; and again bursting in on the vision with a beauty radiant and rare, riveting the attention by their charming beauty and wondrous domain, and yet it cannot compare with the transient splendor imparted to Salt Lake by the oblique rays of a setting sun, One looks out and gazes first on mountain and then upon lake while at the same time the lungs drink in and feast on a breeze laden with mountainous freshness and ozone softness. As one leaves the beautiful lake behind he gradually ascends a peak of the mountain and as gradually descends till he enters the valley pass. The valley is thought of by some to be far more charming than the lake, but as twilight was fast approaching when I reached the valley I cannot say that I was more fascinated by its beauty than by that of the lake. The abrupt peak between the lake and valley is a contrast between beauty and grandeur. It breaks the monotony

and preserves for itself a charm of a different type that causes one to look up to Nature in admiration of Nature's God.

Leaving Salt Lake City and the briny lake going northwest yet, one is ushered into the mining towns Logan, Utah, Soda Springs a Pocatello, Idaho; and three hundred miles farther, enters the busy and tumultous Butte City, Montana. Butte bears the reputation of being the greatest mining camp and smelting plant of earth. Whilst Butte is all thrift, gayety, enterprise and has her cable cars and dummy lines, electric lines and railway motors, her wickedness, debauchery and crime liken her to hell on wheels. Good authority informs me that the monthly payroll amounts to more than one million dollars--about 25,000 hands whose pay is from \$2.50 to \$5, per day. Yet for the amount it would be difficult for a man of high moral ideas to content himself in her midst. At Helena the sentiment, the bearing, the tone, are different. Notwithstanding Helena does not come in the role of pompous style and gorgeous display as does Butte, she can boast of her marvellous public buildings and magnificent churches which look as though they were built for eternity. These buildings are constructed of stone directly from the mountains; blue granite, gray granite and creamy, cut in various shapes while others in a plain unpretentious style tower upward, resembling more the work of nature than art and suggestive of the pillars of Gibraltar. The First National Bank of Helena, a bank that boasts of having more rare specimens of mineral deposits in their crude state, both as to variety and quantity, than any other bank of the country, one specimen among the hundreds, of other beings a huge lump of gold weighing five pounds less two ounces, is a Master piece of Masonry. I have stood in amazement and soliloquized: surely a burglar on coming to this bank would pause in admiration of the unassailable structure and courage fail in anticipation of the fruitless toil expended on its stubborn walls. On looking to the right or left, upon pinnacles are seen magnificent residences, the quiet abode of the wealthy who

have from active pursuit retired and gone above to look down on the humble toilers of life.

A point of interest worth seeing is the greatest natural spring of the world at Great Falls, Montana, throwing a stream of water sufficient to make a river 72 ft. broad and 2 feet deep. Great Falls is a bustling little town and it is there I met the only man, whom I had ever before known, since leaving home. Imagine my feelings on seeing a man I had not seen for twelve years and nearly three thousand miles from home. There is the fascinating lake at Devil's Lake, South Dakota, small, but glittering; almost circular, with diameter not more than half mile.

Whence this water comes and whither it goes, other than by evaporation, no one can rightly say. Its water is not still, stagnant, listless; but restless, sparkling, flitting.

I meant to say something of the great Lewiston mines, big lumbering camp and smelting plant of Missoula and Anaconda but I shall leave them to the imagination and turn my attention to other features of the country.

The soil of the Rocky is excellent. It is black like our swamp dirt and pulverizes almost as readily as an ash-bank. For agricultural purposes nothing is more needed than rain. Moisture is obtained by irrigation; sometime of windmills, at others by ditching from some mountain stream to take the water over the fields of vegetation.

Settlers have recently begun the cultivation of fruit farms. The valleys of Colorado and Utah produce fine peaches, apples and grapes, as well as vegetables--cabbages, pumpkins, etc., while the hay-fields of Utah and the irish potato beds of Montana are unsurpassed in their prolific growth.

The hay-fields at a distance much resemble the wheat fields of Dakota and Minnesota; and it is known that for scope, luxuriance and quality, to say nothing of the vast quantity, there are, elsewhere, no such wheat growing regions. The identity of Dakota is evident from the immense stretch of its plains covered

with a luxuriant growth of grain waving like voluminous sheets of flame. Such flame bears no destruction in its path nor terror in its sight, but the fluctuation of the wheat market depends on the prosperity or failure of these crops. The plant over which we southern people have gone wild is also grown in the Rocky. It is of such delicate growth even in our latitude that to cause it to there germinate is to hot-house it. The plant is a rare weed in that section of the country and is cultured for the sole purpose of pleasing the eye. A man can go the far west and take up a claim, but unless he has a few hundred dollars for improvements, such as taking off rocks, staking fences, erecting windmills or ditching for irrigation on from some mountain stream he would actually starve on his claim of independence and be buried in a land of liberty among the rocks of refuge free from the onslaughts of oppression and happy in the thought of a peaceful repose.

I have said very little concerning the climate, and a few words more I shall say. The Rocky has its winter resorts and its summer villas; its extreme heights and its protected valleys. During summer one can loll around Colorado Springs, Garfield Beach, Yellowstone Park, Soda Springs and Pocatello, and in winter quarters at Denver, Salt Lake and other places similarly protected by the great walls of the Everlasting. The climate is dry and delightful. When the thermometer rise to 90 ° the evaporation of the snow above takes place so rapidly that the atmosphere becomes moistened, and freighted with the misty particles of icy vapor descends to invigorate tired nature and refresh parched vegetation. The climate seems to act as a scavenger upon the system of the delicate, and if the constitution is too frail to resist a few vigorous puffs of the unceasing mountainous breeze the spirit will be blown beyond the harbor of terrestrial life into the heaven of equatorial bliss. After withstanding the climate for two or three seasons the element tans the complexion so that all look more like one nationality than the many nations

represented. The crisp air, too, presumably, gives that clear metallic sound to the voice and lustrous brilliancy to the eyes that rings with music and charm with pleasure. Nature has apparently, borrowed that blonde complexion and given reward attributes that attract and delight through euphonious speech and pleasing eyes. City water is pure and clear and cold. Never is it necessary at all times to use warm water, nor during the hottest seasons can the hand be held under it for any considerable time without feeling icy cold and numb. It is necessary at all times to use warm water for shaving and bathing.

One of the most remarkable freaks of nature is the production of two springs side by side within three miles of Helena. Mon., one hot enough to scald and the other cold to chill, uncomfortably cold.

Sunday is the great holiday for the laboring man. Excursions are made to Medicinal springs, fishing lakes, baseball grounds, pleasure parks, Those who remain within the walls frequent operas, club rooms, beer gardens. Saloons are thrown open and in some instances mechanics labor. Notwithstanding the mountain peaks look barren and forlorn, the plains seem dry and sterile; the Sabbath turned to mockery and desperation countenanced, yet there is a fascination, a charm, a magnetism--a something--about the entire country that tightens one's hold and welds his affections to the immalleable rocks of the Rocky! Some may accredit it to the inexhaustible treasures taken from the bosom of the earth which liberally reward the employer and employees: Other may attribute it to flashy society that stamps its fleeting charm on a vacillating multitude, but I ascribe it to social equity. "That equity which is the impartial distribution of justice on doing that to another which law of God and man and reason give him a right to claim" regardless of color or previous condition. There equity triumphs. All public Inns and public institutions are open to the public. If one esteems himself as worthy of the benefits his privilege is in return respected.

When the black and the white go to law they go before a judge robed in the garb of justice; the case is

placed on the scales of justice and justice is meted out according to the merits of the case. Social equality and social equity are not to be confounded. They are as distinct in their signification as in their application.

Association is, by mutual consent, entirely distinct and separate: insinuating nothing on the one hand nor repulsive on the other. Yet social equity is to be found in all parts of the west. The one distinctly defined and the limits respected; the other as free as grace, as broad as creation, as generous as humanity!

While at Ogden Utah, a few days previous to the great "Rocky Mountain Carnival" for which the people were making preparations for the brilliant displays in every line of interest, I was sitting in my room partly meditating and absently reading, that greatest band of Pacific Slope sent vibrating through the air "My Country, tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty, of Thee I Sing."

The first strains stirred the emotions of my soul and brought memories of home, all that's dear to home; the next impulse I was ready to curse the delusion as a phantasm, a spectre, a "shadow of the substance" it would be, but on a sober reflection I whispered "it is true"--To breathe an atmosphere of liberty, of freedom, of safety, is to breathe an atmosphere of happiness. And in the words of Ingersoll, "After all, happiness is the only good,"

KENNETH M. YOUNG

Spartanburg, S.C.