

RAMBLES ON THE RAIL.

There are many people of all ages who have a great desire to travel. The thought of being able to see places and objects other than those with which they are familiar offers the highest possible source of enjoyment. To a certain extent it is true that observing travelers are much benefited by seeing peoples and nations other than their own, and nothing can take the conceit out of them better than learning this one truth—that all the good folks and the finest scenery are not found in one place.

The habit of noticing peculiarities in people, differences in methods of doing business, improvements in the construction of buildings and modes of manufactures, offers a limitless sphere of entertainment. Many bury themselves in paper bound literature, become oblivious to all attractions, and are scarcely aroused to an interest in passing objects unless shaken up by an accident. All such travelers may as well stay at home, if they intend to tell us on their return what they have seen.

Everybody knows the way out of our valley now. I remember the time when common report made it impossible to get away from Salt Lake City without "having your throat cut," but railroads have changed all this. The United States have deposited this canard in the chestnut rack, where many others will go that obtain credence on the outside.

I went out over the old reliable Union Pacific to Denver. By the way, this city is growing greater and becoming an immense railroad centre. I have the impression that it is sapping the importance of Omaha as a great central point. Railroad combinations are making the city by the Missouri a way station. We begin to speak of San Francisco to Denver, Denver to Chicago. There are three or four roads that reach Chicago from Denver, leaving Omaha out in the cold.

At Denver you say good-bye to mountains, canyons and the sights familiar to a Unionian. A billowy plain is the only diversity seen; it matters not what road you take. Years ago this country of the plains was the favorite haunt of the buffalo, but today nearly every foot of land in proximity to the railroads is taken up. Great breadths of farms stretch east, north and south. The chief product is corn, which, at the time I traveled over the road in the western part, was worth 14 cents per bushel. For a change, I took the C. R. I. & P. railway, and it was on this that I gleaned the fact also that nearly every farm was mortgaged. Representatives of trusts are ready to loan money at certain rates of interest on improved farm property. The interest is collected every fall. For three years, on account of climatic objections and grasshoppers, and consequent failure of crops, the interest has not been paid. This year the corn crop is immense, but there is no sale for it at paying prices.

From this fact, although plenty abounds, poverty and the money lender knock at the door of every granger cursed with a mortgage. I have observed notices posted up in our own valley, such as "Money to loan on improved farms." I hope but few of our farmers have put their confidence in organized trusts, which will never rest until the improvements are wrested from them and they are eternally in debt. If I had the power to whisper in every farmer's ear the sentiment to avoid the professional money lender as he would the small pox, I would do so. I hear that the same calamity afflicts the farmers in Dakota. Better do without luxuries than pay a double price for them by borrowing money.

I learn that the rain belt reaches about fifteen miles westward every year as the country is opened up and cultivated, thus demonstrating that cultivation helps the rainfall as well as tree planting. As we approach the Missouri River the size of the trees increases, and the towns are more frequent. The boomer has gotten in his work in Kansas very effectually, and what the country lacks in real attractions can be readily furnished by the facile pen of the real estate agent.

The speed of railroad trains is growing greater every year. The trip of over 1000 miles from Denver to Chicago is made in about 33 hours—only about 12 hours of daylight; the balance is night traveling. The train service on the Rock Island is simply perfect. There is no chance to get in a growl at all. If any of the readers of this article would like to know how fast they travel, they have only to count the number of "clicks" made by the wheels in twenty seconds, and that will give the number of miles per hour.

Chicago the great by the inland sea is an immense hive of struggling humanity—full of vim, push and enterprise. Railroad and lake navigation has given it the proud position of being the second largest city in the United States. It is bidding for the great Fair of 1892. It is the city of seventeen story buildings, takes the water of Lake Michigan to drink, and empties its sewage back again into the same lake. It is the headquarters of the anarchists; it has the reputation of taking a front seat for immorality; it grows faster and has more railroads centering in it than any other place in the Union. The business men reach out into Old Mexico for trade, and in fact all over the world, although it is a thousand miles from the ocean. This, in my opinion, is the only drawback to the World's Fair being located there—for the reason that everything from foreign countries will have to be hauled so far by rail. Otherwise it is the most central spot that could be selected.

Getting out of Chicago by rail is something like a fly trying to free itself from a spider's web—only one does get out; but the number of iron roadways makes the escape tedious. I left by the Erie road for Boston, which carries the passenger through a succession of manufacturing

towns, where coal, iron and natural gas seem everywhere abundant. At one time the country was covered by forests of oak, but these are being cleared off. The vast drain upon the resources of the country from all parts will some day tell upon the possibility of meeting the demand. There appears to be no provision made to keep up the supply of hardwood timber; but who cares in this rushing age what is wanted in the next century. I suppose if timber cannot be obtained planks of straw can be made! Who knows?

After living so long in the west, the green hills and well watered plains covered in spots with plenty of timber are sights exceedingly gratifying to the eye. In the month of October, when the oaks, chestnuts and maples, nipped by the frost, put on a glorious wealth of color, from high yellow to maroon, from gold to crimson, the effect is charming. A dazzling glow suffuses the woods with nature's unapproachable painting.

The road to Boston via the Erie takes one through the famous Hoosac tunnel. I think this is the longest tunnel in the United States, being four and four-fifths miles in length. It is lighted all the way through by 1225 incandescent lamps. The approaches at both ends combine all the elements of pictorial beauty. Eastward the Deerfield River is followed for a long distance. Rolling hills, grassy glades, factories, pretty homes and thriving towns tell the beholder that he has reached the State of Massachusetts. To myself this longer settled part of the Union is positively attractive. Although the soil is thin and rocky in many places, cultivation has made beautiful what otherwise would be a sterile country.

Boston is a city full of historical interest. The older part has an English appearance. The streets run every way and all on a curve; the newer portions are laid out at right angles. There is scarcely a dwelling to be seen in the business part. It first started as a settlement about 1630.

When as many as fifteen hundred people came over and settled here it gradually took upon itself the dignity of a city. It is today one of the most interesting among the older cities of the Union—full of historical points in connection with the establishment of the grandest republic on the face of the earth. Boston common, the old south church, Bunker hill and the ancient graveyards are worthy shrines for the visitor who would look upon the sacred relics. Dingy old portraits and souvenirs of the battles fought in '75 and '76. Go to the old south church and stand where Washington harangued his officers and announced the progress of the British in their efforts to vanquish the heroes of freedom! Try and think of the noble impulses that nerved the brave men of early days to face the armies of a nation then masters of the seas!

It would be impossible in a rambling article to detail all that is of interest in Boston. To me it pre-