

# THE TRUE NORTHERNER.

PAW PAW, MICH., JUNE 29, 1892.—SUPPLEMENT.

## The Great "Circle" Excursion Trip.

DENVER, COLORADO, JUNE 14.

EDITOR TRUE NORTHERNER:

Dear Sir:

No doubt many of ye subscribers will take advantage of cheap railroad rates to the west this summer, and visit Colorado during the Knights Templar Conclave. To those who anticipate such a trip during August, a few suggestions by a former Michigander in regard to a very popular trip may not be out of place.

There is no section of country in the United States that can compare to Southern Colorado in the many and varied attractions so satisfying to a tourist, be he artist, poet, naturalist, sportsman, or "tenderfoot." This trip "Around the Circle" can be made in five days at a comparatively small expense, affording you a continual round of pleasure and thoughts for many a fire-side chat on your return home. August is a most delightful month to "do" the mountains, for then you will escape the scorching days and sultry nights so common in the east, and enjoy the bright sunshine and cool invigorating mountain air so peculiar to Colorado.

A party of us have just made the "Circle" trip and we enjoyed it hugely, so much so, I am tempted to give you an account of our jaunt, hoping you may become so much interested as to resolve to take the same trip and see for yourselves the beauties of mountain scenery and a climate that boasts of more than 300 sunshiny days in each and every year. We left Denver Monday, June 6th, at 4 p. m. via Denver & Rio Grande railroad, bound for Manitou and "Pike's Peak or bust." A whirl through the extensive D. & R. G. R. R. freight yards, and we then pass Burnham, Petersburg, and Littleton, suburbs of Denver, while off at the right can be distinctly seen the many brick buildings of Fort Logan. From now on we get a charming view of the picturesque Rockies; the afternoon sun heightens the many colors and makes their distance, 24 miles, appear far short of that. The first point of interest according to our railway guide is Castle Rock, 35 miles from the metropolis. It proves to be an enormous boulder at the left and several hundred feet above the track. It has the appearance of a stone fort, and from its size and height can be seen for miles. Quite a flourishing town near by takes its name from this freak of nature. About 5:30 a brakeman yelps, "Palmer Lake, ten minutes for lunch"; but as we are supposed to live on mountain scenery and rarefied air for a few days, we pass the lunch and take to the platform to see a Colorado lake. The view is a pleasant one, for we have not seen so large a body of fresh water since leaving Michigan. The shore is dotted with boats, tents, and a sprinkling of young shade trees, and the locality is becoming a popular resort for the masses.

About six o'clock we arrive at Colorado Springs and change cars for Manitou, the Mecca of all tourists. A ride of six miles and we find ourselves at the foot of the most famous landmark in America, Pike's Peak, 1400 feet above sea level. We put up at The Mansions, one of the fifteen leading hotels, and after partaking of an "elbow chaser" and a square meal, we are ready to go sight-seeing. Manitou has a population of 2,000 people, the town is beautifully laid out, the streets are winding and well shaded, lawns carefully kept, the

numerous fine hotels, pavilions, and cottages, many of the latter of Swiss pattern, giving the town an air of comfort and luxury. Referring to our guide book we find we are in the midst of the romantic scenery of Cheyenne Canon and Ute Pass; near by are to be found the beautiful drives to the Garden of the Gods and Glen Eyrie, in easy walking distance of the famous Iron, Soda, and Sulphur springs, and in sight of the wonderful cog-wheel railroad built to the summit of the Peak. We spent the evening rambling about the pavilions at the different springs and visiting the curio stores which are veritable museums. In the morning we join the crowd of tourists on a half-day excursion to the summit of Pike's Peak via the cog-wheel road, and this side trip is well worth taking. In the afternoon we engage a three-seated park phaeton and driver, and I cannot begin to tell you of the many points of interest we saw about Manitou, the "Gem of the Rockies." We arrived at the Antlers, the leading hotel of Colorado Springs, in time for dinner. This city has a population of 15,000, made up of Eastern "lung hunters," millionaires, and boarding-house keepers. It is said the climate is so very healthy that, after the town had been established some time, the authorities borrowed a corpse to start a cemetery. It is a "dry" town, no liquor allowed to be sold within the corporate limits. The city is handsomely laid out. The wide, shady avenues, beautiful parks, green lawns, and the many large and expensive residences give it the name of the "Saratoga of the West."

We take the evening train for Pueblo and put up at the Depot Hotel, a first-class hostelry. Next morning we drive about Pueblo, the second city in the state. This city has a population of over 30,000, with plenty of push and vim, as is indicated by its growth from 3,000 since 1880. After an early dinner we again board the Rio Grande train. This time we pass through the fertile Arkansas valley, noted for its large harvests and never a crop failure. The first town of any importance is Florence, the Oil City of the West. Here are to be seen scores of derricks, tanks, and reservoirs, indicating an immense oil industry.

Our next stop is at Canon City, a pretty town of 4,000, situated in the heart of a wonderful fruit-producing district. The penitentiary is located at this place. Here the train couples on to an observation car (simply an open car with slat-back seats) to give passengers a better opportunity to view the wonders of Grand Canon. Soon after leaving the city we enter the Canon with its grand panorama before us, every bend in the road revealing new surprises. Sitting in the observation car we look upward and about us, gaze and wonder as we speed on amid the rocky walls, rising in places to 2500 feet above us. Add to this sight the roar of the rushing water, the thundering noise of the train, and altogether it is enough to quicken the blood of the most indifferent traveler.

At Salida, 56 miles from Pueblo, we tarry till early dawn then take the narrow gauge train for the ride over Marshall Pass, and I might add, we hang to the narrow gauge the balance of our trip. This ride over the Pass is a very pleasing one, affording an excellent opportunity for a mountain view at sunrise. The grade is 4 per cent, (raise of

4 feet to 100 feet), and as we wind and twist about, we marvel at the engineering skill that conceived the D. & R. G. R. R. that crawls around steep mountain sides, through seemingly inaccessible canons, or down into ravines that almost makes us shudder. At the summit, 11,000 feet above sea level, we stop to take breath and look down on our track, miles away. It is truly poetical and romantic here in June, but winter storms will paralyze those mid-summer dreams.

For the next hour or two we meander down the western slope till we reach the Valley of the Gunnison. For several miles we travel close to the Gunnison, a wild, rushing stream clear as crystal, along the banks of which can be seen dozens of men and boys angling for the speckled beauties (mountain trout). Gunnison county is called the sportsman's paradise.

We breakfast at Gunnison and then again make use of the observation car for a ride through Black Canon. It is one of the wildest and most forbidding gorges ever penetrated by a railroad; many of the cliffs are 2,000 feet high, while the mad rushing torrent close to the track adds a charm to the weird sight. One more mountain to cross and we find ourselves in the Uncompaghe Valley, very appropriately called the "Farmers' Eldorado." We dine at Montrose and have time for a walk through the business street of this city of 2,000 inhabitants.

The 38 mile ride to Ouray is through a valley dotted with farms, occasionally passing a wee small town. The last 12 miles is over a road-bed blasted the most part from solid rock, many places 1,000 feet above the river. As we wind about and look out on the green valley beneath us, or on the snow-capped peaks above that glisten in the sun, the scene is one of the most picturesque of the entire trip. At Ouray we register at The Beaumont, a model hotel. This city of 4,000 is named after a celebrated Indian Chief who was always a true friend of the early white settlers. Ouray stands unrivaled in its surroundings of mountain chains, lofty peaks, deep gorges, and crystal streams. It is called the "Punch Bowl," or "Theater Pit" or "The Play of the Gods." To whatever figure you liken it, you will not find another just the same on the face of the globe, so say tourists who have traveled the world over. You can stand in any part of town and gaze on the white tents, log cabins, and ore dumps hundreds of feet above you and only reached by a tedious, zig-zag trail. We could go on indefinitely and tell you of the beauties about Ouray and its many mining industries, but time will not permit.

Next morning we take seats on top of an old-fashioned Concord coach for an 8 mile ride to Ironton. Whew! but this is a thrilling ride, traveling as we are on the very brink of a precipice, we tremble at the thought of an accident. We experience alternately emotions of awe and intense enjoyment at sight of this so-called "Panorama of Nature." We pass over the top of the Rainbow Falls, a rushing waterfall that drops 330 feet below us. It is a beautiful sight, for the reflection of the sun's rays on the rushing water makes all the prismatic colors, hence the name.

From Ironton to Silverton, 20 miles, we are on what is called the "Rainbow Route", a railroad built seemingly above the clouds, winding about steep moun-