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A Journey From the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast by Way of Salt Lake City: Returning by Way of the Southern Route, Describing the Natural and Artificial Scenes of Both Lines (Classic Reprint)

L. D. Luke

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Excerpt from A Journey From the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast by Way of Salt Lake City: Returning by Way of the Southern Route, Describing the Natural and Artificial Scenes of Both Lines

An account of New York alone would furnish sufficient matter to fill a volume, but as all my readers are conversant with its history, I pass along through this rich and fertile State, and make no stop until arriving at Utica, where I purchased a first class unlimited ticket to San Francisco, California, for$129.39, September 17th, 1883. At 6.40 p.M., I took the cars on the New York Central, and crossed the bridge at Buffalo into Canada at 1 A.M. Tuesday morning, and arrived at St. Thomas on the Canada Southern Railroad at daylight.

This country is not inviting, the land is low and wet, and no good buildings are seen. It is well timbered with elm, ash, and sycamore. It produces wheat, oats, and grass. Before reaching Detroit the Custom Officer stamped our baggage. The cars were run on to a boat and ferried across to the city at 10 A.M., 261 miles from Buffalo.

I can not pass this city, so rich in ancient lore, without a few remarks. It was visited in the sixteenth century. In 1701 Fort Ponchartrain was built by the French, who held the territory fifty-nine years, until 1160, when it was transferred to the English. In 1796 it was ceded to the United States, and incorporated as a town in 1802, and burned in 1805. In the war of 1812 it was again taken by the English, who held it one year. It received its first city charter in 1815, and was the residence of General Grant from 1846 to 1850. Located as it is on the route of all vessels to the upper lakes, and its railroad facilities, it has become a rich, flourishing and popular city, of 125, 000 inhabitants, which double in every decade.

Its manufactures are various, among which we notice cars, pins, matches, organs, stoves, shoes, safes, c.Its streets are regularly laid out, wide and airy.

The buildings are extremely fine, among which we notice the City Hall, 90 by 120 feet on the ground, and 200 feet high; containing the largest clock in the world save one. The building and grounds cost $600, 000.

The Opera House, Merchants Exchange, Odd Fellow's Hall, High School, and Public Library, are all large, costly edifices. The Library contains 40, 000 volumes for public beneficence. The city supports many benevolent institutions also.

I received the hospitality of Brother Lorenzo Sellick, and tarried till the next day, Wednesday, 19th, at 10 A.M. I then left Detroit on the Michigan Central Railroad in Michigan. From here to Upsilanti, thirty miles, is a beautiful farming country. Farther on we passed through Kalamazoo, of 12, 000 inhabitants, which lies in a good farming country also.

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