

**TOWARDS THE SUNSET:
SOME IMPRESSIONS OF
CALIFORNIA AND THE
WEST IN 1915**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649436729

Towards the Sunset: Some Impressions of California and the West in 1915 by Margaret E. Dunbar

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MARGARET E. DUNBAR

**TOWARDS THE SUNSET:
SOME IMPRESSIONS OF
CALIFORNIA AND THE
WEST IN 1915**

TOWARDS THE SUNSET

Some impressions of California
and the West in 1915.

by

MARGARET E. DUNBAR.

*"We lose vigor through thinking
continually the same thoughts.
New thought is new life."*

Brooklyn, New York City



us 38239.15.5

*
✓



Ernie Ford

*Copyright 1915
by Margaret E. Dunbar*

TOWARDS THE SUNSET.

ANTICIPATION.

Going West! These have been magic words to me as long as I can remember. And now John and I were to follow the westward trail to the Pacific. The mere terms Desert, Sierras, Grand Canyon and Yosemite had long been words to conjure with, words that opened up alluring vistas to the imagination, and now we were to see them with our own eyes. It was very exciting.

Time was when the life of a gypsy, wandering over the country in a lumbering wagon, was my ideal. Later I transferred my aspirations to life on a canal boat, perhaps because of the water view. But traveling West on a Limited is a far cry from either gypsy wagon or canal boat. It is, in fact, the most fascinating means of getting over the ground that I, as a chronic "ga'en about body," have been able to discover.

NEW YORK TO CHICAGO.

At about two in the afternoon of Friday, May 28, we started from the Grand Central Station on the "Westerner," leaving with a little throb of regret the dear ones who had come to see us off. Then for three hours we followed the "lordly Hudson." That river, at least, is in a class by itself, and has no rival. After

TOWARDS THE SUNSET

leaving Albany we turned into the Mohawk valley and saw a beautiful sunset along the peaceful waters of the canal. This inspired my companion to unexpected poetic flights, but I am not to mention that. We went to bed in great comfort, since the car was not more than half filled, but at about two o'clock in the morning we seemed to bump into everything in Buffalo. Ours was the only sleeper going to Chicago, and I think they tried us behind every locomotive and in front of every train in the yards before they found out where we really belonged. The last one they tried happened to be the right one, and after that we slept in peace.

It was cloudy all the next day but we had a very good view of northern Ohio including Cleveland, and cut across corners of Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois before reaching Chicago. We arrived in Chicago at about five in the afternoon and had three hours to dispose of before leaving on the California Limited of the Santa Fé (pronounced Fee in the West). The clouds were now discharging a heavy rain which was not conducive to sight-seeing in comfort, but we went over to the Congress Hotel which was not far away, and found this handsome hotel well worth inspection.

I remember the fine Elizabethan room in which it happened that a Thé Dansant was progressing. We

NEW YORK TO CHICAGO

might have progressed also for the insignificant matter of a dollar apiece, but decided not to; and after all, the beautiful room with its handsome dark woods claimed most of our attention.

Then came the California Limited, a train which up to date represents the best I know in railroad travel. It was going out in two sections. One section was to stop over at the Grand Canyon in Arizona while the other traveled through to the Coast with those who were not going to the Canyon. Here, again, we were not crowded.

CHICAGO TO THE GRAND CANYON

We left Chicago at eight on Saturday evening, and the next morning at about nine we were passing through Kansas City. On waking that morning I looked out and thought we must be crossing a long bridge because we were everywhere surrounded by water. Trees and telegraph poles were more than half submerged, and we learned later that the whole Missouri valley was inundated. Our train had to make a detour of a hundred miles in going through Kansas, and we thus had an unexpected view of Topeka.

It was Sunday and I had the impression of great peacefulness in the quiet towns and hamlets along our

TOWARDS THE SUNSET.

route; we could not have been more comfortable at home. At times we went back to the observation car and either sat on the platform under the awning, or occupied one of the comfortable arm chairs inside. Magazines and books were provided, also desks with writing materials.

An agreeable diversion that Sunday afternoon was created by a brown-eyed Chicago girl who surprised me by coming over and inviting me and my "husband" to take tea with her. John, the gentleman thus distinguished, happened to be in the observation car at the end of the train. However, I fetched him. Our new acquaintance explained that afternoon tea was a necessity with her, but she did not like having it alone. She had persuaded the willing porter to bring the accessories, and from her own store she produced a toothsome homemade cake—her mother's parting gift. The little buffet table had been slipped into place, and the center was graced with a bouquet of sweet peas and maidenhair which the porter had kept fresh for our hostess. Altogether we had a merry little tea party, and always the train flew along.

All day Sunday we rolled through the level grassy country of Kansas with the prospect of dipping down into the more hilly country of New Mexico during the night. But so far there was no discomfort from heat,

CHICAGO TO THE GRAND CANYON.

and our windows were kept closed so we had no dust to complain of. Indeed, it rained all day, quietly and rather soothingly so far as I was concerned, except for the remembrance of those water-dredged districts of which we had had a glimpse.

The next day, Monday, we were in New Mexico, a country inclined to be hilly but with a dearth of vegetation due to the lack of water, and at noon we stopped at Albuquerque, the capital, in about the middle of the state. The station, which is also a Harvey hotel, is a beautiful and appropriate bit of architecture surrounded by trees and well-kept lawns which were in striking contrast to the bare country through which we had been passing, due simply to the application of water.

There was a motley assortment of Indians, young and old, male and female, awaiting our arrival and bent on selling us baskets, pottery, etc. To me they looked the most degraded of human creatures, undersized and overpoweringly dirty. Not too captivating is the noble Red Man as one sees him at Albuquerque.

At this point one begins to see Navajo blankets of all kinds for sale. After hearing an old traveler explain that many of these were made in a factory in Connecticut I felt less anxiety to possess one. But sordid little details like these were unconsciously noted. What I re-