

## PLEASURE JAUNT OVER THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD.

Through the courtesy of the officers of the Baltimore, Wilmington, and Philadelphia Railroad Company, and of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, we enjoyed, in company with other invited guests, a railroad ramble, which, for completeness of arrangement in regard to comfort, could not be excelled.

Leaving Philadelphia at noon on Monday, the city of Baltimore was reached at 4 P. M. Soon after, we made the western connection, at which point were waiting private cars, neatly divided into parlor, dining-room, and sleeping apartments. The train soon sped on its rapid way. Almost on leaving Baltimore the railroad dips into mountain scenery, and follows the Patapsco River, whose banks are dotted here and there with extensive flouing and cotton mills, and whose valley is more thoroughly cultivated than almost any other portion of the State. Slipping by Fredonia Junction, forty-eight miles from Baltimore, the Catoctin station comes into view, and we near the romantic "Point of Rocks," a gigantic Druidic-looking pulpit of solid rock, which juts out from the mountain side, and overhangs the railway track. Harper's Ferry was reached by night-fall, and here the excursion party stopped for rest. The moon lit up the scene of enchantment; the interest in the far-famed surroundings of this historic point was strangely intensified. It was not difficult to appreciate the force of Jefferson's remark that "the passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge was one of the most stupendous scenes in nature, and well worthy of a voyage across the Atlantic to witness." The town lies around the base of a hill, exactly at the confluence of the Shenandoah ("Daughter of the Stars" in the significant vernacular of the Indian tribes) and of the Potomac, where the united stream breaks through the mountain barriers of the Blue Ridge.

The National Army and grounds, the rural cemetery perched on the summit of the high ground overlooking the town, and Jefferson's Rock are the principal points of interest, and are familiar to all travellers who have ever touched here. The bridge which crosses the Potomac is a handsome wooden structure of some seven spans, bifurcating near the western bank into two sections, one to carry forward the main stem of the Baltimore and Ohio, and the other for the accommodation of the Winchester Railroad. The point of bifurcation was selected by John Brown and his men as the proper place to arrest the trains, and a better military point could not have been devised. The buildings adjacent to the railway station are riddled with balls; the bullet holes being plainly visible still. The bridge bears the marks of the blood of Thomson, one of the insurgents, whose life was first protected by a daughter of one of the citizens, but was finally sacrificed to the vengeance of the people.

The next place of interest reached was Martinsburg, the county seat of Berkeley County, on the Tuscarora Creek. Here the Company have extensive repair shops, this being the end of the first division of the road. In addition to the present accommodations, the Company are now erecting a large circular engine house, intended to contain twenty stalls for locomotives. The foundation walls of this immense amphitheatre measure one hundred and seventy feet in diameter, are four feet in thickness, and capable of sustaining almost any conceivable weight that may be put upon them. The scenery beyond Martinsburg is particularly striking, the

"North Mountain," on the Maryland side, casting its huge shadows, like a mighty giant, over the waters of the Potomac. Crossing the Great Cacapon River, the road pierces a mountain spur by means of the Doe Gully Tunnel, twelve hundred feet in length. The Lesser Cacapon, the southern branch of the Potomac, and Patterson's Creek are crossed, and in the approach to Cumberland the Knobly Hills are first seen, a long mountain group of regular peaks covered to the tops with verdure, and resembling a series of exaggerated Indian mounds. The Potomac, at Cumberland, makes a deep bend, and the railroad, in following its course, sweeps around almost the entire extent of the town, passing within a few feet of the site of old "Fort Cumberland," now more peacefully possessed by a modern Protestant church, built of handsome cut stone. Wills' Mountain and Wills' Creek, both of historic memory as connected with General Washington, meet the eye as the train passes through and beyond Cumberland. Another parting view of the Knobly Hills is again caught, and the traveller soon gazes upon the wonderful panorama of the Alleghany region.

At Piedmont, 206 miles from Baltimore, the second division of the road terminates, and at this point are extensive machine shops belonging to the Company. From this station westward, the ascent of the mountain range begins in good earnest, the upward grade continuing seventeen miles at a proportionate rise of one hundred and sixteen feet to the mile. The sublimity of this upward flight truly baffles all description, the soul itself feeling awed into mute amazement at the grand and weird elements of the wild and wonderful. The "Savage Mountain, with its gloomy masses of foliage, towers upon the right; the eastern slopes of "Meadow Mountain" rise in gentler impressiveness on the east; whilst the Savage River, with its fringe of silvery light, is seen winding away in the distance, like the memory of a meteor over a dark sky. We finally reach, by dint of climbing, Altamont, 2700 feet above the Atlantic level, a point where the brooks, gushing from the mountain side, part company, and send half their waters to the Atlantic, and half to the Gulf of Mexico. Passing further on, we come to Oakland (232 miles from Baltimore), situate on the Alleghany plateau of table land. Trout and venison are the essential food of the inhabitants of this rural retreat, and our company did full justice to the excellent qualities of both. The temperature is often here 50 degrees at midsummer, and the fact seemed credible enough from noting that the trees had barely commenced to put on their spring livery.

Beyond Oakland, still greater marvels are in store for the western-bound traveller. At Cranberry Summit the first glimpse is obtained of the "Western World," as the descent is made from the Alleghany heights toward the region of the Ohio and its tributaries. The descent is made rapidly, through tremendous excavations, two tunnels, and several viaducts, until the Cheat River, with its dark waters, is reached, the road following the tortuous windings of the stream at a high elevation above its surface, at times seeming almost suspended in mid-air, so precipitately frowning on the high embankments which sustain it. At Tray Run, one of the tributaries which pitch down from a mountain gorge into the Cheat River, a viaduct is thrown, which may be regarded as the very acme of railroad engineering. The length of the viaduct is six hundred feet, the base work being of solid masonry, seventy feet in height, an

top of which is heavy iron trestle work, eighty feet in height, making the total altitude to the road-bed one hundred and fifty feet. The miracle seems to be how the mind of man could ever conceive such gigantic works, much less execute them.

Beyond this point, we pass through the Kingwood tunnel, 4137 feet in length, and walled with solid masonry throughout. It occupied the incessant labor, night and day, of a thousand men, for over three years and a half. A few miles beyond is Grafton, the end of the third division of the road, and the point where the branch to Parkersburg diverges. The Tygart valley river region is next entered, the scenery partaking less of sublimity, though richer in the elements of quiet beauty.

The Valley Falls is a strikingly picturesque point, the water here pouring down in broad masses over several successive rocky ledges, making a descent of from seventy to one hundred feet. Not far from this point, Tygart River and the West Fork unite to form the Monongahela, which, a quarter of a mile below the junction, is spanned by an iron viaduct, 615 feet long, the largest iron bridge in America, and due to the engineering skill of Mr. Albert Fink. There are three spans of 205 feet each, supported on immense piers of cut stone masonry, wide enough for a double roadway, the total cost of the structure reaching over \$300,000. At Fairmount a suspension bridge of 500 feet in length crosses the river. It was the work of the celebrated Charles Ellet, the constructor of the Wheeling and Niagara suspension bridges. Beyond this we reach the Board Tree Tunnel, the completion of the work, which is 2400 feet long, dispensing with the dangerous Ys, which were previously used to cross the mountain summit. Two more tunnels are passed, the Ohio stretches far before the eye, and the city of Wheeling, with its smoky atmosphere, is finally attained, the point of destination, and the western terminus of the main stem of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

In this notice, which we have extended much further than we had intended, we have barely hinted at the most prominent themes of interest. To appreciate the road fully it must be seen. The pleasure of our trip was much enhanced by the admirable arrangements of the officers of the Company. To the President, John W. Garrett, Esq., and to his assistants, Wm. Prescott Smith, Esq., Master of Transportation; John L. Wilson, Esq., Master of Road; B. L. Jacobs, Esq., Supervisor of Trains, especial acknowledgments are due. They left nothing undone to make the jaunt full of the most pleasant memories.

As a pleasure jaunt, we recommend all to go over this road. The courtesy of Wm. Prescott Smith, Esq. we can never forget.

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