

This description is introduced as an example of the many grand views to be obtained, which are not to be despised as means to stimulate to exertion, while they excite pleasurable emotion in the mind of the invalid tourist.

By referring to a map of this continent, the Territory of Colorado will be found to occupy the space between the 37th and 41st degrees of north latitude, the centre of which being the same degree in which the City of Washington stands. It is in this territory that the Rocky Mountains attain their greatest altitude and width, consequently the average elevation of the surface is much greater than elsewhere on the continent, being over 7,000 feet. Here nature culminated her greatest forces, and the many ranges of mountains remain as evidences of the terrible convulsions and volcanic upheavals which the crust of our earth sustained in past ages.

The immediate crest of the continent is the Main or Snowy range, flanked by numerous offshoots or foot ranges, which run more or less parallel, and between which are situated extensive valleys, each peculiar in climate and vegetable productions.

In the future it may be found that some are better adapted than others for peculiar cases; in my limited experience I came across a few cases which bear out this view.

By referring again to the map it will be observed that the territory is peculiarly situated, being far distant from any of the great sources of evaporation which supply moisture to the atmosphere. The nearest portion of extensive water surface is the Gulf of Mexico, 800 miles distant, and it is from that surface that the greater part of the rain which falls on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains of Colorado is obtained. On the eastern side of this continent the Appalachian chain of mountains, including the Blue ridge, Alleghany and Cumberland, form a barrier which withdraws from the atmosphere great quantities of its moisture, and before the air currents have proceeded westward to within 100 or 200 miles, of the Rocky Mountains the atmosphere has been deprived of nearly all its watery vapor. This 100 or 200 miles constitute the plains which are sandy and not very fertile, owing to want of moisture, buffalo grass and sage being about the only vegetable growths.

These plains gradually rise and merge into the foothills.

The Sierra Nevada of the Pacific slope acts in a similar manner on the western side of the Rocky Mountains as the Appalachian on the east. What

little moisture is retained is attracted to, and condensed chiefly upon, the higher main range, and it is interesting to witness this condensation occurring and clouds forming as the air currents brought fresh portions of the atmosphere to be chilled against the highest peaks, forming flag-like streamers as they floated from each peak.

As the elevation of the country averages over 7,000 feet the atmosphere is very light, and incapable of retaining as much moisture as at sea level.

(At this elevation the pressure of the atmosphere is about eleven pounds to the square inch.)

It will, therefore, be understood why the climate is so dry and without dewfall at night, and, for the same reason why it is so warm during the day and cold at night. There being no watery vapors to intercept the sun's rays the earth's surface is quickly warmed, which as quickly cools by radiation as night sets in.

The peculiarity of its climate, therefore, is owing to its latitude, its distance from the sea, the great elevation of its general surface, and to the prevailing dryness of its atmosphere.

No just estimate can be made of its average temperature. Its surface is so diversified that much will depend on situation, but the mean average may be generally stated to be several degrees higher than that of Philadelphia for the north, and Baltimore for the south, in the same lines of latitude. Of course, the higher the elevation the colder it will be, and, in summer time, tourists or invalids remove to higher levels, and, as this can be accomplished in a few hours, the invalid can always manage to obtain nearly the same degree of temperature the year round.

I have, in the morning, left warm summer weather, and, in a few hours, have found myself in a bleak and wintry region, exposed to a driving snowstorm.

While the general winter temperature is much warmer than the same latitude east, the summer is much cooler, owing to the chilling effect exercised by the proximity of the snowy range.

It must not be inferred that no rain-fall occurs. In winter more rain falls in the northern than southern portions. The former being subject to occasional heavy snowstorms.

The rainy season proper, occurs in July and August, usually of short duration, and the rain falls in showers and not continuous. The soil is so dry and thirsty that moisture is quickly absorbed. As a change this rain is long wished for and welcomed, but, occasionally, it comes in a very undesirable form.