

Our wondrous trip.

Our Wondrous Trip

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Myrtle I. Barrett

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*TO MR. AND MRS. M. F. JARVIS AND JANET JARVIS, OF WINFIELD, KANSAS—MY
COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY*

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\$0.75

DEC -3 1914 © Cl. A388675

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I have called this journey "Our Wondrous Trip," for it was wonderful in many ways. There was not an accident nor an incident to mar the joy of it all. The weather was perfect, only one day of rain in the entire month, and as the roads over which we traveled were splendid ones, it was jolly to speed along that day, enjoying the freshness of the green covered hills and valleys—the wonder work of the Almighty.

It is not to chronicle all the places of interest, to describe the cities, that I have written this narrative of our delightful automobile trip through the New England states, New York and several other states—twelve in all—through which we traveled; but to bring to you some of the delight, a breath of the cool refreshing mountain air, the scent of pine, the spice of

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cedars, glimpses of the glorious sunset, to picture to you, so you can imagine them, the scenes which surrounded us, for all the promises of spring had been fulfilled in the lovely month of June. The sun seemed just a little brighter; the tender green of young leaves and grasses and the smiling faces of daisies and buttercups just a little more alluring in the novelty of early growth and bloom.

If you are tired and world-worn, may the peace and quiet of the mountains—the woods—the still lakes—come to you. Let the meadows of blossoming clover, the buttercups and the daisies, the lovely roses of June, brighten you with their radiant colors; the water-falls and the noisy mountain streams chatter and amuse you; and the trees—the great trees of the forests—let them lift your souls, as they their heads, far above the turmoil of the world. And may this communion with nature bring an added appreciation of the beauties and a keener perception of the wonders ever spread before you.

We started on this automobile trip from Winfield, Kansas, late in the month of May, leaving at an early hour so as to enjoy the fresh morning air. The sun shone out unusually warm and we realized that hot days were to follow, so it was with a feeling of relief to leave them behind and with anticipation of the cool days in the East ahead of us, we glided along over excellent roads toward the first stopping place—Kansas City, Missouri.

The pleasant scenery of our own state (as with all the accustomed surroundings in life) did not arouse our enthusiasm into rhapsodies over its beauty, until, when west of Cotton-wood Falls, Kansas, a steep hill was ascended. We stopped and looked back and down upon the valley, lying smooth and green, with its wheat fields waving and blowing and rolling, like the waters, with the wind driving it here and there, and backward and forward, a wide valley surrounded by trees, a creek with wooded banks winding through it, spreading before us for at least twenty miles to the south and west, rolling hilly country, a beautiful picture to brighten the commonplace and to remember, as I have, at the end of my trip, along with other never to be forgotten views.

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About sundown we were between Ottawa, and Olatha, Kansas. We had been traveling east and realized from the colors in the eastern and southern heavens that when we turned north, as we were soon to do, the full view of a wonderful sunset would be before us, and so it was; the sun had sunk behind a great bank of clouds, fleecy ones, like huge snow balls in the sky, and long low ones, like the foot-hills of a mountain range. You have seen our lovely sun sets here in the west? And you know how at times the clouds mass and group themselves? Well, this night the sun shot straight through them—one broad streak of pink light half crossed the heavens and radiating from it, streaks and ray after ray went up and out, in and among the banks of clouds, like a true sun-burst, painting the sky in all colors of the rainbow. Billows of pink, purple and red clouds rolled and piled upon each other—the high winds of the heavens were scattering them broadcast over the sky so as to complete the dome of many colors which made us catch our breath in wonder and excited admiration; and as the sun sank lower the colors deepened, softened and gradually faded into the grey dusk. So, on our first day out, we were given a portion of that beauty which was to surround us for the following four weeks.

The automobile ran perfectly, the roads were excellent, and the Santa Fe trail markers, on telegraph poles, were our satisfying guide into Kansas City. We made the run—two hundred fifty eight miles—on plain dirt roads—in exactly twelve hours, having stopped five times, one hour for lunch, eaten in the shade of a large Elm tree, a good picnic lunch, and as the day was very warm we had stopped in different towns for a refreshing drink; arriving at the Baltimore Hotel in Kansas City, at eight-fifteen that evening—tired, of course, from so long a run, but in the best of spirits as the journey had been such a pleasant one in every respect.

The following morning we drove over Kansas City. The boulevard System there is fine—the Cliff drive especially beautiful, the view of the city below and the country far out and over Penn valley was grand. The residences and the city's Electric park are in keeping with the progressiveness of the western city.

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The automobile was shipped from Kansas City to Buffalo, New York. We were familiar

A Typical New York Road

with the country of the middle states and wished to devote the time we had planned for the vacation to seeing the east. While the car was enroute we spent a day with friends at Excelsior Springs, Missouri, another day in Chicago and then on to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for a short visit with friends.

Pittsburgh, the picturesque.—It is a smoky place, I admit. The richest valley in the world, Homestead and all the great steel interests is far from being a beautiful valley, but Pittsburgh, the picturesque, rambles up and down, over and around it's hills and, when on the boulevards, which wind in and out upon these hills and in the valleys, you are apparently in the heart of a forest, far from the noise and smoke of the city, for so densely and luxuriantly do these trees and shrubs grow on each side of the drives. The famous homes, many old, with ivy covered walls and wonderful grounds, set far back from the streets, giving this city an air of substantiality and age—varying so from western newness—and perhaps made Pittsburgh all the more interesting to us. We enjoyed three National League ball games while here, our interest in them being very keen as our hosts team was playing on the home grounds and we shared his hopes and pleasures in victory.

I must tell you of the wonderful night scene, from the top of a hill on the city below; our host's automobile, with us occupying it, was driven upon the lift or cage at the foot of the hill incline and we were gradually taken to the top of the hill. Great cables manipulate the cage drawing us upward so smoothly, so evenly balanced that our ascent was scarcely uoticeable until the city began to lie below us and the lights shone out in the darkness, reaching the top we drove out upon the boulevard. Looking down, off to the sides, to the left, to the right, as far as we could see, the city appeared a marvel of illumination; millions and millions it seemed, of lights, like fire flies in the darkness, shining out from boulevards and by streets, outlining sky scrapers and huge electric signs; at the meeting of the rivers there along the banks reflected lights and buildings cast mystic shadows upon the waters.

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This far above the scene below was one of entrancing beauty, tranquil and yet so full of hidden life.

We left Pittsburgh on a daylight flyer, making sixty miles an hour, enjoying the comforts of a modern parlor observation car and an excellent dinner served in the attractive dining car. Leaving at five o'clock in the afternoon the most lovely portion of the day we spent looking out upon the rapidly moving scenery; the tree covered hills restful and soft in the fading light.

Marble from Rutland

Our machine arrived in Buffalo, New York, the following morning and we had delightful drives over the city. The horse chestnut trees in blossom—great white clusters of flowers—were so beautiful and new to me. The Japanese maples, with their rich red, brown leaves appeared like great carved master-pieces in bronze: exquisite trees, striking in their rich colorings among the green foliage of other trees.

The most interesting part of our stay in Buffalo was a visit to the Pierce Arrow Motor Car factory, where we saw the building, the ensemble made, to the finishing of this splendid car in an altogether modern factory.

We were chagrined to find it raining early the morning of our expected departure but it soon cleared off and we started across country in our good machine—finding the air only the more bracing and the fine macadam roads cleaner after the shower. Oh, how good the country looked. I saw for the first time the buttercups and the daisies in the fields together (in the meadows I should have said, for we are in the East now, and to the spaces of clear green growth among the hills I must assign their true names, Meadows) the pretty nodding white daisies—the tiny yellow buttercups, shining as if they had been truly dipped in melted butter.

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The journey across New York state, through the cities of Syracuse, Utica, Rochester, Schenectady, past beautiful lake Geneva, and many summer resorts, from city to village and hamlet was a charming panorama road perfect and the hills and meadows quiteing to look upon.

We followed the Erie canal for many miles. Also the Mohawk river, through the famously beautiful Lehigh valley. For a day we traveled along this stream course, by it's side as it ran calm and clear and now dashing and noisy where it met and rushed over boulders; then our road would be on the hill sides—high above—looking down into the valley. Standing in bold relief were the Holstein cows grouped or resting on knolls here and there among the butter-cups and the field daisies.

Saratoga Springs, New York, with every where evidences of it's past glories, is still very lovely and interesting.

From Saratoga Springs into Vermont, some of the most beautiful scenery of our trip was before us. The perfect joy of those rare June days in an automobile over the hills and through the valleys, and then on to the Wonder beauty of the Green mountains, as they arose in long graceful ascents, covered thickly with the tall pine trees, and trees of seemingly hundreds of varieties, for so thickly massed and

Along the Mohawk River

so different the greens of their foliage shone in the sunlight and, as the shadows played upon them, the constant changing of the greens, made a never tiring sight; restful, and refreshing in their still beauty, against the blue of the sky.

Up and down, around and over them, these mountains, we drove on the splendid roads; past quaint old cemeteries, stopping and rambling through several of them to observe the dates on headstones which were black and weather beaten, many of the dates on the stones were back over two hundred years; the ravages of time and the elements making

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many almost indistinct. We smiled at the many villages perched on the mountain sides and wondered how they had kept their balance so long without sliding on down. Northward we drove, winding through the quiet woods on the mountain sides; the Connecticut river flowing like clear crystal in and out the valleys, past factory towns on its banks where the click, click of the noisy woolen mills brought a touch of the commercial world. For sixty miles one day we followed this river; wild ferns carpeted the road sides and into the woods they grew, each tiny leaf so perfect—the grace and beauty of the larger ones so lovely—as they swayed in the gentle breeze. This WONDERLAND of green growth, more lovely to me than anything I had ever seen.

Imagine roads winding through rows of trees—trees so tall and straight, bending gracefully and making over the drive a perfect arch as their great arms reached out and clasped each other, a roof of green foliage and strong branches, alike in design to the roofing of a place of worship—and truly upon entering here a Holy spirit seemed to prevail; arousing an appreciation and a religious wonder over their perfection. The river's shining waters; glistening in the sunlight and seen through the trees; the bright tiny flowers here and there and again the daisies and the butter-cups, completed the perfect beauty picture. Still, along the river banks we drove—by dashing water-falls, crossing many times on the quaint old covered bridges—each having an electric light in the center to avoid possible accidents, and all along the way, all over this section of country, gasoline stations and garages are in abundance—first class automobile inns, where a good meal can be had, all for the comfort and pleasure of the auto tourist. Along the country roadside when villages are not far apart electric lights are on telephone poles to guide the traveler at night. Every road has its sign guide post, and those, together with our dependable auto blue book, served as our reliable way shower.

Falls on the Connecticut River

The White Oxen

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The farm houses with wood sheds, garages and barns connected in one continuous line were a novelty to us. The snow is so deep here in the winters that for comfort and convenience they are built in this manner and access to all can be gained without going out of doors. The handsomest, as well as more modest homes, are built this way.

A pair of white oxen pulling huge stones out of a field on the hill side, which a farmer was cultivating, aroused such a lively interest that we had to stop and kodak them—much to the satisfaction and pleasure of the farmer and his boy who were very proud of their intelligent team. The lad marched them into the road they turned facing us, at his command, and gazed inquiringly and with so much calmness out of their eyes—standing still—strength and repose in every line.

Through the valleys, among these mountains. the black and white Holstein cows grazed and seeing the well filled wood sheds at each country home it seemed as if the farmers' entire day must be filled with the milking of the cows, chopping of the wood and gazing with rapt admiration at the scenery, for surely the beauty of it all must appeal constantly to the inhabitant.

Rutland, Vermont, the marble city of America, is interesting because of the vast amount of marble around there. We passed a wagon containing a huge slab of marble so heavy that it required six horses to draw it.

It was with regret we journeyed from this portion of the country. With reluctance we left the Green mountains and their valleys, stopping the machine often to look back over the beautiful nature pictures before we traveled slowly on towards the White mountains of New Hampshire, picturesque and tall and lovely but lacking the luxuriant growth of green the other mountains were so rightly named for.

Arriving at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in the very heart of the mountains—surrounded by them—we were fortunate in having made the journey here in June; in fact

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it was the ideal month for the entire trip, for all nature was at her best, with flowers profuse to brighten and emphasize the greens of trees and grasses. In June the atmosphere surrounding the mountains is clear, while in the summer months a haze often enshrouds them, making their peaks indistinct.

Bretton Woods is an immense estate of over ten thousand acres, a delightful resort, a big playground in a bowl shaped valley; with golf links, tennis courts, fine drives and walks through the woods of birch and cedars, cool air abundant, mountain climbs leading to every form of wood-land beauty and mountain grandeur, paths through the fragrant Balsam firs to cool springs of water and along the brooks to the cliffs and peaks. We spent a delightful day here among all this beauty of nature.

Leaving Bretton Woods we went through Crawford's Notch, a wild and rugged rocky pass—picturesque and wonderful. From here we saw one of the grandest and loveliest views I have ever looked upon. The road wound around the mountain, passing waterfalls, high and dashing—the white foam lovely, spraying the rocks and trees so far above us, we at the base of the mountain in a narrow valley, but still below us were the peaks of lower mountains with their own streams rushing and hurrying along, visible from our road. Standing in bold relief against the sky was the famous “Profile,” in Franconia notch. Gradually winding our way among all these peaks we descended to the lower trail, past more waterfalls, off to the sides and far above us and from the heart of the mountains into the heart of the woods we drove—woods so still and dark, so seemingly remote from all the world—with the mountains fencing them away, the only visible signs of civilization being the good road over which we were traveling. Here and there the soft clear notes of a bird singing deep in the forest and the music of the rushing river, were the only sounds as we stopped the machine to enjoy the impressive silence.

The trees grew so thickly—so massed—so tall—that only the winds of the heavens could hear their rustling as they swayed, if indeed they swayed at all—wonderful trees—high and straight and dignified. Balsam firs, cedars, whose arms stretched far out—the long shaggy

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needles drooping like willows, but never stirring—sturdy, bunchy cedars, too, spruces and elms; so many many trees that were strange to me and Oh—the white birch trees—how can I make you see them, in all this dusky darkness, standing out as if the sun light—like lightning—was running down their bodies, and so illuminating the space about them that the thickness of the forests growth was revealed with it's carpet of ferns—tiny ones—larger ones and those spreading out four or five feet, their leaves so delicately beautiful.

I wish I could picture more plainly the quite wonder-beauty of nature in this section of or country. It seemed to me I could go driving forever over these mountains, with their ever changing loveliness and through the great magestic forests, seemingly so endless; and when we left them, upon entering the open country I looked back with longing for still one more glimpse and a lump in my throat and tear dimmed eyes forced me to turn reluctantly but a feeling of gratitude filled my heart that I had passed through and seen and so enjoyed this wonderland.

Crawford's Notch

Log Jam on Bridgeton Lake

We journeyed north-eastward toward and into Maine, the land of more forests, but those through which we were passing not like the forests of Bretton Woods; for a few minutes we would be in a regular jungle and then right out into the open again, and back into the forests and so on into the lake region we came; great placid lakes, with the water lillies spreading leaves on their quiet surfaces, silent cedars standing like sentinels on guard, mirrored on the water and the sky's blue caught in the reflection.

Along the famous Sebago lake chain, Long lake and by immense ponds, a changing and pleasing variety of scenery. Through Bethel, south to Bridgeton, here we watched a boy loading logs which had drifted from the lumber camps up in the mountains slowly down rivers into the lake. Reaching into the water with a long pole, which had a spear on the end, he would spike a log and, pulling it forward, slip it through chains on the under part

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of the wagon which he had backed to the edge of the lake—the chains held the logs in place to carry. A slow mode of transportation, also of loading. From Bridgeton on to Poland Springs and further south to the city of Portland, Maine, on the Atlantic coast.

The ocean, the morning we saw it, was quiet and the breeze only brought up an occasional white cap—just tiny ones here and there—blueish green in the sunlight it sparkled, meeting the horizon to join the gray sky. There is a restlessness, a loneliness to the ocean to me and I was glad to leave its desolation, the great white sea-gulls hovering over its surface seemed to me like lost spirits seeking an impossible place to rest; I was keen to reach again the restful inland, my loved trees, flowers, singing birds and the joyous things of life. So we traveled south-westward to cross the famous Merrimac river; but passing through Portsmouth and Hampton Beach before crossing the river. Then east to the Atlantic coast again.

Salem, Massachusetts, quaint with its memories of witch-craft. Beverly's lovely homes, a change to the modern again, the coast drive to Boston, through Swampscott and Lynn was delightful. Handsome summer homes were just being opened for the summer season, many built at the ocean's edge, facing out over the waters. Revere Beach, the Coney Island of Boston, is a gay place.

Boston, itself, was keenly engrossing; we saw it well, and the historical places of interest. The old state house; Faneuil hall. A visit to the fish markets on Friday took us through the most congested stream of traffic I have ever been in. For blocks the market wagons were

Erie Canal and Road

massed so closely—four rows abreast in the street—that all progress was made at a snail's pace.

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We were entirely through the Thos. G. Plant shoe factory; seeing the shoes being made from the cutting of the lasts to the finishing and the boxing for shipment; all instructive and entertaining.

From Boston over to Cambridge to view famous old Harvard University. The tree under which George Washington took command of the American army is tenderly cared for.

We journeyed on to the city of Worcester, and west to Springfield, through the varied scenery of Massachusetts. Her world renowned Berkshire hills, with the mountain Laurel—delicate pink and white star shaped flowers—blossoming profusely—a lovely picture massed in their great clusters. Down through the farming districts, fertile rolling country, into Connecticut, from Hartford south to New Haven, we were there on a Sunday morning. It was commencement time at Yale University and arriving at chapel hour the scene was full of life and youth. The graduates, accompanied by parents and friends, filled the side walks and groups were making their way from Fraternity buildings across the lawns to the church.

From New Haven, along the sound to New York, America's wonderful city, seeing it as thoroughly as the usual sight seer—and perhaps much more than many do in so short a time as we spent there. Again here, as in Boston, we secured the services of a well informed and careful chauffeur to drive our car to those places most interesting and worth while seeing, so as not to waste time in finding out where and how to get about in the unfamiliar city. I shall not dwell upon the marvelous commercial center, which would make an entire story of itself, but take you where again nature reigns supreme.

The Bronx park zoological gardens—the birds especially—were enjoyable. Three rare pink feathered parrots were so beautiful; like the petals of a blush rose, their feathers folded over their bodies, the eyes were mild and kind, exquisite birds, delicate and lovely. Thousands of songsters, from all over the world, were singing; and through the wonderful mixture of tone, one bird sang out in a long plaintive call—a sweet minor note. It was a

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marvelous orchestra filling the great room with it's enchanting melody, soft and at times wierd—a varied but tuneful whole. I could have lingered here for hours.

In the palm sections of the green houses immense Brazilian palms towered fifty feet before their leaves spread out. A group of tall bamboo trees—sleek and green bodied with

On a New York Estate

graceful feathery tops—swayed easily as the draft from open doors would strike them; and it was easy to draw upon the imagination, seeing a forest of them swaying, supple and shining.

Among the flowers, delicate, perfect orchids, that rare blossom, shown here in such perfection and variation of colorings, were a real delight; and the pond lillies, great waxen beauties, lying so still upon the waters, white, purple, yellow and red ones. White peacocks wandered in and out among the tulip trees—the willows and the elms of this park.

Visiting the famous Van Courtlandt estates we examined hundreds of relics of the Revolutionary war; uniforms, swords, old documents, letters of great value, old money, etc. Quaint dresses worn by the women of that period, peuter cooking utensils, queer china; the house was completely furnished, filled, with old and very interesting articles. George Washington had been entertained here. The bed-chamber he had occupied was furnished just as at the time of his stay here.

The magnificent palace homes of Fifth Ave. appeared more like club houses from the outside than private residences. The subway Pennsylvania station, Wall street, Broadway, the Bowery—all had their interesting points. The fisheries at Battery park were well worth going through.

The Hudson river, with it's palisades, deserves the fame as a beauty spot. Our journey along the sides of this river for miles, was delightful; we were fortunate in seeing another fine sunset here, over it's waters and high banks. The fleecy clouds in the sky caught

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the sinking sun's rays; the pinks, purples and reds, in spots and long streaks, spread far out and over the heavens, and were reflected in the river where one long streak of shimmering light made a path of golden glory on the water. Oh, that was rare and beautiful and gorgeous.

We crossed this river at Hudson, New York, where the Portland cement plant is located—an immense plant covering many acres. Further south, before crossing to the west bank, we had passed through Poughkeepsie, with its Vassar college, Tarry-town-on-Hudson and other places of interest. Of course, all the magnificent country estates and homes along the river banks brought exclamations of delight and pleasure as we passed them; but at Ossining, Sing Sing prison brought a sigh for all the heart aches within its walls. Great and strong and lonely, it looked; a mass of solid greyness against the clear blue sky.

We followed the Hudson river as far north as Albany. The magnificent new educational building here is a splendid example of modern concrete construction.

Falls on the Hudson River

The trip from Albany back to Buffalo, took us over a small portion of our first route and it was on this return journey that we had our one rainy day. The roads had been freshly retared and were a trifle sticky; so we just spun along without fear of skidding and I cannot begin to tell you of the real fun and merriment we had, for it was jolly driving through the rain, with machine partly enclosed. The air was so fresh and bracing and a return to the hills and valleys and the great weeping willows was pleasing and welcome. We did not go into Buffalo until later. Driving north to Niagara Falls, this marvel was to me as wonderfully grand on this, my third visit here, as when I first viewed it, almost sixteen years previous; altho, I felt quite sure that the water, as it falls over the precipice, lacks the force of former years, when it fairly leapt into the air before it took the downward dip. Now it glides smoothly over the point; and the rapids too—this most wonderful part—seemed not quite such a churning mass as when I had looked upon it before.

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Going west from Buffalo, through the cities of Erie, Pennsylvania, Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio. We passed through the vineyard section of the east—the Chautauqua grape belt—covering miles and miles of western New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Along the sides of lake Erie we drove for half a day. The restless and changing waters were fascinating and refreshing, for the day was warm; there was verdure along these shores, not barren like the ocean edge. Tiny white sail boats, all sorts of pleasure crafts, as well as the larger lake boats, were gliding over it's waters, with their cargos of light-hearted pleasure seekers, off for a Sunday's outing—a June day's gladness on the glistening waters.

Through Indiana, the fields of red and white clover filled the air with the fragrance of their blossoms; masses of golden, white and vivid colored butterflies, sipping the sweetness from flower to flower, hovered over these fields, making a lovely picture—to the right—to the left—for our road wound between them.

Further on, towards La Porte, bright orange colored Tiger lillies growing along the way, nodded cordial greetings to us as we passed along. These flowers grew thickly along the road, and the wind passing among them made them nod and nod and it pleased our fancy to believe the salute a greeting.

The roads from La Porte to Chicago were not good. There had been rain and we ran through much mud, but without trouble of any kind, and the inconvenience of slow progress did not annoy us as we were not rushed for time; but we were glad when the boulevards of Chicago were reached. Splendid Chicago, of which I could write so much. But our stay here was short and not a part of our auto journey, as we returned home from here on the train, and so “Our Wondrous Trip” was ended. But it's pictures, it's gladness, and all its beauty has made me appreciate, more than ever the great gifts of our Creator—Vision and Memory. And, as I stated in the beginning, it was my purpose to bring you into a closer touch with nature. The noblest work of art lies all about us, for beyond our

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range of sight Nature has a subtle influence which few trace. She is a presence affecting, informing, and guiding our hearts and thoughts. In joyous paths she will lead us beyond the mediocre. She is the revelation of the Divine power which created and controls the universe. God, in His infinite wisdom, has endowed the flowers, the trees, the mountains and valleys, the rushing waters and the singing birds with the voice of Hope and Good Cheer; for Nature, with her smiles and roundelays, sings to the light a glad refrain and continually manifests her supreme understanding of the purpose of Life.