

G. K. Ness Tells About His Trip

The second week of my journey is rapidly drawing to a close and as I expect to hop off this American continent about Friday the 21st, I must jot down my observations since last I wrote.

Since Sunday evening I have traveled some 1500 miles by train. I can't say that I have enjoyed the trip very much this far. Traveling by train is very tedious and exceedingly nerve straining. Here's hoping the eight or nine days to be spent on the ocean will be more pleasant. I might at least have something to do there as I am expected to feed a flock of fish.

Much of the traveling done this week has been at night, preventing extensive observations. Leaving Bristol, S. D., Sunday evening, I arrived in Minneapolis Monday at 7:30 a. m. Leaving there at 7:10 p. m. arriving in Chicago Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock. Those two nights I slept peacefully away.

After a couple of hours stay in Chicago we proceeded on our journey via the Burlington to Detroit. This part of the journey was made in daylight and I tried to notice things that could be seen from the train. Throughout northern Illinois and Indiana the harvest seemed fairly well advanced and some threshing had been done. Apparently there isn't a great deal of harvesting and threshing to do. Just a few patches of field was seen in between the clusters of trees. Not that there is any timber worth mentioning, only what might be termed large groves.

I had expected to see some great corn in that part of the country, but was sadly disappointed. If I know anything about this kind of crop, corn is fully as good and as far advanced in Northern South Dakota.

As I sat there looking at this land supposed to be worth several hundred dollars per acre I was glad my home is in North Dakota where much better land than this can still be bought at reasonable prices. Even the cattle grazing along the track seemed of a poorer grade than what is usually found in our own state.

The farm buildings in that country are in the average about the same as in our own state, but most of them are sadly in need of paint. There are hundreds of farms where paint apparently had never been used and many of the buildings are perhaps a hundred years old, or at least appear that way.

The whole district from Chicago to Detroit gave me the impression that progress and prosperity is lacking.

At Detroit the whole train was run out on a ferry boat and taken over to Windsor, Canada. This was a new one on me and with my face formed into an interrogation point I bumped into a brakeman with a few why, where, how, when and wherefore. In reply to this he stated that having so many prospective ocean travelers on board, this plan was hit upon to give us a test. If we got seasick crossing from Detroit to Windsor we would be sent back, but if we didn't get sea-sick there we could proceed. None was returned. If you don't know why the train had to be transported on a ferry when proceeding from Detroit on its way to Buffalo look it up on a map. It

might be worth your while in geographical information.

We had entered Canada and as it was also getting dark I went to sleep and slept peacefully till after we had re-entered the States at Buffalo, N. Y., when a fellow passenger woke me up because I was snoring. It was daylight and I resumed my observations from the car window.

When one travels through the Northwest he finds it monotonous to look at the never ending prairies. I found it almost as monotonous to watch the continuous wooded hills along the almost 400 miles of track from Buffalo to Hoboken through northwestern New York and northern Pennsylvania. There are almost as many towns along this route as there are miles traveled, as the towns in many places are only a mile or two apart. That is, they are called towns but most of them consist only of a few houses hid away in the woods.

As I sat there watching these so-called towns as the train speeded by I wondered how the local printers could make a living. But perhaps they are not accustomed to such luxuries as printing offices there yet.

Arriving at Hoboken we were met by a Jew and escorted to a hotel. Some of us wondered why the management of the Norwegian-American Line had detailed a Jew to meet a company of former Norwegians. But perhaps it is because these two nationalities have certain traits in common. Both are great business men and in the U. S. A. the Jews have cornered the business in the East while the Norwegians have it cornered in the Northwest. And perhaps John Liabo is right, too, when he says the Norwegians descend from the lost tribes of Israel.

At any rate this Jew proved a good shepherd and watched his flock carefully. Wanting to see things I started to wander away from the fold, but he was after me at once, forbidding me to speak to others than him.

Having us placed at the hotel he left us but returned the next morning to take some of the passengers to the custom house for sailing permits. Being a U. S. citizen I didn't need to go but went as an interpreter as there was one or two in the company whose American is very limited. Arriving in the custom house I was told to beat it double-quick, but protesting I finally made them understand and that I had a right to enter.

Two Italians were in there at the same time and they were immediately searched for weapons. Apparently the government employees take no chances with the Southern Europeans.

I haven't seen much of the city and don't care to see much more. What I have seen convinces me that I shall be glad to return to the prairies.

Leaving Minneapolis Monday evening there was an old gentleman in company with us. I didn't know the man but when I learned that he was to be with us all the way to Norway I went and asked his name. You can imagine my surprise when he told me he was Lars Ness from Klota who was the first man I worked for in North Dakota. Mr. Ness is now about 70 years of age