Three distinct correspondences: pages 2-7, 8-16, and 17-18.

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Jan 27th 1858

Dear Father,

When I came back up the mountain a few weeks ago, Corporal Sherwood and I rode almost to the very summit on our mules. We are the only two who have accomplished this feat for some two months back, the others having abandoned their mules at a place where the timber ceases to grow and the timberline which is about 3 miles below the summit. The weather was quite cold the day we came up about 16° below 0, but we Pike's Peakers don't mind such weather as that very much. I take the credit of our having obtained the summit on mule back partly to myself, for when the corporal hesitated and looked a little blue at the snow drifts and other difficulties in the outlay ahead, I proposed to ride the mule to the top alone.
This evidently decided the corporal for it would never do to say that he turned back and allowed a comparatively new comrade on the Peak to finish the trip. I would not have it appear that I am superior in daring to the corporal for Sherwood will do anything that and other mortal will dare to do. In fact the proposal of mine was rather through fear for I was appalled at the idea of climbing 3 miles on a day 16° below zero in the face of a driving wind with about 20 lbs of Blackstone's digest, some Jack Tobacco a Colt 41 caliber revolver (as opposed to Mountain Lions) and other supplies without which life on Pike's Peak would be an unbearable burden. While it is attended with a little more danger I would gladly have the mules transfer this burden instead
While the corporal and myself were warming ourselves at the office at the livery stable at Manito, where our horses were being made ready for us, I was amused at the expressions of the loafers for strange as it may seem these western towns abound in loafers, and there are as many "ruthless corners" out in this country as in the East. We could hear such expressions as: "You never will get up that trail on a night like this." "I'd rather it would be you fellers than me." I wouldn't try to go up there such weather as this for $50." etc. etc. I was glad to hear them talk thus, for I knew it would have the effect to determine the Corporal that he would ride clear to the top or die. I was struck with a remark of the Corporal regarding the remarks of the loafers a little
after we had started on our journey.

We were laughing about the talk
that they had indulged in
when the Car. said, "You see
the more these fellows talk
and let on the bigger fellows
it makes us." And I consider
that there is a good deal of
sound philosophy contained in
the Corporals's statement.
When he left me I asked
Mr. Sherwood to drop you
a card stating that I had
arrived safely.

I am sorry to say that I
have been quite sick for a
week past but am nearly
well now. The trouble was
a sort of bilious fever
which I would have been
subject to anywhere and is
not the result of the high
altitude. Luckily we have
am an army medicine chest up here, with remedies for the commoner complaints, and so I found pretty good rough medical treatment. The weather has been remarkably fair for two or three days past, and today myself and my friend Snyder, have been taking photographs of one another, and of various points of interest about the park. I have been reading my text books, carefully and steadily and hope to understand them thoroughly before leaving here. In case of my finding employment at Independence would there be any chance of my having access to a large library at night? Otherwise do you think it would be better for me to engage in the newspaper work again. How is everything going with you at Independence?
and how are things progressing at home. In case you know of no opening at which I can make a fair salary, I still think I will follow out my intention of going farther west the last of May. So I intend writing to mother tonight; I will close, but will annex a post script before sending your letter down.

Your Aff. Son

[Signature]

[Signature]

I just received my mail and am very glad indeed to hear from you. I am sorry that I have not time to write at greater length but the men go down immediately. With much love your aff son.

[Signature]
The writer, as one of those who enjoy the distinction and who suffer all the pernicious incident to home life on Pike's Peak, and whose word must be taken as authority on all matters pertaining thereto, for the want of any other testimony, sends for the use of your columns, a few thoughts and corrections, regarding what has aptly been designated by a distinguished authority, "The great storm factory of the continent."

In so doing, the writer hopes further to refute some of the elaborate stories, so freely circulated in the East, through persons more distinguished for their credulity, or, and vivid imaginations than for their truthfulness. The following, so far as can be learned, is the best authenticated record of the original discovery of the peak:

It is related, that one day Captain Pike, while engaged in the invigorating and patriotic amusement of pursuing or escaping from aborigines, it is not certain at this time which, stood with his party about forty miles away, and surveyed the peak with many expressions of patronizing interest, which, he being the great man of the party, was noted by the rest of his companions, and the mountain has since been distinguished from its surrounding contemporaries, for its having once been
the object of his illustrious patronage.

There is no substantial evidence in verification of the
idea, that Colonel Pike ever made any nearer
approach to the mountain, or that he ever
bestowed upon it the least of those little
attentions, deemed proper for a great man
to bestow on a namesake, though a very
thrilling account of the adventures of General
Pike, and his party in their heroic and
herculean feat, of making their way through
scary difficulties to its summit, afterward
appeared in a leading scientific magazine, and
has always held it own on a level with the
legend of Pocahontas, and little Washington
Howshank, to venture to deny which, a man
would ever after be stigmatized as an Ishmael,
and a traitor and public enemy to his country.

But to come near the more particular purpose
of this paper, a few statements regarding the
peak as it is today it is hoped, will be of
interest.

During the summer months, the peak is a
great attraction for Colorado tourists, few
of whom, are content to return to the East,
without having made an effort to attain
its summit.

For the sum of five dollars, in advance,
(which is the full value of the animal,
thoone such is the stablesman's affection,
that seventy-five dollars additional is charged, in case he suffers any harm, the traveler is equipped at Manitou Springs, with a "Burro.

A little way up the trail a dollar extra is levied by a man for some alleged improvements to the mountain path, though where, and to what purpose, has never been discovered.

The "Burro" is a very small animal of the same species and resemblance, as the common mule, and possessed of a digestive apparatus, and a capacity for general meanness, of the most exaggerated proportions.

One of the most amusing, and the one in commonest practice, of the tricks of the Pikes Peak "burro," is a habit of stopping over the edge of a bottomless abyss, and leaning over, with the perfect abandon of wanton recklessness, to the very point of toppling over (while the hair of his rider begins to whiten with the snows of many winters) a thing which the burro is prevented from doing, not, it is supposed from any solicitude for the safety of his rider, but from the knowledge that his own body must suffer likewise.

When the tourist, having escaped all the dangers incident to his tedious journey of twelve miles, finally arrives at the summit, he is usually very much surprised, to find
instead of a sharp rocky point, that he is surrounded by a level tract of about seventy acres, covered with irregularly shaped granite blocks of about an average size. At the eastern edge of this tract is a low substantially built house of the same granite, used as a government signal service station.

Some years ago a telegraph line was established at a cost of twelve hundred dollars, connecting the station with the general lines below. Its use was soon abandoned as it was found impracticable to keep the line in working order. The whole outfit has recently been sold to a citizen for the sum of ten dollars.

All the practical uses, for which the telegraph was instituted, are now accomplished, by the use of the heliograph (a telegraph by sun flashes from a mirror), an instrument costing less than thirty dollars. Such little economical experiments of Republican administration as the Pikes Peak telegraph scheme, if conducted in the same proportion of profit, and less, tend greatly to a reduction of the difficulties of the surplus question.

When the traveler comes to this station, he is heartily welcomed by two young men of fascinating manners, picked men, furnished specially to this station, the government well knowing it to be the resort of numbers of
with it, may be indifferent to these things; it is the shadow of the peak, at sunset.
The photographic artist observes this panorama, with a hopeless longing, ecstasy, for the arts of
simple mechanism, are here at fault. In a field of colors, such as can be only created
by the exquisite touches of a departing sun, there arises from the plain, a regular cone of a
denser blue than the surrounding air, with a
cloud for its base, and for its apex, the sky,
Gathered around its base, and extending to the
horizon, hiding from view the cool, misty Earth, as
if to give an ethereal aspect to this heavenly
creation, is a vast bank of clouds, that seem
to wash the feet of this mythical mountain,
like the white, surging, yet strangely silent, billows,
of a storm tossed ocean.
Herein is found every perfection of sea or sky
that has ever appeared to the aspirations of
Christian hopes, or that ever kissed the im-
aginations of the soul of genius; and here
in all the perfect skill of divine art, is
displayed, with all the majesty of concept, and
variety and delicacy of coloring, that constitute
the attributes of the master ideal.
Very few persons have been privileged to see
of this glorious panorama in its perfection.
When able to do so, no doubts are admissible,
truth of that celestial description of
of Prantice, expressed in the sublime language of that brilliant, though erratic genius, an inspiration which never could have been adequately expressed in language less beautiful, "There is a realm, where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before you like islands that slumber in the ocean, and where the beautiful things that now pass before us like shadows, will stay in our presence forever."

The period, during which we are honored with the visits of tourists, lasts usually from the first of June until October, though this period varies of course with the weather, which is subject to many changes and anticyclones.

Nearly every tourist holds in solution, an inevitable and irresistible stock of questions. This became such a nuisance to one observer, that he got up a lot of stereotyped answers to these questions of commonplace occurrence, and posted them on the wall for the inspection of visitors, a course that we would advise depot agents, postmasters, and all holders of public offices to adopt. A few of these answers will show the tendency of the conversation held on the peak.

"Yes this is the highest mountain in the world"
“No those are not clouds, but smoke from the craters.” “No it never snows, or gets cold up here, the snow you see, has been here ever since the inception of the mountain.”

“Don’t tell us anything about Mt. Blanc or Mt. Washington because we’ve been there.”

“Yes you are nearer heaven than you have ever been before, or doubtless ever will be again, but that’s what everyone else says. Give us something new.” Etc Etc.

After October, the mountain trail, generally becomes covered with drifted snow, and is thenceforth a very unhealthy and uncongenial resort for tourists. The regulars however, who change station duty each month continue to make their monthly trips, bringing up the mail, tobacco and other supplies, without which life on Pike’s Peak in winter would be unbearable. The trail rarely becomes impassable to persons on foot, though several years ago, the observer was snowed in for three months, although rewards were offered by his friends, and many efforts were made to rescue him.

When he was finally rescued, it was found that he had been subsisting on the contents of a box of ginger snaps for six weeks, an article of diet, toward which he has proven
Incredibly ungrateful, having, it is said, never eaten any since.

An idea seems to be very general among all persons who have never had an opportunity to get at the true fact, that the weather on the summit of the peak during the winter is excessively cold. To a large degree this is a mistake. The coldest weather ever recorded at the station has occurred during the present winter. This was 99° below zero. This was only for a short time, and as we learned since, was at about the same time that the entire western part of the continent was afflicted with the severest weather, many parts of Montana and other states and Territories of much lower altitude, registering as low as 60° degree. The wind, however, is sometimes terrific, attaining a velocity of from 80 to 110 miles an hour.

If the traveler is so unwise as to make known his intention of ascending the peak, at the hotel at Mammoth, his soul will be filled by people who haven't the slightest knowledge of the facts, with most terrific account of the dangers, and difficulties attending the project.

On one occasion my friend S— one of the observers at the peak station, who a few days before had walked down a perfectly clear trail, happening to be near one of
one of these gatherings, was appalled to hear that the trail was blocked with an im-
possible barrier of snow (drifts of incredible size) that no sane man would attempt
the journey, and that he, the observer, was
supposed to be in great danger of starv-
ation, and that the most dreadful rumors
were abroad concerning his safety.

My friend S— is a very handsome, and
in many other respects extraordinary young man.
The other night in writing to a lady, the
friend of his boyhood, in far-off Michigan,
he stated that on a clear day, we could
hear distinctly, the waves of the Pacific
ocean beating against its shores. To this
he appended the remark, "it is remarkable
how sound travels in this high altitude."

As to the truth of my friend's statement, I
will say, that though I have listened
intensely, several times with all the
conditions in my favor, I confess that I
am unable to hear that far.

To this young lady, whose interest, he is very
deeply attached, he confesses with many
expressions of grief, that he is totally unable
whatever may be his desire to do so, to
prevent the young ladies who come up
here, from falling into spaces of distracted
love, over his personal charms.

A single sample will serve to show this
peculiarity of my friend and companion.

My dear Dubrie — You would sympathize with me deeply, if you could witness the trials which myself and my friend suffered here. You have no idea how silly the girls act over us. You'd think we were the only two men in creation. Not long ago, the ladies of Madame Adelina Patti's Company came up, though we regret without the divinity herself. However we got along very nicely. You see the ladies became tired out when near the summit, having left the mules some distance back. So we went down several hundred yards to meet them. It was evident that those fair creatures must be transported to the top, and the only way we knew of was to carry them. (I am sure you will understand the difficulty in which we were placed.) We accomplished our task in very acceptable style, I being selected by a beautiful blonde alto, and my companion picking out a dark haired combination mezzo contralto. (Regarding this last choice, the mutes left the into a decided hitch. essay referred to, was written for the reason that his wife, a constant reader of dramatic journals, expressed a wish to write about the scene, might be his lines, and therefore has no very distinct recollections of it.)
them up, for the curious visitors to refer to, a course that we would advice
past masters depot agents, and other
public servants to adopt.
A few of these answers will show
the tendency of the conversations held
on the peak.
"Yes this is the highest mountain in
the world." "No those are not clouds
but smoke from the crater." "No it
never snows or blows up here, the
snow you see has been here ever
since the invention of the mountain.
"Don't tell us anything about mount
Washington or mount Blanc, because
we've been there."
"Yes you are nearer heaven than
you ever were before as doubtless
ever will be again, but that's what
everyone else says. Give us something
new." etc. etc.
To enable the reader to appreciate the
immense difficulty of transporting
even the lightest burdens to the
summit in winter, we will say
that the editor has on file among
his valuable relics of correspondence
our request, that should he consider
**WAR DEPARTMENT,**
**SIGNAL SERVICE UNITED STATES ARMY,**
Division of Telegrams and Reports for the Benefit of Commerce and Agriculture.

**REPORT of Observations taken at**

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Received at: _M._

Sent at: _M._

Operator: _Sergeant Signal Service U.S.A._

Operators will send only the matter inside the heavy lines, without address or signature.