

This letter was written by Samuel Le Nord Caldwell, M.D. and is included in *The Century Chest Letters of 1901*.

(Dr. Caldwell settled in Colorado Springs in 1890 and lived until 1942)

Following are excerpts from his letter titled “Overview of Colorado Springs.”

*The presence of this large element of people of wealth and cultivation, who had traveled and seen much of the world, makes Colorado Springs a very delightful place of residence and different from any other town in the west.*

815 North Tejon St.

Colorado Springs, Colorado

July, 1901

My dear friends of the Twenty-first Century.

Until the discovery of the gold mines at Cripple Creek in 1891, Colorado Springs was exclusively a tourist and health resort, but now it is a lively business town and railroad centre. The following steam railroads come to the town: Denver and Rio Grande; Colorado Midland; Colorado Southern; Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe; Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific; Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District Railway; Missouri Pacific over the tracks of the D. and R.G.

It is now the leading market for mining stock in the country, and there are more transactions in those securities in this little town than in any other city in the world except London. Everybody here owns and speculates in mining stocks from clergy to maid servants. In 2001 when the store of precious minerals in the Colorado mountains shall have been exhausted, the town may once again have to depend on its climate and scenery for its prosperity. It may lose its commercial importance, just as the Massachusetts seaboard towns did, such as Newburyport and New Bedford, when their foreign commerce fell into a state of decay a half century ago.

Still as a tourist and health resort, and an educational centre renowned as the seat of Colorado College, it may well be a more desirable place of residence and have a more interesting civic individuality than a large commercial or manufacturing town would have, and it may continue to be the same delightful place of residence it is today.

One of the characteristics of our age is the desire to go everywhere in a hurry; horses are no longer speedy enough for transportation purposes and are becoming more and

more instruments of pleasure and less and less the servants of utility. The electric trolley car and the bicycle are our chief means of local transportation. The electric railroad extends to the northern limits of the city, to Cheyenne Canon on the south and to Manitou on the west; the fare is five cents in the city limits and ten cents outside. It takes about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour to go to Manitou or the canons. The electric current is generated in a power house at the corner of S. Cascade and Moreno Aves. It is conducted on copper wires suspended over the middle of the street by cross wires fastened to poles, an ugly and disfiguring method at which you will wonder and which you will have improved upon. The power house for electric lighting is situated north of town near the coal mines.

A few automobiles have appeared in the city, but, as yet, they are too costly and noisy and “smelly” and uncertain in action to come into general use. (Dr. P.F. Gildea is the first physician to use one in his practice.) Bicycles are the most popular and convenient means of getting about and there are thousands of them in use; our smooth, level highways are excellently adapted to them though our high winds sometimes interfere with rapid locomotion. A bevel-gear chainless wheel costs \$50 to \$75; a chain wheel can be bought for \$25. It looks as if the bicycle had taken a permanent place among our wheeled vehicles, and I think you will be using them in 2001, but prophesying is dangerous business.

The city ordinance allows druggists to sell liquor in quart bottles only; they pay the city a license fee of \$1000 annually. As a matter of fact, they serve drinks to their patrons from their soda water fountains and one who “knows the ropes” can get almost any kind of drink.

The Cheyenne Mountain Country Club is situated at Broadmoor on the eastern slope of the mountain. In the last fifteen years country clubs have become a feature in the life of nearly all American cities; their popularity is due to a reaction against the confinement, conventionality and other drawbacks of city life, as well as to a desire to engage in out of door sports. This is the theory upon which they are founded, but practically it too often happens that the vices of the city are transplanted to the country; drinking, gambling and flirtation are often more in evidence than the simple healthful pleasures of the country.

Our Country Club has its “fast set,” a clique of young people, both men and women, whose one idea in life is to live high and have a good time. Some of these young women drink more cocktails – a concoction of spirits and bitters – than is good for them; they gamble, tell risqué’ stories and flirt with men who are not their husbands, and dance Sunday nights. Such a state of affairs leads sooner or later to scandal and immorality, but fortunately it is only a reckless few who indulge in these practices.

In the matter of public art our town is decidedly remiss; there is not a statue within its borders, not even a single fountain of artistic design. . . . Such works of art would preserve interesting types of manhood which have passed away forever, and exemplify in enduring marble or bronze a period in our history of which the written records are few.

The favorite forms of entertainment are lunches, afternoon teas, dinners, evening receptions and dances. Lunches are almost exclusively a feast of fair women; they give an opportunity for a display of elegance and taste in table decorations which causes much emulation among our ladies.

The rooms are crowded with women, all laughing and talking at once as fast, or even faster, than thoughts come into their head. A low, soft, well modulated voice is one of the most desirable possessions a woman can have, but I regret to say that the average American woman of the present day has a thin nasal uncultivated voice; she is as careless about the use of this organ as she is about walking gracefully.

The average American woman of today is bright, clever, quick-witted, self-possessed, independent and often a college graduate; she has an excellent taste in dress; she makes a charming companion and friend, and a good wife, though childbearing is not to her taste and large families are no longer common. Children nowadays are too independent and forward, and are too often old before they are young, while young people generally seem to me to be less well-mannered, less respectful to their elders, and less reverent of the truths of religious faith, than when I was a boy. But perhaps this opinion of mine simply means that I am getting on in years, and am out of harmony with the youngsters having none of my own.

During the past few days we have been celebrating the quarto-centennial of the admission of Colorado as a state. The great feature of the celebration was the presence of Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt, who made an address in North Park. He is a man of great force of character and of notable literary ability; he is very strong with the people but not so strong with the politicians and office holders. I hope that he will be President of the United States some day.

Hail and farewell, dear friends..... Samuel Le Nord Caldwell, M.D.