

CORRESPONDENCE.

Written for this Paper.
IN MEXICO.

CAVE VALLEY, on the Rio Peadres Verdes, Chihuahua, Mexico, April 9, '94.

I arrived at this romantic spot in the mountains day before yesterday, accompanied by Elder Joseph C. Bentley and wife. The Cave Valley branch of the Pacheco Ward consists of ten families, or eighty-two souls, all members of the Church, and all residing in a little village which stands near the left bank of the the Rio Peadres Verdes, at a point where a small, living stream (rising in a number of springs about a mile westward) puts into the river named. This little stream waters the townsite, but most of the farms are watered from the river, along which in narrow strips nearly all the farming lands are situated. The land is good and productive. Most of the inhabitants live together in a local united order, all sharing alike of everything produced according to the number of souls in each family. This place is supposed to be on a tract of land owned by Apostle Moses Thatcher. The facilities here are too limited for a large settlement; but there are room for more than those who are now here; and here as well as in all the other Mormon settlements in Mexico, a hearty invitation is extended to other Latter-day Saints to come and settle. Cave Valley is 7 miles north of the Pacheco townsite, and 35 miles by round-about road southwest of Colonia Juarez; but a new road over the mountains is now being made which will shorten the distance to Juarez about six miles.

Cave Valley has for centuries been a great Apache Indian stronghold; and from here they used to make periodical raids upon the Mexican settlements situated in the lower valley lying eastward. Numerous attempts were made by the Mexican soldiers to, drive them out; but they were always unsuccessful; the mountain crags, caves and canyons afforded the Apaches such natural shelter that they never could be dislodged; but from their positions behind the rocks they were always able to deal out death and destruction to their enemies. Even to this day the Mexicans are said to be afraid to penetrate these rugged mountains, and they were very much astonished that our people dared go in here a few years ago; as there are still a few renegade Apaches roaming throughout the country, among whom one known as the "Kid" is very much feared by the Mexicans, as he has committed a great many depredations during the past few years.

Adjacent to the Cave Valley settlement are the celebrated caves which were used by the ancient inhabitants as places of refuge; there are quite a number of these caves in the canyons through which the Rio Peadres Verdes passes and also in the side canyons. In most of these are found remnants of the old cliff dwellers' habitations. In most instances the mouths of the caves show signs of having been walled up and fortified very strongly; in fact a number of these walls or pallasades are still standing; behind them and extending into the interior of the caves were the habitations of the cliff dwellers, consisting of rooms of different sizes, but sel-

dom of greater dimensions than 14 feet square; on the walls of the caves proper as well as upon the partition walls made by hand are numerous Indian hieroglyphics; in one instance I noticed some that resembled to a certain extent the characters and cuts represented in the Book of Abraham.

Perhaps the most attractive of all the peculiar rock formations in the neighborhood is the so-called Olla Cave, situated about half way up (between base and top) of a magnificent cliff, or about 100 feet above the creek bed below. The mouth of this cave, which is reached by climbing over the face of an extended sloping ledge, is about 50 feet wide and 18 feet high; it is about 200 feet deep and contains a number of ancient dwellings, some of them two stories high; there is also an altar, with three steps to it, standing in front of what may have been a room or house erected for public worship. In the mouth of this is the so-called grand olla which somewhat resembles a huge jug terminating in a small top. This olla is 12 feet high and measures 35 feet in circumference in its widest parts; the walls are made of matted straw or weeds covered with clay. It is an undecided question what this and the other smaller ollas in neighboring caves were used for; but the supposition is that they were grain magazines; perhaps others were made to hold a supply of water in case of a siege.

Adjacent to the Olla Cave, at the head a rocky gulch, is the so-called Dark Cave, the mouth of which is about 40 feet wide and 20 feet high; in the interior of this cave, which is about 100 feet deep, there is a regular system of ancient habitations, a number of broken ollas and fragments of Indian pottery. Near by is another cave with a small mouth which is entirely walled up, with the exception of an opening large enough to admit a human body. A short distance back from the mouth this cave opens into a very large room over 100 feet long and perhaps 25 feet wide in the main, with several side chambers. The height of the large room varies from 4 to 12 feet. Human skeletons and many varieties of Indian pottery, tools, etc., have been found and carried off by former visitors to these strange chambers on the rocks, leaving only less interesting relics for my friends and myself to carry away.

Across the creek or river from the Olla cave and in the mouth of a canyon is a fine grove containing 15 or more different varieties of timber and bushes. Among them we notice the cedar, uniper, black oak, white oak, cottonwood, ash, cherry, pine, grape vine, willow, balsom, sycamore, maple and ivy. No one is allowed to cut down any timber in this grove, which would make a most beautiful and attractive pleasure resort, were it situated near a more thickly populated district of country. Should a railroad be built through this country at some future day, tens of thousands of tourists would certainly visit this romantic valley to see the caves and others of nature's great wonders which abound here.

The Cave valley settlement has a little saw mill, to which is attached a miniature grist mill. If it don't pro-

duce the very finest brand of flour, it chops the grain sufficiently small to enable the people to have bread, which is healthy and strengthening, and is relished by the residents fully as well as by their more delicate visitors.

The people of Cave Valley are satisfied with their location and can point out quite a number of natural advantages which they think their neighbors do not possess, and they have the satisfaction also of knowing that they are the only community of Latter-day Saints at the present time who are living in the "United Order."

Cave Valley was first settled by our people in 1887, since which an ecclesiastical organization have been kept up; at present they have a Sunday School in good running order, a Relief Society, a Y. M. M. I. A., a Y. L. M. I. A., and a Primary Association. Elder Christopher B. Heaton, first counselor in the Pacheco Ward Bishopric, and who is a resident of Cave Valley, presides over the general meetings. I am now bound for Sonora.

ANDREW JENSON.

TRIP IN OLD MEXICO.

OAXACA, Sonora, Mexico,

April 12, 1894.

In company with Elder Robert E. Vance (who was called on a special mission by Bishop Smith, of the Pacheco ward, to pilot me over the Sierra Madre mountains into Sonora) and young Martin Mortensen, I left Cave Valley on horseback early on the morning of the 9th ult., bound for Sonora. After traveling two miles we arrived at Williams's ranch, situated in a snug little valley through which a small tributary finds its way to the Rio Peadres Verdes. Another two miles' ride brought us to the Cliff ranch, where Elders Heleman Pratt, Miles P. Romney and others settled several years ago, and made some improvements, which are still standing. One or more families resided here till September 19, 1892, when the Indians made a raid upon the only family (Thomsen) who then resided there, and killed Sister Karen Thomsen and a little boy and severely wounded another boy, both sons of the Thomsens. A little girl who hid in the chicken coop escaped unhurt. Sister Thomsen was first shot and afterwards beaten to death with rocks, the boy was killed about a hundred yards from the house while engaged in feeding the pigs.

From the Cliff ranch we continued our ride eight miles via Dry Valley to the Rio San Pedro, a tributary of the Casas Grandes. This is not the same San Pedro river which is famous for the Mormon Battalion bull fight that took place on its banks in 1846. On the headwaters of this stream lives a genuine British lord—Lord Berestord—who owns a large ranch, keeps a black mistress, several large dogs, and employs a number of men to take care of his stock. He is said to be well liked by his neighbor ranchmen, and dresses, talks and acts the same as other frontiersmen. Frequently he is visited by friends from across the waters. A story is told of one of these visitors, who, on his return to England, tried to portray to his countrymen his hairbreadth escapes and extraordinary adventures in the wilds of Mexico. "Why," says he, "on one occasion I traveled on a hot summer day twenty-