

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALT LAKE TO SANTA FE.

SANTA FE, New Mexico, Feb. 6, 1894.—Starting out on a trip to Arizona and Mexico, I left Salt Lake City on the evening of Saturday, the 3rd inst. From Grand Junction I took the Colorado Midland railway to Colorado Springs. The mountain scenery along this road is grand beyond description, at least a part of the way. From Grand Junction the road bed follows up Grand river to the point where Roaring Fork puts into said river. At the confluence of the two streams, in a picturesque valley surrounded on the north, east and west by timber-clad hills, are the celebrated Glenwood Springs, where a large hotel has recently been erected and where the tourist can enjoy a hot salt water bath in the heart of the Rockies. From that interesting point the railroad follows the Roaring Fork to Aspen, thence up to Red canyon, along the Fryling Pan river, circling the so-called "hell gate," and up over the Saguache range of Continental Divide, where the road, at an altitude of 11,528 feet, passes through the Hagerman tunnel. This is, I believe, at present the highest operating railroad point in the United States, being 676 feet higher than Marshall pass, the altitude of which is 10,852 feet. From the Hagerman pass it is down hill to Leadville, one of Colorado's chief mining towns, and, after following the general course of the Arkansas river, the road turns to the left over Trout Creek pass, across South Park, up Granite canyon and east over the Hayden divide to the Ute pass, which is celebrated throughout the land for its beautiful scenery and interesting natural parks. From Woodland park, at the head of Ute pass, a good view is obtained of Pike's Peak, at the base of which the traveler passes through the celebrated Cascade canyon. Manitou, a romantic city nestling at the east base of Pike's Peak, possesses a great number of novelties and attractions; and its mineral waters have gained a world-wide fame.

At Colorado Springs, 601 miles by rail from Salt Lake City, I changed cars, taking the A. T. & S. F. railway via Pueblo to La Junta, a town situated away out on the plains in a southeasterly direction from Pueblo; thence the course is changed to a southwesterly direction and the mountains are again reached at the growing city of Trinidad. Then we traveled up through the celebrated Raton pass, through which the old Santa Fe trail led the numerous caravans that before the advent of the railroad brought goods from the Missouri river—principally from Westport, Jackson County, Missouri—to Santa Fe.

The Mormon Battalion, on its famous march in 1846, also entered the mountains at this point. While the Union Pacific railway follows the old Mormon wagon road up the Platte valley for several hundred miles, it is also a matter of interest to know that the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway follows the old Santa Fe trail for several hundred miles—or from the Raton Pass to Glorieta.

Though I have only spent a few

hours in this historic place, Santa Fe, I have already become deeply interested in it. This morning early I walked out to and climbed the hill on which old Fort Marcer once stood. The trenches and earth works thrown up by General Kearney's troops in 1846 are still seen, and from the top of the hill I obtained a fine view of the old town. Situated on both sides of the Santa Fe creek, a tributary of the Rio Grande, the city is almost encircled by bluffs. The higher mountains lie eastward about three miles distant. Cedar covered bluffs protect the Santa valley proper from the north and west winds, while the adjacent country on the south is lower and quite flat, sloping gently toward the Rio Grande on the southwest. The river is about 18 miles distant from Santa Fe.

To observe the stately modern buildings, such as the Palace hotel, the courthouse, the Federal building, the high school, rising tall and grand in the midst of the numerous low flat-roofed one-story buildings of the Mexicans, including the hundred year old Palace, which is only one story high, the visitor naturally becomes possessed of strange feelings. Here truly the improvements of ages past are, figuratively speaking, shaking hands with the most improved architecture of the nineteenth century, thus forming one of the most unique and interesting pictures that any one can desire to gaze upon. Then there are the original narrow road ways, some of them scarcely a rod wide, intermixed with streets laid out according to American taste from four to six rods wide; and while the latter are straight and aim to follow the cardinal points of the compass at considerable regularity, the old streets are crooked and winding, and allowed to run in all directions.

Of historic buildings in Santa Fe the St. Miguel church is the oldest church edifice in the United States. The usher, who has charge of the building and who shows visitors through it, asserts emphatically that it was erected between the years 1582 and 1597, but from more reliable sources the year 1630 seems to be nearer the fact. This old adobe structure stands on the south side of the Santa Fe creek in the midst of a cluster of old Mexican dwellings. The interior length of the church is 70 feet, the width 24 feet and the height from floor to ceiling 25 feet. The walls are from 2½ to 5 feet thick. The altar is supposed to be even older than the church itself, and was probably imported from Spain by the missionaries who accompanied Antonio de Espejo to America in 1582. A very old bell and other relics are also shown, to see all of which the visitor pays 25 cents. Regular services are still held in this old church, and that too three times a week.

The central town of Santa Fe I should judge covers about a mile square, and is built compact only in places. The principal thoroughfare is St. Francisco street, a narrow lane running nearly east and west, and terminating on the east against the raised ground on which the unfinished Catholic cathedral is situated. By permission of a

jolly old Catholic priest, who seemed to enjoy his long pipe hugely, I was permitted to look through the cathedral and also through an interesting museum connected therewith. I have also visited the splendid collection of Indian relics, etc., in charge of the "Historical Society of New Mexico." Three large apartments in the old "palace" are occupied by this museum. In this same old building are the offices of the governor, secretary and other territorial officers; the postoffice is also there.

I have been introduced to the secretary of the territory, ex-Governor Prince, who is the author of a history of New Mexico; Max Frost, Esq., and other leading men of the city, who have kindly furnished me with much valuable information. Gov. Frost has a very fine private collection of Indian relics, old maps and a splendid library.

About one hundred and twenty soldiers, comprising companies B and D of the Tenth infantry, are stationed in Santa Fe. Their quarters are near the center of the city. On making inquiry as to why they were there, I was frankly answered: "To help drink whisky and keep business alive in town." It was asserted by others that this was as near the truth as anything could be.

One of the peculiarities of Santa Fe life is the Mexican mode of importing fuel into town. Burros are employed for this purpose. The owners take these tough little animals into the timber in the mountains or on the lower hills from five to fifteen miles away; then cut the timber in proper lengths to be used in the fire place or stove, and load the burros with all they can carry to town, the packs being securely lashed to their backs. Saturdays thousands of animals, in droves ranging from two or three up to twenty or more, are seen approaching the city with these odd looking packs, which the owners then hawk through the town and dispose of at prices ranging from 15 to 25 cents per pack, according to size, and also according to the status of supply and demand.

Historically speaking Santa Fe is one of the most interesting old things on the western continent. Go back as far as manuscripts and semi-authenticated traditions have blazed the path, and in the unpenetrated jungle of doubts and fairy tales that darkened the early days of North America, some hint or trace of early settlements in New Mexico always eludes our sight. Says a recent writer: "To most of us it is wholly new. Until the railroad (the modern Alladin), came the 'Land of Sunshine' (a favorite term for New Mexico) was essentially foreign; a fragment of the Latin empire stranded among the silent mountains after the northward-rolling wave of conquest had receded. There remain many quaint villages of adobe built, in quiet sunshine valleys, unstirred by the echoes of the locomotive whistle, where people are uniformly polite, and indifferent to the tomorrow—where the noon siesta is prolonged until the shadows have appreciably lengthened on the eastern slopes, and where Time seems to have hung up his sickle and hour glass. Perhaps this is the most sensible way to live. It is a matter of opinion.