

TO CALIFORNIA ALONG THE OLD SANTA FE TRAIL

By W. H. SIMPSON.

You have all heard about the annual convention of the National Educational Association to be held in Los Angeles, Cal., July 8 to 12.

There are several routes from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And there is much of scenic interest on each of them. You cannot cross the backbone of the continent anywhere without being impressed with its picturesque views.

Not until Colorado is reached, the morning of the second day out from Chicago, does the landscape hint of the heroic. And now the front Range of the Rockies looms up sunsetward, a thousand miles west of Chicago.

It may puzzle you just how the train will get over the barrier. A way was found half a century ago by the wagons of the Santa Fe trail voyagers. It is known as Raton Pass. With the aid of a helper engine the train slowly crawls up, up, up, almost to the top—plunges into a mile-long-tunnel, emerges into the sunshine again at an elevation of 7,608 feet—and glides down hill to the level country once more. This is the land of the adobe, the land of the Mexican and the Pueblo Indian.

You ride for several hours southward until Las Vegas is reached. Near here is located the National Fraternal sanitarium. Soon after leaving Las Vegas you are among the high hills again, and again confronted by a mountain wall, that of the Glorieta Range, which is crossed at an elevation of 7,453 feet. The upclimb takes you near Starvation Peak and the crumbling ruins of the old Pecos church—the venerable pile in New Mexico. The downward ride is through Apache Canyon, where, in 1847, Kearney's Army of the West met the Mexican forces. A short distance away is the city of Santa Fe, the oldest in the United States and of great interest to the tourist.

At Albuquerque, further south, on the Rio Grande, the train turns westward for a long and steady pull up the Continental Divide. While waiting here for dinner, three unusual sights attract you.

One is the Alvarado Hotel, like a great Spanish mission, save for its newness.

The other attraction is the Indian curio building, where priceless examples of Indian and Mexican handicraft are exhibited.

The third is a group of Navajo weavers, brought here from their far-off Arizona home. Mingling with them are Indians from Isleta. Their bronze skin, their black hair, their odd garments are so un-American as to make this seem like a foreign land. Indeed, all the way from Colorado to California you are often reminded of Egypt and Palestine.

That one-story adobe settlement, near the track and a few miles below Albuquerque, is Isleta. It is a typical Indian pueblo. The inhabitants, like those in other similar villages, are self-sustaining and self-respecting. They are farmers, shepherds, potters, and weavers. Coronado found their forbears in this self-same land away back in 1540.

You reach Acoma by wagon. This is the most strikingly picturesque of all New Mexican pueblos. It is built upon the summit of a table-rock with eroded precipitous sides, 350 feet above the plain, which is 7,000 feet above the sea. Formerly it was reached only by a hazardous stairway in the rock. Easier pathways now exist.

En route to Acoma in the Mesa Encantada, a lonely mass of earth-covered rock rising 450 feet from the level plain, and practically inaccessible.

Arizona is a country of prodigious things and queer ones, too. There is only one Grand Canyon in the wide world, and that is out in Arizona. There is no petrified forest elsewhere comparable to the one in Arizona. There is no native race equalling the Mokis for strange ceremonies and aloofness of habitation. Here also are prehistoric ruins and peaks that pierce the clouds.

I urge you to stop off one day at either Adamona or Holbrook and visit the petrified forest. You have never seen anything like it before. The trees are limbless and leafless, they are rainbow-colored, and the logs won't burn! They do not stand upright, but are prostrate on the earth. The three sections most commonly visited cover an area of several thousand acres. You may here see hundreds of whole tree-trunks, each from 150 to 250 feet long, looking as though ready to be hauled to the saw-mill. There are literally millions of shattered pieces, of all sizes and shapes. In one place is a petrified bridge, formed by a tree having fallen across a ravine. But the glory of it all is the exquisite coloring. These pines are ages old and agatized. In the process of hardening, the wood has taken on most brilliant hues—reds, yellows and greens predominating.

Before reaching the San Francisco Peaks, you cross Canyon Diablo, a profound gash in the plateau, some 225 feet deep, 550 feet wide, and many miles long. Several miles southeast is Meteorite Mountain, where it is supposed a colossal sky-wanderer once fell. The craterlike cavity marking its crash into the earth is a mile wide. A company of Philadelphia capitalists is now boring to find the meteor. Recent reports indicate a successful search.

The Grand Canyon of Arizona will not be content with a hurry-up visit. It takes practically one day for the railroad trip out and back, leaving the transcontinental line of the Santa Fe at Williams. The Canyon is 65 miles north of Williams. Don't think of staying at this titan of chasms less than two days, for you will at least wish to devote one day to rides along the rim, and the next day to the river trail trip. Three days will permit of a stage ride to Grand View. A week will enable you to loaf a little, going off alone to sit on the edge of the gorge and lazily watch the changing play of sun and shadow. It is not an expensive outing. Your side-trip railroad ticket will cost \$6.50. Accommodations at El Tovar, the luxurious Harvey hotel—more like a country club, though, than than a hotel—vary from \$3.50 to \$5.00 a day and upwards. If economy is the watch-word—go to Bright Angel Camp, where a room costs only 75 cents a day each person, and meals are obtainable at the Harvey cafe. The trail trip will cost between \$3 and \$4. Carriage hire is moderate in price. The weather at the Canyon in July will be pleasant. You are so high up in the air, 7,000 feet, that the nights, mornings and afternoons are always cool. High noon may be hot, if measured by the thermometer, but the lack of humidity in the air lessens the heat as it is felt by the body.

The Canyon must be seen to be understood. Then the great rock forms, rising from the gulf mountain-high, in bands of red and white and yellow and green, will tell their wonderful story. When I say that the series of tremendous chasms which form the channel of the Colorado river through northern Arizona here reach their culmination in a chaotic gorge 217 miles long, from nine to thirteen miles wide, and, midway, more than 6,000 feet below the level of the plateau—that is about all that can be told, except perhaps to add that it is not like an ordinary chasm, but it is a great trough carved out of the plateau, widest at top and narrowing to the river, which, in turn, runs through a narrow cleft 1,200 feet deep.

Just a word in closing about the summer climate. You may expect cool weather nearly all the way from Colorado west. The Santa Fe runs over four mountain ranges. At times you are more than a mile up in the sky. The air in that region is dry and bracing. The California summer is as pleasant as the California winter, if one lingers by the seashore or goes up into the mountains. At San Diego, for example, in the southwest corner of the "Golden State," the average midday temperature in July and August is nearer 70 degrees than 90 degrees. It is the dry season, and you will find the country roads dusty, unless oiled. That's about the only drawback.

YALE UNIVERSITY

A unique course in Geography is to be given in the Yale Summer School this year. Professor Gregory, who is one of the directors of the Connecticut Geological Survey, has arranged to take a class of teachers to the various parts of the State where the most typical formations are to be found and will lecture in the field to the class. Almost every type of geographical formation will thus be examined and studied in a very practical way.

Dean Hill of the Teachers College of the State University of Missouri is recognized as one of the leading organizers of teachers in this country. He is to be absent during the latter part of the Missouri Summer Session in order to give two courses of lectures at the Yale Summer School.

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