

**NEW COLORADO
AND
THE SANTA FÉ TRAIL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649656288

New Colorado and the Santa Fé Trail by A. A. Hayes

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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BY
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ILLUSTRATED



LONDON
C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1881

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TO
THE COLORADO PIONEERS

WHO SHOWED THEIR FAITH IN THE FUTURE OF THEIR MOUNTAIN HOME BY THEIR ENERGY IN
DEVELOPING ITS RESOURCES, AND THUS CONCLUSIVELY PROVED THAT ALL
THE WISE MEN DO NOT COME FROM THE EAST

This Book is Dedicated by

THE AUTHOR

NEW COLORADO

AND

THE SANTA FE TRAIL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"LET every man," saith the Apostle, "be fully persuaded in his own mind." He may go across the Atlantic; endure that most trying of all short civilized journeys, the transit from London to Paris; spend a night, uncheered by Pullman, between Paris and Bordeaux; traverse the gloomy *Landes*; walk under a white umbrella through the not always odoriferous streets of Pau; and, finally, indulge in orthodox emotions at the orthodox glimpse of the Pyrenees from the Place Royale. His neighbor, again, may enter a car, fitted with every comfort, at New York or Boston; travel westward by the Mohawk Valley and the shores of the Great Lakes; or across the Alleghanias, and some of those States once Western, now Central; visit several growing, aggressive cities; cross the Mississippi and the Missouri; and then, leaving the shores of the latter one forenoon, raise the curtains of the hotel windows at Denver the next afternoon, and see the Snowy Range lifting itself in regal grandeur from Long's Peak on the north, to Pike's on the south. Then, still in comparative comfort, and without undue exertion or fatigue, he can approach *Wahatoya*, the beautiful Spanish Peaks; view a sunset on the solemn Sangre de Cristo; and, crossing the great Cordilleras, or climbing Gray's Peak, see the eternal sign of the Holy Cross on that wondrous mountain away beyond.

Each would state a strong case. The former would exalt the delights of a visit to the Old World, of historical associations, of living for awhile on a soil every inch of which has a vivid human interest; nay even, if he

be candid, of "doing the correct thing." He could impeach, too, the newness of the latter's surroundings, and the semi-barbaric accommodations, and *cuisine*; and he might loftily quote the declaration of somebody or other that "the farther he went West, the more was he strengthened in his faith that the Wise Men *did* come from the East."

His friend would doubtless retort that one cannot expect everything; that a true mountain-lover can forget, in the presence of such mighty scenes of Nature, any little collateral discomforts; and that, although he has slept on softer beds and eaten better dinners (a slight retrospective shudder might here be hardly repressed), they are not what he went to Colorado to find. Who shall decide? If a truly impartial opinion could be had; if, say, an intelligent Tasmanian, or a clever Japanese, or perhaps the pupil-lacking Chinese professor at Harvard, were asked to arbitrate, he would do well to content himself with a reference to the apostolic injunction just quoted. Whereas we, who make no pretence of impartiality, but are partisans *au bout des doigts*, would, if we could not do both, choose without hesitation, and, as Mr. Harte puts it,

"Speed to the sunset that beckons far away."

This for two reasons: first, because the overwhelming majority take the European trip, and the mountain one has comparatively few friends. If you tell an Englishman—what in his heart he knows perfectly well—that his countrymen longed for the destruction of our nation in the Civil War, and that Appomattox was nearly as grievous a disappointment at the London clubs as at Richmond, he will reply, "Oh! I say, really now, my dear fellow, you are mistaken, quite mistaken, I assure you, by Jove! You see we always sympathize with the weaker side, and we thought you fellows at the North were the stronger, don't you know?" Q. E. D.

Again, the sights of Europe have lasted for a long time in the past, and will, we hope, last for many generations to come; while it is now that one can see and study, in Colorado, not only a magnificent mountain region, but, just at the right moment, a most unique and interesting population.

Approaching the Centennial State from the east, we have been gradually ascending since we left the Missouri, and cross its eastern border at an elevation of some 4000 feet. Up to the foot-hills run plains,—intersected by streams and by the "Divide," a ridge 8000 feet high, fifty miles south of Denver,—giving room for many cattle, sheep, and farming ranches. Boldly out among these foot-hills comes the great lateral buttress capped by the famed Pike's Peak; then comes the majestic "Range" itself, the backbone of the Continent, describing a tortuous

course through the State, and throwing out other great buttresses enclosing the so-called Parks; and then the still mountainous and comparatively thinly populated region "Over the Range." This whole unique domain, of 106,475 square miles, may, with the exception of the extreme southwestern corner, in which are the curious ancient ruins and cliff-dwellings of the Mancos Cañon, be called essentially a new country; since its white inhabitants (whom, pending the new census-taking, we will estimate as numbering 200,000) have all either been born, or immigrated, within some twenty years.

Our ideas of the characteristics of an American mining region and its people are generally formed from what we know, or have heard, about California; and, to be sure, the miner pure and simple is *sui generis*—much the same in all parts of the country; but there were elements in the pilgrimage to the Pacific slopes and the subsequent occupation of the land which have been quite wanting in the Rocky Mountain region. Many, it is true, braved the vague terrors of the overland journey to California, but thousands went by the Panama and Nicaragua routes: first very uncomfortable, then gradually improving, lastly very good; and thousands, again, by the long sea trip "around the Horn."

Into the beautiful bay where they cast anchor flowed the Sacramento, affording easy communication for some distance into the interior; and for those desirous of reaching the southern portion of the country there was more than one harbor easily accessible by coasting vessels. The Golden Gate, too, was the mouth of a gigantic ocean ferry-slip. Into it could freely sail or steam vessels from many and divers climes; the new side-wheel steamer from New York *via* the Strait of Magellan, the Aberdeen clipper, the teak-built East Indiaman, and even the Chinese junk, or the Japanese fisherman blown off his own coasts; and come they did, and in them came the men who gave to San Francisco the cosmopolitan character which she has never lost. Again, these Argonauts found not only the Golden Fleece for which they sought, but a land where ample harvests would reward the farmer, and the wheat of the North compete with the oranges of the South; so a city of 350,000 inhabitants stretches itself over the sand-hills; and the pioneer of the "fall of '49 and the spring of '50" sits under his own vine and fig-tree, a respected veteran, an aristocrat of the Land of Gold. He builds as high a brown-stone front as he dares, in view of the earthquakes; and, in curious forgetfulness of the circumstances of his own advent, he exclaims, "The Chinese must go!"

On the other hand, San Francisco had superseded the little village of Yerba Buena ten years before, through wandering adventurers, whose re-