

near a very large city, called

PRAIRIE DOG CITY—one of the largest cities on the whole line of the road. At this point, and for several miles up and down the valley, the dwellings of the prairie dogs frequently occur, but three miles west of the station they are found in large numbers, and there the great prairie dog city is situated. It occupies several hundred acres on each side of the road, where these sagacious little animals have taken land and established their dwellings without buying lots of the company. (We do not know whether Mr. Landcommissioner, intends to eject them or not.) Their dwellings consist of a little mound, with a hole in the top, from a foot to a foot and a half high, raised by the dirt excavated from their burrows. On the approach of a train, these animals can be seen scampering for their houses; arrived there, they squat on their hams or stand on their hind feet, barking at the train as it passes. Should any one venture too near, down they go into their holes, and the city is silent as the city of the dead.

It is said that the opening in the top leads to a subterranean chamber, connecting with the next dwelling, and so on through the settlement; but this is a mistake, as in most cases a few buckets of water will drown out any one of them. The animal is of a sandy-brown color, and about the size of a large gray squirrel. In their nest, living with the dog, may be found the owl and rattlesnake, though whether they are welcome visitors is quite uncertain. The prairie dog lives on grasses and roots, and is generally fat; and by many, especially the Mexicans, considered good eating, the meat being sweet and tender, but rather greasy, unless thoroughly parboiled. Wolves prey on the little fellows, and they may often be seen sneaking and crawling near a town, where they may, by chance, pick up an unwary straggler. But the dogs are not easily caught, for some one is always looking out for danger, and on the first intimation of trouble, the alarm is given, and away they all scamper for their holes.

COURT-HOUSE ROCK—About 40 miles due north from this station is the noted Court-House Rock, on the North Platte River. It is plainly visible for 50 miles up and down that stream. It has the appearance of a tremendous capitol building, seated on the apex of a pyramid. From the base of the spur of the bluffs on which

the white Court-House Rock is seated, to the top of the rock, must be nearly 2,000 feet. Court-House Rock to its top is about 200 feet. Old California emigrants will remember the place and the many names, carved by ambitious climbers, in the soft sand-stone of which it is composed.

CHIMNEY ROCK—is about 25 miles up the river from Court-House Rock. It is about 500 feet high and has the appearance of a tremendous, cone-shaped sand-stone column, rising directly from the plain. The elements have worn away the bluffs, leaving this harder portion standing.

The next station is nine miles distant, called

Bennett—named, possibly, after James Gordon Bennett, of the *New York Herald*, but more likely after the agent of the Palace Car Co., on the Union Pacific road; but neither are greatly honored, as passenger trains never stop, but roll on 9 2-10 miles further where they do stop, at

Antelope—It is situated at the lower end of the Pine Bluffs, which at this point is near the station, on the left.

This station is in the center of what the plains-men call "the *best* grass country in the world," as well as one of the best points for antelope on the route. For article on stock-raising, see ANNEX No. 29.

Six miles further and we come to

Adams—an unimportant side-track, from which it is 5 9-10 miles to

Bushnell—This is another unimportant side-track, near the boundary line between Nebraska and Wyoming Territory. Passenger trains do not stop, but pass on ten miles further to

Pine Bluffs—where cattle-shipping is the principal business transacted at the station.

During the building of the road, this place was known as "Rock Ranche"—and a tough ranche it was. Considerable pitch pine wood was cut for the railroad in the bluffs, a few miles to the southward, from which the station derives its name. The bluffs are on the left hand side of the road, and at this point are quite high and rocky, extending very near the track.

FORT MORGAN—was established in May, 1865, abandoned in May, 1868, and its garrison transferred to Laramie. It is about 60 miles north of this station, on the North Platte River, at the western base of what is known as Scott's Bluffs. Latitude 40 deg. 30 min.; longitude 27 deg.

Our course from this station is more to