

This station is the junction of the El Moro Branch, 49 miles south of Pueblo, 169 miles from Denver, 37 miles from El Moro and 100 miles from Garland.

Let us now "change cars" and, while taking a run, note the results.

Crossing the Cuchara River, and on, over a broad prairie—with the Spanish Peaks on our right—10 6-10 miles bring us to

SANTA CLARA—on the creek of that name. Just 9 4-10 miles further is

APISHAPA—a small side-track on the river of the same name. Then, over a broad plain, 9 4-10 miles, is

CHICOSA—and 7 3-10 miles more bring us to

EL MORO—the end of the track. This place is one destined to be a point of great importance. It is situated on a plain near the eastern base of the Raton Mountains, and although the town was laid out in the spring of 1876, it *now* has a population of over 700, and is doing a large and rapidly increasing business. The forwarding of goods for the southern country is one that centers a large amount of business at this new town; and stores, hotels, restaurants and shops of all kinds are springing up daily. A bank has been established, and a newspaper soon will be.

Near the town is located extensive coal mines. One vein that is now being worked is a horizontal 14-foot vein, so situated that cars are run to the mouth of the mine and the coal is dumped, by a chute, into the cars. One great feature of this coal is its adaptability for coking.

The railroad hauled away from El Moro during the year 1877, 700 tons of coke; some was shipped as far as Salt Lake City, to be used in the smelting of ores, but the greater portion was taken to the furnaces at Black Hawk, Golden and Boulder.

There are now in operation 32 coking ovens—and still the demand exceeds the supply.

Prof. Gardner, of the U. S. Geological Survey, made a number of careful experiments with this coal in 1875, and as a result of his tests in reverberatory furnaces, he says:

"In a few minutes both furnaces were enveloped in a sheet of burning gases, that went roaring up the flues. Heat became so intense that the ores had to be pulled back to the chimneys, for that left near the bridge melted down and ran like water. The flame and great heating power were

now too evident to be mistaken."

El Moro is 86 miles from Pueblo, 206 miles from Denver, five miles north of Trinidad, 65 miles to Cimerron, 105 miles to Fort Union, 150 miles to Las Vegas, and 205 miles to Santa Fe. Stages run daily to the last four named places; fare averages 15 cents per mile.

TRINIDAD—the county seat of Las Animas county—is five miles south of El Moro, and is an old settled place; the greater proportion of the people are of Spanish or Mexican descent; stock raising is the principal source of income. Coal mines are extensive—but until a railroad is built to the town the demand cannot extend beyond home consumption.

Returning to Cuchara, "change cars," and we are off again—this time up the west bank of Cuchara River.

WALSSENS—is the first station—6 7-10 miles from Cuchara. It is tastefully laid out—having been settled by a colony of Germans, who are engaged in agriculture and stock raising. From this the grade will be heavy, until we reach the summit of the mountain.

In passing along up the creek, it will be observed that all the settlers are Mexicans or Spanish, and they observe all the old customs of Spanish countries, particularly in their cultivation of the soil. They ignore the usual implements of husbandry to a great extent. They tickle the ground with a wooden plow; cut their grain with hand knives; thrash it out with goats, clean in the wind by dropping it to the ground from an elevated position when the wind is blowing. Then when the grain is gathered and cleaned it is pounded to a powder between large flat stones. Goats and sheep are their stock in trade. Their houses are of adobe, or, at best, logs—and the number of children is only equaled by the number of dogs; but all seem happy, and we are inclined to say with the poet:

"Rustic ease and true content
Are in this valley sweetly blent—
And comfort smiles, and plenty reigns;
Here peace has undisturbed domains;
And here a rural, peaceful race
Has found a fair abiding place;
Its homes and plazas, simple, rude,
The walls of stately pine trees hewed,
Or rough adobes, crudely piled,
The roofs with "dirt" securely tiled,
Are primitive and cool and warm,
Secure against the winter's storm,
And 'gainst the sun's devouring rays
When with the summer's heat ablaze."

[There, that is the first poetry I ever