

near the head of the infamous Solidad Canyon, known as the "Robbers' Roost." This canyon is a deep gorge, with rugged, towering mountain cliffs rising on each side, in places from 500 to 2,000 feet above the bed of the canyon, the fronts of which look as though they had been slashed by the hand of the great Architect, from summit to base, into narrow, deep ravines, and then left, presenting as wild, gloomy and dismal gorges as the most vivid imagination can conceive. These, with the dense growth of pines, cedar and shrubs, make the mountains almost impenetrable, and all that the most wary villain could desire.

The canyon is about 25 miles in length, inhabited mostly by Mexicans. It was the headquarters and *home* of the noted Vasques, and his robber band, who was hung at San Jose, March 19, 1875. Later, a band of a dozen or more raided Caliente, binding and gagging all who came in their way, and after loading their riding animals with all they could carry, returned to *this* their rendezvous. By a shrewd plan, five of the number were captured, and lodged in jail at Bakersfield, from which they were taken by the citizens and hung without much expense to the county. But with all their devilment, the trains and railroad property have always been secure. At the next station, the brother of this noted chief resides, against whom, as we understand, there stand no accusations.

Passing on down, the canyon widens, and cottonwood, sycamore and a few oaks and willows line the little creek, which ripples over the sands. Mining, to some extent, is carried on by the Mexicans living here, but in a primitive way, using arastras, with water, horse, hand, and, in three cases, steam power.

Ravena—is the next station, 3.7 miles from Acton. Here are located a village of several dozen log, sod and stone houses, belonging to the Mexicans, and the paper mill, before alluded to, as utilizing the yucca palm for making paper.

We were told at this place that "moss agates and grizzly bears abound," but just *why* the two should be coupled together, we are not informed.

About one mile below Ravena, on the left, away up on the side of the mountain, 600 feet above our train, is a huge rock, called George Washington, from the fact that it bears a *striking likeness* to the "father of his country," who, it seems

has left his impress all over his country. Continuing down, the canyon narrows; the bluff walls on each side assume more formidable features, and in fact is the most formidable portion of the canyon, the rugged spurs shooting out as though they would bar our farther progress.

Two of these spurs did bar the progress of our way, until tunnels were completed through them, which aggregate 596 feet in length.

Timber can be seen on the tops of the mountains, and in the largest of the deep ravines, but inaccessible, from the unusual ruggedness of its surroundings. Lime-rock abounds and game, both large and small, is very numerous, including the grizzly bear. When we passed this way in January, 1878, Mr. Lang, of Lang's Station, close ahead, had killed one of these bears that weighed 900 pounds, and Lang called it a *small* one.

Lang—is a small station, 8.5 miles below Ravena, and about half-a-mile west of where the "last spike" was driven, Sept. 5th, 1876, that united the line, building from Los Angeles and San Francisco. The bottom, below the station, widens, sand hills and sand beds appear, as well as sheep, on the adjoining hills, which are now lower, with grassy sides; and 10.1 miles from Lang, and our train stops at

Newhall—a station where are large pens and shutes for loading cattle and sheep. This station is in the midst of a small valley, named for a Mr. Newhall, who owns several hundred thousand acres of land in the vicinity, on which range immense numbers of cattle and sheep.

Stages leave this station daily for Ventura, 50 miles; Santa Barbara, 80 miles; San Louis Obispo, 190 miles; Paso-Robles Hot Springs, 220, and Solidad, 300 miles, at the end of the Southern Pacific railroad, in Salinas Valley, as noted in excursion No. 5. These stages carry passengers, mails and express.

We now confront the San Fernando Mountains on the south, which rise up before us, towering to the skies, in one great black solid mass, apparently presenting an impenetrable barrier to our further progress. Such *was* the case until the engineers of this road, failing to find any way *over* them, resolved to pierce *through* them, which was done, resulting in a tunnel 6,967 feet long, built in a straight line and timbered all the way. These mountains, as stated, are high, rising up out of the valley from