

come to the double town of Safford, or Layton, or both; when dating our letters or giving our postoffice address we write Safford, but when speaking of our ward organization we say Layton. Still further west three miles is Thatcher; thence three miles further takes us to Central. Another three miles distant is Pima, formerly known as Smithville; this is about the largest town in the valley. Three miles further west takes us to the string town of Matheosville; nine miles further west we come to old Fort Thomas, lately abandoned by the military and now being rapidly settled up by citizens. Through the settlements above mentioned is located the main traveled road through the valley, including the Gila valley, and the Globe & Northern railroad, whose terminus is at present at Pima. Across the river on the north side of the valley are the towns of Graham, Brice and Curtis; these towns are needing more settlers, and in fact all the settlements of this valley have a capacity for more than double their present numbers.

Members of the Church in this, the St. Joseph Stake, number about 2,200 souls. The voting population of this county numbers something over 1,600. Politics has been Democratic, but the last November election went strongly Republican, with a sprinkling of Populists.

The demonetization of silver has thrown a damper on the mining interests of the Territory; money is scarce and the cry of hard times and high taxes is heard everywhere; yet improvement is steadily going on, and many fine, commodious brick buildings are going up in the different settlements. Notwithstanding the hard times there is plenty of the necessities of life for both man and beast, and the awful cry for bread is not known in our land. Prospects never were better for an abundant harvest; the unusual amount of rain through the winter has made the farmer's heart glad. Large deposits of snow in the mountains north and east of us also promise to furnish water for irrigation through the heated season of the year.

Since the advent of the railroad in our valley last summer, which has cut off nearly all freighting by team, the people have settled down to home improvement. We are having considerable of the influences of modern civilization that follows railroads and railroad building—the influx of saloons and the element that follows them, all of which does not seem to have a very desirable effect on many of our young people and some of the older ones also.

A few days ago we had a visit from our beloved brethren George Goddard and Karl G. Maeser, in the interest of the Sunday school; they came in the valley on Friday and left here Monday, and during that time they held nine meetings, three in the evening and six in the day time, and in every instance the meeting houses seemed to be too small to hold the congregations. Most excellent instructions were given, and in several places expressions were taken with the uplifted hand as to whether the people were willing to abstain from the use of our practice of the "six articles," as Brother Goddard would put it; holding up his hand—he would count from his fingers—tea, coffee, tobacco, beer,

liquor and round dancing; for this last article he would count one finger twice in order to bring in the sixth. In every instance most of the people made this promise, and quite liberally so with the young, and I have been pleased to witness since then that it has made a good impression, and many are more determined than ever before that they will abide by these instructions.

The young people of our settlements have been very liberally entertained this winter; but there seems to be a class of the more aged that were partially neglected. Hence the superintendents and teachers of our Habbath school, by consent of our Bishop, took it in hand to give the folks an entertainment. The patriotic day, the 22nd of February, was selected for this occasion. All that were over sixty years old, and the widows, fatherless and cripples were invited, irrespective of sect or conditions, other than that they were good moral people. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon all gathered at the Layton ward church house; a program was carried out—music, singing, recitations, speeches, etc. At 3 o'clock a large table was spread with the bounties and luxuries of life, and it was enjoyable to see our old gray-haired veterans partake of the repast heartily.

After the old folks had eaten till they were filled, those that were waiting on them filled another table, and after they had eaten all they desired, there was still more remaining which was distributed among the neighbors. We believe that good will come from thus showing our respect for the aged, teaching our children by example this noble principle of respecting the aged, for there seems to be an inclination to fulfil one of the sayings of the old Prophet Isaiah, that in the last day the young would behave themselves proudly against the aged, and the base against the honorable. We should forestall this inclination on the part of the young, if it is possible; hence object lessons and examples or properly and agreeably entertaining our aged veterans would be profitable lessons to the young, as well as doing our duty and paying our respect to the aged.

A few cases of the dreaded disease, diptheria, have made their appearance in our town, though it is said to be the mildest form; no cases have yet been fatal. Generally, the health of the people has been good; some coughs and colds, but very few deaths.

At present writing, fruit blossoms can be seen in various places throughout the valley; lucern and grain fields look bright and green; gardening is being busily prosecuted, and nature seems to be about ready to put on her spring garments.

The first issue of the *Graham Guardian* will come out next week, a new industry for Safford. This will be two weekly papers we have in this county. The *News* is a welcome visitor, and it comes quite regular; we generally get it the fourth day after it is printed. ABRAHAM PERKINS.

#### FAREWELL PARTY:

DRAPER, March 7, 1895.—A pleasing farewell party was given to Brother Thomas Stokes, who leaves tomorrow evening on a mission to Europe. The party was given by the members of the

Seventy-third quorum of Seventy. About three or four hundred people assembled at Rideout's hall and were entertained about three hours with an excellent program consisting of music from Prof. Joseph Orgill's band, singing by the ward choir under the direction of Wm. B. Norris, duets, choruses and recitations from the best talent of the ward. Original poems prepared especially for the occasion were read by Mrs. Gwyther and John W. Smith. Remarks were made by Brother Lauritz Smith, president of the quorum, Bishop Wm. C. Allen, Peter N. Garff, P. A. Nielsen, Benj. Driggs, of Pleasant Grove, and Jos. M. Smith. At the close of the lengthy yet interesting program, to Brother Stokes was presented a purse of about fifty dollars, contributed by members of the ward. Brother Stokes expressed with emotion his thankfulness for the honor shown him and the assistance rendered. He considered it a great privilege and blessing to be worthy of being called to labor in such a worthy cause, and hoped he might be successful in bringing many souls to a knowledge of the truth. Brother Stokes leaves with the best feelings and prayers of his brethren and sisters. May a successful journey and a safe return be his. S.

#### WEST VIRGINIA WOMAN'S TESTIMONY

No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from West Virginia. I am glad to say that I have had the privilege of reading your paper this winter, and enjoyed reading the letters from the Elders all over so many States; it shows they are doing a great work. I have heard of the Mormons all my life, but was made to believe that they were wretched outlaws. I have often heard persons say when they wanted to pass some degrading sentence on some one's character, "Why he is worse than a Mormon." I am glad I have lived to learn to unlearn what I have learned amiss in regard to the Mormons, and am happy to say I have met with seven of the Mormon Elders and have had the pleasure of entertaining them at my own home, and can truly say I never met with nicer gentlemen in my life. Elders Taylor and Dougall of Salt Lake City, boarded with me three months, and their example of piety during their stay with me is worthy to be imitated. I had the privilege of reading their books and papers, and conversing with them in regard to their religious belief. I find they are true Bible Christians and I endorse their doctrine. I often wondered why the prophets and the laying on of hands were done away with and we had no living evidence that the Bible is true. What a delightful thought that it is just the same today as it was when Christ was here on earth, teaching and healing all manner of diseases.

I am a member of the Methodist church, and try to live up to its discipline; but I always felt an aching void, but I am feeling better now. I understand the Scripture better and hope to live nearer to God in future. I have a strong desire to dwell in the city of the Saints and become a member of their Church. I feel satisfied in my own mind that they are the chosen people of God.

WEST VIRGINIA LADY.