

MISCELLANEOUS.

EARLY UTAH AND THE PLAINS.

On the evening of Wednesday, Feb. 20th, Dr. H. J. Faust addressed the Mutual Improvement associations of the Twenty-First Ward on Early Experiences in Utah and Incidents on the Plains, a synopsis of his remarks being given herewith.

The speaker began by remarking that his audience did not look as though they were hunting a camping place, where wood, water and grass was plenty. Said he: You look as though you had just left a good camp. How different it was with the early settlers of these valleys, forty-nine years ago.

Let us go back to that beautiful city, Nauvoo, in 1846, situated on the banks of the Mississippi river. There we find about fifteen thousand people, surrounded with the comforts of life, and comparatively happy. These people were gathered from many of the states, as well as from many of the nations of the earth, in many instances, two from a city and one from a family. They must have been born for the purpose before them; if they had not been, they never could have stood what they did in coming to and settling these valleys. These people were surrounded by a mob, made up of bad men, fanatics from other churches, and in many instances led by pretended ministers of the Gospel.

These Saints were expelled under pain of death and the burning of their city. We see them in the month of February, when the thermometer stood below zero, crossing the Mississippi and camping in Iowa, on Sugar Creek, in their tents. It is true that there were nine children born that night.

Who can tell what the sufferings of these people must have been! Take you tonight, and let you go over Jordan, pitch your tent, make your bed on the ground and let the thermometer fall below zero, then you might have a little taste of what they had.

These people started west over the bleak prairies of Iowa, making the roads as they went, ferrying the streams or building bridges as the case required. The road from Nauvoo to Council Bluffs is called the Mormon trail to this day. These people could be tracked by the blood from their feet on the snow. Their camping grounds were known by the newly made graves. Just think of your fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters, sick and dying while the wagon was moving along on a rough road; when camp was reached, they were no more. A hasty digging of the grave that night; in the morning a hasty funeral; the body consigned to its last resting place in the grave, unmarked, and to be forever forgotten. No; you will never have to pass through these trials!

The Missouri river was reached and crossed where Omaha now stands. Winter Quarters was established about six miles north of the crossing, and houses built out of logs, sod and tents. Many of the men went down into Missouri to work to get provisions, cattle and horses to come west with. There was a proposition made by the Church leaders to the government, through Colonel J. C. Little, to build forts at intervals on the

plains to protect the emigrants going to Oregon and California, as the emigration thither had then begun; but instead, the government called on the Saints to furnish five hundred men for the Mexican war. The famous Mormon Battalion was enlisted, taking the ablest and best men. They made one of the longest marches ever required of soldiers, twenty-five hundred miles, making the road as they went. Let us tonight imagine their feelings. What must they have been! Husbands, fathers, brothers and lovers, leaving mothers, sisters and sweethearts on the banks of the Missouri river, without a home, and many already in want, not knowing that they would ever see each other again in this life! Who will say that they were not all brave, that they were not Saints, who put their trust in their God? What the Mormon Battalion did you can read in history.

There was sickness and some suffering in the winter of 1846. In the spring of 1847, on the 7th of April, President Young started with that brave band of Pioneers of one hundred and forty-three souls, with nothing but a compass, the setting sun, and their faith to guide them. What faith they must have possessed! The difficulties, the Indians that beset them on every side, and all their troubles must be imagined, for they cannot be told. We have no time this evening to follow in their road making, river fording or ferrying across the streams, or taking their wagons to pieces and carrying them over the mountains piece by piece. It was this company that hunted the trail across the plains, which hundreds of thousands of people have traveled over, and millions born and yet unborn will travel, because the railroad is built mostly along that trail.

On July 24th, 1847, these brave people came out of Emigration canyon, where Wilford Woodruff came down on to the bench land near where the penitentiary is. President Young alighted from President Woodruff's carriage, in which he was riding, sick. He took a look around and said, "Drive on; this is not the place yet." That night they camped where the Templeton Hotel now stands.

In the morning the President went over to where the Temple now stands. Here he looked to the north, then turned to the west, thence south, and then then turning to the east, as much as to say to the mobocrats: "We are beyond your power now." He then put his cane down, and said, "Here we will build a Temple unto the Lord." You that have been in it can testify to the truth of his saying.

To plow, to plant, sow and build houses, was the next thing to do.

President Young, with a trusty few and the best teams, started back to guide the Saints to their new home. It is well for you to understand that the people left at Winter Quarters, were organized into companies of fifty teams in each. These trains moved out as close to each other as convenient, so they could protect each other in case of an Indian attack. Many of the teams had to be driven by women and children, as many of the men already had gone with the Battalion and Pioneers.

This made much work for those men that were left; hitching up teams, and standing guard.

Just imagine yourself turning out of your bed in one of those storms to go on guard, in a rain storm, such as only the Platte valley can produce, where it pours down as though the deluge was on again. Mud! mud! everywhere you went; with no wood to make a fire; no houses. You could not stretch the tents that you had with you. I was in one of those storms for three days and nights. In all of that we did not have a fire. We ate raw bacon with a few crackers we had left.

Each day we had to travel and each night we stood guard. I do not believe that there was ever an emigrant train that crossed the plains that escaped those storms. The captain goes ahead and looks out a camping place, where water and grass can be had; when the wagons arrive he corrals them. This is done by driving one half to the right, the other to the left in a half circle, this then forms the corral, with the camp on the outside and the stock inside. This is done as a protection against the Indians. The camp is now made.

The teams once unhitched and sent out to grass, tents are pitched, water is brought, buffalo chips are gathered, and a fire started on the ground or in the sheet iron stove, as the case may be, and all is moving so as to get something to eat before the storm comes that is approaching, or before night sets in. Hungry! it makes me hungry now, to think how hungry we would get then. A few hymns and songs were sung, then prayers, and to bed to rise in the morning, to pack up, and move on repeating the same performance day after day. All had to walk up hill that were not sick, and many will this day tell you that it was most all up hill. This labor had to be performed; the fear of Indians had to be endured for at least three months, or all the way from the states, to your now happy homes in Utah.

We find that about seven hundred wagons, with about two thousand people, came the first year. Contrast the labor of the ancient Israelites with that of the Latter-day Saints. Moses was out but fifteen days with his people when they began to murmur, and wish themselves back around the flesh pots of the Egyptians. The Lord had to feed them quail on toast, with manna as a side dish, to get them along at all. Is it to be wondered at that they quit work, and that their descendants have not worked much since? Just think of it! Forty years traveling, and an overland coach would have driven the same distance in two days, or the pony express would have made it in twenty hours. Brigham Young, with the Saints, traveled one thousand miles, making the road every foot of the way, in three months and eleven days. The people planted a garden and reaped the fruits thereof the same year.

There were no stores to run to for every little thing that was wanted in those days; the people just simply did without. Each year teams had to be sent back to bring up the Saints that came across the ocean, and those that were left on account of having no means to come the first year. Each year missionaries were sent abroad to preach, and each year found the people making new settlements, building new forts and digging new canals. The Indians took