

WHAT THE COMMERCIAL CLUB HAS DONE FOR SALT LAKE

Manager Harris Tells the Story for Christmas News Readers.

THE old chamber of commerce, which, under the efficient secretaryship of Judge E. F. Colborn, accomplished so much for the good of Salt Lake City, went out of existence a good many years ago for reasons which were then familiar and which are now of no particular interest. A series of years followed its extinction when Salt Lake City occupied the unique position among cities of similar size in the United States of having no organization of business men. The necessity for such an organization impressed itself upon the minds of the people to such an extent that on Feb. 11, 1902, there was incorporated under the laws of the State of Utah the present organization known as the Commercial club. This club began with a membership of 55 of the most prominent citizens of the city, and Mr. W. A. Nelden was made president. The club, from this small beginning, has grown rapidly and substantially until today it has a membership of over 400, resident and non-resident members, and its assets approximate \$20,000 in excess of all its liabilities. The Commercial club, Salt Lake City, is in reality a chamber of commerce or board of trade to which has been added the social feature. Its membership consists of business and professional men, and any reputable citizen of the State of Utah is entitled to belong to it. The method of its organization and the manner in which it is conducted is in line with the custom of similar organizations in other parts of the United States, where it has been demonstrated that the social feature aids in maintaining the efficiency of the organization from a business standpoint.

DURING THE PAST YEAR.

It is proposed here to give only a brief outline of the principal work undertaken by the club during the past year. A detailed statement of all it has accomplished and attempted to accomplish, in the fulfillment of its mission, would take up more space than has been accorded this article.

For many years it has been evident to the thoughtful citizen that in view of the rapid and substantial growth of

the city in population and wealth a material increase in the water supply was a necessity. In the latter part of 1902 this club took up the work of devising a plan for such increase and prosecuted it vigorously and intelligently. The various committees appointed by the board of governors for the purpose worked indefatigably for many weeks on the subject, their labors finally culminating in a plan for the appointment of a non-partisan commission by the governor, the members of which were to serve without pay, to begin and carry to completion a modern system of waterworks, which would provide abundant water for a population of 150,000 people. There was also presented with this plan a system of financing the enterprise which would entail upon the taxpayer but little additional burden. This plan was the result of much thought and study and had the unqualified endorsement of the best financiers of the city. The Legislature of 1903 was asked to pass such laws as were necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose indicated but, for causes, which it would now be unprofitable to discuss, that body declined to do so. In view of the fact, however, that the demand for an additional supply of water is ever increasing in intensity with the growth of the city it is fair to presume that the great mass of valuable data, bearing on this subject, accumulated by the Commercial club will become of value in considering the question in the future.

Some months prior to the termination of the school term ending in the spring of this year it became evident that the public schools of the city would close some five weeks in advance of the regular time because of the lack of funds at the disposal of the board of education. After the board of education had finally declared that they were unable to maintain the schools longer, and had directed the teachers to quit their work, the board of governors of the Commercial club took the matter in hand and continued the schools for the full term. This work was accomplished by public subscription, aided by a great concert given in the Tabernacle, which building was donated for the purpose by the authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is only fair to say, however, that these means would have been altogether insufficient had it not been for the earnest work of that public spirited citizen, Mr. Simon Bamberger, treasurer of the club and a member of the board of governors.



COLONEL EDWIN F. HOLMES,
President of the Commercial Club, Who Will Probably Succeed Himself.

who personally raised the greater part of the sum needed.

When it was definitely determined that the San Pedro road would be built, thus forming another connecting link between this city and the Pacific coast, the club decided to show its appreciation of the great accomplishment by giving a banquet to United States Senator W. A. Clark as a token of appreciation of the work of himself and associates. This function was given in the club rooms and was attended by nearly 300 members of the club and their guests representing nineteen-twentieths of the business interests of the state, and every phase of our religious, business and political thought.

It will be remembered that in September last there was held in the city of Ogden the eleventh session of the National Irrigation congress, which was attended by many of the most prominent and distinguished citizens of the United States, and which surpassed in the character of its accomplishment any preceding meeting of that great body. The Commercial club of this city, appreciating the importance of the gathering referred to and its bearing upon the material interests of the arid west, went to the assistance of the city of Ogden and succeeded in raising from our public spirited citizens something over \$5,000 to aid in the entertainment of the congress. Too much praise cannot be given to our sister city on the north for the magnificent manner in which she handled the affair, and it is a cause of congratulation that Salt Lake City was enabled to be of service to her.

The club also at this time had as its guests the Washington correspondents of the great daily newspapers of the country, who were in attendance upon the congress. Aided by the Press club these distinguished gentlemen were entertained with trips about the city and a visit to Utah lake, for the purpose of inspecting the proposed reservoir site, and by a banquet at night. This was only one of many other parties of distinguished men who have been entertained during the past year by the club. The ultimate advantage derived by the city and state, from the extending of such courtesies can only be indefinitely determined, but the officials of the club have always considered it in line with the proper work of the organization, and feel sure that the expense incurred will return in a thousand ways of benefit.

During the year reciprocal relations, involving an exchange of club courtesies, have been made with many of the most important commercial clubs of the country, so that the honor of a card of membership in the Commercial club of Salt Lake City is entitled to all the

privileges of members of the clubs with whom this one is thus affiliated. Sometime in November of this year the people of Salt Lake City received notice that the price of coal would be advanced from \$5 to \$5.75 per ton. Recognizing the fact that there was no family or interest in the state so poor and none so rich that it would not be affected adversely by this increase in the price of a necessity, the club at once began an agitation on the subject and an investigation into the causes of the proposed raise. This work resulted in a prompt return to the original price, thus saving to the citizens of the state many thousands of dollars.

What has been recited above gives but a faint idea of the good that has been accomplished by having in our midst an organization, the duty of which is to look out for the public welfare. It is safe to say that no instrumentality has in the past been so potent as this in bringing about a better understanding between the various classes of citizenship. This work alone, if pursued to the ultimate and happy conclusion would far more than justify the existence of the club. But in addition to what has been mentioned it should be remembered that the club has circulated great quantities of literature describing the advantages and resources of the city and state and its office force is kept busy continually answering correspondence of inquiry from home seekers and capitalists. In conclusion I would like to invite attention to the fact that men become members of the Commercial club for various reasons; some of them support it because of the good they hope it will accomplish from a business standpoint; others become members for the social advantages it offers; while still others affiliate themselves with it for a combination of both reasons.

It is the club's mission to satisfy both of these interests, and the club has been, in the past year, the scene of many social functions. There have been banquets, musicales, lectures and other functions given in its rooms, all of which have tended to bring our people together, and have doubtless been productive of much good in many directions.

One of the most notable affairs that has occurred during the past year was the second annual banquet of the club, which occurred on Dec. 14, and was given in honor of the Weber club of Ogden, in celebration of the arrangement of reciprocal relations between the organizations and with the design of cementing more strongly the friendship which now exists between the commercial centers of the state.

Believing in organization, as it does, it has been the policy of the club to organize other public bodies than itself, and this feeling has resulted in the organization, during the past six months, of the Hay and Grain association and of the Real Estate association. In conclusion, I wish to say that there is a strong determination on the part of the club membership to live up to the great possibilities for good that lie before it.

FISHER S. HARRIS,
Assistant Secretary and Manager.

The Oil and Gas Fields of the Great Salt Lake Valley.

NATURE has provided well for Utah and its citizens. Its resources are almost boundless, and nothing could be more true than the oft repeated saying "that its inhabitants would never suffer for want if a high stone wall were built around this state and they were shut out entirely from communication with other portions of the world."

While the agricultural, horticultural, manufacturing and stock raising interests of the commonwealth are great, indeed, it is becoming more and more generally admitted that mining is its most important industry.

The metal mines of Utah have produced considerably more than \$30,000,000 during the year 1903. While the mountains are yielding their wealth in this manner the Great Salt Lake valley and some other portions of the state are attracting the oil magnates of the country. The former, particularly, is looked upon at the present time as a very inviting field for investigation and within the past few weeks developments have come to the surface which indicate that some of the noted oil kings of Pennsyl-

vania and other districts are reaching out in this direction for a foothold.

NOTED OIL EXPERTS.

During the past year several of the most competent oil experts of America have been here and they have pronounced the region stretching along the shores of the lake from this city north to the Bear river as strikingly favorable for the development of large and productive oil wells. If their opinions count for anything the indications are equally as good here as they were in the Beaumont, Texas, the Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania fields.

SYNDICATES FORMED.

At least two syndicates have been formed to operate in the Salt Lake valley, and conspicuous figures in one of them is the Guffey-Galey combination, which has millions of capital to back it up in any of its undertakings. This syndicate has machinery already on the ground with other consignments on the road. The first investigations are to be made near Farmington, in which considerable energy and money was spent several years ago in opening up the gas wells which flourished for a

time, but were finally abandoned for causes not the fault of the fields.

DID NOT GO DEEP ENOUGH.

Men who are competent to judge have since declared that the reason for this failure lay in the fact that the wells were not sunk deep enough, that they had not been put down to a solid formation, and that had Henry L. Driver and other promoters of the gas well enterprises, kept right on they would not only have found stronger and better flows of gas, but within a depth of 3,000 feet struck the oil strata.

INTEREST REAWAKENED.

Until a little over a year ago the surrounding fields remained dormant. Some activity was evidenced in other parts of the state a few years ago, but the Salt Lake valley section was apparently abandoned, until late last year, when Charles K. Rowland, who had visited Utah a number of times and had been on the low flat lands near Farmington, where the Driver wells were put down a dozen years ago. Mr. Rowland relates that in October, a year ago, he was in Chicago and at the Grand Pacific hotel in that city he happened to meet Col. William Weiss, a prominent capitalist of Beaumont, Texas, and who at that time was extensively interested in these fields.

ADVICE OF A TEXAN.

Mr. Rowland informed the captain of what he had seen in Utah. He gave the Texan information concerning the formations that existed here and told him of the conditions as they were in general.

"GREATEST IN THE WORLD."

After listening attentively to the story of Mr. Rowland the captain advised the latter to immediately return to Salt Lake City and to lose no time in securing in some way title to the lands, for, he declared, if the conditions were as described, he was as positive as anyone could be that the Salt Lake valley would become one of the greatest oil fields of the world. Owing to his delicate state of health, Captain Weiss did not care to enter into any new enterprises, but promised to give Mr. Rowland all the assistance that he could.

BEGAN LEASING LANDS.

Acting upon the advice of the Texas capitalist, Mr. Rowland returned to Utah. His acquaintance here was limited, but he knew Dr. P. S. Kough, so he laid his plans before him and they quietly commenced leasing and locating lands in the vicinity of the old gas wells near Farmington. But soon after his arrival from Chicago, Mr. Rowland went to Beaumont, Texas, for the purpose of studying that field and

making comparisons. Altogether, Mr. Rowland made two trips to the Texas field and finally came away thoroughly convinced that conditions were every bit as favorable here as any place he had seen.

He endeavored to interest Beaumont capitalists, but owing to the distance between there and here and the fact that the field there offered favorable opportunities for investment, he found it a very difficult task. Mr. Rowland met Capt. Weiss there, who introduced him to many prominent citizens and finally to Robert E. C. Wilson, who had been engaged by the Galey-Guffey syndicate in leasing oil lands in the Beaumont district.

LAD BEFORE PENNSYLVANIANS.

Mr. Wilson consented to go to Pittsburgh, where he undertook to interest his employers to the extent at least of investigating the Utah field.

S. V. SHELPS BECAME INTERESTED.

At about this juncture the support of Schuyler V. Shelp, manager of the Walker Bros. Dry Goods Co., was enlisted and he joined heartily into the plan to bring about the development of the lands along the lake shore between this city and the northern end of the lake.

GALEY AND GUFFEY CAME HERE.

Mr. Shelp also went to Pittsburgh later to interview the Pennsylvania oil kings, and through his endeavors Messrs. Galey and Guffey consented to make a personal investigation of the local fields. Both were here during the past summer. In addition to this they had some of the best oil experts in the country on the ground and all seemed to reach the one conclusion: that the geological and other conditions could not be more promising for large productive wells. Accordingly, Messrs. Galey and Guffey made a proposition which was accepted by Mr. Shelp and his associates.

Up to this time the promoters of the enterprise encountered many discouragements, but when the Pennsylvania men concluded to come, the horizon commenced to brighten.

CONTROL 16,000 ACRES.

The Galey-Guffey syndicate was given the controlling interest in something like 16,000 acres of lands, the consideration being that they were to sink wells to great depth and thoroughly determine the worth of the field. The machinery has begun to arrive and within a few weeks active drilling operations will be in progress; they having contracted to sink three wells. Only the most modern machinery will be used and the first pipe to be put down will measure 13 inches in

diameter. The rotary and standard rigs, designed to meet all conditions likely to be encountered, will be used. All the pipe necessary in the work has been ordered and will be delivered to the ground before drilling actually commences.

WITHIN NINETY DAYS.

The operators claim that with the modern machinery they have provided, if nothing happens to interfere seriously, they will have reached a depth of anywhere from 2,500 to 3,000 feet within 90 days after commencing operations, by which time it is confidently expected that success will have been achieved and the dawn of a new era in the state's history will be at hand.

MEN FROM BEAUMONT.

In September last, Perry Weiss, a son of the captain, visited the local field in company with a number of well known Texas operators; they examined the field and went away thoroughly satisfied as to its future.

75,000 ACRES SECURED.

In Salt Lake, Davis, Weber and Boxelder counties the Shelp-Rowland syndicate has acquired by purchase, lease and location upwards of 75,000 acres. Dr. P. S. Kough, Robert E. C. Wilson, Judge T. J. Anderson and Charles Walker are heavily interested in the lands.

While Mr. Rowland has taken an important part in attracting capital to the Salt Lake valley fields he declares that the success thus far attained is due to the energy of Mr. Shelp more than anyone else. Other companies have been formed to search for oil and gas. The latest corporation formed is the Brigham City Gas and Oil company, which has acquired about 3,000 acres near the town of Farmington and other places along the shores of the Great Salt Lake natural gas is continually escaping from the ground. The flow is heavy in some localities. On the ground acquired by the Brigham City concern is the remains of an old brick kiln, the brick having been burned with natural gas used as fuel.

ON PROMONTORY POINT.

Another evidence, and a very good one, that oil actually exists in the Salt Lake valley, has been brought to light by the receding of the waters of the lake on the west side of Promontory point, directly west of Ogden, along the Lucin cut-off of the Southern Pacific railway.

Here immense deposits of asphaltum have been found on the shores and in the water of Utah's briny sea.

During the past year this district has attracted considerable attention and many locations have been made there,

although little has been done to develop them. A number of Californians succeeded in getting locations and they have formed the Royal Oil company.

CREATED ENTHUSIASM.

At the late session of the Irrigation congress several barrels of the product were exhibited, later at the Weber county fair, which caused quite a little attention. A number who attended the congress became so deeply concerned that they visited the scene and returned a few days afterwards amazed and none the less astonished, but enthusiastic over what they had seen and were a unit in expressing the belief that the day was not far off when this field would become important in the production of not only crude asphaltum, but an excellent quality of oil.

OZZES FROM THE GROUND.

The substance oozing from the ground is as black as the blackest coal tar and is visible over a strip about a mile in width and for the most part is covered by water ranging from a few inches up to a few feet. Above the surface of the shallow water are innumerable black points, some of them are

quite large and they are referred to as asphaltum islands which have been formed by the constant oozing up of this gummy substance from the bottom of the lake. A pipe was driven down in one place to a depth of about 70 feet and from the top of it is coming a slow but constant stream of this black, sticky material. An analysis made some time ago shows it to contain 84 per cent asphaltum, and 40 per cent fine oils.

HAD SEEN ONE.

Prof. Thomas C. Mendenhall of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, while traveling through Ohio several years ago, called at the district school which, as a boy, he had attended. They asked him at the school, to make a few remarks, he assented, and began to talk to the children in a direct fashion, trying to interest them from the start.

"Did any of you," he said, "ever see an elephant's skin?"
"A boy held up his hand and wriggled excitedly."
"Well," said Prof. Mendenhall to him, "I have," said the boy.
"Where did you see it?" the professor asked.
"On an elephant," was the reply.



S. V. SHELPS.

Trustee of the Recent Big Oil Land Deal in This and Davis Counties.



COL. C. K. ROWLAND.

Original Promoter of a Deal That May Make Salt Lake a Richer Place.