

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper

ARIZONA PIONEERS.

Years ago, a wagon-train of desert travelers pitched their tents beside the waters of the Salt River, in Arizona. A fertile valley was about them, and the azure of a perfect sky curved down on every side to purple-tinted mountains. They had journeyed patiently for months over a trackless, parched and barren waste, beneath a blistering sky, through a land where human toes had tracked them by day and menaced them by night—under the sun a dreaded thirst, under the stars a dreading vigil. Rough they were in aspect, uncouth, perhaps, in manner—for pioneers, no matter though the divine afflatus encased beneath their rude assumption conceal their finer sensibilities with a rugged semblance of their undeveloped physical surroundings—but in their midst they brought a maiden, fairer than aurora, and a man of perfect mould. Faith was the name of the damsel, and her consort's name was Industry. And when the weary pilgrims took each a portion of the fertile valley they had found, and laid their hearthstones there, and turned, with plow, the brown soil up towards the smiling sky, this twain dwelt with them still.

Prior to this time, when the mighty bells of eastern cities were ringing out their announcement of the birth of the year 1878, that portion of the great Salt River valley on which Mesa City now stands, was an arid plain, unpeopled and practically unknown. In February of that year its regeneration began. Seated at a camp-fire on the banks of the river, a few travel-stained, weary men, almost destitute of worldly goods, planned its restoration to the markets of the world, from the torpor in which it had lain since the annihilation of the Aztec race, long centuries before.

Frank M. Pomeroy, John H. Pomeroy, George W. Sirrine, Warren L. Sirrine, Theodore C. Sirrine, Charles Mallory, Elijah Pomeroy, Parley P. Sirrine, from Bear Lake, Idaho, and William M. Newell, Charles I. Robson, William Schwartz, Job Henry Smith, Charles Crismon, Jesse D. Hobson, William Crismon and J. H. Blair, all from Salt Lake City, were their names. And when in future years the youth of a wholly developed continent read the biographical histories of the great pioneer heroes of America, no purer source for information, no nobler models for emulation, will be found in all the archives of Occidental achievement than the earnest, patient, self-abnegating careers of these modest, but truly great reclaimers and reformers of a long forgotten and a long abandoned land. There will be no thrilling tale of bloody battle on their page of that great history, no incident of reckless, warrior courage; but it will tell of hunger and of hardships bravely borne, and of heroic lean labor cheerfully performed; of smiles which conquered grim adversity, smiles which rainbowed the very sweat upon their brows.

Seated at that campfire, their loved ones sleeping near, the colony in all numbering seventy-nine, they counseled for the morrow. What were their pos-

sessions? What had they with which to begin their battle with undeveloped nature? What did they need? What could they procure? An inventory was mentally taken; their requirements approximately discussed; and the result would have dismayed many men of the most determined mold. Not so with them. The first essential requisite, of course, was water—not to assuage their thirst, but the thirst of the torrid lands. Ditches must be made. Where were the engineers with their costly instruments and years of college training? Where the heavy teams and modern implements to turn this water from its sunken bed out onto the higher plain of the adjacent soil? They had them not. Yet, that night they resolved that these ditches should be dug. How did they accomplish it? God only knows! The story of their privations, their sufferings and their achievements will be told when the history of the Mormon colonization is fully written.

In May following, W. A. Kimball, of Park City, Charles Crismon, Jr., Joseph Cain and William Brim, from the neighborhood of Salt Lake, joined the colony, and immediately began co-operation in all of its undertakings. Later in the same year, T. C. Sirrine located, in his name, the section of land upon which Mesa City now stands; which section was the true nucleus of the subsequent growth of the region now known as the Mesa lands of the Salt River valley, embracing, as they do, the wealth of vineyards, orchards, beautiful farms and the numerous industrial and commercial developments which are fast becoming unrivaled in the entire West.

The first settlers of this city were nothing if not practical. Every step they took was taken with an eye single to the demands of an imperative future: Work was their capital; and with it homes must be built; fields converted into farms, and lots into garden patches. A choice section was decided upon for the building of a town. The land chosen was deeded to a townsite company by its locator, T. C. Sirrine, and plans for its symmetrical apportionment were formulated by C. I. Robson, George W. Sirrine and F. M. Pomeroy, who also gave it its present name. It was surveyed into lots and blocks, the streets being given a width of 125 feet, by A. M. Jones. The plan adopted for the distribution of the lots, all of which were an acre and a quarter in size—thus making eight lots in a block of ten acres—was that the settler who held one share in the newly built Mesa canal, each share being then valued at \$200, was entitled to four lots, and he who held more than one to as many more in the same ratio. The work of erecting houses was then begun, and Charles Mallory built the first adobe house, which still stands near the geographical center of the town. The other buildings were constructed Mexican fashion, the roof being made first, supported on poles, and then the walls were built up to it. On the completion of the canal to a distance of nine and a half miles, fruit trees were planted and gardens speedily laid out. A schoolhouse—that also served for religious purposes—was then erected of adobe, and in 1882 an addition to it was made. About this

time the place began to take on quite a village air, and it was considered entitled to municipal incorporation. A petition praying for such was signed by sixteen citizens on July 5th, 1883, and was granted by the county supervisors July 15th, 1883. An election was held on the first Monday of August following, and the officials elected were as follows: A. F. McDonald, mayor; E. Pomeroy, G. W. Sirrine, W. Passey and A. F. Stewart, councilmen; C. I. Robson, recorder; J. H. Carter, treasurer; H. C. Longmore, assessor; W. Richins, marshal; H. S. Phelps, poundkeeper.

Under the wise direction of this governmental body, the city of Mesa was steadily improved, streets and sidewalks received due attention; and in the ensuing years, their successors followed in the line of progress they laid down. Desirable homes were erected concomitant with the growth of wealth, and at the present time no city can boast more elegant residence and business structures than adorn its soil. The streets and sidewalks are uniform and noble in their wide proportions, and are laid out to the compass' cardinal points; while two plazas, each ten acres in extent, provide for future public demands in the way of parks or recreation grounds. The wealth of foliage, and fruits and flowers, of deep-green lawns and well-kept homes, add much to the facial beauty of the town. As an index to the taste displayed in the selection of this foliage, the pepper, a stately evergreen, which grows here to a majestic size; the palm, the prototype of grace in arborage; the broad-reaching umbrageous China and the weeping willow may be mentioned.

The keynote to the stable condition of the little city, its finances, and all other phases of its corporate life, is the fact that its citizens are unanimous in their co-operation towards its prosperity, irrespective of personal creed or party promptings.

POPULATION AND WEALTH.

Beginning with a population of seventy-nine souls, in the early part of 1878, the community has steadily grown, slow, it is true, but healthfully and permanently. The last city census, taken January 4th, 1894, shows a population of six hundred and forty-eight, and the increase to the present time may be safely said to have swelled the number to seven hundred in all. One of the most convincing evidences of the people's prosperity is the fact that almost every family owns its own home and lands. The assessment rolls of the city and county are indubitable proof of this; and, what is more, the per capita of wealth is considerably larger than in many cities of its size elsewhere. Taking the city assessment alone, the 36 ten-acre blocks, together with the 28 blocks of fractional size, excluding public property and school lands, all of which are within the city limits and owed by city people, and the assessed valuation of the same amounts to \$37,252; while the improvements and personal property thereon are assessed at \$69,148, making a total assessed valuation of \$106,400 in round numbers. This valuation, however, is conceded to be exceedingly low, more so than is the general rule outside the territory. For, instead of being assessed at one third of its actual value, as is common, it is listed in many cases, at not more than one-fifth, and as a rule, at about one-fourth. This