

has some fine-looking ranobes where there only drinkable water on the east side is to be found; all other water, and more particularly that obtained from a distance at Mercur, is so strongly impregnated with arsenic that it is not only unfit but unsafe to drink. Those who do drink it do so in moderation of course, but even then they are soon made aware by kidney troubles that it is a very unwise thing to do; however, as water is not much used for drinking purposes in the average mining camp, it does not matter greatly.

It would be about as difficult a matter to estimate the population of Mercur at this time as to determine the number of ants in a hill where they are abundant and busy. There are certainly a thousand people, perhaps more. You see there are large numbers coming along every day and these or at least a majority of them do not come to stay; besides, some that did come with the intention of remaining change their minds and leave, not a few of them by the old, familiar means introduced by the first hip of our race as soon as he got done crawling—that is, they walk. This discloses the fact—and pricks a popular bubble at the same time—that all who are there are not millionaires; the truth is that several are not worth over \$100,000, and I am personally acquainted with a few who would give full title and immediate possession to all their property for \$5,000 or \$10,000 at the most. These are the ones previously referred to as walking out. The walking is not very good and is oftener than otherwise aggravated by the accompaniment of an empty stomach. It sounds queerly enough to say that in a place where, opulence is the rule and native wealth in its manifold forms abound—in places where there are more men wanting jobs than jobs wanting men; but such is undoubtedly the case. This is not the fault of the camp either; in most other respects it is equal to its reputation; but whenever any camp, or other place for that matter, begins to boom, it immediately becomes a cynosure and transients and others are attracted to it like bees to a flower, the result being that a flower of a dozen bee capacity is beleaguered by two or three dozen bees and a very great proportion of them are disappointed in the matter of obtaining honey; a very few get all they want, or at least all they need, a larger number have to get along with a moderate supply, and several get nothing at all, unless getting "hot" figure as a possession, and this is no fault of the supply point at all but of those who persist in overdoing things.

The central portion of the town proper presents a metropolitan appearance as any new mining camp ever does. The frame buildings are confluent for some distance on either side of the principal street and a rambling sort of building up is evident almost everywhere. The great Mercur mine is situated due south of this part and is not as hard to get at as most big concerns of the kind are, being less than a quarter of a mile distant and up a forty-five degree hill. The ore is emptied from the mine right into cars ready to receive it and taken to the mill. Other properties of less renown

are in evidence whichever way you look and it is the expressed belief of many that the greatest ones have yet to be discovered. Perhaps this is true, but it would be a reversal of the record if it were. Anyway, prospecting is going actively ahead and will be more vigorously conducted than now when the snow shall have entirely disappeared for the season. Locations extend down the canyon which stretches out easterly and at right angles with the one in which the town lies, these reaching down as far as Five Mile Pass, where the Union Pacific leaves Cedar Valley and passes into the one first spoken of.

And how long will the boom last? Current history shows us that these outgrowths of enterprising communities are all more or less consumptive, but that of Mercur shows symptoms of holding out longer than many of its predecessors. The working, in the language of the song, may be for years and it may be forever so far as any presently known appliances of man go.

Look at it from any standpoint you please, Mercur is a pretty big proposition. It has its drawbacks, which do but prove the good qualities. The genus millionaire of the mushroom variety, previously spoken of, does it more harm than anything else, but then he is omnipresent and inevitable. A few days since a couple of men who have been prospecting for some time made what was considered a fair strike, and while such things do not create any great excitement this one attracted enough attention to cause quite a few persons to go out and take a look at the discovery. The interest manifested was about the same as that which the good middle-aged and more elderly ladies of a community show when a neighbor has a brand new baby. One of the discoverers, who has of late vainly striven to "stand off" a barkeeper and only "works" the "bannery" because the proprietor of the latter knows full well that to diminish his customer now would be to lose all arrears, recently announced that he and his partner had been offered \$10,000 for their find. "Well, why didn't you take it?" some one asked. "Oh," he replied, "ten thousand ain't no money; it don't cut no ice at all." These self-sufficient barnacles on prosperity whose affected indifference to small sums of money is so diaphanous that there is not a sucker in the country so green that they can catch him, serve but one useful purpose—their example is an incentive to honorable effort.

ESSAY CAIGH.

SNOWFLAKE STAKE CONFERENCE.

The regular quarterly conference of the Snowflake Stake of Zion convened in the Stake house at Snowflake on Sunday, March 1st, 1896, and continued two days. The presidency of the Stake, Jesse N. Smith, L. H. Hatch and J. H. Richards, were present, also nearly all the members of the High Council, bishops and other leading brethren, besides a fair congregation, and a few Saints from the St. Johns Stake.

The best of feeling prevailed, and good and wholesome counsels were given. The Snowflake ward choir

rendered the hymns and anthems in a very creditable manner. The speakers enjoyed a rich gift of the good spirit—giving prominence to the proper payment of tithes and offerings, observance of the Sabbath, marriage, the more efficient cultivation of the soil, contentment and the proper control and instruction of the young.

A Priesthood meeting was held during the evening of March 1st. The High Council as usual met on the Friday previous to the conference.

The conference of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement associations was held on Saturday, February 29, at which it was shown that the young people are in a fair state of progression.

The general authorities of the Church and the Stake authorities were all sustained by unanimous vote of the conference.

Rather a disagreeable wind storm prevailed, but that did not hinder the Saints from enjoying the occasion and profiting by the instructions.

Respectfully, L. M. SAVAGE,
Clerk of Conference.

POLYGAMOUS CHILDREN.

Following is the full text of Governor Wells's message to the Legislature on the bill relating to the heritable rights of polygamous children; the message was read in the Senate session Monday afternoon.

STATE OF UTAH, EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
SALT LAKE CITY, March 9, 1896.

To the President and Gentlemen of the Senate:

I have the honor to inform you that I have this day approved and filed with the secretary of State, Senate bill No. 79, entitled:

"An act relative to the heritable rights of the issue of polygamous marriages."

I understand that the purpose of this act is to re-enact and make clear the laws already in operation, and that it entitles the issue of polygamous marriages, born previous to March 3, 1883, to inherit or to be entitled to any distributive share in the estate of the father of such issue. I believe that this legislation is proper and right and it appears to me, in view of the fact that conditions which called forth Congressional legislation on this subject are settled and that the past has been concluded, that it would be in the interest of public policy and for the welfare of the State to remove whatever ban may exist against the issue of polygamous marriages, up to one year succeeding the date of the amnesty proclamation of the President; or what would be better in my judgment, up to the date of the admission of the State. I am convinced that such legislation would not only be in the interest of the State, but the children themselves affected thereby would be better citizens, in the knowledge that they are entitled to all the legal rights and privileges of their fellows.

Legislators will not forget that while the manifesto was final with the great majority of the people, it signaled the immediate surrender of what had, for a lifetime been held as a vital religious sacrament, and some hearts cannot change in a day.

HEBER M. WELLS,
Governor.