

industry a cornucopia of plenty satisfactory to the most exacting farmer who has invested his money in this region.

The tendency here, however, is toward horticulture. The people regard their lands as too valuable and productive and capable of too great returns, to plant upon them more grain or fodder material that is barely sufficient for their farinaceous needs and the requirements of their stock. Almost everything is here that is grown from the Arctic circle to the equator. In fruits the following are produced, many of them in the highest grade of perfection known: oranges, limes, figs, bananas, walnuts, peaches, quinces, pears, apples, lemons, strawberries, olives, pomegranates, almonds, nectarines, apricots, pecan nuts, plums, cherries, peanuts and grapes of every variety. Besides these, vegetables of every kind give a most prolific yield and are grown all the year round. Many of the deciduous fruits ripen from three to four weeks earlier than those of California, and have the advantages of the earliest markets and highest prices. Oranges are grown to perfection and ripen thoroughly long before frost is known. In this respect the Salt River valley is superior to California and Florida as well.

Cotton and tobacco are also raised, and one farmer is growing cane and growing it successfully. *Cana Agria* as it should be called, meaning "sour cane," is admitted, as the reader doubtless knows, to be the best material for tannic extract in the world. It is rapidly taking the place of costly extracts hitherto procured at enormous expense from the lowlands of the Lesser Ganges in the country around Calcutta, in East India, and should be more extensively cultivated than it is.

Briefly, such is the agri-horticultural phase of the Salt River valley, a land of wonderful fertility, manifold in its productions and bounteous in return for the labor bestowed. It may not inaptly be termed a beautiful oasis in the dreary desert which stretches between the corn fields of Kansas and the groves and vineyards of southern California.

In point of landscape beauty this valley is unsurpassed either beneath the azure skies of Italy or in the distant South Sea Isles. The mountains which form a graceful background to the perspective, are massed in glorious confusion range upon range, until the loftiest and most distant peaks, snowclad, melt into the almost translucent blue of heaven's perfect ether. The tints that rest upon them in the early morning and at eventide are soft as nature's painting on a shell. Here a deep, rich, russet brown, while there a pale pink played upon with blue. In the twilight hours the sun's parting kiss to heaven is reflected again in the softly shifting shadows that are floating there. On every side a perfect perspective prevails. No uncouth foothills mar the middle ground, but field on field of emerald green lead the eye in entrancing vista to their gentle lights.

N. W. McLEOD.

MESA, ARIZONA.

### THE ORATORICAL CONTEST.

THE oratorical society of the University of Michigan was organized some five years ago; the object is to foster an interest in oratory, and to take part in the contests of the Northern Oratorical

League. There are seven competing orators in the contest (which takes place annually), chosen from the students of the University that have not received a degree, and these are chosen by a preliminary contest from the senior, junior and sophomore classes of the literary and law departments. The contestants in the preliminary contest receiving first and second positions are sent to the final contest as representatives of their classes, the "seniors" only being granted two representatives, the other classes one each. Utah received the highest honors in the first contest through the efforts of J. E. Hickman. In true oratory and an earnestness that was inspiring, he told of the sufferings of the Mormons and of their pilgrimage from Missouri to Utah. The audience was held spellbound during the entire oration, and when he told of his wife's mother carrying her babe across the plains, a deathlike silence filled the room. Mr. Hickman did not expect to win when he began his oration. "If I can only get into University Hall with my speech and vindicate my people from the wrongs which have been heaped upon them, I shall be satisfied," he said some weeks ago. He has done more than that!

#### THE BANISHMENT OF THE MORMON PEOPLE.

My subject is a most unpopular one. It was chosen not to herald an unpopular faith, but to defend the cause of civil and religious liberty against unwarranted prejudice; not to advocate the tenets of any religion; but defend the cause of virtue and order against the enemies of all divine and human laws. I keenly realize the disadvantage at which I am placed in defending this much misunderstood people. And I am not ignorant of the prejudice existing upon this subject. There ore, I ask you do not judge until their history is held up to the light of reason.

Though this people originated in New York, I will not speak of their history until we find them in the western part of Missouri, where they had gone and built themselves comfortable homes with the view of worshipping God according to the dictates of their conscience. But as their religion was different from the accepted belief of the day, they soon began to be ridiculed, then to be persecuted; finally organized mobs assembled, and burning their homes, tarred, feathered and whipped many of their people. In their extreme suffering, they applied for protection to judge, priest and governor, but received none. They even petitioned President Van Buren, who replied: "Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you." Bancroft, the great American historian, says that banded mobs went from settlement to settlement of the Mormons, burning their homes, killing or driving the unoffending inhabitants into exile in one place. They murdered every man, woman and child. And among the number killed was an old Revolutionary veteran, who had fought for our independence. Says the historian: "Never in savage or other warfare was there an act more dastardly or brutal." The Missourians in order that they might have a mantle to cover their cruelty, drew up resolutions. They said that the Mormons believed in prophets, etc., in revelations, and that they were superstitious; that, being mostly from the New England States, they believed

in freeing the slaves; and finally, they were poor.

Poverty, superstition, unpopular doctrines—these were the crimes. For such crimes, fourteen thousand inhabitants were driven from their homes in mid-winter. In the Middle Ages? No; in the nineteenth century. In Russia? No; in America, fourteen thousand inhabitants driven from their homes in the dead of winter! The sick were torn from their beds and thrust out into the midnight air, and compelled to seek safety in some bleak forest. There were shivering little children, there were infants, homeless but for a mother's arms, couchless but for a mother's breast. In such distress, pursued by merciless oppressors, they left the tracks of their bleeding feet upon the snows of their pathway. Homeless, shivering, heartbroken and plundered, they sought shelter in the uninhabited plains of Illinois.

In this bleak wilderness, far from the inhumanity of man, the fugitives did for a time find peace and rest. During the six years which they were permitted to remain in Illinois they built several villages, besides Nauvoo, a city of twenty thousand inhabitants. They established schools, founded a university and built a magnificent temple. "It must be admitted," says Bancroft, "that the Mormons in Missouri and Illinois were more honest, temperate, hard-working, self-denying and thrifty people than those by whom they were surrounded." Whatever was the cause that led to their expulsion from Illinois, it was not due to any crimes of theirs, unless it was an offense to profess a different creed and worship at a different shrine. But Governor Ford said that all manner of trumped up charges were brought against them; and those charges were without foundation, for the Mormons had committed no such offenses. On a pretended charge Joseph Smith and others were arrested and taken to Carthage under the sworn protection of the Governor. It is said that Joseph Smith had a premonition of his terrible fate and said: "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter; but I am as calm as a summer morning. I have a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all men. I shall die innocent, and it yet will be said of me, 'He was murdered in cold blood.'" The next day after this prediction he and his brother were killed in Carthage Jail. Again mob law reigned and men lost their reason. The Mormons were ordered from the state; their homes were robbed and laid in ashes. The scenes of Missouri were being repeated. Scarce had the lights of their burning homes died out, when, with scanty hoard, they crossed the Mississippi. On the first night of their exodus, February 4th, 1844, nine wives became mothers. How those innocent babes, sick and delicate mothers, were cared for under such conditions is left to the imagination of the sensitive hearer. Was it in Russia, Tartary or Hindoostan that people had to flee for opinion's sake? As those exiles departed, at the top of every hill they could be seen looking back like banished Moors on their abandoned homes, and their distant temple with its glittering spires.

Let me observe here that there were many honest souls in Missouri and Illinois who cried out against such injustice; but, as is too often the case,