

OLD FOLKS' ANNUAL OUTING.

A fixed and established institution of Utah is what the annual Old Folks excursion has come to be. It is looked forward to and back upon by those who have entered or are verging upon second childhood, as children look upon Christmas or the Fourth of July.

Connected with this custom of giving the old folks a treat each summer, is a spirit of such genuine and sweet charity, of such whole-souled and practical benevolence, and of heartfelt filial love, as throws a softening influence over the whole community, regardless of color or creed; for all the aged, without distinction of sex, race or party, are cordially invited to participate in the festivities of Old Folks day, without money and without price.

The preparations made by the Old Folks committee this year were extensive, and contemplated a larger attendance of the aged than usual. In the neighborhood of 1,500 tickets had been given out, and as it was impracticable to carry so large a number of the old people on one train, it was decided to make two sections. These were announced to leave at 8:30 and 8:45 respectively, this morning, over the Rio Grande Western, which this year generously furnishes the transportation.

At about daylight this morning light showers began to fall and there was a prospect that the day might be unfavorable for an outing for aged persons. But notwithstanding the clouds, some time before the hour of starting large numbers of aged excursionists began to gather at the depot, and long before the time set for the first section to start the platforms were thronged with badge-wearers, while every electric car going in the direction of the depot was laden with them. The showery weather had not in the least dampened the ardor of the veterans, nor had it, apparently, reduced the number of those intending to go.

A choir of about eight voices was on each section. That on the first was led by William H. Foster; the other by T. C. Griggs. On the journey these choirs went from car to car, singing selections and greatly enhancing the pleasure of the excursionists.

OGDEN, Utah, July 16.—Among the excursionists in the first section was the typical Utah veteran, President Willford Woodruff; also President Joseph F. Smith. About the time the first section started, at 8:30, the sun began to shine, and the ride to Ogden was cool, pleasant and delightful. The first section composed thirteen cars, all filled but not overcrowded, and the second section had a like number comfortably filled.

In conformity to the established custom, refreshments in the shape of lemonade (not circus imitation, but a genuine article), fruit and cake were served and relished. The singing in each car by the chorus was a particularly pleasing feature. On the train and during the whole day a spirit of cordial fraternity prevailed among the excursionists. There was much a hand-shaking and many a greeting between old time friends and many a reminiscence was recounted.

Both trains reached Ogden without

a single unpleasant incident and were met by splendidly organized committees. Elaborate and perfect arrangements had been made for the reception of the guests. The bishops of the five wards of Ogden and Marriott and Lynn formed a central committee of seven, with Robert McQuarrie as chairman. This committee had general charge, while the other committees were as follows: Reception, thirty members; transportation, five; decoration, five; music, three; finance, five. Each committee had fully completed its work in a splendid manner. Two hundred vehicles were provided for conveying the excursionists to Lester park, while the street cars bore streamers: "Toll Car Free for Old Folks."

The care, kindness and solicitude with which the aged were met and assisted into conveyances at the depot was marked and in the highest degree creditable to the good people of Ogden. The exact number of old folks on the second train could not be ascertained, but is closely estimated at 700. On the first train the count disclosed 783. There must have been in all just about 1,500—the largest old folks excursion ever given. A number were picked up at the stations of Davis county.

Beautiful Lester Park was gorgeously decorated and admirably arranged for the reception and comfort of the guests. Each Ogden ward had space set apart under trees, and tables of enormous length groined under weight with good things to which the guests were made cordially welcome.

In the pavilion were tables at which the committee, invited guests, including Presidents Woodruff and Smith, dined. Near the pavilion was a tent bearing a streamer "Headquarters Mormon Battalion." Here all "Battalion boys" reported and registered their names and addresses. Over twenty sat at the table reserved for them. About twenty-three members of the Battalion and more than that number of members' widows reported during the day. Old folks from Weber county to the estimated number of about 700 were also present making a gathering of about 2,200 old folks over seventy years of age.

Shortly before noon a program of literary exercises was begun. Besides several musical numbers, the program included an address of welcome by Hon. L. W. Shurtliff, a response by George Goddard and addresses by Elder Franklin D. Richards, Rev. C. F. Richardson, a Presbyterian minister of Ogden, and C. R. Savage. The program for the afternoon included variety sports, games and other amusements.

No rain has fallen in Ogden but the sky is cloudy, making it an ideal day for such an excursion.

In addition to the program as above given, there were addresses by Presidents Woodruff and Smith.

President Woodruff was the first speaker. He expressed the pleasure the occasion afforded him. Referred to Elder Abraham H. Cannon's sickness and hoped the Saints would pray for his recovery. He recounted his experiences in the early days of the Church and the first settlement of Utah. He declared God had set His hand to fulfill the prophecies and revelations given in ancient times.

President Joseph F. Smith was the next speaker. It was a glorious privilege to behold such a sea of faces. He was grateful for the invitation to participate, was glad to see so many aged people present, and among them, two or three survivors of Zion's Camp. He referred to the members of the Mormon Battalion who helped to save this region to the United States and first unfurled the Stars and Stripes in it. He pronounced an eloquent eulogy on the Battalion, which was loudly applauded.

Rev. C. F. Richardson was the next speaker. His remarks were in a humorous and happy strain and pointed several morals. He related several pleasing anecdotes which were greeted with laughter and applause.

Elder Franklin D. Richards followed. For the first time he was able to wear an Old Folks' badge, showing he was seventy; and he was proud of the distinction. He spoke of his association with the founders of the Church and of this State. He paid a glowing tribute to the Mormon Battalion, and said that about the time we learn how to live we pass into the eternal world; exhorted all to ensure the salvation of their souls.

A Maori chief who was present was introduced to the audience and spoke some minutes in his native tongue, apparently with eloquence and feeling.

Elder E. A. Stratford delivered an address, and C. R. Savage expressed the thanks of the Old Folks' committee for the aid received, especially from the Rio Grande Western railroad. He moved a vote of thanks to the officials of the road, which was carried unanimously.

The musical features of the program were very good and were well rendered.

At the present writing the excursionists and friends and general public are thronging Lester park to the number probably of 3,000.

Games and amusements are in progress. There has been no rain, but the atmosphere is cool and comfortable. The excursion is a grand success.

After the close of the NEWS report of the old Folks' excursion to Ogden yesterday, the festivities continued between two and three hours. Each ward in Weber Stake had a dining table under the trees of Lester park, most of them of wonderful length, and any visitor was welcome to any table. A moderate estimate of the number of people who dined in the park during the day would be from 4,000 to 5,000.

Following are the names, ages and addresses of the surviving members of the Mormon battalion who reported at battalion headquarters on the grounds:

Alexander Brown, 70, Lynn.
John C. Thompson, 76, Riverdale.
Clinton D. Brownson, 72, Ogden.
Wm. S. Muir, 74, Bountiful.
Joseph Taylor, 71, Harrisville.
Orin Hatch, 66, Wood's Cross.
Ralph Douglas, 73, Ogden.
James Owens, —, Harrisville.
Willard G. Smith, 69, Morgan.
Jarvis Johnson, 67, Box Elder.
Lorenzo Clark, 90, St. George.
J. W. Shoup, 73, North Ogden.
John Ritter, 76, Eden.
Jesse S. Brown, 71, Lynn.
Chas. B. Hancock, 72, Harrisville.