

IMPROVING WAGON ROADS

THERE is naturally an opportunity for considerable improvement to the wagon roads leading across the Imperial lands, as well as to the roads leading to the colony from various points, and plans are maturing for improvements in a number of directions.

The most important of the roads is that from Flowingwell, over which by far the greater portion of the freight is brought in, and on which the stage comes. The Southern Pacific railroad has never favored that road, because Flowingwell is on a heavy grade, and it wished the Imperial freight and passengers to leave the road at Old Beach, about three miles east of Flowingwell, and an arrangement has been perfected whereby the change will be made at once. This will be an improvement for almost everybody. There is about three miles of very heavy sand to be crossed in coming from Flowingwell, and at least two thirds of that will be dispensed with on the new route, which will be but a trifle longer than the old line.

At Old Beach the Southern Pacific company will put in a depot and telegraph office worthy of the extensive business which it is doing with the people of the Imperial colony, and the facilities for getting goods and people here will be much improved thereby.

Supervisor Jasper is making a study of the situation in this section, with a view to giving Imperial better communication with San Diego and other towns to the west, now having men at work, and County Surveyor Ward and Messrs Allen and Williams have been in the valley the past few days, incidentally keeping an eye open to roads while transacting other business. That the country will soon take some important steps in road building in this section is highly probable.

But while the approaches to the colony are being looked after, the lines of communication between portions of the colony are not being neglected, and it is generally understood that at an early date there will be a more definite marking of what will be the main thoroughfares from Imperial southeast to Calexico and southwest to Blue Lake. There is now a great deal of teaming done over these roads, and their importance is growing daily. Later on there will of necessity be a road leading directly eastward from Imperial to the east side and another directly westward to the west side, crossing the two rivers, where now a long detour is essential. There is no immediate demand for those roads.

PROGRESSIVE COLONISTS

J. H. McKim of Pomona and William Hart of Puente have arrived to take charge of their lands on portions of Sections 7, 8, 9 and 17, township 15, range 15, and are preparing to work on a large scale: They brought to Flowingwell six car loads of freight, including two cars of hay, two of grain, lumber for a house and farm implements. As a considerable saving can be made in getting to their place from the railroad by coming the east side of the Salton, they are considering the propriety of putting in a bridge over the stream northeast of Imperial, near their land, where it would be of great benefit to settlers of that section. These gentlemen are preparing an active campaign of planting during the coming winter, Mr. McKim having 720 acres and Mr. Hart 160 acres which it is proposed to get under cultivation before spring.

BOUGHT THE CROPS

Messrs A. E. Walters and L. M. Holt have recently purchased from Dr. J. C. Blackington his interest in the crops and farming operations near Calexico, as Dr. Blackington desires to devote his time to the improvement of his section 33, just south-east of Imperial, and work on the company's ditches. The doctor has had charge of this work during the past season and Mr. Walters came down this week with the doctor to close up the work and dispose of the crop as soon as it is ready to harvest. Edgar Freeman is now in charge of the ranch.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

I. W. VanDorin brought in household goods filling two freight wagons Monday. He recently arrived with his family from Linda Vista.

FORAGE PLANTS

Some days since H. C. Oakley wrote Walter T. Swingle of the U. S. Department of Agriculture regarding specimens of forage plants for this section, and he will proceed to get them under the conditions of the following letter received from Mr. Swingle, who is located at Berkeley, Cal.:

"I am assured by the Oakley-Paulin Co. that you will be glad to test and report upon some forage plants of the Mediterranean region. These are planted in autumn and grow through the winter.

"If you desire to undertake to test any of these please write or wire me at once. I think the Alexandrine clover may do well with you, and have asked Mr. Fairchild to wire you in regard to it. His address is D. G. Fairchild, Department of Agriculture.

"I am very much interested in the culture of the date palm in the Colorado desert and would like to learn what is the coldest temperature in winter, the hottest in summer, and the nature of the soil at Imperial. How is the water obtained? Is the drainage good? I send you my paper on the date palm under another cover."

STORM CLOUDS

While other portions of Southern California have been visited of late with rain which was severe enough to cause a washout that delayed last Sunday's eastbound overland five hours, Imperial got only a stiff breeze as its portion. There was no disappointment in this, for no one wants it to rain here, preferring to rely on the canals for water.

But there were some beautiful scenes presented to the people of this section. For two days the storm clouds were hanging over the mountains to the westward, and at times the rain could be seen descending, as though in a torrent. But though the wind blew continuously in this direction from the storm center, the storm made no advance beyond the mountains, the clouds hanging over the peaks as though they had been met by an impassable barrier.

ON A BEATEN PATH

People who imagine that Imperial stands off the beaten paths of travel are mistaken, for every day or two there passes through town a group of people bound from points on the coast to other points up the Colorado river, or on their return from the latter region. Four men have passed through Imperial during the last week in two parties, one of which was bound for the river and the other returning.

While wagon roads have been scarce in this part of the world until the last year, the tract has been passed over for years by many people, and now that the roads are made and water is plentiful, the wayfarer finds his task the easier, and makes Imperial a stopping point on his route.

NOW FOR HEADGATES

J. Stuart arrived at Imperial Tuesday to take charge of the construction of headgates, drops, etc., in connection with the canals and laterals. There is a vast amount of lumber to be put in during the next few months. Mr. Stuart has had charge of similar work on several large irrigation systems in Washington, where he worked with C. N. Perry, D. L. Russell and others connected with the Imperial survey.

PROSPECTIVE BRICK YARD

W. Leonard of Los Angeles examined Imperial this week with a view to establishing a brick yard. He thinks a superior brick can be made here, but took samples of earth home to test. As long as he can get wood at \$3.50 a cord he thinks brick can be retailed in Imperial at from \$8 to \$10 a ton. There are a number of persons figuring on building with brick as soon as they are to be obtained.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

W. W. Masten's camp was moved from Calexico to a point five miles north of Imperial Tuesday, from which point the construction of the new road to Old Beach is now in progress.

VARIOUS TOWNSITES

THERE is to be more than one important trading center on the Imperial lands. That is one of the certainties of the future, and already there is a degree of good natured rivalry between the residents and prospective residents of the various towns, and it is evident that the progressive spirit of the people coming to the colony is to be manifested in the building of towns as well as in the cultivation of the soil. At present there are two towns which have passed to the point of ocular demonstration of their existence. These are Imperial and Calexico, the former in the heart of the great colony, and the latter on the international line, where it stands a good chance of intercepting a large portion of the trade with Lower California, and where a custom house will soon become an imperative requisite. Imperial thus far has the advantage of being the point from which a number of important roads radiate to various portions of the colony, and it supports a number of business houses, the number of which is increasing steadily.

Among the towns which are to be, and which already have enthusiastic supporters are Paringa, Eastside and Rancherita. With the first named, there is a belief that it will become of importance as a trading center, and that it will also become an important point for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, there being a number of small tracts around the town adapted to that use. The future of the other towns seems assured, on much the same lines.

That somewhere on the great tract there will be one town which will grow to especial prominence everybody believes, though the opinion as to the town which will gain the lead is an open one, different people viewing the subject as their wishes prove father to their thoughts.

The next year will see some very important developments of town industries on the tract, and there will be some competencies created through increased values.

NATIONAL BANK OFFICERS

At a meeting held in Los Angeles officers of the First National Bank of Imperial were elected, as follows: President, George Chaffey; Vice President, A. H. Heber; Cashier, Leroy Holt; Assistant Cashier, W. F. Holt. The directors consist of the officers and N. W. Stowell. Leroy Holt, who will be in charge of the bank, has returned to Imperial. He has spent most of his business life in the banking business. The bank will begin the transaction of business in about thirty days, using the southern part of Mr. Holt's store building for temporary quarters. Within a short time a substantial bank building will be erected on the southwest corner of Imperial avenue and Eighth street.

THE GREATEST NEED

The one thing that Imperial has the greatest need of is a new oldest inhabitant. It is rather tame talk one hears when the present bearer of that high dignity braces himself and remarks: "When I first arrived here, six months ago —" An oldest inhabitant whose record only goes back six months does not deserve his honors.

BROUGHT HIS FAMILY

Henry Mitchell drove into Imperial Monday, having made the trip from Phoenix, Arizona, about 300 miles, with his wife, mother and six little children and their household goods on two unsheltered wagons. He has no land and had never seen the country before. He hopes to get work with his teams.

PUTTING IN CROPS

H. J. Jenks and W. A. Edgar have leased 160 acres of land southeast of Imperial from W. F. Holt, and are preparing it for a crop of wheat and barley.

NEW POSTOFFICE

The equipment for a new postoffice to be known as Barnes, on the Hunt tract east of Calexico, arrived Monday. Peter Barnes has been commissioned as postmaster.

FIRST CHURCH SOCIAL

A social which was held at the Christian church Thursday evening of last week was of greater importance than is the usual gathering of the kind. It was the first social "function" ever held in that broad land bounded by the Colorado river on the east, the international line on the south, the San Jacinto mountains on the west and the Chuckawalla mountains on the north. In that area might be laid one of the far eastern states.

Possibly the programme which was presented might have been more appropriate to a village improvement society, but such as it was it was purposely selected as adapted to the requirements of the day, leaving to later times the presentation of the more usual concomitants of such gatherings.

Rev. John C. Hay directed the programme and read a letter from a friend at Indio, giving advice regarding the planting of fruit and shade trees on the desert.

Rev. J. S. Kline gave a brief address encouraging the people of the colony to harmonious work.

Mrs. W. A. Edgar gave a very pleasing recitation of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

Miss Jessie Holt recited a pretty story of doll life.

R. T. Perry of Los Angeles and several residents of the valley made brief addresses.

The programme of music was particularly pleasing, Mrs. D. C. Huddleston gave a solo, accompanying herself on a guitar, while Master Carl Huddleston rendered a solo, accompanied by his mother.

Mrs. H. C. Reed presided at the organ as accompanist and soloist in a very creditable way.

FANTASTIC DANCE

Probably the first dance ever held on the Imperial lands was an informal affair in W. W. Masten's dining wagon at Calexico a few days since. Music was provided and a number of the graders and Indians employed near Calexico joined in slinging the light fantastic in a new fangled manner.

NEW COTTAGE

A. W. Patton, one of the old timers in Imperial, having lived here over half a year, is building a neat cottage on East Ninth street, at a point convenient to his freight station.

Mainly Personal

Edward W. Coil and George Lusk of Corona, visited Imperial this week.

George Varney of Halleck, San Bernardino county, looked over business prospects here a few days since.

A. M. Dunn of the Pomona Review, has taken in an eighty-acre slice of Imperial lands, which he selected this week.

Walter Evans and family and F. L. Richmond arrived Tuesday from Phoenix, A. T., having driven through with two covered wagons and eight horses.

A. B. Chaffey, son of George Chaffey, has joined the surveying corps under F. F. Hall. Mr. Chaffey was with the corps a year ago for two months.

William G. McConnell and William Wagler of San Diego, were looking over the lands a few days since, expecting to bring in their families in a short time.

William Demery, representing Baker & Hamilton, brought his 320 pounds of avordupoise to Imperial a few days since, being the first drummer to invade this country, so far as the record goes.

J. E. Heber, son of A. H. Heber, general manager of the Imperial Land company, came in Wednesday to assume charge of the business of the Imperial Mercantile company, which has purchased the store of Leroy Holt.

David Stoner of Corona, who has 320 acres six miles south of Imperial arrived Tuesday, accompanied by J. T. White, wife, four sons and Mrs. White's mother. They will make their home on Mr. Stoner's land, having just arrived from Missouri.