

SONORA.

SONORA was first settled in the Summer of 1848, by a band of Miners from Sonora in Mexico. Hence it was called the Sonoranian Camp, and afterwards Sonora. Wood's Creek and Jamestown, being afterwards settled by Americans, were called the American Camp, or Campo Americano, in contradistinction to the camp of the Sonoranians. The first white men who settled in Sonora, in 1848 and early in 1849, were Joshua Helden, Emanuel Linoberg, Casimer Labetour, Alonzo Green, Hiram W. Theall, R. S. Ham, Charles F. Dodge, Theophilus Dodge, Terence Clark, James Laue, Dr. William M. Shepperd, Alferd W. Luckett, Benjamin F. Moore, Dr. William Norlinu, Francisco Pavia, Jose M. Bosa. — Elordi, Remijio Riveras and James Frasier.

ALCALDES.—The first Alcalde was R. S. Ham, elected in the Fall of 1848. His successors were James Frazier, Hiram W. Theall, and Charles F. Dodge, who was in office at the time of the organization of the County, in the Spring of 1850. The first Justice of the Peace went into office on the first Monday in May, at which time the office of Alcalde ceased.

POPULATION.—In the Fall of 1849, Sonoranian Camp was by far the largest mining settlement in the County, the population being estimated at about 5000 persons. On Sunday, which was the great trading day, the narrow streets were thronged so as to be almost impassable. During the winter a portion of this population was distributed among new camps in the vicinity. In the Summer of 1850, the population was diminished at least one-half by the enforcement of the Foreign Miners' Tax, which was then thirty dollars per month. The merchants, mechanics, physicians,—all classes,—suffered by this sudden exodus from our midst, and business stagnated in every department. In the Fall of 1850, there was quite an accession of white persons, and business revived. Since that time the population has not varied much from 3000, many being foreigners from England, Ireland, France, Germany and Italy.

FIRES.—The first fire occurred in the Fall of 1849, and swept off nearly the whole of the town, which then consisted of canvass, and of remadas, or brush houses. The second fire was on the night of June 17, 1852. It consumed all the most valuable portion of the city, from Church street on the South, to the United States Hotel on the North, destroying one life, and upwards of \$700,000 worth of property. The third fire was on the night of August 17, 1853; loss \$30,000. A fourth fire followed soon after,—on the night of October 3d, 1853, destroying one life and property to the amount of \$300,000.

On the night of November, 2d, 1853, a fifth conflagration destroyed about \$40,000 worth of property.

NEWSPAPERS.—The first newspaper published in the mines of California was the SONORA HERALD, which commenced its career on the 4th of July, 1850; John White & John G. Marvin editors and proprietors. The first seven numbers were printed on Foolscap, and were sold at 50 cents a copy. After reaching the 12th number, John White's interest was transferred to J. R. Reynolds, extensively known as the Ex-Judge of the First Instance. He continued half proprietor for two weeks, then transferred his interest to Dr. Haley, who sold to Dr. L. C. Gunn, after a short suspension of publication. The 15th, 16th and 17th numbers were issued by Judge Marvin and Dr. Gunn. In the 18th number Judge Marvin retired, and E. L. Christman succeeded him. The Herald continued to be issued by Christman & Gunn until the 40th number, when Dr. Gunn became the sole proprietor. Under his auspices it continued till May 22d, 1852, when Walter Murray and James O'Sullivan succeeded him. On the 19th of February, 1853, Mr. O'Sullivan sold to Mr. Murray. On the 1st of August, 1853, Mr. Murray sold back to Dr. Gunn. In April, 1854, the Herald was sold to Mr. O'Sullivan and Alexander Murray, a brother of the former proprietor.

In September, Mr. Murray sold to Mr. O'Sullivan, and the latter remained the sole proprietor till after the election in 1855, when E. A. Rockwell was announced as editor and proprietor. It was first an Independent, then a Democratic paper, and is now devoted to the American party.

The MOUNTAIN WHIG was started in the Summer of 1852, under a Mr. Dunn, as editor and proprietor; but at the end of five weeks it expired. It was a Whig paper.

The UNION DEMOCRAT was commenced by A. N. Francisco, its present editor and proprietor, on the 1st of July, 1854. It is devoted to the Democratic party.

TOWN ORGANIZATION.—On the 7th, of Nov. 1849, the citizens of Sonora organized themselves into a town government, mainly with a view of providing a Hospital for the sick.—Owing to the want of fresh vegetables during the previous year, multitudes of the miners were attacked with scurvy as soon as the rainy season commenced. This was especially true of the Mexicans, who died by hundreds. The sympathies of the benevolent were excited on beholding so much suffering, and a Hospital was built, and maintained for more than six months. The Hospital steward was paid \$8,000