

THE TOWN OF CLINTON.

A PIONEER IN ENTERPRISE—ITS FORTY-SEVEN YEARS OLD RAILROAD—BUSINESS OF THE TOWN—ITS COLLEGE—SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION—PROSPECTS.

Clinton, in East Feliciana parish, though not the oldest place in the State, dates its early recollections back over a half century. But few evidences of its primitive days mark the present beautiful little city. Of these few evidences a little notice may be bestowed on its early enterprise in building and equipping the third railroad in the United States, the cross ties being of poreheart cedar, some of which are lodged where they were first placed in building the roadbed, some forty-seven years ago.

This section being filled with liberal, enterprising and prosperous people, recognized their remote position from the great commercial highways—the water courses—and proceeded among the first acts of their prosperous history to build the Clinton and Port Hudson Railroad, which gave them in those days quick transit in travel and freights to the markets for merchandise and sale of their cotton. This move has liberally repaid them, and it has enabled them to draw the products of the country for many miles away to their own prosperous little market, which grow to become a thrifty and hospitable little town, noted for its exceedingly fine health, intelligence, moral tone and educational advantages.

The railroad runs to Port Hudson, 22 miles distant, on the Mississippi River. The original passenger coach purchased 47 years ago, the date of birth of the Picayune, is still in active use every day, and is now the oldest passenger coach in the United States. It is probable that it will be sent to the Exposition as a curiosity. But it has done good and faithful work in transporting passengers to this beautiful magnolia and beech grove country, where the poetry of nature and the purity of the atmosphere could be enjoyed, after a long season of labor in the toiling fields of an active commercial season in the cities.

But speaking of Clinton and the magnolia and beech groves leads me to say, that in no section can a city be found with so many handsome and well contrasted groves, at every home, of magnolia, beech, live oak, with an occasional tall pine interlacing its brawny branches into these broad leaf shade givers, and here and there are to be found cedars, whose spreading proportions and circumference indicate that they have withstood the peril of many a winter's storm to yet give shade to the grandchildren of those whose memory links them back to the hours when they afforded no shelter from the summer's sun. For general beauty of homes which are placed on a small incline to give fine natural drainage, with fine yards of shrubbery and flowers, no place excels Clinton.

The little city has had a steady growth until it now numbers about 1500 people, and has some twenty-five business interests to foster its continued prosperity. Last season 15,000 bales of cotton were shipped from here, a considerable part of it coming from St. Helena parish, Amite and Wilkinson counties, Miss., besides a large amount of general country produce. It is situated near the centre of the parish, 32 miles from Baton Rouge, 30 from Woodville, 30 from points on the Illinois Central Railroad and 22 miles from Mississippi River, with no successful rival to compete for this lucrative trade.

Among the well-to-do merchants of Clinton who share this business are H. D'Armond, F. D'Armond, George D'Armond, Jos. Israel, H. Hortner, J. L. Heyman, E. T. Worms & Co., L. Naumon, Faulkner & Hays, R. Carver, Knox & Cain, A. J. Donaldson, E. Meyer & Co., with a number of others whose names are not remembered. Mr. B. T. Morris has a good carriage and buggy factory.

There are two well and ably conducted newspapers, which have a large and influential circulation, to-wit: The Patriot-Democrat and the Southern Watchman, which enjoy a liberal advertising patronage. In fact the little city is blessed with every convenience necessary to carry on her business and enjoy her social life—telegraph office, barber-shop, hotels, livery-stables, etc. The Hebrew cemetery is one of the neatest and best-kept to be found in the country. The city is out of debt and has several hundred dollars in the treasury.

One of the leading attractions of Clinton is the Silliman Female Institute, which was founded years ago by the lamented William Silliman, who built the college buildings prior to the war, costing \$40,000, and endowed it with \$20,000, which is invested so as to yield \$1000 annually, a small portion of which is used by the board of trustees to keep it in repair, the remainder is used to educate about thirty poor children, who are unable to pay their tuition. It has a capacity of 200 attendants, and usually registers 125 pupils; all branches of female education are taught here by a thoroughly competent faculty of five or six. The trustees of the college have secured for the next session Prof. G. R. Ramsey, of whom the Patriot Democrat says: "We had a pleasant visit on Saturday last, from Prof. G. R. Ramsey, of Kentucky, the President-elect of Silliman Female Collegiate Institute. Prof. Ramsey is a polished and entertaining gentleman, and one well calculated to make for himself warm friends and ardent admirers of our entire people. Prof. Ramsey assures us he will do all in his power to build up Silliman Institute, employing both money and enterprise in order to accomplish his purpose. At a large salary he has secured the services of that acknowledged Southern educator, Gen. W. F. Terry, formerly State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Alabama, also at one time President of Lynnhall Institute, and now Professor of English Literature in Ogden College, Ky."

The fraternal organizations—Masons, Odd Fellows, I. O. B. B., K. of P., K. of H., A. L. of H., all have good lodges and are in a prosperous condition. The Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian and Catholic denominations have good churches and fine congregations in Clinton with prosperous Sunday schools attached to each. There are several good water mills located a mile or two from Clinton, on Comite and Pretty Creeks, which unite about a mile from town, affording 10 feet of fall for establishing any kind of manufacturing interest, and with but little effort 20 feet fall could be obtained. There are a great number of fine gardens which supply every variety of vegetable for table use which a lover of "garden truck" could wish for. With the quick trip from the town to New Orleans; with the advantages of health, scenery and fine water, Clinton people hope to have a number of the city people spend their summer here. They can build their own houses here or rent cheap. Fishing and hunting is good near by, and these people are social, intelligent and unexcelled for hospitality.

East Feliciana parish is somewhat of an irregular formation, having nearly a third greater distance at the base than at the northern side, and the western portion sloping toward the south to the Mississippi River. The population by the census returns of 1870 was 5623, and in 1880 it was 15,132, showing a very rapid increase, which is still going on. A German colony has been established since that time and is doing real well. Messrs. Wood & Woodward have begun the initial step in improving the stock by importing some blooded cattle, which are attracting attention, and their course will soon be followed by others who see the benefit.

The farming interest consists to a large extent in corn and cotton, but last year or so some oats, millet and corn have been successfully planted, and there is a

growing feeling in favor of diversified crops with fertilization.

J. E. Mansker, the telegraph operator who has devoted attention to scientific works and improved farmings, says:

"I have made experimental trial on a small piece of ground containing 18 rows 90 feet long, by 3 feet apart. About 1st of February planted the rows with two bushels cut potatoes; about 1st of May planted in between the rows a few hills of popcorn and pindars about eight feet apart; 1st of June dug Irish potatoes, turned out 2½ to 3 bushels a row, drawing ridge of ground up to line with popcorn and pindars. In between the popcorn and pindars set out sweet potato vines, making fourth crop in same ground this year, and this fall when I dig sweet potatoes will manure the ground and sow it in turnips, which will be fifth crop on same ground in one year."

Judge W. F. Kernan some years ago discovered a peculiarly colored boll of cotton approaching a rich, creamy color or probably nearer the color of tea, with milk in it, which he has kept separate from other cotton plants, until now he has an acre planted in the peculiar colored cotton. It is of a silken texture and a very handsome product. He has been offered 12½ cents per pound for all he can raise for ten years. He has taken a great interest in having the grasses of his parish properly presented at the Exposition, and to that end he has gathered from his own yard and garden and carefully pressed and preserved about 40 to 60 varieties. He will have others. One gardener has promised to raise him a wire grass measuring 60 feet.

The Picayune correspondent enjoyed the hospitality of Judge Kernan and his accomplished daughter on last Wednesday, and finds the Judge very much interested in improved farming-fruits, etc. Though he is constantly engaged in his judicial labors, he devotes some attention to this subject. To Col. Stone, Judge Brano, Mr. Henry D'Armond and Judge Kernan the Picayune representative is indebted for courtesies and hospitality. H. H. H.