

When asked how long these Indians had lived in that country Commissioner Sells stated in effect that he did not know, and probably no man living does know. Certainly they have lived there more than 200 years. The first authentic record of them appears in the diary of Father Eusebio Kino, who made tours through their country in 1698-1699. He found them to be a docile, industrious, peaceful tribe of Indians, which manly attributes they retain to this day. It is a boast of the Papago that he has never injured a white man.

The Papagoes have battled with adverse conditions and won. They forced a repelling desert to yield a subsistence, and they have thrived. One cannot help but feel imbued with deep respect for a people who can progress under conditions as they are found in the Papago country. Mile after mile of virgin desert can be traversed without a sign of an animal.

After traveling 25 or 30 miles through "barren stillness" one runs into a Papago village of say 30 or 40 houses, built reasonably close together on two or three acres of ground. In close proximity will be found a small cultivated patch, usually devoted to the growing of squashes and other vegetables during the summer, the same ground being planted in grain, generally wheat or oats, during the winter.

The annual rainfall is not sufficient to mature grain, but the Indians have evolved an ingenious method of augmenting the moisture. They throw out dykes or wings frequently many miles long. These dykes converge, thus gathering the rainfall from an immense area into a pocket of a few acres only. The waters thus gathered are sometimes sufficient to mature a small crop, which is gathered most carefully and hoarded. Dry years frequently occur, during which grain is not matured. The Indian then fall back on their stored grain supply and the "native products" of the desert. They save seed for three or four years and always have a small supply. These people have even developed a hardy variety of bean which matures from one irrigation only. The department of agriculture has mentioned this bean (the tepary) in a number of its bulletins as being especially adapted to desert countries.

The Indians seem to thrive on the natural products of the desert and even use the fruit of the cactus in various ways for making jams, syrups and potables. Their houses are usually furnished with such articles as can be manufactured on the spot. Fibers from desert plants are woven into mats and baskets and each woman is the potter for her own household. The men hew bowls and spoons out of wood and make their ropes and harness out of rawhide. Most of them never saw a nail.

Adjacent to each village will also be found "a stock corral," generally fenced with mesquite brush, and a "charco," or a pond, into which rainfall is diverted and stored for domestic and stock watering purposes.