

# Omaha Elks Lodge and Club Rooms



LODGE ROOM OMAHA ELKS CLUB.



READING ROOM OMAHA ELKS CLUB.



CARD ROOM OMAHA ELKS CLUB.



MAHA LODGE NO. 39, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, was instituted February 7, 1886, by Dr. Simon Quinlan (since deceased) of Chicago, acting as deputy grand exalted ruler, assisted by a delegation from Chicago lodge No. 4. There were twenty charter members and only five of them now survive in active membership in Omaha lodge, namely, I. W. Miner, Alfred Srenson, Thomas F. Boyd, Omaha; A. B. Davenport, Lafayette, Ind., and W. E. Annin of Denver, Colo. The installation occurred in a hall, southwest corner of Fourteenth and Dodge streets. The trustees of the lodge immediately secured rooms on the upper floor of the Boyd theater building, at that time located on the corner of Fifteenth and Farnam streets. The accommodations were small, measuring about 20x78 feet, and consisted of the lodge room and one ante-room. There was no elevator in the building and the Elks of sixteen years ago climbed, laboriously but cheerfully, up the long, long flights of stairs to that far-away upper floor. But what good times they did have when they got there! The Elks were young in those days and they were very frisky. The lodge grew rapidly in numbers and when the new Continental block was built, at the corner of Fifteenth and Douglas streets, the Elks felt warranted in leasing for five years the upper floor of that block. The space

occupied was 66x132 feet. The rooms were very conveniently arranged in accordance with plans submitted to the builders of the block by architects who were members of the lodge. The furnishings throughout were first-class, as is attested by the fact that some of the lodge room furniture of today, bought over thirteen years ago, shows very little wear during the years that it has been in use.

A fine lodge room, a magnificent parlor, spacious card rooms, a billiard room, a beautiful dining room and a large kitchen made up the accommodations. There was a first-class chef in the kitchen and he laid every modern convenience for his work. There was an abundance of silver, china and linen to set the dining room tables with the best possible effects. Those were glorious days for those of the Elks who enjoyed the best of living, but it was not many months before the trustees discovered that the maintenance of the grill room, with its large corps of colored servants, under the supervision of a high-priced steward, was running them deep into the hole, and the depth increased as the months passed by.

A halt was called when the lodge was found to be \$9,000 in debt. It was then that the lodge turned its finances over to George T. Mills, David Bennisson and Edward O. Brandt. In six weeks time they had settled and paid off every obligation of the lodge,

through the sale of furniture, collection of arrearages from members, etc. They saved out the lodge furniture, and when they made their report they also had \$200 in cash on hand and the lodge was free from debt. It was a noble work on the part of these three men—the grandest ever done by any members of Omaha lodge of Elks—and they were fittingly made honorary life members in return for distinguished emergency services that could not be paid for in money.

Then followed the only dark days that Omaha lodge has ever known. The trustees secured very much smaller quarters on the third floor of the building on Farnam street, near Fourteenth, now occupied by the Postal Telegraph company. The lodge merely existed there for several months. There was very little growth during that time. It was very largely owing to the efforts of George P. Cronk, who, at this critical time in the history of the lodge, took the matter of new and larger rooms in hand and put through a proposition to move to the third floor of the Ware block, corner Fifteenth and Farnam, previously occupied by the Union club. The Elks have occupied these rooms ever since. The public is familiar with these beautiful rooms. From the first day the Elks occupied them up to the present time, the lodge has grown wonderfully. It has steadily prospered and flourished until today it has

nearly 600 members, and the prophecy is freely made that by the first day of next June it will have 800 members, and within a year its membership will be increased to 1,000.

On account of the rapid growth of the lodge, the trustees were instructed last spring to make arrangements for better and larger accommodations. Acting under these instructions, the trustees, Messrs. Canada, Brucker and Whinnery, leased 33x66 feet on the third floor of the Granite block, across the alley, and connected the third floor of each block with a bridge over the alley. The lodge room in the Ware block was enlarged by taking in the former card room and a hardwood floor was laid in the new lodge room. This fine floor has made the room especially enjoyable for the

dancing parties that have been so far given this season by the committee on ladies' socials. The pictures presented in this issue of this paper clearly show how delightful all these Elk rooms are. The stuffed elk seen in the pictures was presented to the lodge some years ago by John A. Eyer, who was complimented by the lodge with an honorary life membership for his generous gift. The new card room, as shown in these pictures, with its Oriental draperies and decorations, was the thought of Dr. J. C. Whinnery, one of the trustees, and it is one of the show rooms of this city. We doubt very much if there is in any Elk rooms in this country another one so handsome as this. The Elks take a great deal of pride in showing it to visitors, as, in fact, they do all the rooms that they occupy.

## Gleanings from the Story Tellers' Pack

THEY are telling an amusing story about Richard Harding Davis, who recently visited New York City for the dog show, where Mrs. Davis, who has long been interested in dogs, had entered some fine exhibits. Mr. Davis was in the smoking car on his trip down from Marion, Mass., where he lives, when he was accosted by an unafraid stranger of somewhat "sporty" appearance.

"Are you," said this gentleman, cheerfully seating himself by Mr. Davis' side, "are you Mr. —?" naming a celebrated dog fancier.

"I am not," Mr. Davis replied, calmly enough, knowing that he had facts up his sleeve which might easily be made to annihilate this presumptuous individual. "I am Mr. Davis—Richard Harding Davis."

The sporting gentleman drew back with an air of deference and awe.

"Do you mean to say," he said, "that you are the husband of Mrs. Davis, the owner of Woodcote's Jumbo? I'm glad to know you. That's the finest bull!"—but Mr. Davis had vanished.

A man from Dunedin once visited (the town of) Wellington, relates the Scotsman. An Irish friend insisted upon the visitor staying at his house instead of at a hotel, and kept him there for a month, playing the host in detail, even to treating him to the theaters and other amusements, paying all the cab fares and the rest. When the visitor was returning to Dunedin the Irishman saw him down to the steamer and they went into the saloon to have a parting drink.

"What'll you have?" asked the host, continuing his hospitality to the very last.

"Now, look here," said the man from Dunedin, "I'll hae nae mair o' this. Here ye've been keepin' me at yer house for a month an' payin' for a' the theaters an'

cab an' drinks. I tell ye I'll stan' nae mair o' it! We'll just hae a toss for this one!"

Senator Quay of Pennsylvania is not a laughing man. He rarely lets anything move him beyond the twinkle in his eye, but a Florida farmer's impression regarding him made him "let loose." The senator, returning from a fishing trip to his bungalow, at St. Lucie, Fla., rode in an accommodation train, and the farmer sat beside him and questioned him. Quay's knowledge of countryside gossip proved limited and discouraging.

"Don't belong to these parts, do ye?" said the farmer. "Don't know much about Florida, do ye?"

"I have been here several times in my wanderings," said Quay.

"And what might be the reason ye air wanderin'?"

"I am trying to ameliorate the condition of man—the inner man," replied Quay, solemnly.

The farmer moved to another seat and remarked to the man beside whom he sat: "Talked to that feller back thar a good bit 'fore I found out he was one o' them dern faith healers."

In a speech in Baltimore recently former Senator Gorman related the following anecdote: "I remember during my service in the United States senate when we had quite a sharp division in our ranks. One very great man introduced a resolution which some one of us thought was unwise. He made a half-hour speech, full of eloquence and force, in favor of this resolution. Just before he sat down I caught his eye and shook my head. The great man turned at once to the president. 'Mr. President,' he said, 'that was one side of the question. There is another side.' He then spoke with equal eloquence and force against the

resolution for half an hour. He said it was too serious a matter to take snap judgment on, and ended by moving to adjourn. Afterward he came over to me and asked: 'What the devil is it all about, anyway?'"

"The odd things schoolboys say sometimes when trying to be entertaining are often spoken of," remarked a teacher in a boys' school to a Philadelphia Record reporter, "but I think the limit was reached by one of my scholars a couple of weeks ago. I had been ill for several weeks and the boys were very uneasy about me and showed their solicitude by calling every day to inquire about my condition. When I was convalescent one of them came in to see me. After the usual greetings he stood awkwardly shifting from one foot to the other. Finally he looked out the window and a happy thought struck him. Woodlands cemetery was just a few blocks away. 'I'm awful glad you're better, Miss Jones,' he said, 'but I was just a-thinking that if you should happen to get worse it is a good thing the cemetery is so handy to you.' Then he looked at me inquiringly, while my sister was stricken with a sudden laughing spell which compelled her to leave the room."

It was during the Cleveland administration that Private John Allen made his famous reply to the equally famous speech of Congressman Boutelle of Maine, says a writer in the Kansas City Star. President Cleveland had decided to allow the captured confederate battle flags to be returned to the different states whence they came. Boutelle made a masterful address on the subject. He reminded his hearers of all the notable federal victories and ended in a blaze of glory as he painted by word of mouth the final surrender. When Boutelle took his seat he had so far carried his

hearers away that those in the gallery and the republican members of the house burst forth into cheers.

Suddenly, from the democratic side, was heard the calm, soothing tones of John Allen as he said: "Mr. Speaker." He told of his joining the southern cause and following one of the flags about which the discussion arose.

"When it was all over," he said, "I started back home. I was barefooted, nearly naked and without money. I concluded to walk. I trudged along for a day or so, when a man I knew lent me a mule. When I was about four miles from home I decided to leave the main road I was traveling and go by another route and sneak in the back way. I had gone only a little distance when I saw an old man, a fellow townsman, sitting on a rail fence.

"Well, John, I see you are back," he said.

"Yes, Uncle Zeb," I answered.

"Did they lick us, John?"

"Yes, Uncle Zeb. They licked us plenty, too."

"Freed the niggers, too?"

"Yes, they freed the niggers."

"The old man got down off the fence and, after he had thoroughly stretched out all his kinks, he said:

"John, I don't mind being licked so much and I can stand the niggers being freed, but, John, the worst part of it all is that in about thirty years some durned fool will throw it up to us."

Mr. Lee Fairchild, who is coming to the front as a humorist, visited San Francisco not long ago and, like many literary pilgrims to the west, determined to pay a visit to Mr. Joaquin Miller, poet of the Sierras, who lives in a charming villa in the Contra Costa foothills, across the bay from the Golden Gate.

"What will you charge me to drive to

Joaquin Miller's?" Fairchild asked of an Oakland cabman.

"Five dollars," was the response.

The humorist got in and started away over the long, rugged road leading to the poet's side-hill hermitage. It was evening when he started; the night had settled and the moon was up when he arrived. He paid the driver and was about to open the rustic gate to the famous home when the cabman said dryly:

"I suppose you know that Joaquin's not in California at the present time."

The humorist thought quickly and, smothering his indignation, replied:

"Oh, yes, of course; I merely wanted to see how his place looks by moonlight."

Americans have not the reputation of Europeans for gallant speeches, says the New York Times, yet there are many occasions when they earn the envy of the people who are more given to saying pretty things. At a recent private dinner at which Seth Low and his wife were guests one of the diners said to the new mayor:

"You must be proud to be the husband of the first lady in New York."

"I am proud," said the mayor gallantly, as he glanced tenderly at his wife, "to be the husband of Mrs. Low."

On a similar occasion recently the American ambassador to the Court of St. James paid a graceful compliment to his wife.

It was at an informal dinner, at which the guests were intimate friends. Some one proposed that each in turn should answer the question:

"If you were dead and could come back to this world in another body, who would you prefer to come as?"

When it came to Mr. Choate's turn he said: "I would prefer to come as Mrs. Choate's second husband."