

# Morton's History of Nebraska

Authentic, Complete

(Copyrighted 1906. All rights reserved.) By courtesy of Editors and Publishers of Morton's History, the Publishers Newspaper Union of Lincoln, Nebraska, is permitted its reproduction in papers of their issue

## CHAPTER VI CONTINUED (21)

Friends of Bellevue read in this apportionment the doom of their hopes for the capital, and it was the first overt act of the bitter war between the North Platte and South Platte sections which lasted until the chief cause of the quarrel was removed by the removal of the capital to Lincoln in 1867. It is seen that twenty-one members were awarded to the counties north of the Platte and eighteen to those south of the river. It was strongly contended by the people south of the Platte that their section was the most populous, and the governor's own census gave it 1,818 inhabitants as against 914 in the northern section. The census showed 516 voters—that is, males over twenty-one years of age south, and 413 north of the Platte. But during the final debate in the house on the 25th of January, in which, for some reason, Governor Cuming was allowed to speak, he said that there had been some misrepresentation regarding his acts which he wished to correct; that he had found, after careful examination of all the census returns, that the greatest population was north of the Platte, and he had given that section representation accordingly. He said the poll books and census returns were free for investigation by members. But the abstract which he certifies flatly contradicts him. In the same debate Mr. Poppleton also alleged that the census returns gave the North Platte the greater population.

Deductions from the figures of the first census and the abstract of votes of the first election are contradictory, and according to the vote the governor's apportionment as affecting the two sections was not grossly inequitable.

By the census of 1855, taken about ten months after the first one, the population was found to be 4,494, with 1,549 north and 2,945 south of the Platte river. It is probable that in the meantime the relative increase of the North Platte section had been greater than that of the South Platte, on account of the drawing influence of the newly made capital; so that the contention of Governor Cuming that the North Platte had a greater population than the South Platte not only involved the utter repudiation of his own census, but seems to be inconsistent with the weight of the evidence upon this point. There is no doubt that the vote of Burt county was largely "colonized," since it is known that there was no bona fide population there. And the same machinery that so successfully imported voters into Burt was, not unlikely, quite as effective in the case of Washington and Douglas counties. Governor Cuming disregarded the palpable overcount in Richardson county, and apparently the basis of his apportionment there was not far from correct, since the county showed a population of 299 by the regular census of 1855. If he had eliminated the population of Richardson by the first census—851—the South Platte would still have been in the lead, according to his census, by about 100.

One wonders on looking at the map of those first counties why the line of Washington run so close as to graze Omaha, the capital of Douglas county. A scalp-lifting critic of the governor's course explains his action in the following specifications:

"You established Burt county with not half a dozen actual residents in it giving it a representation of one to the upper and two to the lower house. The vote we acknowledge was swelled to perhaps 50; how deserted Bluff City on the day of election, can't (can) tell. Then comes Dodge with the same representation and only 14 votes.—You feared the independent citizens of Florence and to overpower them, you brought the southern line of Washington to within a mile of Omaha, that importation might be easy. In Cass, that you could not hope to control, you gave only one councillor and three representatives, yet the vote in that district was 128.—In Pierce, with a vote of 188, you gave three councillors and five representatives. (You thought some of your plants would grow there, Governor.) Two little pets of yours, Forney and Richardson, are finely endowed. The first with 42 votes sends one to the upper house and two to the lower house—the latter with 24 votes is equally favored."

The Budget of Council Bluffs, mouth-piece of the Iowa exploiters of Omaha, in an article scolding the Palladium for its chronic scolding, offers the following justification of Cuming's course.

"We have been a quiet looker-on whilst the struggle for the capital has been going on between four land companies, each sure that their special point was designed by nature for the great western mart, and the capital of a new and important state. Foremost upon this list was Bellevue, the proprietors of which loudly claimed the right by precedence, being the earliest settled place, etc. Nebraska City claimed it from being handsomely located, and Winters Quarters by its most central position, whilst Omaha claimed the capital by right of her early industry in making by far the greatest amount of improvements, from being the most populous and convenient place, and as offering the most conveniences for the coming session of the legislature. Although as yet there has been no improvements or buildings going on at Bellevue the town owners have constantly

claimed all the advantages, merit and consideration, leaving nothing for Omaha or any other place. Before Cuming arrived here we know that he was prepossessed with a conviction that Omaha must be the place for the present seat of government, and at the death of the lamented Governor Burt he had not changed his mind. Consequently he could not have been influenced by unworthy motives in selecting Omaha as the present capital. Finding congenial and equally disappointed parties south of the Platte they have leagued to slander, vilify and misrepresent Mr. Cuming abroad, and are making strenuous exertions for his removal from office, by petitions and private letters.

But the Palladium had pointed out that:

"The doors of the mission are open to receive the legislature, if it is called here, and we hazard our reputation upon the assertion that equal accommodations can not be offered elsewhere in Nebraska before the 8th day of January, 1855. This house was built under difficulties such as had disappeared long before Omaha was thought of; most of the lumber having been sawed by no other aid than hand labor. Now according to the principles upon which our anxious neighbor thinks ought to control the location of the capitol it would be located here."

Governor Cuming did not issue his proclamation convening the legislature at Omaha until December 20, but the Bellevue contingent had anticipated his recreancy to their cause some time before, and a gathering of citizens there on the 9th of that month to further the interests of Bellevue in the capital contest, which Cuming attended, was turned into an indignation meeting. At this meeting Governor Cuming is quoted as saying that he had made up his mind two weeks previously to locate the capital at Omaha, but owing to attempts improperly to influence him in favor of that place he had changed his mind and was then in doubt. But if Bellevue would nominate a candidate for the council and two for the house, pledged to sustain his administration and not to attempt to remove the capital from the place of his selection, he would give Bellevue a district by itself, otherwise the nervous aspirant would be included in the Omaha district and be swallowed up by it. The Omaha Arrow, published at Council Bluffs by residents of that place, and which was also the actual residence of Governor Cuming, announces, November 3, that, "the work on the state house here goes briskly on. It will be ready for the accommodation of the body for which it was intended before the middle of next month;" and on the 10th of November that, "the contractor of the state house assures us the building will be ready by the first of December." Even of Governor Cuming himself, at Bellevue, had lost faith in his intention to locate the capital at Omaha, his Council Bluffs neighbors had not, and they kept pushing their preparation for it to perfection.

These Bellevue people either considered that they had no chance, and could afford to play the role of indignant virtue, or they were very poor generals; for by responding to the governor's finesse they might have had three militant members directly representing them in the contest in the legislature. But they threw dissimulation to the winds, and Mr. A. W. Hollister insisted that he had seen the original of a compromising letter, apparently written by Cuming, and which in some unexplained way had come into possession of his enemies, and he was certain of its authenticity.

At this juncture Governor Cuming, in a fierce passion, left the meeting and thereby placed upon Bellevue the perpetual seal of "the deserted village." Mr. Hollister then proceeded to aver that Major Heppner, Indian agent, would swear to the genuineness of the signature to the letter, and to spurn with contempt the propitiatory offering of the governor. Stephen Decatur and Silas A. Strickland followed in a like intense and grandiloquent strain of indignant patriotism and offended virtue, in which rather more than due rhetorical justice was done to "the tyrant Charles the First" and to "the great charter of our own liberties."

Soon followed mass meetings at many places in the South Platte district for the purpose of denouncing Governor Cuming. The meeting for Pierce county was held December 15, at Nebraska City, and it passed resolutions charging Cuming with "seeking only his own aggrandizement, with neglecting to reside within the limits of the territory but keeping the actual seat of government in a foreign city," and that he "is no longer worthy or capable of discharging the duties that have accidentally devolved upon him, and his longer continuance in office would be an insult to the people of the territory." The resolutions invited the citizens of the territory to meet in delegate convention at Nebraska City, December 30, "to select some suitable person to recommend to the president of the United States for appointment to the governorship of this territory." The climax of the proceedings of the convention was a resolution commending the people of Bellevue "for their Christian forbearance toward Governor Cuming in not offering him personal violence for as gross an insult by him as could be offered by a tyrant to a free people, in refusing to give

them a separate district and allowing them to elect members of the legislature, unless they would pledge themselves to elect such men as he should dictate."

A meeting for a like purpose was held at Brownville in Forney county, December 28. In this meeting the two Mortons, destined to long careers in the territory and state, took important parts. Thomas Morton was chosen chairman, and J. Sterling Morton, one of the three delegates to the territorial convention. Here the latter performed his first public act in the commonwealth which was to be distinguished as the scene of his public activity for near half a century, and where his personality was to be impressed on the institutions and the life of the people. Mr. Morton was as prompt in taking this active part in public affairs as he was afterwards ceaseless in pursuing it. Only three weeks before this meeting the Palladium contained the following modest but, in the light of subsequent events, important notice:

"J. S. MORTON.  
"This gentleman, formerly associate editor of the Detroit Free Press, and lady arrived at Bellevue on the 30th ult., where they intend to settle. Mr. Morton is a man of ability and an able writer, and having had the good sense to select one of the most beautiful locations for his residence as well as one of the most strongly fortified points—in a political view—he will no doubt be an important acquisition to the territory and to this community."

Nevertheless, within only two months, this most strongly fortified political point yielded to the siege of the Omaha forces, and was so completely razed that Mr. Morton was prompt to evacuate it and take a new position at Nebraska City, which he occupied with distinguished courage, enterprise, and honor for forty-seven years.

By a previous notice in the Palladium it appears that Mr. Morton himself had visited Bellevue on the 13th of November. The old settler is only able now to point out the approximate site of the log cabin which was the home of the young couple, married somewhat less than a year, when they left with the abtitude of Bellevue's fortunes for the more promising location.

In the delegate convention at Nebraska City, held December 30, five counties—Cass, Douglas, Forney, Pierce, and Richardson—were represented by nineteen delegates; and of course the Douglas county delegates, Stephen Decatur, J. Sterling Morton, and George W. Hollister, were all from Bellevue. J. H. Decker of Pierce county (speaker of the house in the legislature which retreated from Omaha to Florence in a subsequent capital controversy), was chairman, and George W. Hollister of Bellevue and A. M. Rose of Pierce county were secretaries. Mr. Morton was chairman of the committee on resolutions, and this first official function in territorial affairs in Nebraska we may be sure he performed without dissimulation or self-repression. The resolutions went straight to the mark—his mark—which, in the nature of the men, Cuming had already become:

"Resolved, 1st, That Acting Governor Cuming is neither an upright, honest nor honorable man.

"Resolved, 2d, That he, the aforesaid Acting Governor Cuming, is an unprincipled knave, and that he seeks rather to control than consult the people.

"Resolved, 3d, That he, the said acting governor, has, by his own acts, secret ones now exposed, as well as those which he has openly avowed, convinced us of the truth of, and invited us to pass the above resolutions.

"Resolved, 4th, That, recognizing the right of petition as the prerogative of all free citizens of the United States, we do hereby petition his excellency, Franklin Pierce, president of the United States, to immediately remove the said Cuming from the acting governorship.

"Resolved, That we, also, because of the reasons hereinbefore stated, petition for his removal from the secretaryship of this territory.

"Resolved, That the secretaries of this convention forward a copy of these proceedings to every newspaper in Nebraska for publication, and every paper containing them, with a written copy, to the president of the United States.

"On motion,  
"Resolved, That we recommend General Bela M. Hughes of Missouri for the office of governor and Dr. P. J. McMahon of Iowa for the office of secretary."

"After a long and spirited discussion," we are told, the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

TO BE CONTINUED

## DOMESTIC WASTE.

Reasons Why Housekeepers Waste Millions of Money.

Chicago housekeepers waste nearly \$200,000,000 every year, according to the Tribune of that city. The exact figures taken from commercial reports and the percentages of waste calculated by domestic science experts, show that \$193,140,000 is lost annually by careless buying, unscientific cooking and other domestic extravagance.

The School of Domestic Science sums up the cause under several heads. Among these the half dozen following are selected by the Tribune as the most prominent:

1. Buying provisions by order and telephone instead of seeing them.
2. Buying prepared foods.
3. Buying fruits and vegetables out of season.

4. Taking goods as offered by dealers instead of insisting on qualities, brands and cuts wanted.
5. Loss on weight, wrappings and attractive glasses, cans, etc., in which food is put up.

6. Lack of expert knowledge of cuts of meats and of how to cook least expensive things to bring out values and good taste.

"The thing which the average housekeeper figures upon as most important now is her time," said Miss Lyford, of the School of Domestic Science. When she buys so as to save this she has to figure against it not only loss of money, but loss of nourishment. Again, you have to figure if it isn't better to spend more money and get more nourishment."

Two women were talking of the little chicken pies that are bought at the delicatessen shop.

"They are only 18 cents and one piece is plenty," said the first housekeeper. "But the crust is greasy and not nourishing, and besides we have been used to have a great dish of chicken pie from which we would fill up our plates a couple of times at least, and each time more than the whole of your one little pie."

Of the gain in the old-fashioned plan of going to market instead of ordering by telephone or by the order boy, the woman of the school cannot speak too strongly. Said Mrs. Wagley, the secretary:

It is a matter of fact that your roast will cost more if you order it than it does if you see it weighed. The butcher may prove perfectly honest and you may have him for years and years and not find a fault if you go and get your things yourself. The minute you begin to order, however, the total of your week's bill will be higher.

"Another advantage of going is that if your butcher does not happen to have the cut you want, you simply and easily can walk to another place without any talk or argument about it. Many housekeepers do not do this, but it is the most logical thing in the world to do. You ask for a certain thing, he hasn't it. You say nothing, but go to another place to get what you have decided upon."

One of the things which Mrs. Wagley considers it absolutely indispensable to see cut is hamburger steak, which she says should be cut off as wanted and put through the grinder. The kind that is ready prepared will have scraps and trimmings put in it.

One reason for the common habit of ordering is given by the housekeeper in the fact that in the majority of markets the fresh goods are not brought up until nearly noon, and this leaves the housekeeper no time to market but in the middle of the day. To this is attributed the crowding of markets just before dinner, when it takes an almost impossible time to get waited on.

## Why He Looked that Way.

A Northern man visiting in a Southern town announced that he could tell a man's political tendencies by looking at his face. His auditors looked at one another with incredulity.

"Well, I seldom make a mistake. You," he said, indicating one of the group about him, "are a McKinley man."

"That's 'right,'" said the man referred to.

"You," pointing to another, "are a Cleveland Democrat."

"Yes, that is so," answered he. And the crowd began to sit up and take notice.

"You," addressing a third, "are a Bryan man."

"You're wrong there. I'm sick; that is what makes me look that way."—Harper's Weekly.

## Blue Laws of 2,500 B. C.

The members of the Bartzan graft investigating committee and the agitators for a strict enforcement of the Sunday closing laws were probably too busy yesterday to pay a visit to the opening session of Prof. George E. Vincent's class in sociology at the University of Chicago. But if they had they might have obtained a few interesting side lights on present day conditions projected upon a background of forty centuries.

Prof. Vincent told a few incidents taken from the happenings in Babylon about 2,500 B. C. to illustrate the fact the laws are not always obeyed.

"A few centuries hence," said the professor, "archaeologists may dig up some of our own statute books. They may find the Sunday closing laws there and draw conclusions. They will probably be at fault, but it will not be their fault."

For some of the "blue laws" of the ancients the students were referred to the 'code of Hammurabi,' which was in effect about 2,500 B. C., and which has just recently been translated by Prof. Robert Francis Harper of the University of Chicago.

Here are some of the "blue laws" they found.

Capital punishment may be inflicted for false accusation of a capital crime, a causeless curse or ban; aiding a slave to escape; kidnapping; the desertion of his duty by an officer of the law.

If a woman plays the part of a false and negligent householder, her husband shall divorce her and reduce her to the rank of servant in his house.

If a woman has "gadded" she shall be drowned.

If a man steals furniture at a fire, throw him into the fire.

If an officer or a constable is ordered on an errand of the kind and hires a substitute, put him to death.

If a wine seller does not receive grain as the price of a drink, but receives money or gives short measure, throw her into the water.

If there is a brawl in a wine shop and the wine seller does not cause the arrest of the offenders, put her to death.

If a priestess enter a wine shop or keep a wine shop, burn her.

If an officer absents himself from his own ward for more than three years let some one else have his property.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

## Identified.

Senator Tillman tells a story on himself as to how he was identified by a postoffice money order clerk when he first arrived at the Capitol city.

After being in the city a few days he dropped in at the postoffice to cash a money order.

"Do you know anyone here who could identify you?" asked the clerk.

"Well, no," the senator answered. "Is that necessary? I am Ben Tillman of South Carolina."

The clerk smiled then asked the senator if he didn't have some letters or papers that would make him known to the postoffice authorities.

The senator had put on a new suit that morning, and had neglected to transfer his letters, but he had his pocket book with him. Digging down in his trousers pocket, he drew forth his wallet and proceeded to search for an article of identification, but could find nothing but a small photograph of himself.

"This will do, I suppose," he said, handing it to the money order clerk.

"Why, sure! That's you all right," remarked the man behind the counter, handing over the cash.—Lippincott's.

## Irving as a Witness.

Sir Henry Irving was at one time a witness in a case of street robbery. He had seen a sneak thief make off with a girl's pocketbook, and he consented to appear as a witness for the girl. The thief's lawyer was of the type that roars and rants at witnesses and attempts to break them down. He tried this method on the distinguished actor. "And at what hour, sir, did this happen?" asked the lawyer. "I think—" began Sir Henry, when the lawyer interrupted with: "It isn't what you think, sir; it's what you know that we want!" "Don't you want to know what I think?" mildly asked the actor, "I do not," the lawyer snapped out. "Well, then," said Sir Henry, "I might as well leave the witness box. I can't talk without thinking. I'm not a lawyer."

A man recently hit his wife over the head with a framed motto, on which was printed "God Bless Our Home."