

Pioneer Day "Executive Ball" Set Pace For Subsequent Omaha Formal Functions

Long before King Ak-Sar-Ben came to rule over his happy, bustling, prosperous people, and to signify his presence by an annual state ball, the circumstance and glitter of which has made it a criterion for all formal functions in the kingdom, Omaha was the scene of a formal and important function that is interwoven with the history of the state, and one of the merriest chapters of its pioneer annals.

It was the only "executive" ball ever held in Omaha, and was given in honor of Mark W. Izard, who was named as governor, to succeed Governor Burt, first executive of the territory, who had died before he had entered upon the full discharge of his office. It was an affair somewhat impromptu, but nevertheless was made as effective as the very limited resources of the budding metropolis could afford in that far away winter in 1855, and long furnished subject for conversation. It was in part reproduced by the pioneers at their reunion in Omaha last week, the ball on Friday night being for the purpose.

Dr. George L. Miller and Mrs. T. B. Cummings are the only ones now living who attended the Izard ball, and both were unable, because of infirmities, to attend the pioneers' reunion.

Account of First Ball. Mr. Clarence H. Payne of the State Historical society furnishes The Bee the following account of the original ball.

For the most part, balls and socials made up the complement of diversions, and this suggests an account of the first executive ball ever given in Omaha, for a graphic description of which the writer acknowledges his obligations to Dr. George L. Miller of the Omaha Herald. Mark W. Izard, who came into the territory as United States marshal, was appointed successor to Governor Burt, and the ball was held in honor of his excellency. It might be here parenthetically stated when the governor was to read his inaugural message he arranged it so that a negro was to announce his approach to the legislative chamber in words substantially as follows: "Mr. Speaker, the governor is now approaching," but forgetting his text, the messenger electrified the assembled wisdom with the sentence: "Mr. Speaker, de' gubner has done come."

What Dr. Miller Wrote. Quoting from Dr. Miller agent of the ball: "Izard was a stately character physically. Mentally rather weak, and felt a lively sense of the dignity with which the appointment clothed him. He had never known such an honor before, and it bore upon him heavily. To the few persons who then constituted the population of the city, the governor was careful to intimate a desire to have his gubernatorial advent suitably celebrated. The facetious and wary Cuming suggested the idea of giving Izard an executive ball. The larger of the two rooms, which theater of a scene perhaps the most ludicrous that was ever witnessed in the history of public receptions. The rooms had a single coat of what was then called plastering, composed of a frozen mixture of mud and ice, and a very thin coating of that. The floor was rough and unplanned and not altogether safe for those who preferred the upright position. It had been energetically scrubbed for the occasion. The night being dreadfully cold, and the heating apparatus failing to warm the room, the water froze upon the floor, and could not be melted by any then known process. Rough cottonwood boards on either side of the room were substitutes for chairs.

Scene at the Ball. The hour of seven having arrived, the grand company began to assemble. Long before the appointed hour, this Arkansas excellency appeared in the dancing hall. He and Jim Orton, the band of Council Bluffs, reached the scene at about the same moment. The governor was very polite to Jim, and Jim was tight enough to be correspondingly polite to the governor—while Izard was the guest of nine ladies, who were all that could be mustered, even for a state occasion, in Omaha. They were Mrs. G. L. Miller, Mrs. T. B. Cuming, Mrs. Fenner Ferguson, Mrs. J. Sterling Morton, Mrs. C. B. Smith, Mrs. Fleming Davidson, Mrs. A. J. Hanscom, Mrs. A. D. Jones and Mrs. S. E. Rogers. Two of the ladies could not dance, and their places were supplied by the same number of gentlemen. The governor had a son by the name of James. He was his excellency's private secretary, and wishing to present a high example of style, he came in at a late hour, escorting Mrs. Davidson. His bearing was fearfully stately and dignified. He wore a white vest and white kids, as any gentleman would do, but these were in rather discordant contrast with the surroundings. Paddock, Poppleton, Cuming, Smith, Morton, Ferguson, Goodwill, Clancy, Folsom, and Dr. Miller, besides a large assemblage of legislators attended. Jim Orton was the solitary fiddler, occupying a corner of the room. The dance opened, and it was a gay and festive occasion. During the dance several accidents happened. One lady, now well known in Omaha, fell flat; others did likewise. The supper came off about midnight, and consisted of coffee with brown sugar, but no milk, sandwiches of peculiar size, very thick and made up of a singular mixture of bread of radical complexion, and bacon. The menu was supplemented with dried apple pie, and there being no tables in those days, was passed around. The governor, having long lived in a hot climate, stood around shivering with the cold, but bore himself with amiable fortitude, buoyed up by the honors thus showered upon him, and at the proper time, under a deep sense of his own consequence, made a speech re-

Royal Dynasty of the House of Ak-Sar-Ben

Table listing names and years of the House of Ak-Sar-Ben, including E. M. Bartlett, Casper E. Yost, E. P. Peck, R. S. Wilcox, W. D. McHugh, F. A. Nash, H. J. Penfold, Thomas A. Fry, Frederick Metz, C. H. Pickens, G. W. Wattles, G. W. Dietz, V. B. Caldwell, W. L. Yetter, Arthur C. Smith, Everett Buckingham, Joseph Barker, T. C. Byrne, Charles Black, and their corresponding years from 1895 to 1914.

SHE WAS THE IRRESISTIBLE QUEEN OF TANGO.



turning thanks for the high honors due him.

Thus is described the first and last executive ball that ever took place in Omaha.

Governor Izard's Personality. Dr. George L. Miller's personal recollections of Governor Izard: "Mark W. Izard is recalled by me as a prominent citizen of Arkansas, of what might be called the middle class in the days of slavery. I think he was a Baptist preacher at one time, but I am not sure of this. Governor Izard was a man of large and imposing stature. He must have been not less than six feet tall, symmetrical in form, of full flesh, erect carriage, and dignified bearing. His manners were very courteous and affable, and he had a gentle disposition and kind heart. He was a man of strong religious convictions and exemplary habits of life. Governor Izard was much respected by our people. His head was large, his hair, eyes and complexion dark, and his face full and broad."

War Reduces Prices in London Theaters

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) LONDON, Sept. 15.—The war has brought about two innovations in the leading London theaters, a reduction of prices and the privilege of sitting in the best seats without wearing evening dress. The stalls of London houses, which correspond to orchestra seats in America, are ordinarily sold at £50, but several of the principal theaters have reduced the prices to £2. Although there was no hard and fast rule, there was a custom which only a few independent people had the temerity to violate, that every occupant of the stalls should wear evening dress. The exceedingly fashionable theaters controlled by Sir Herbert Beerliohm Tree and Sir George Alexander were among the first to recognize that war is a time when formalities are at a discount. When people are cutting off their luxuries, and many in mourning or oppressed with anxiety for relatives at the front, theater-going suffers a sharp decline. In the interests of the many people who depend upon them for a living, the managers are doing their best to keep their houses open. Profit sharing has been adopted by many London and provincial establishments.

Advertisement for B. L. Baldwin Company, General Insurance, W. A. Yonson, President, 510 First National Bank Bldg., Omaha. Lists assets for various insurance companies.

INSURANCE BUSINESS GROWS

Annual Report Published by State Shows Healthy Condition.

TWO BILLION NOW IN FORCE

Premiums in Stock Fire Insurance Companies Amount to Four and a Half Million for the Fiscal Year.

A recapitulation of the insurance business of the state of Nebraska shows insurance in force to the extent of some \$2,000,000,000. Definite and accurate figures of this are not obtainable when one takes into consideration the assessment and plate glass insurance, the stock miscellaneous companies, and the assessment health and accident insurance for which no definite amounts are stated in the policies.

The premiums in stock fire companies in the last year in Nebraska amounted to \$4,409,963, while the losses paid policy holders in this class of insurance in the state were \$2,003,971. The total insurance in force in this class is \$731,341,106.

In the mutual legal reserve life class the premiums of the last year amounted to \$1,163,490, the losses paid policy holders amounted to \$1,019,660, and the total insurance in force amounts to \$115,725,389.

Fraternal Organizations. In the fraternal beneficiary associations the premiums were \$2,886,961; the losses paid policy holders \$2,542,941, and the total insurance in force \$290,241,849.

Those figures mean that Omaha has been doing a great insurance business, as every company that does business in the state has offices in Omaha, and many of them have the main office in Omaha. The average man in Nebraska does not realize what the insurance business of the state means to the state or to a city where the companies make headquarters. The encouraging of insurance means increase in the bank deposits and means much in the financial world.

The insurance department of Nebraska has just published its summary of the insurance business of the state for the last year with some comparisons.

Insurance in State. The following recapitulation of business

in Nebraska for the last year is contained in this volume:

Table showing insurance statistics for Nebraska, including Stock fire, Mutual fire, Fraternal, and other categories with 1913 and 1914 figures.

Doubles in Four Years. Casualty, surety and miscellaneous business practically doubled in Nebraska in four years, that is from the figures of 1909 to the figures of 1913.

A comparative study of the fraternal and beneficiary business of the last six years shows some fluctuation, but on the whole a substantial gain in business. The amount of certificates in force in the state in this class December 31, 1908, was \$296,473,072, and on the same date in 1913 there were \$299,241,849.

Accident and health business has much more than doubled in the last five years according to the figures of premiums paid which are \$385,000, as against \$145,679 in 1909. The losses paid in this class have more than quadrupled, being \$307,000, as against \$77,308.

Of the stock legal reserve life insurance companies, sixty are doing business in Nebraska. Six of these are companies with headquarters in Omaha.

Gain in Fraternal. A comparative study of the fraternal and beneficiary business of the last six years shows some fluctuation, but on the whole a substantial gain in business.

During the last two years there has been a falling off, according to the state report, of the amount of insurance written annually in the fraternal beneficiary line. Here, too, a period of six years shows a fluctuation or a steady rise and then a steady decline.

Losses Paid Increase. The losses paid in death have made practically a steady increase. They are as follows in a resume of the fraternal beneficiary insurance of the state:

Table showing losses paid in fraternal beneficiary insurance for the years 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913.

During the same period the losses paid for disability made a big increase, having much more than doubled in the six years. Beginning with \$11,000 in 1908 they now paid \$40,000 in 1913. The figures on this matter taken from the state report are as follows:

Table showing losses paid for disability in fraternal beneficiary insurance for the years 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913.

The amount received from members during this period shows an increase, although here, too, the increase was not a steady one, but a fluctuating one during the six years. The figures taken from the annual report will show:

Table showing amounts received from members for the years 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913.

The risks written each year for six years show some fluctuation, but on the whole have averaged up well, ranging from \$38,000,000 to \$46,000,000 and back to \$33,815,779 in 1913. It is in the risks in force that the steady and unbroken in-

crease is shown for the six years. The following figures from the report illustrate this:

Table showing risks in force for the years 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913.

Servians Are Brave but Not Very Good Shots, Says Austrian

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) ROTTERDAM, Sept. 15.—An Austrian captain, wounded in the battle of Sjabats, is quoted in the Bohemia, a newspaper published at Prague, in part as follows:

"The Servian infantry is very brave, but does not shoot as well as it might. The only good shots the Servians have are the Komitadj irregulars, who concealed in the foliage of bushes and trees, make a specialty of shooting down the Austrian officers."

"The Servian artillery is excellent, accounted for in part by the circumstance that fighting in its own country it is fully familiar with the terrain. As a result their range is good, all the more so since they are given by the natives information which we cannot get, of course. Generally the direction of advance of our army is given by the Servian peasants to their army by the lighting of great straw fires. In the neighborhood under the church in Sjabats we found a telephone station with wires running to the various Servian headquarters."

"But the Servian soldiers are brave. Some of their tactics are peculiar. Now and then numbers of them permit themselves to be made prisoners of war for the purpose of supporting a plan of ambush. Cases, too, have been known in which prisoners of war made attacks on our men with hand grenades concealed

by them. The confusion resulting from this has in many cases resulted in the escape of the prisoners.

"We have found that women fight us with rifles, while even children are employed to throw bombs. A 12-year-old girl, who was shot through the legs and was taken into the hospital at Leusatz, boasted of having thrown sixteen bombs among the Austro-Hungarian troops."

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Table showing assets and reserve fund for July 1, 1914: Assets \$1,491,443.56, Reserve Fund \$1,213,715.13, First Mortgage Farm Loans owned \$791,507.46.

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INCREASE IN RESERVE FUND

Table showing increase in reserve fund from December 31, 1902 to December 31, 1913, with values ranging from \$9,934.44 to \$1,079,377.44.

July 1, 1914 . . \$1,214,715.13

Securities deposited with Nebraska Insurance Department to full amount allowed by law.