

## AS THE YEARS GO BY.

We miss a lovely maiden  
Whose memory so dear, so sweet,  
Yet lingers like a vision  
Of blossom time, so fair, so fleet.  
Ah, we remember with a sigh  
To miss her as the years go by.

So young, so bright and joyous,  
So glad and true her spirit's mirth,  
Her life was like a sunbeam's  
That, flitting, glimmers on the earth,  
A life that brightened but to die.  
We miss its light as years go by.

A strain of tender music  
Seemed blending with her winning ways;  
Her voice rang out in carols,  
Sweet melody ran through her days;  
She echoed bird notes floating high.  
We miss the songs as years go by.

So swiftly passed her morning,  
The golden morning time of life,  
Which led her to the threshold,  
Perchance, of sorrow or of strife.  
And then she went beyond the sky,  
Where morning time shall ne'er pass by.

Thank God, she has not lingered  
In weary ways that lie below!  
Thank God, her sweet existence  
Had little touch of human woe!  
And yet our hearts must ever sigh  
And miss her as the years go by.

If a moment from the angels  
God should lend her by His grace  
And she stood once more beside us,  
A smile, we think, would light her face  
In answer to our loving cry,  
"We miss thee as the years go by."

—MARY FRENCH MORTON.

## A RELIC.

An interesting monument of the very earliest administration of justice in Nebraska has fallen into THE CONSERVATIVE'S hands; no less than a record of court business kept by a local magistrate forty-three years ago, or in the year following that in which the territories of Kansas and Nebraska were organized. It is, as an inscription on the fly-leaf recites, the "Docket of Mills S. Reeves, a Justice of the Peace of Otoe County, Nebraska. Elected November 6th, A. D. 1855." This the squire wrote himself in his new book, in a hand that is a pattern of neatness, first drawing pencil-lines across the page to go by. On another page appears in the same elaborate script, "United States of America. Nebraska Territory. Otoe County." The book is a slim volume with marbled sides, such as sells for about fifteen cents; it contained 108 pages, which were supplemented, as the needs of the court required further room, with a quire of foolscap, carefully sewed in at the latter end.

The record covers the period from December 7, 1855, to October 11, 1856.

## Marriages.

On the last day of January it became Justice Reeves' privilege to unite in marriage Mr. William J. Spry and Miss Elizabeth Roberts, "all of Otoe County;" and he started a record of such transactions on the inside of the back cover of his book. During the time it was in use he performed six marriages, two of

the other couples being residents of Kearney City, two of Camp Creek, Otoe County, and one coming across the river from Fremont County, Iowa, to obtain the benefit of his experience and skill.

Besides this there is a page devoted to complicated calculations, which display a profound knowledge of the arts of multiplication and long division. Large sums are dealt with, and as that was before gold was discovered at Pike's Peak it seems likely that the squire was figuring profits on Kearney City lots; most of his results are divided by 27, as if there had been that number of stockholders. And ornamental designs on another page show where the baby got at the docket one day with a lead-pencil.

For the most part, Justice Reeves' docket deals with the simple incidents

of commerce in a peaceful community.

The transactions of his court consist mainly of actions for debt, on promissory notes drawn usually at one day after date, for small amounts, but bearing interest at from ten to twenty per cent; of actions of assumpsit, for sheeting at three cents a foot, lumber at thirty dollars a thousand or shingles at \$3.25; or of replevining oak and walnut rails and similar merchandise. The record opens with a petition wherein Warren Atkins sets forth "that George Gline wrongfully detained a certain wagon from his possession." A writ was granted and delivered to Constable N. T. Hallock for service, and the case set for hearing in one week. On the day "the Plaintiff appeared but the Defendant came not," as is recorded in the squire's beautiful handwriting. Further on one learns with pleasure that the custody of the wagon was awarded to Plaintiff and the costs (amounting to \$2.20) assessed against Defendant; but Atkins appears to have paid them, as if he was glad to get off so easily.

Possibly the defendant Glines was impressed by this exhibition of the

## A Litigant.

power of the law, for four weeks later he in turn complains that Robert Kennedy unlawfully detains two hogs from his possession. This case was warmly contested; no fewer than nine witnesses were summoned, and the active constable was enabled to pile up fees amounting to \$2.93. The hogs appear to have been lost sight of in the confusion, but the costs were unequivocally laid upon the Defendant. As they came to \$10.48 this was a serious matter for him; but perhaps still more so for the constable and justice, for after trying to collect it for a month the execution was returned endorsed "No property found."

Immediately thereupon Tootle & Armstrong brought suit against Glines for payment of a note of \$20.65, with 10 per cent interest. "Notice was served by leaving a copy at his residence with

Indiana Gline, she being a free white person over the age of fourteen years." And after this troubles gathered thick and fast over the unhappy Gline, who appears as Defendant in no less than ten cases in the book; and by October he had fallen so low as to be fined two dollars for assault and battery on the person of Robert Fox.

Among other names that occur frequently in Justice Reeves' record is that

Others, of one Charles B. Fooks, who begins

by suing Maulding & Woods for fifteen dollars, "for ten days work in the store at posting books," and subsequently sues many other persons on many grounds. There is also one Joel Helvy, who appears all too often as Defendant in various cases of debt. The Boulwares, McMechans and Nuckolls are there, of course, usually endeavoring to collect money from insolent debtors; the attorneys who appear most frequently are H. H. Harding and Wm. M'Lennan, who was prosecuting attorney, and who will no doubt recall many of the incidents of the period. The only physician in evidence is Dr. Matthew Kelly Kay, who comes in two or three times with notes which he desires to have collected.

History relates, however, that the Kearney City of 1855 was not altogether

the abode of peace, and as a faithful

## Offenses.

record Justice Reeves' docket reveals the existence of some evil-disposed characters within his jurisdiction. In the dead of winter, for instance, Stephen F. Nuckolls charges James Crawford with breaking his smoke house with intent to steal. "After hearing the evidence," says the squire, and "duly inspecting all things touching the complaint, it appears to me that the crime of burglary or house-breaking has been committed;" and the "culprit was held to answer for the same." Our magistrate is as scrupulously careful in his language as in his chirography; but there is room to suspect that in a larger sphere he would have been what is called a hanging judge, for of all the miscreants brought before him he never acquits one. There is Ambrose Beers, charged with stealing a pistol of the value of twenty dollars; there is one Hazlerigg, accused of "finding Bank Bills and appropriating them to his own use;" the same disturber up a short time later for "an Affray;" all, all guilty. Some culprits would take the short course and plead guilty at once; as Peter de Vallier, charged with assault and battery on Prosecuting Attorney M'Lennan himself, and fined four dollars therefor; and Alpheus M. Barnes, who owned up to keeping a "dram shop" and paid ten dollars for his transgression.

Others would demand a jury, and in some cases escape thus the rigor of the squire's justice. Lafayette Cowles,