

EARLY TIMES IN JEFFERSON.

From the time of the first settlement of the county by ranchmen and stage station men until August, 1864, no trouble had been experienced with the Indians who frequented the Little Blue valley, except that the aborigines had a marked propensity for pilfering, which they took every opportunity of exercising.

On August 7, 1864, every ranch and station between Ft. Kearney and Big Sandy in this county was attacked at nearly the same hour of the day. The attack was the consummation of plans made monthly before and was in nearly every instance successful.

In the summer of 1863, a year before the outbreak, the writer, while at Cottonwood Springs, on the Platte, was advised by a squaw man, who was living with the Sioux, to keep off the plains as the Indians were planning a raid and a big one. The idea seemed preposterous, but time verified the prediction.

The raid was most severe at Eubank's ranch and Oak Grove. The few settlers in the vicinity of the Big Sandy receiving a few hour's notice succeeding in escaping to Marysville, Kansas. At Eubank's ranch, several were killed and Mrs. Eubank and Miss Roper, of Beatrice were carried into captivity, from which they were redeemed the following March. Captain H. E. Palmer, of the 11th Kansas, who arrived at Eubank's a few hours after the attack, states in his history of the Powder river expedition, that the Indians were led in the raid by Black Lettle, Two Face and one-eyed George Bent. It is interesting to note that when Col. Chivington defeated the Indians at Sand Creek, on Nov. 26th, 1864, one-eyed George Bent was found among the slain; and that Two Face was hung in chains, near Ft. Laramie, by Col. Tom Moonlight, the following March.

During 1865 and 1866 there were no Indian troubles in this vicinity except rumors of threatened attacks, which fortunately proved unfounded. In 1866 the settlers on Rose Creek constructed an enclosure of sod, about one-fourth of a mile south of Ives Marks' saw mill, but had no occasion to use it.

1867 saw a repetition of the scenes of 1864. The Hackney ranch, occupied by Thompson & Halliday in Thayer county, was burned, and the Kiowa ranch attacked but not taken; and settler named Hainey was killed about one mile from the present location of Hebron.

Bennett & Abernathy had a ranch between Meridian and Hebron. They were attacked and retreated to a cave in the bluffs, the entrance to which was filled with combustibles by the Indians, and the unfortunate settlers suffocated. Their bodies were recovered by members of Captain John R. Brown's company of militia.

July 4th, the settlers on Rose Creek

constructed another barricade three miles west of Marks' Mills. It was built of sod and pierced with loop holes. Joseph Goeller and Frank Thomas plowed the sod for the walls, and it was occupied for several weeks by a number of families.

August 1867 witnessed another outbreak of hostilities. Three men driving a flock of sheep were attacked near Hackney ranch, one German was killed and the others escaped to Big Sandy. The Indians visited the little home of a man known as Poland Pete, and after killing his little son, took his daughter, a young girl, prisoner. The little girl was afterwards recovered by purchase at North Platte. About the same time, Polish Albert and Polish Joe, as they were called, were killed near Oak Grove.

The farthest point east they penetrated was on Coal Creek, south of the present location of Endicott, where they found Wm. Smith cutting wood. They shot him in the neck with an arrow, and took his team, while he made a hurried retreat to his home across the river.

August 13th, the first company of militia was organized at Meridian where they were stationed until Nov. 15th, when they were mustered out. Several of the company were out scouting one day when they encountered a considerably larger force of Indians. The small squad retreated to Joseph Walker's ranch, a short distance from Meridian, and the Indians crossed the river, stopping enroute to secure the team of a man named Hunt, who was cutting hay in the bottom. Hunt escaped with his scalp intact, but minus a good team. Joe Baker and John Breese of Fairbury, two members of the militia, rode to the hill top in time to see the Indians surround and kill Ignatz Tenish, who was on the opposite side of the stream, but they were too late to help him or recover his team, which the Indians secured. A company of militia was organized, and mustered on August 13, 1867, and was mustered out of the service November 18, 1867. All the members were enrolled from the Big Sandy and several of the boys still reside in this vicinity.

June 1st, 1869, Governor Butler ordered the enlistment of a company of the Nebraska cavalry militia, First Nebraska. The company went into camp near the present location of Hebron, at Camp Butler, and remained in service until they were relieved in the spring of 1870 by a company of regulars.

Jefferson was the only county in the then territory, where the settlers depended for protection from the Indians upon troops raised from their own members. Other localities were guarded by the First and Second regiments, the Eleventh Kansas and the Eighteenth Ohio, but no troops were sent to this valley until the danger was virtually over.

W. W. WATSON.

CIVIC FEDERATION.

The Civic Federation of Chicago which has been active in the promotion of conferences having for their object civic improvement, has taken steps for the organization of a national association. The object of which, as stated in the constitution, is:

"To provide for a thorough discussion of questions of national import affecting either the foreign or domestic policy of the United States, to aid in the crystallization of the most enlightened public sentiment of the country in respect thereto and, when desirable, to promote necessary legislation in accordance therewith."

The plan provides for the appointment of an advisory council of five hundred. Several months have been spent in carefully selecting the members of this council, the object of the committee being to secure only representative, conservative, practical men of affairs, republicans and democrats. No federal or state office-holders, professional politicians, cranks, hobbyists, or revolutionists have been knowingly included.

In a government like ours, associations of this character, that have for their object the investigation and discussion of public questions, are of incalculable value in influencing popular judgment and avoiding the evil consequences of extreme partisanship. It is to education, by encouraging men to think more and talk less, that we must look for the remedy of existing evils in government.

THE HERESY OF DR. HILLIS.

Dr. Hillis, a Presbyterian, and pastor of Plymouth church, is accused of heresy. Here are some of the statements for which he is blamed: "He spoke of the uncertainty of the world to come, none of the greatest philosophers having ever been able to picture it even to their own satisfaction, and all conception differing." \* \* \* "When we read Christ's statements regarding the future penalties and rewards, and interpret them in the light of evolution, how fragmentary seem the old teachings." \* \* \* "The Confession of Faith says that certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, being 'particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished,' and every young man who enters the Presbyterian church has to solemnly swear to believe and teach this frightful view. And every attempt to revise and expel that statement from the creed has been successfully combatted by a majority that wishes to retain the doctrine. It would seem as if a man would prefer to be burned at the stake rather than hold or assert or charge such infinite cruelty upon the all-merciful and all-loving God. The day the scholastics wrote that chapter in the Confession of Faith, they got the devil confused with God." —Emporia Gazette.