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JUSTICE OF THE EARLY DAYS.

The Peculiar Methods of Omaha's Vigilance Committee.

HOW THEY CLOSED THE SALOON.

The Struggle on the River Bank—The Claim Club and Its Methods—The Irishman's Siege at Florence.

The Old Vigilantes.

If the old vigilance committee, which flourished in Omaha in the early days, were in vogue now it could in all probability do great deal for the good of the public. A prominent citizen states most emphatically that there never was a vigilance committee in existence in Omaha, while others state with equal emphasis that there was.

At any rate, there were popular uprisings of the people, who administered justice and dealt death to those whom they thought deserved it.

There was a Mrs. Taylor who resided on the Papio, about twelve miles from Omaha, who was

AWAKENED ONE NIGHT,

nearly thirty years ago, by two burglars and compelled to disclose the hiding place of some \$1,500 she was known to have in her possession. This she did, the money was obtained and the two thieves escaped. They were soon arrested, however, and brought to Omaha and confined in the old jail at Sixteenth and Franklin street, where the Paxton building is now situated. In a room containing forty men, Mrs. Taylor picked out the two guilty parties. One of the men turned states evidence and escaped punishment, but the

OTHER WAS HUNG

from the rafters by a mob that forced its way into the jail.

Two horse thieves were taken from the jail in this city in 1858 and conveyed to a spot near Florence, where they were lynched.

It is said, and so it was claimed by one of the men, that he had earned the horses legitimately by working for them. Whether or not there is any truth in this I am unable to say, as the old citizens who remember the occurrence never know of its verification. If it is the truth the hanging of this man was nothing less than murder.

A desperate attempt was made in 1870 to take

A MURDERER

from the jail while Sheriff Grebe was in possession for the purpose of lynching. The sheriff and his men withstood the attack, consequently the attempt was unsuccessful.

There used to be a grove or park, as it was termed, that extended from Harvey to Chicago street in the "good old colony days," along Ninth street. Two notorious horse thieves were taken down into the grove by the vigilance committee who were determined to hang them, but when the critical moment came to

ABOUT THE NOOSE

they grew faint-hearted and had conferred with the people about virtually creating themselves murderers. There were plenty of men present more than willing to pull the rope but none had the courage to fasten the rope around

the necks of the terror-stricken criminals.

The mob was undecided as to what was the best course to pursue. It was plain to them that to present the men would not be lynched and yet their very souls thirsted for vengeance. There were some present, however, who were possessed of inexhaustible resources and

WHIPPING AT THE STAKE

was proposed. The men were escorted to the flag staff and securely fastened. Emulating the old semi-barbaric king who caused the wrong to inflict the punishment, the owners of the horses were designated to perform the disagreeable task of logging the men.

One of the owners of the horses was the possessor of a soft heart, and his victim did not suffer so badly, but the other thief was not so fortunate. The horse owner, filled only with the memory of his wrongs and thirsting for revenge, belabored the tied thief with all his strength.

Another way the vigilance committee or mob composed of popular uprisings of the people had of amusing itself was to take the unfortunate criminals down to the river and throw them in, compelling them to swim to the low shore or drown. It was certainly a case of "sink or swim." It is related that they conveyed four notorious desperadoes down to the river one night with the avowed intention of drowning them. It was

A DESPERATE STRUGGLE

between the members of the vigilance committee and the desperadoes. Standing on the bank with the river rolling sluggishly along in the night, those four men fought with the fury of a wounded tigress. Their lives were at stake and they fully realized it. Their foes were four to one, but the desperate fight those made for their lives should have won, and perhaps did win, admiration from any one of their enemies. But the odds were too great against them, and they were finally pushed over into the river and the Missouri hid them from sight.

If the banks of the Missouri river in and near Omaha could speak, many mysterious disappearances could be cleared up; many cold-blooded stories could be told. Undoubtedly the vigilance committee did many acts for which the people should have been thankful, but there is also no doubt that they often acted hastily upon their decisions.

There is said to have been a well known saloon and

GAMBLING HELL

on Franklin street between Eleventh and Twelfth, which the vigilantes raided one night in 1850 and broke up in a very eccentric manner. The bartender and occupants were unceremoniously driven out, but not a glass, not a bottle, not a chair or table was molested. Everything was left intact, but this popular uprising of the people left a startling and significant warning in the shape of a rope with a noose, dangling in the doorway. The vigilantes disappeared about 1862.

THE CLAIM CLUB.

It was by no means a rare occurrence to quarrel over claims. A man named Snow was killed on his claim near Omaha. It had been "jumped," but Snow came to this city for assistance but not being able to obtain it, he armed himself and proceeded out to his land for the purpose of reinstating himself, but he was shot, so the "jumper" claimed, in self defense.

The Claim club was an organization of men who were determined to

organize either of them were—

that flourished about the same period the vigilance committee did.

The Claim club is said by many to be a company of men banded together for the protection of legitimate and bona fide settlers against that accursed of all western men—the claim jumper.

Under the United States law a head of a family or any single person of a certain age can pre-empt 160 acres of government land, and after a specified time, provided the requirements of the law have been complied with, the land becomes the property of the settler.

Some authorities assert, however, that the object was just the reverse from protecting the settler. That after a claim had been proved up on and it was valuable and located near Omaha, the Claim club obtained possession of the land fairly by the payment of something like \$1.25 per acre, or resorted to foul means if the owner was found obdurate. It is also maintained that four men often became necessary in order that the club might become the possessor of a valuable claim, and that more than one honest settler was severely used or

MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED

because of his refusal to accede to the wishes of the club. Emulating the police of the Emerald Isle the Claim club went up near Florence for the purpose of evicting a man from a claim. The man, through some of his Omaha friends, had heard of the intended visit several days previously, and accordingly he had fortified himself in his cabin in good old Ireland fashion, and was amply prepared to resist the proposed invasion. At last the memorable day arrived. Every member of the club was a Brobdignagian when he moved with martial tread on the cabin, but he immediately became a Lilliputian of the most pronounced type when hostilities commenced.

DESIGNED.

The beleaguered had not only provided himself with sufficient provision for a siege, but also with fire arms and ammunition that would have caused the hearts of the colonial Indian to throb fast with envy. It was a veritable storming of Fort Sumter, in which stormed and stormers fought with dogged pertinacity and vigor for possession and supremacy.

But in the course of time the inevitable end was reached when the man's provision and ammunition were exhausted and he was forced to succumb. To attempt to run the gauntlet of the intrepid Claim club was nothing short of suicide, and the man wished to continue his residence upon his property. Negotiations for a peaceful settlement of difficulties were therefore entered into between the besieged and the besiegers. A treaty of peace was at length satisfactorily perfected, but the man was forced to abdicate.

HOSTILITIES WERE SUSPENDED

and the man came out of his miniature fort bearing an emblem of peace, and departed leaving the battle-scarred and victory-crowned members of the famous Omaha Claim club monarch of all they surveyed. Such an overwhelming victory could do naught but fire the club with enthusiasm, and it is a mystery how they ever permitted their organization to disband, which it did in 1858.

But still if one-half the stories that are told of the Claim club are true it is a positive wonder that the decent people of Omaha did not compel it to disband long before it did.

R. A. EATON.

Harvard and Yale will have the largest freshmen classes ever known at either institution.

A HALF-MILLION SQUANDERED

Reckless Waste of Public Money on the Geological Survey.

MANY REMUNERATIVE SINECURES

Steadily Increasing Appropriations for Decreasing Value—The Railways of Ceylon—Difficulties in Their Management.

The Geological Survey.

WASHINGTON, August 9.—Special to THE BEE.—Another effort will be made to deprive the geological survey of its existence. One of the appropriation bills now pending contains the provision for keeping up this institution, and it is discovered that it costs about a half million a year. A member who has watched the work of the geological survey from its beginning sums it up as follows:

"I do not remember that any man or the government has ever profited a dollar by this work, except he be connected with it and gets his profit by way of salary. There is no law authorizing the geological survey, and there is no law governing the large expenditures made by it annually. Originally there was a little appropriation—I believe it was \$10,000—made to secure certain services in geology, and it authorized the employment of a superintendent. He so managed the work that he did not complete it within the time specified, and another call was made for an appropriation. This time it anticipated more work, and more money was given that at first. From year to year it has asked congress for larger and larger appropriations for the purpose of making geological surveys, but without specifying as to where the work is to be done, and for what purpose it is to be used. The money has been given and the appropriation increased from one, two, three and four hundred thousand dollars till round numbers are being paid about a half million dollars a year for this work. Inasmuch as there is no application as to the organization of the bureau or the employment of any specific number of men, the superintendent may make as many sinecures as he wishes, and pay as large salaries as he may choose.

"But the thing I most object to," continued this member, "is the way in which this service has been maintained. If you will get the roster of the geological survey you will find that nearly every member of the house committee on appropriations and the senate committee on appropriations for the last ten years, has had at least one friend if not ten in this service. Places have been doled out to men in congress for the purpose of getting their influence, and it has been a clear case of you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours till this little pile has grown to be a great caribande of words, body politic, and instead of spending \$100 a year, as at first, the money given the geological survey every year comprises quite a large part of the general appropriation. I know of no service so useless to the country and none that could be so easily exploded by anyone in congress who would take the trouble to jump into it. It is vulnerable at every point. Nearly all of the men employed as experts are without any practical knowledge of geology, although there are some very excellent and reputable gentlemen connected with it. I do not blame the men who are carried on the rolls. It is not their fault. Neither is it their blame that they have nothing to do. Nor can it be said that they are blame-worthy because it is within the power of their chief to give them large or small salaries, assign them to alleged duties or allow them to remain at their homes, and to have absolute control of the large appropriation made every year.

American railroad managers would undoubtedly be disgraced in the management of the little roads in the island of Ceylon. The

total number of miles of railroad in Ceylon is but 182, and they have only been in operation fifteen years. It seems from computations in the possession of the department of state, that it cost \$150,000 a mile to build much of this road. The country is so mountainous that a great deal of blasting and tunneling is required. The cheapest line cost \$90,000 per mile, while some of it cost \$175,000 a mile, the entire length. The stations are about six miles apart on the main line from Colombo to Nannoya. This line taps a worn out coffee district. It seems that these roads, although they charge five cents a mile for the first-class passage for passengers pay only 3 per cent on the capital invested. The gauge is the same as the American compromise. Some of the lines are divided into three classes, and are charged accordingly. There are also special rates for certain products, coffee, cinchona, tea, etc., mostly the products of the interior. The country is rich in undeveloped products, but is financially poor. It is believed that there is not a cash equivalent on the whole island worth \$10,000,000. The heavy investments in the railroads is to develop the country. A great many difficulties are reported in the management of the road.

CONSUALITIES.

"Good-Deed" is a combination found in a marriage advertisement in an Allentown (Pa.) newspaper. Everybody will wish the contracting parties a Good-Deed of prosperity.

Miss E. H. Ober, the founder and first manager of the original Boston Ideal Opera company, was married on Wednesday last in Blue Hill, Me., to Virgil B. King, a lawyer of Cleveland, O.

Near Chattanooga, Tenn., a father who had forgiven his son's crime and her young Lochinvar, nevertheless gave a sound thrashing to the friend who acted as best man in the runaway match.

A prominent young gentleman in Athens has taken out a blank marriage license, and so soon as he can find a fair damsel who is willing to take his name in the blank he will secure the services of a J. P. and have the knot tied.

After walking fifty miles, an eloping couple reached Pomery, O., and were married. The bride admitted she felt a little tired and foot sore, but didn't care as "she was in for getting all the romance out of the affair, even if her pa does object to the marriage."

A man sixty years old has been sued by his wife, aged eighteen, in Chicago, who wants to get her wearing apparel and personal effects out of his possession. She felt a little tired and foot sore, but didn't care as "she was in for getting all the romance out of the affair, even if her pa does object to the marriage."

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quite the fashion. One was lately reported from the Red River region, where the bride and groom were pushed out in a buggy into deep water and there wedded according to the laws of Indian Territory; and now Dr. Hill and Miss Pitt, of West Point, Ga., have got themselves wedded in a sawd at sunset, "skimming over the waters of the yellow Chattahoochee."

Society in New York is talking about the Marlborough marriage, and probably will do so for several weeks. The closest friends the new duchess has in New York declare that all the talk about the duke of Marlborough having insisted on financial arrangements before the ceremony is simply rubbish. They say that he asked nothing of his bride and required nothing. It is added, too, that the alliance was not by any means without a romantic color. Mrs. Hammersley came to have before the end of the courtship the strongest possible feeling for Marlborough, and the admiration which she felt for her was never disguised from the first.

Miss Hester Tyre, of Jackson county, W. Va., eighteen years old, determined in spite of the opposition of her parents, on marrying George Finell, a farm hand, aged nineteen years. Between them they had only \$1.25. Last Friday they started out and walked fifty miles to the Ohio river, taking three days for the journey. Crossing the river they found a justice, who married them for nothing, kissed the bride and paid their ferry. Another fifty-mile walk and they arrived home and received the parental blessing. Miss Tyre is evidently one of the kind whom you cannot tire.

PEPPERMINT DROPS.

This is the end of my striving. Yes, this is the end of it all; I tried to steal third, but the pitcher hit me in the neck with the ball.

Of course a girl who fences is graceful, especially if she is on the right side of the fence.

A perceptive partisan is the man who is trying to have himself appointed to the office now held by his friend.

If this is the best time to buy coal, as we are informed by an exchange, why shouldn't January be the best time to lay in fly-paper and mosquito netting?

Old Mother Hubbard, had she been a woman of discretion, would have gone to the water cooler to get herself a quart of melted ice, while the poor dog went to thunder.

There is something cruel in the fate of the Vermont man who spent several weeks in a swamp looking for a mine of plumbago, and who while so engaged caught the lambsago.

A German physician has discovered that excessive indulgence in telephonic communication causes a peculiar disease of the ear. It also brings on total loss of the temper and promotes expetives.

House-owner—I warrant the street a respectable one; the neighbors are sans reproche. House-hunter—That's good, sir, so far as it goes. But the house—can you warrant it sans cockroach?

If Muck-a-pee-wah-ken-gah, the Indian who has just been granted a pension, had not been successful in his application, he could have made a living by routing his name to be a barbed wire fence.

It is said that a St. Louis man who bought it under the impression that it represented a base ball empire being given to his oration.

"Get yourself full of your own and then your essay will write itself. I know, professor," said Miss "but my essay is on 'Eun, the oration was entitled 'Upward' is now reading a party of to Rocky mountains. But he the kind of upward and on to in his oration.

An enterprising Australian fuses that he will pay half persons whom patients disment. No such a pro-ed from American hours and watermelons.

Joe Frangere's bunch of fashion's ville News says

family arrayed in dashing new hats, exclaimed: "There go my wife and daughters with thirty bushels of oats apiece on their heads!"

The best treatment for a dog afflicted with fleas is to give him a bath. Select a quiet spot overlooking a deep body of water, kindly but firmly attach a stone weighing fifty pounds to the animal's neck, put him in the water, and let him bathe as long as he feels like it. This method has received the endorsement of many of the ablest minds in America. It is also useful as a preventive.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Joe Emmet (Fritz) has sailed for Europe. Gilbert and Sullivan have nearly finished their new opera, which will be brought out in September.

Emma Juch will sing in a series of twenty concerts next season. Hope Glenn, Teresa Carreno and Leopold Lichtenberg will also be in the company.

Campanini is taking his annual course of baths at Acqui and engaging artists for his approaching concert tour. He will return to the United States in October.

Signor Liberati has organized a military band of fifty musicians and soloists for a fall and winter season. He will start in August and play in the large western cities.

The rumor that Mrs. Lanetry is trying to secure the lease of the Grand Opera house is probably false. With the fulfillment of her contracts for the coming season she intends to retire to private life.

Mrs. Mathilde Hochm, a young and handsome singer of New York city, received the first prize at the closing performance this season of the vocal and dramatic classes of the Vienna conservatory.

Dion Bonicelli will remain in New York during the ensuing winter, to devote himself to the establishment of the new dramatic school of art, founded by A. M. Palmer and himself at the Madison Square theatre.

To the list of society amateurs who infer the dramatic stage in Mrs. Potter is to be added the name of Mrs. W. O'Sullivan Dumfries, of Baltimore, who "is tall and has a faultless figure, regular features and a sweet, melodious, well-modulated voice."

"Mynher Jan," a new opera by the author of "Ermine" will be produced by the Carleton Opera company. The subject is historical; the period, fifteenth century. It affords an opportunity for handsome Spanish and old Holland costumes. The music is said to be on a par with that of "Ermine."

EDUCATIONAL.

The cost of public education in Prussia is 15 cents per head.

In Liberty county a school of 100 pupils stands at the head.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. ...

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