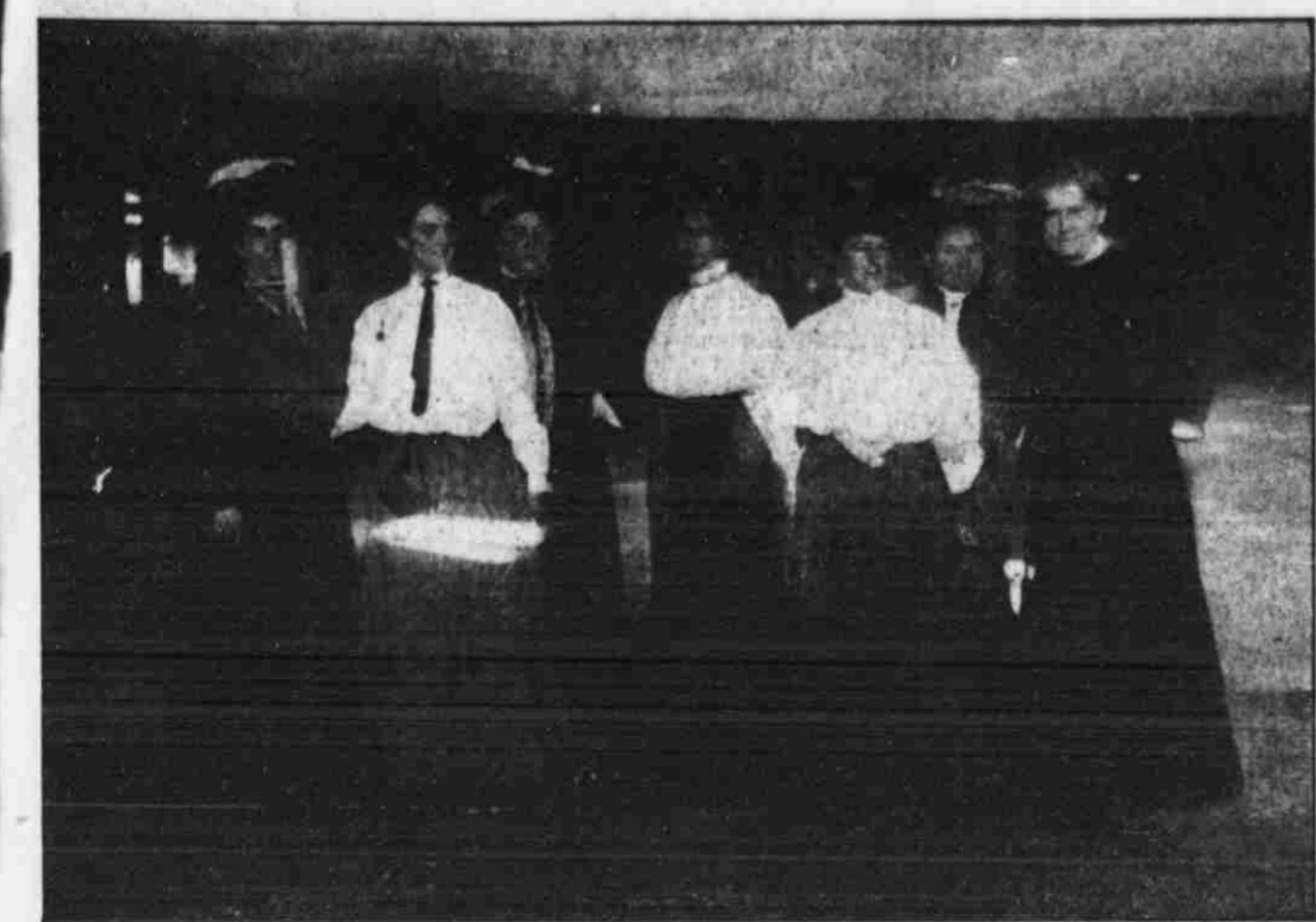


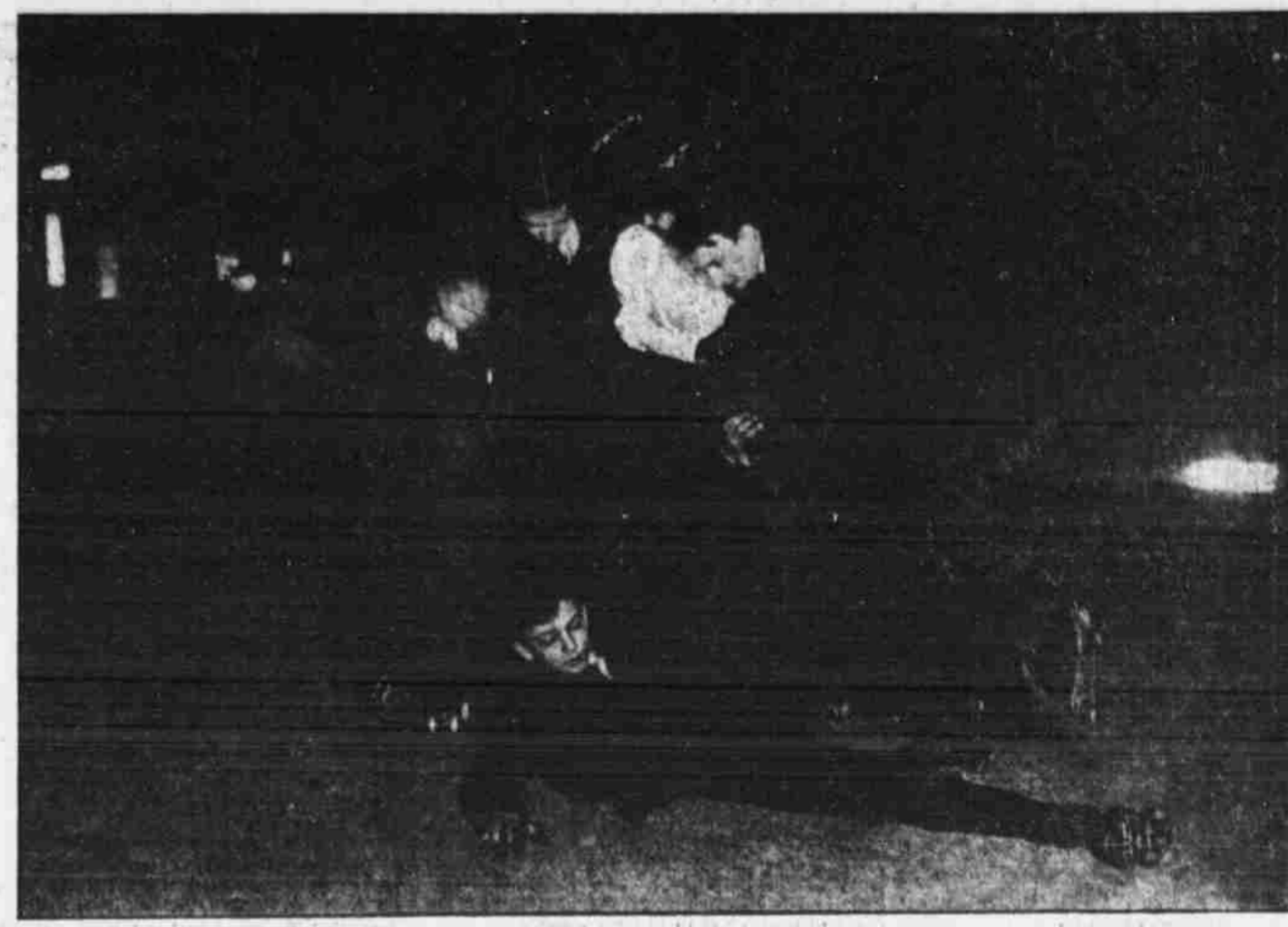
Revival of the Roller Skating Craze---Twenty Years Ago and Now



GROUP OF OMAHA SOCIETY WOMEN ON ROLLERS.



MRS. CUSCADEN, CHAMPION SKATER.



AN INCIDENT OF THE RINK--AN AWKWARD TUMBLE MAKES TROUBLE.

TALK about these being the first roller polo games... said Ben Robidoux of the G. A. Hoagland company, scornfully. "Why, I saw the other day in one of the Omaha papers that these polo games being played at the Auditorium were the first thing of the kind ever done in Omaha. It's queer how people forget. Back in 1885 and 1886 we had the greatest sort of polo games, with a good many of the most prominent men in the city rooting for Omaha. If you could have seen Charlie Gulou and the rest of the bunch getting crazy over at Council Bluffs once they had two goals to nothing on us and we were desperate, but we won the game; if you could have seen and heard that crowd when we beat Council Bluffs out, you would have never thought it possible for an Omaha paper to say there had never been any polo in Omaha before."

place, but it was not really so fine, for the floor was of hard yellow pine, which was rough to the skate wheels and the dorsal fin. The soft streaks in the boards wore out and left the rollers parallel with each other like the street cars on Thirtieth street, where they bob and bow at crossing the railway track.

Its Most Glorious Days.

The real imperial era of roller skating, however, came when Joseph Elliott built the rink on Capitol avenue, above Eighteenth. It was the pride of the city and the gathering place of nightly throngs. Here flourished the masquerade and the polo game and all the manifestations of civilized sport. Here the band played every evening while the youth and beauty of the city—usually a youth and a beauty together—rolled about with easy grace in time to the cadence of the music. Not alone the youthful skated, if we may believe the old patriots, but the more elderly who had retained enough of young suppleness in their joints to arise successfully after a wreck were also eager attendants at the rink.

This was the nightly custom of that period for some years, until about 1888, when a bunch that knew not Joseph or any of the established customs began to start other diversions than the skating rink. The end did not come like walking off the platform in the dark. People gradually became interested in business and dancing and the bicycle and after awhile it became noticeable that they were hardly ever seen at the rink more than five nights a week. Then it was four, then three; then the rink was deserted save for a few kindhearted ones for the street and a few other people who ought to have known better, but who were not in touch with public opinion. When the beautiful maple floor which had been laid with such rejoicing in 1884 came to be covered thickly with a mass of dust through which the thousand-legged worm made a trail like the picture of a railroad in the geographicals—then came the Omaha Guards. They were the next habit of Omaha. They were a rink and made it into an armory. They put rugs on the floor and moved in easy chairs and put their fine little brass cannon out in front of the



"PROFESSOR" AND BEGINNER.



PITT CUTS A FIGURE EIGHT.



HIGHBY DOING A SPLIT--A DIFFICULT TRICK.

First of the Kind in Omaha. The first roller skating done in Omaha was in 1881. It seems hardly possible that there should be people in Omaha yet living who remember the historic time and the old-fashioned customs which prevailed at the rink on the third floor of the Crouse block at Sixteenth and Capitol avenue. Within that small arena, the clatter of the ball-bearing wheels and the bang and crash of the craniums as they bounced on the hard pine floor must have been deafening. The sport had warrant on, and the attendance seemed to warrant a flitting to a broader field. So the skates and the oil cans and the chalk dust were removed to 1306 Douglas street. This rink seemed really fine after the first whirling

door. But that was the end of roller skating. After the guards left the rink was used to hold packing boxes and at its finish it became the mark for incendiaries, who succeeded in burning it after several trials. They were never brought to trial.

Played Champion Polo. Omaha used to be almost the champion at polo. This almost is a tribute to the Blair skaters, who came down like the Goths and the Huns and seemed to think they were playing ninepins. The pride of Omaha consisted of Charles Gratton, now of a sedentary turn of life and the Pacific Storage company; of Sherman Canfield, who has hid himself at Sheridan, Wyo.; John Hitchcock, a brother of Gilbert Hitchcock; Warren Heighway, a present-day packing house man; Harry Maceloon, who is a Chicago representative of the Illinois Central; and Ben Robidoux, manager for the G. A. Hoagland Lumber company. The game flourished in the winter of 1885-8 and the Omaha team played ten or twelve stirring contests. They went down to Lincoln and over to Council Bluffs and broke up the Philistines. Then they had the outsiders here and made a pitiable exhibition of them. They would have been the champions but for the mistake of playing Blair in an unguarded moment or with an unguarded goal. First they went up to Blair with the idea of making a holy show of the country all night, so they did not get back to town until noon next day. About fifty fans had gone down to Lincoln with the local team, and coming back in the special train it was found the bridge west of Valley would not hold the train. So the party walked the rails and gathered around the platform at Valley and tried to be cheerful and gay until a special train could be sent out for them from Omaha. Valley was hardly up to feeding such a crowd, either, and altogether it was not a very nice time.

get in a double cross on the out-of-town goal keepers. The goal in favor twenty years ago was a board about six feet long and raised from the floor only six inches. The rule was to shoot the ball under this barrier from in front. This was difficult, however, because a coarse, brutal man was waiting in front of the goal to hit the little ball an awful blow if it came fooling around. So the Omaha team got a good idea. They would go fooling off with the ball and get away down in the corner behind the goal, while the opposing goal man leaned on his stick superciliously and took a little rest. Then Omaha would knock the ball through the goal from the back and a man who had been resting in front of the goal keeper would wake up and lambast the block back again between the goal keeper's skate wheels. It was a good trick. One of the interesting moments connected with Omaha roller-polo was a time when the Omaha rooters got stalled at Valley. It seemed more like hours at the time, for a weakened bridge kept them in the country all night, so they did not get back to town until noon next day. About fifty fans had gone down to Lincoln with the local team, and coming back in the special train it was found the bridge west of Valley would not hold the train. So the party walked the rails and gathered around the platform at Valley and tried to be cheerful and gay until a special train could be sent out for them from Omaha. Valley was hardly up to feeding such a crowd, either, and altogether it was not a very nice time.

Women Who Could Skate. Some of the women of the old skating days were exceedingly graceful in the rink and accomplished in the use of the skate. Walter Morris of the Union Pacific was a good and willing performer. Warren Heighway was the great trick skater in those days. He could do more things on skates than a beginner—he did them intentionally and it did not hurt him. One of his accomplishments was to imitate the novice. He would do some work that would surprise the uninitiated onlooker. As he would fall most on his eyebrows and recover himself by a marvel of agility people would be heard to exclaim: "My gracious, that awkward skater will kill himself." In those days as in these, a good part of the sport in the arena came from bait-

ing the beginner. The fancy boys would come rushing up behind and jar the new one's feet from under him. It was great sport—for the veterans. One night a small boy, wicked and agile as small boys are, was having a great deal of amusement out of an extremely large and awkward man who was no skater. He would stand on his skates and threaten the boy to the delight of everyone, and then his skates would start off in opposite directions and he would hit the floor a blow that would make it undulate. Sometimes the boy helped him. At last the big man grew savage and without attempting to skate made a sudden running dash at his tormenter. For some reason, he did not fall, and the boy being so astonished did not start soon enough to get a fair headway. It was seen by everybody that the boy was gone and what the large, irate man would do to him, interested the crowd very much. The boy saw he could not get away and became desperate. He crouched suddenly and stopped, bracing himself. The concussion was really wonderful, and before the large man had stopped revolving, he had caused a bulge in the north end of the rink.

Tersely Told Tales, Both Grim and Gay

Retort Gracious. A NORTH CAROLINA lawyer was trying a case before a jury, being counsel for the prisoner, a man charged with making "mountain dew." The judge was very hard on him and the jury brought in a verdict of guilty. The lawyer moved for a new trial. The judge denied the motion, and remarked: "The court and the jury think the prisoner a knave and a fool." After a moment's silence the lawyer answered: "The prisoner wishes me to say that he is perfectly satisfied he has been tried by a court and a jury of his peers."—New York Tribune.

Her Lesson From the Sermon.

A Herygman gives some pertinent instances of the unexpected to be met with in preaching. "At my time of life I ought not to be stunned by anything, but one day after service a good woman of my flock did manage to take my breath away. I was preaching about God's wisdom in caring for us all and I said that the Father knows best which of us grows better in the sunlight and which must have the shade. You know you plant roses in the sun and the heliophytes and geraniums, too; but if you put fuchsias to grow you must put them in a shady nook. "I hoped the sermon would be a comforting one and after it was over a woman came to me, her face glowing with pleasure which was evidently deep and true. "Oh, doctor, I am so glad of that sermon," said she, clasping my hand and shaking it warmly. My heart warmed as I wondered what tender place I had touched in her soul; but my joy lasted for a moment only. "Yes," she went on, fervently, "I never knew before what was the matter with my fuchsias."—London Interior.

Not the Only Feature.

Polo, however, was far from the only diversion of the roller skaters on Capitol avenue. Far from it. They enjoyed some of the most gorgeous fancy dress parties and masquerades that ever happened. There must be fifty people who remember Mrs. Al McKeeth and her string of beads. This

The fancy dress parties always began formally with a grand march on skates, which must have been a very moving affair. After the formalities and the spectacular part, the skaters moved gracefully around the arena to the music of the band. Skaters of that time tell us the object was not then

Entertaining Stories for the Little People

A Story of Real Life. A VERY pretty little story of real life is told by the Washington Post, and so real is it that it will carry many memories back to the days of big red apples and little red school houses.

to the surface, they died as quickly as a perch or a bass would if plunged into a kettle of water that was scalding hot, not only this, but the skin peeled off exactly as if it had been boiled. Eels are common enough in all subterranean lakes and rivers, but this is the only cause on record of living fish being found in boiling water.

The Little Old White-haired Woman. A tidy little silver-haired woman in black riding toward Georgetown in the front seat of an open car. A handsome, blooming matron of 35 or so, carrying a basket stuffed with good things from the market, boarded the car and took a seat directly behind her.

The Little Old White-haired Woman. The handsome matron studied the back of the little white-haired woman's head for some time and then moved along to get a side view of her face. This apparently satisfied her, for she began to fumble in her basket, smiling in a reminiscent way, and finally brought out a fine big red apple, which she polished for half a minute with her silk gloves. Then she leaned forward and danced the red apple in front of the little old woman's eyes.

The old skater used to be gay about twice a month with these fancy dress parties. Sometimes the skaters were in masquerade and sometimes in pink cheeks and gold billings. Some of the old skaters would have us believe that never since have there been such fine parties and such handsome costumes. Also such handsome women. But in this matter it should be remembered that some of the wives and husbands of the present matron, riding toward Georgetown in the front seat of an open car. A handsome, blooming matron of 35 or so, carrying a basket stuffed with good things from the market, boarded the car and took a seat directly behind her.

The Little Old White-haired Woman. "Why, bless her dear little heart! Here, operator, send this immediately." "This was a telegram, hastily written out by the speaker, who was Vice President-elect Fairbanks. Time and place were Wednesday morning, November 9, in the beautiful Fairbanks home in Indianapolis, Ind. A telegraph instrument and operator were installed in the library. Since midnight congratulations had been coming in over the wires, and typewritten yellow message sheets lay on the floor so thick that it looked like the ground of a forest the next morning after a hard frost. Many of the telegrams from important people had not been replied to—it would have been impossible to answer all of them, and few of the senders expected replies.

The Little Old White-haired Woman. The old school teacher and little Virginia smiled at each other and three prosperous grizzled men who were watching them at Carson City, Nev., in 1854. At that time I gave you an apple, Miss 'Liz'beth, was in school in 1877. "So it was."

The Little Old White-haired Woman. "Accept my hearty thanks for your congratulations and the flower you gave me at Louisville CHARLES W. FAIRBANKS." "She was a sweet little girl about 5 years old, I think, who gave me a flower when I spoke in Louisville and hoped I would be elected. And now she sends me a telegram! Well, well, young America, these boys and girls know everything going on these days, taking a deep interest in national affairs. It's an intelligent interest, too. We grown-ups will have to get up pretty early in the morning to keep ahead of the children."—Little Chronicle.

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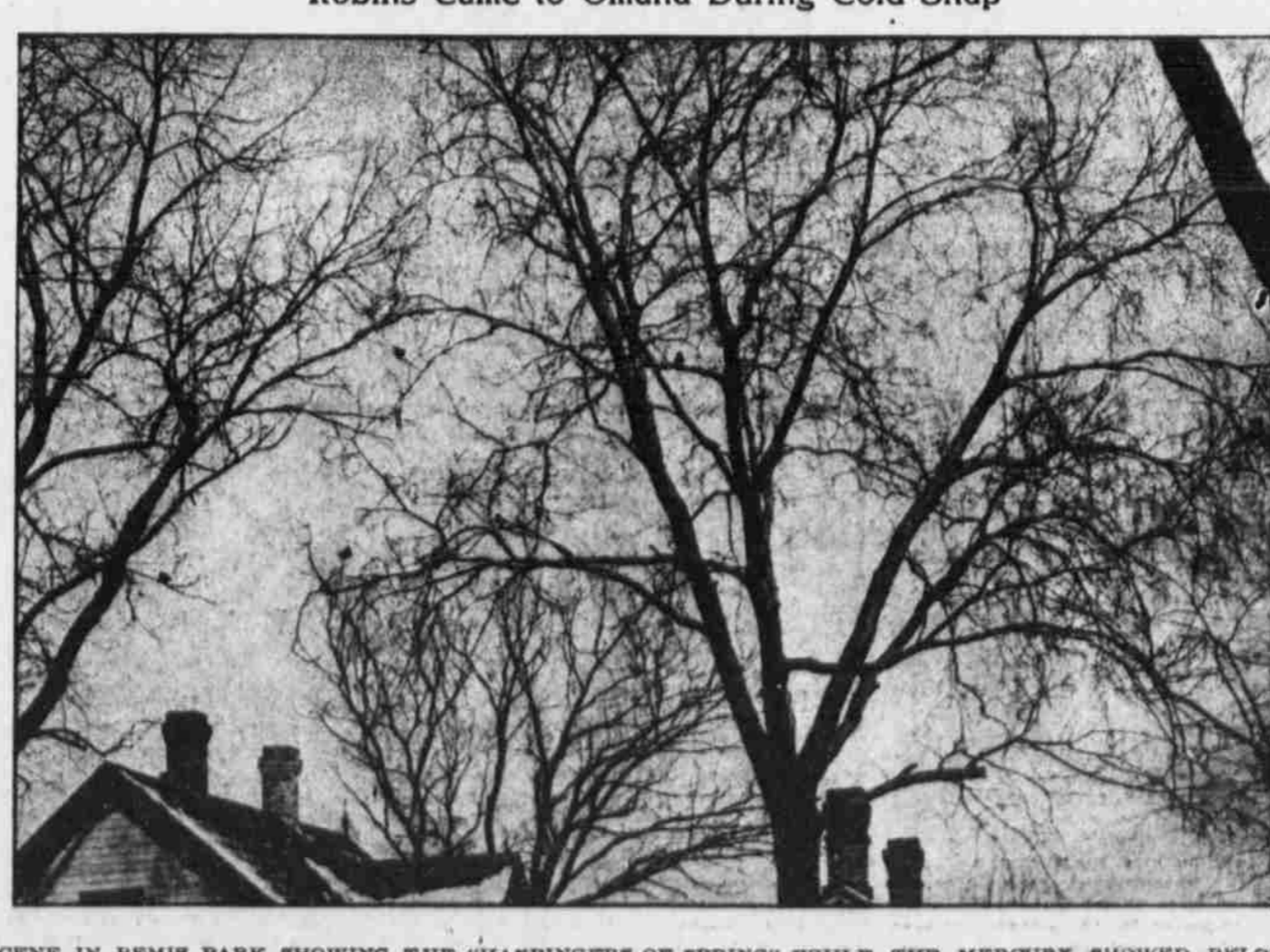
Lessons From the Lowly.

"Hall Caine, the last time he was in Philadelphia, spent the evening with me at the University club," said a Philadelphia journalist. "His conversation was very brilliant. It was very striking. "Hall Caine said that we could learn a lesson from a convict. On that point he told me a true story. "A bishop, riding in his carriage on the Isle of Man, came to a convict in his striped clothes, breaking stones on the road. "The bishop talked to the convict a little while, giving him some advice and encouragement. Then as he got ready to drive on, he said with a smile and a sigh: "'Ah, my man, I wish I could break up the stony hearts of my people as you break these rocks on the highway.'" "From his lowly attitude the convict looked up at the proud bishop in his magnificent equipage. "'Perhaps, sir,' he said, 'you don't work on your knees.'"—San Antonio Express.

Promised to Be Good.

A well known preacher recently spoke at a religious service in prison. He noticed that one of the convicts seemed extraordinarily impressed. After the service he sought him out and continued the good work by remarking: "My dear sir, I hope you will profit by my remarks just now and become a new man." "Indeed, I will," was the reply. "In fact, I promise you that I will never commit another crime, but will lead an exemplary life to my dying day." "Good," said the dominie, "but are you sure that you will be able to keep the promise?" "O, yes," was the cheerful reply. "I'm in prison for life."—New York Tribune.

Robins Came to Omaha During Cold Snap



SCENE IN BEMIS PARK SHOWING THE "HARBINGERS OF SPRING" WHILE THE MERCURY SHOWED BELOW ZERO.

One Irish State.

The German banker of Church street loves to tell the story of the two Irishmen who discussed the "nationality of the American states. Said Pat: "Faith an' be jabbers, if this grate country ain't overrun wid th' Irish, an' yit out of thirty-two states in th' union not wan has an Irish name." "Sure an' yer wrong," replied Mike. "What's the matter wid O'Regon?"—New York Press.

Power of Eloquence.

"The late Jimmy Michael," said a Chicagoan, "met me abroad last autumn, and we talked together about a young Welsh orator who was put fuchsias to grow you must put them in a shady nook. "I hoped the sermon would be a comforting one and after it was over a woman came to me, her face glowing with pleasure which was evidently deep and true. "Oh, doctor, I am so glad of that sermon," said she, clasping my hand and shaking it warmly. My heart warmed as I wondered what tender place I had touched in her soul; but my joy lasted for a moment only. "Yes," she went on, fervently, "I never knew before what was the matter with my fuchsias."—London Interior.

Would Want a Harp Then.

The craze for giving and accepting coupons for purchases of merchandise, to be redeemed by prizes, was given a more or less merited rebuke by Mr. Nat C. Goodwin. After buying a bill of goods the salesman offered him the coupons that the amount of the purchase called for. Mr. Goodwin shook his head. "I don't want 'em," he said. "You had better take 'em, sir," persisted the clerk. "We redeem them with very handsome prizes. If you can save up 500 coupons we give a grand piano." "Say, look here," replied Mr. Goodwin. "If I ever drank enough of your whisky I smoked enough of your cigars to get 500 of those coupons I wouldn't want a piano. I'd want a harp."—New York Herald.

Talked Shop.

A group of young men, many of them officials in the government service, recently met in the smoking room of a Washington club house. At the suggestion of one of the party it was agreed that the one first

At Home in Hot Water.

We should not expect everyone to be affected in the same way by the same circumstances. God's creatures are all different and what is necessary to one may kill another. One of the most remarkable discoveries in the shape of a peculiar species of fish ever made on this continent was that made at Carson City, Nev., in 1854. At that time I gave you an apple, Miss 'Liz'beth, was in school in 1877. "So it was."

Gift in School.

A dozen little boys and girls. With sun-browned cheeks and flaxen curls, stood in a row one day at school. And each well as boys, know everything going on these days, taking a deep interest in national affairs. It's an intelligent interest, too. We grown-ups will have to get up pretty early in the morning to keep ahead of the children."—Little Chronicle.

Selected.

The morning lesson recited its close. When "tap, tap, tap" upon the floor made every eye turn to the door. A little calf that wandered by had chanced the children there to spy. How green the little calf became? Much to the joy of lad and lass. Their A-B-C's and B-A-B-A's he heard and solemnly did say: "Baal Baa!" then scampered to the green. And never since in school has been. These boys and girls soon learned to spell And read and write; but who can tell How green the little calf became? It may be now a calf of fame! Or was that "Baal" all that it knew! I think it must have been. Don't you?—Selected.