

The Polk County Signal.

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FRAGMENTS OF POLK COUNTY HISTORY.

NO. V.
"There comes a voice that wakes my soul;
Tis the voice of years that are gone;
They roll before me with altho' deeds."
OSSIAN.

The District Court of the United States was held for the first time in Polk county, at the new Court House in Cynthiana, in Oct. 1851. Hon. O. C. Pratt, Judge.

Judge Pratt was then, perhaps, about thirty five; of small stature, slender and active, and of rather a pale bloodless complexion, and statue-like expression of countenance. He was a gentleman of fine education, versatile talents, polished manners, and a profound jurist; yet, there was a certain degree of hauteur and self conceit about him, which prevented him from becoming a great favorite with the plain mannered pioneers of Webfoot. Although he was respected and admired as a judge, he met with but little favor as a political partisan; and, after remaining a few years in Oregon, he removed to the more congenial atmosphere of San Francisco, where he now resides, and has been for many years one of their District Judges, and an ornament of the California bench.

At this term, Jas. McCabe, B. F. Harding, A. B. P. Wood, J. W. Nesmith and W. G. T. Vault were admitted to practice as attorneys of the court, in the second judicial district; and Jas. McCabe was appointed Prosecuting Atty. for the U. S. and for the Territory, during the term. J. W. Nesmith was appointed Master and Commissioner in Chancery, and J. H. Lewis was appointed to take bail, &c. &c. The latter gentleman familiarly known as "Uncle Jack," came to this country in 1847, and settled on the Reek, at the place now owned by Geo. M. Scott, and on which a portion of the town of Dallas is located. Upon the resignation of H. M. Walker, in Aug. 1851, Mr. Lewis was appointed to the office of Clerk of this county; to which office he was subsequently elected by the people. His name is intimately connected with the history of the county; and particularly, that of Dallas, to which we will give attention at some future time. There were eight civil causes on the docket at this term; and the Grand Jury found ten indictments.

There are persons in every community—and we have some of them here—who are always croaking about the times being "out of joint," who grow pathetically eloquent over the primeval honesty of our ancestors, and the world degeneracy of the rising generation; who sigh for the good old days, when I was young—when everybody was honest, and every one did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and of his neighbor; but, ah, my friends, these latter days, they are growing wicked and wicked every day! For the consideration of such, it may be remarked, that at the term in 1851, the Grand Jury found just twice as many indictments as they did at the last term, in 1848; which, viewed with reference to our great increase of population and business, since the former period, will, it seems, hardly sustain the position of our friends of the "mourning visage."

In spite of all the learned have said, the people of Polk county are growing richer, and wiser, and better, and more of them every day.

Judge Pratt held another term of court in April 1852, which was the second, and last, held by him in this county. The U. S. District Atty. being absent Hon. R. P. Byrse, Prosecuting Atty. on behalf of the Territory, was appointed to attend to the business of the United States, pro tempore. At this term occurred the first murder trial in the history of Polk county. On the opening of the second day of the term the Grand Jury presented an indictment against Return Wm. Everman,

his brother Hiram, David J. Coe and Enoch Smith, who were then in custody for the murder of Cyrenus C. Hooker.

They were kept in chains, under a strong guard, in an upper apartment of the court house, as we had no jail at that time. Mr. Hooker was a relative of Gen. Jo. Hooker, who fought the "battle above the clouds" at Look-out Mountain—a cousin it is said. He was a bachelor; had settled on his land claim, on the south side of the Reek, a few miles below Dallas, and was supposed to have a large sum of money about him. His land claim now forms a part of the magnificent estate of Gen. Nesmith. Return Wm. Everman—or Bill Everman, as he was generally called—went to the house during Hooker's absence from home, and broke open his trunk; he failed to find the money, but took a valuable gold watch, which he found there, and which was highly prized by the owner. Hooker suspected Everman and his friends, and expressed his opinions quite freely, charging "Bill" with having committed the burglary. This led to bitter animosity and threats of vengeance.

Early in the spring, the two Evermans, Coe and Smith made preparations to go to California; and when everything was ready, they all started in the morning, except Bill Everman, who went over to Hooker's field, armed with a shotgun and a revolver. He concealed himself in the fence, near the end of the land where Hooker was harrowing, and, as he approached, shot him down with a charge of shot, which disabled but did not kill him. Everman then walked up to where he lay, and in abusive language, exulted for a moment over his fallen enemy, and, then, while the wounded man was pleading for his life, deliberately blew his brains out with a revolver. He then mounted his horse, which had been left already saddled and bridled, and soon overtook his friends on the road to California; he told them "the deed was done," changed horses, and fled in advance. However, they were all soon captured and brought back. Coe took a change of venue to Yamhill, and was acquitted; Smith was tried; the jury failed to agree; he then took a change of venue to Yamhill, and was convicted, as accessary before the fact, and sentenced to be hanged, but was subsequently pardoned. R. W. Everman was convicted of the murder, confessed, and was executed. Hiram Everman pleaded guilty, as accessary after the fact, and was sentenced to a term of three years in the penitentiary. We had no penitentiary, nor even jail, at that time; so in execution of the sentence, Hiram Everman, was by order of the County Court of Polk county, on the day of his brother's execution, publicly sold by the Sheriff, for the term of his sentence, to the highest bidder. He was bought by Mr. Theodore Prather—then residing in this county—and when he had nearly served out his time Mr. Prather petitioned, and obtained leave to set him at liberty.

OLD SETTLER.

MODEL ADVERTISING OF THE OLD TIMES.—The following capital advertisement is from an old Connecticut paper:—John Stubbins, Taylor, Shoemaker and Astronomer. I also keep journey-men to do all kinds of carpenter and blacksmiths work, and to hang bells, &c. Any lady or gentleman as respects a covey or pair of breeches may have it on Friday or Saturday without fail. N. B.—Being rumored that I intend leaving off business on account of my being elected church ward, I tell my friends want give ears to such blood-thirsty Reports Stubbins.

Full and reliable returns from all the towns in New Hampshire show the radical majority at the recent election to be 2,483, against 3,146 last year. The increase in the Democratic vote over the vote of last year is 4,507 increase in the republican vote, 2,969.

Tell your neighbor to take the Signal, or else quit.

DEMOCRATIC QUARRELS.

It is singular that when a party gets strong enough to carry a State a quarrel is sure to spring up. The Republican party divided on the day of its power into long and short hairs, and the quarrel waxed warm with time until defeat came along to settle their difficulties. The Democratic party took charge of the State, and no sooner is it ascertained that a nomination by a party gives some show of election by the people, than we find contentions among themselves as to who shall receive the honors and emoluments of the party. The divisions come sometimes of old and dead issues, and at other times they are merely personal with no matter of principles in them. Some man who has been to a county convention a time or two, and who has some influence in a rural precinct imagines that he is a party leader, and that his services have been so great that a high reward is just due. In the theory of such men parties are made for them and not they for the party.

The true line of policy for the Democratic party to pursue is to ignore the claims of men on account of mere party service, and to nominate men of ability and such as can get a full party vote, as well as such as can get votes from the non party portion of the community, on high personal grounds. A staunch partisan should be nominated by a political party—not because of his partisanship alone—and he should have other qualities of head, heart and character, which gain for him the confidence of all parties. Over such men the party can have no quarrel, but with such men the party can have all that enthusiasm which carries an election.

The Democratic party has no strength which it can fritter away in this coming canvass. A nomination is by no means an election, and it is poor reward to be stuck on a ticket and be defeated. Therefore quarrels should be kept down, and Democrats should cease to divide under the leadership of men. When a man attempts to get up a row in the party let his political head roll off under the party ax. Principles and not men should be our motto; success for the party and not rewards to politicians should be the aim of our actions. (Grass Valley Nationalist).

A TEST VOTE.—The other day General Butler endeavored to have a suspension of the rules of the House of Representatives, in order to offer the following resolution:

That in the judgment of the House, all the indebtedness of the nation ought to be paid in exact accordance with the acts of Congress creating it, but not otherwise—that is to say, all loans contracted to be paid in gold; to be so paid; and all loans not so contracted to be payable, ought to be paid in lawful money of the United States.

Now one would suppose that no one but a person who is in favor of robbing the people, and who is inclined to be a resolute, would vote against such a resolution, but it was voted down by eighty-three to fifty-five. The New York Evening Post—Radical and bondholder—regards it as a test vote. Of the eighty-three negative votes, seventy were radicals and thirteen were Democrats, and of the fifty affirmative votes, fifteen were Democrats and forty were Republicans. This vote shows that the bondholders are at work in both parties, and it behooves the people to be on the alert to prevent a high handed, enormous public robbery. Let them look to it that they vote next year for no one for President and for Congress, who is opposed to the principle of the resolution offered by General Butler. (Cincinnati Enquirer).

INCREASE OF CATHOLICISM.—The American Catholic hierarchy now comprises no less than fifty-nine bishops and vicars apostolic (exclusive of coadjutors), and about three thousand three hundred priests, though even this number is wholly inadequate to the wants of the population. Yet it is scarce sixty years since a single diocese comprised the Union within its limits; it is not fully eighty, since a Catholic bishop first set his foot upon her soil.

"HE BUSTED."—The Unionist man got terribly mad at the Signal the other day, and, in attempting to describe the editor thereof, likened him to a buzzard in this "wisely?" *Necronaturally!* Well, that buzzard enough. The writer "busted" at this stage of the game, or God alone knows what he would have said.

THOMAS DARCY MCGEE.

The assassination of the gentleman whose name heads this article, on the 7th inst., in the city of Ottawa, Canada, has been announced by telegraph.

Mr. McGee was a native of the county of Wexford, Ireland, and emigrated to the United States in immature manhood. He located in Boston, Mass., and made that city his permanent residence for many years. About the time of his advent to America the Repeal agitation was raging furiously, and attracting entirely the attention of his countrymen, he soon joined in and by his eloquent and patriotic speeches and lectures gained the admiration of his fellow countrymen. Upon the demise of Mr. Walsh, editor of the Boston Pilot, he succeeded to the editorial control of that journal and during the exciting and trying period of Native Americanism his columns furnished indubitable evidence of his firm ability and moral and physical courage. His able defense of the character of his countrymen and his fearless and earnest efforts in securing for them the rights and immunities guaranteed by our laws, when party spirit and phrensy ran so high, should not soon be obliterated from the memory of Irishmen. Mr. McGee was ever ready with pen and voice to combat the oppressors of his country. And that he might prove his patriotism was of a sterner and more practical compound than that contained in lip value, he voluntarily resigned his editorial position and went to Ireland prior to the rupture in the Irish Repeal party, which culminated in the withdrawal of the Irishers. At this exciting epoch in the history of this faction, Mr. McGee was urged to the editorial management of the Dublin Nation, and inspired, as it was, by the spirit of his predecessor and compatriot, the illustrious Davis, he put forth in his columns, in bold and defiant terms, the whole power of his gifted mind and polished intellect, in cheerful obedience to the promptings of his impulses and innate devotion to the memory of martyred ancestors. The subsequent disastrous results attending the proceedings of the Young Ireland party compelled Mr. McGee to come back to this country and he again engaged in journalistic labors by the publication of a paper in the city of New York. But, owing to some ill considered and hastily written articles, prompted no doubt by the opposition of the Irish clergy to the principles promulgated by his party, for the amputation of Irish grievances, he quarreled with the lauded and distinguished Archbishop Hughes, and it was short lived. Sometime subsequent, however, and after he failed in a like enterprise in Boston, he started the Call in the same city and met with a prosperous career for many years. As matured years rolled on McGee discarded his errors and atoned for his hasty, and retracted his aspersions upon the clergy of his church. By this course he again enjoyed the warm friendship and full confidence of his Archbishop. After Mr. McGee's return to America from his native land, he wrote several works of literary merit and deep research, all dedicated to the interests of the Irish in America. What ever may be said of his course subsequent to taking up his residence in the dominion of the Irish crown, it is but simple justice to the memory of Mr. McGee to state that the Irish in this Republic had no sterner, more sympathetic, or ardent friend and advocate. (Marysville Appeal).

WELL did an eminent writer say that the Democratic party "stands between tyrants and the people." So long as there is a Despotism, an oligarchy, a monarchy or an oligarchy, there will be a Democratic party battling for the rights of the people; the oppressed, the down-trodden. The party will never die. There is no seed of dissolution in it. It may be put down for a while, but the people will again rise in its favor, for without it there is no liberty and no safety. The barons who conspired John at Runnymede to grant the Magna Charta were Democrats; that it is who, demanded for Liberty the broadest possible latitude. The world is governed too much.

ALEX. Montgomery, Esq., has revived, the California Express at Martinez, Contra Costa county, California. The Express did good service at Marysville during the dark days of the Republic. It ought to be supported.

FURIOUS GRAMMAR.—The Sentinel says Dave Logan understands "Ben's" tactics well, and obscene stories. The above "felicitous" is being mingled with the "morality" editor. His Democrats who are illiterate, O yes!

DOWN ON THE GERMANS.

The radical journals tell us that one reason why they are so determined the negro shall vote, is, thousands of the Germans are leaving the radical party, and they want to punish them for it by making the negroes their equal. The Boston Journal, a leading organ of the Radical taxgrinders, taunts the Germans with the following insulting language:

"Although it has taken a great deal of time and cost us a vast amount of money, we have at least got the stolid Dutch of the Western States educated up to the higher law standard. When few years ago they spit upon us, the despised abolitionists, we determined the 'negro' (as they called the colored man) should be made their equal, or we would crash the Union. Colored suffrage is a fact. The foot of the negro is now on the neck of our ancient revilers, and those who are not in our toils must stand from under."

It is not at all likely that the Germans will feel bad at anything the Radicals may say about them. They are too much engaged just now at hard work to enable them to pay the enormous taxes the radicals have forced upon them, to find time to punish the Radicals for the insulting taunts they hurl at them. The Germans will devote a day next fall to the work of putting the nigger Radicals and the Radical niggers where they belong—not with their necks under anybody's feet—but under the rule of men who do not believe the negroes to be the equal of the German, or any other white men. The Radical leaders never made a greater mistake than they do when they tell the Germans they are no better than niggers. The Germans have assisted to give freedom to the negroes—they will not assist the Radicals to put white men under the rule of the black barbarians.—Quincy Herald.

RELIGIOUS.

LA CROIXE POLK CO. CON.

EDITOR SIGNAL:—

By your permission, we will call the attention of the Christian Brotherhood, to their approaching annual meeting, a notice of which, appeared in the papers at the time the location was made substantially as follows: That they had located a site, and had left the grounds in the hands of a committee of arrangements, to be fitted up and prepared for the next annual meeting, which they had appointed to commence at 4 o'clock P. M., Thursday, before the third Lord's day in June next, and to hold over the fourth Lord's day, and that cooks be employed, and provisions furnished on the ground for all who might attend, requesting the churches to send up a contribution to defray the necessary expense, and recommend that each duly organized congregation, send up one messenger, and one additional, for each twenty five members in excess of the first twenty five. The committee of arrangements have not recently been called together, but a partial understanding has been had, and a considerable work has been done—much remains to be done towards fitting up the grounds; this expense will be heavy, the table expense also will be considerable, and a pasture must be had, and paid for; contributions therefore, in money or provisions, or any material or labor, necessary to the fitting up of the grounds, will be acceptable, and thankfully received.

Brother Pendergast, from California, and Brother Backlee, of the Bible Union, are expected to be with us. Turn out brethren, and give us an exhibition of the generosity and nobleness of your calling. Done by request of a majority of the COMMITTEE of arrangements.

CONSISTENCY.—The rebel papers of Oregon, headed by the Oregonian, are quoting copiously from Mr. Pendergast's speeches in Congress to prove that he opposed the prosecution of the war.—These papers say that his "war record" is all that can be alleged against Mr. P. Now, who has a letter "war record" than Nesmith? Was he not foremost in the support of all measures to bring to a more vigorous prosecution of war? Would the papers not sooner support Gen. Longstreet for any office than Mr. N.? Of course they would, and here lies the inconsistency. They care nothing for any man's "war record" so long as they support their measures looking to self preservation in office.

FURIOUS GRAMMAR.—The Sentinel says Dave Logan understands "Ben's" tactics well, and obscene stories. The above "felicitous" is being mingled with the "morality" editor. His Democrats who are illiterate, O yes!