

THE MONTANIAN.

VOL. 3. CHOTEAU, CHOTEAU COUNTY, MONTANA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 1893. NO. 38.

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Winter in California.

A chilling waste of barren sand,
A spectral cactus, far away;
A chain of hills which seem to stand
Between the desert and the day,
A sonless arch of steely blue;
A noiseless rush of sweeping blast;
A lonely hare; a bush or two;
A vulture driving swiftly past,
A gleaming skull beside a rock;
A bruised and battered tin canteen;
A weather-beaten alpenstock;
Some scattered bones strewn in between,
A tattered, rotten, buckskin sack;
A fleshless hand; a gleam of gold;
A shriveled shoe; a miner's pack;
Enough! 'Tis all the heart can hold!
—Alfred I. Townsend in the Californian.

The Popular Vote In 1892.

The popular vote for president shows that a good many voters in the United States remained at home on election day. From 1884 to 1888, the increase in the total presidential vote in the United States was 1,318,000, while from 1888 to 1892 it was only 557,000. Of the latter increase, more than one-half came from the new states of Idaho, Montana, North and South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming, which did not vote in 1888. The combined vote of these states last fall was 288,121, which leaves the increase in popular vote in the United States only 269,000. This is more than one million less than might be expected from the natural growth of the country.

It will be generally agreed that the comparatively small increase in the number of votes cast is not due to any cessation in the country's growth, but to the fact that many republicans preferred to express their dissatisfaction by not voting at all, rather than by voting for Cleveland or Weaver. Staid republican states like Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Pennsylvania, show a falling off in their total vote. In New York state, there was a great falling off in the country districts, but the cities brought the total vote up to about the same as in 1888. Such states as Kansas, Nebraska and Michigan cast a smaller vote than in 1888. Farther west, the only state that cast a smaller vote than in 1888 was Nevada, the decline in this case probably being due to natural causes. Even Indiana, Harrison's home, showed a loss in total vote.

Harrison's loss on that total vote over 1888 was nearly 300,000, while Cleveland's gain was only 30,000. It should be remembered however that Cleveland received no vote in Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Nevada and Wyoming, where fusion was effected with the populists and Cleveland's natural vote was cast for Weaver. As it is, Cleveland has a larger popular vote than any other presidential candidate ever received.

ONLY ONE WAS GUILTY.

And He Was Released for Telling the Truth.

Proctor Knott, famous as an eloquent governor of Kentucky, was a Missourian in the fifties. He was Governor Stewart's attorney general. Knott tells a story of Stewart which, although very old, is declared by him to have had its origin just as he states it. One day, so Knott relates, the pair were walking through the penitentiary on a sort of inspection tour. Prisoners were then permitted to approach the governor in person and plead with him for executive clemency. As the officials passed through the corridors Stewart asked one after another of the convicts about his case.

"I am here," said one, "for a murder that I never committed."

"And I'm in," said another, "for attemptin' to kill when it was a clean case of self defense."

"I'm innocent, too, governor," said another. "I never stole a thing in my life."

Governor Stewart asked hundreds of questions, but every convict declared his innocence and begged for pardon. At length, just before leaving the prison, the executive met a young fellow carrying a load of some sort of prison product. The convict saluted respectfully and was passing on, when the governor stopped him.

"What are you here for?" he asked.

"For stealing horses, your excellency," was the ready reply.

"But of course you are innocent?" the governor went on, winking at General Knott.

"Of course I'm nothin' of the sort," said the prisoner, "I stole 'em and I've got three years to do 'em."

"Well," said Governor Stewart, "you will be pardoned to-morrow. I am sorry that it will be necessary for you, a guilty, bad man, to remain here even another night with all of these innocent gentlemen. You will contaminate them."

The truthful young horse thief was free the next day, and, oddly enough, he became an honest, valuable citizen.—Chicago Tribune.

Old Time Superstitions.

In 1350 a witch was formally tried in Augsburg, Germany, and convicted upon the testimony of nineteen witnesses, who claimed to have seen her perform all sorts of tricks in the shape of a black

cat. She had been caught crouching over the cradle of sleeping children, who laughed in their dreams in answer to the blasphemous scurrility of her whispered remarks. She had also been seen hobnobbing with the devil and stirring a caldron of witchbroth, but in spite of the strongly supported evidence the judges hesitated for a week before they agreed on the fatal verdict.

Three similar cases were tried in Padua Linz (Upper Austria), and Strasburg in the course of the next ten years, and upon the basis of these precedents the Christian world soon after appeared to go crazy en masse. Witch commissioners with their posse of bullies roamed from village to village, the jails were crowded with prisoners, who in many cases seem to have lost their wits as completely as the prosecutors. Death by fire became the usual form of execution. The terrible name of the Paris chamber ardente or fire court would have applied to thousands of tribunals in Western and Southern Europe.

The ghastly insanity reached its culmination point about the end of the 15th century, and it seems a merciful dispensation of Providence that by that time the progress of the American colonies had opened a gate of escape to the far west. Witchcraft trials occurred in Spanish America and here and there in the English settlements, but on the whole the settlers of the new world were too busy with terrestrial problems to waste much time on the mysteries of supernaturalism. Some 40,000 or 50,000 Mexicans may have been burned on a charge of the black art during the first three centuries of the Spanish dominion, and perhaps 3,000 persons in all British North America, but those aggregates are the rarest trifle compared with that of medieval Europe. Prof. Hitzig of Berlin, after a careful comparison of all the available records, estimates the total number of victims from the end of the 14th to the beginning of the 18th century at 7,500,000. Gavinet in his "Memoir de la Magie" assumes a much higher aggregate, and Dr. Sprenger in his "Life of Mohammed" may come very near the true medium in computing the total for all Europe and America at 9,000,000.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Young Staylate—I should very much like to meet your father some day. Any—Well, if you stay about an hour longer he will be coming down to breakfast.—Harper's Bazar.