

## Glimpses of Iowa

*Seventy-five years ago, in January, 1861, the nation was on the verge of war. South Carolina had seceded and other southern States followed her example. Iowa newspapers were filled with dispatches and comment upon the crisis. James Harlan made a masterly reply in the Senate to a resolution proposing recognition of secession, and Senator James W. Grimes, convinced that compromise was futile, proposed augmenting the navy with ironclad vessels. Meanwhile, the tenor of everyday events was undisturbed. If the following local items that were printed in the papers revealed normal conditions, the pattern of life in Iowa, then as now, was composed of the character and conduct of common folks responding to the pressure of immediate circumstances.*

NEW YEAR'S DAY. — Omitting the religious part, nearly the same programme was observed here [Vinton] yesterday as on Christmas, ending, of course, with a "trip of the light fantastic toe" at the Shield's House.

Jesse Kennedy, of Jasper County, killed a hog New Year's day, one year and eight months old, which weighed 631 pounds.

Last night [January 1, 1861] everybody was delighted with a beautiful phenomenon. Surrounding the moon was an immense circle, its lower edge resting on the horizon, whose general color was a clear white. Those portions of the circle which would be intersected by a line drawn horizontally across the Moon's center, were brilliant with the hues of the rainbow. Perpendicularly, there ran from the center of the Moon to each side of the circle, a broad track of light, while a similar one ran horizontally but unlike the first (which terminated at the edge of the circle) it extended many degrees beyond the circle on either side, and at each end expanded into a broad, luminous, fan-shaped body of light.

The question whether the United States can lawfully coerce South Carolina has been a good deal debated; why don't some one take up the other part of the subject, and consider whether South Carolina can lawfully coerce the United States?

The volunteer companies of Burlington have

offered to the Governor their services in case of a war. It gives us great satisfaction to notice so honorable a readiness to stand up in defence of the Union and the laws.

TO ARMS! — All persons interested in the formation of a good Military Company in Iowa City, are requested to meet at Market Hall on Saturday evening next, at 7 o'clock.

The *Muscatine Journal* assures its readers that secession is about played out. The *Journal* is not well posted, we fear, else it would have come to a different conclusion.

The Historical Society of this State held its annual meeting yesterday, January 8th, concluding with a Festival of the members and "Old Settlers" of Johnson County. The address was delivered by Hon. Hiram Price of Davenport.

Rev. Edward Beecher, brother of Henry Ward Beecher, lectured before the Young Men's Association of Des Moines, a few days since. *Subject* — "The Destiny of the English Language, and those who speak it."

Two or three dozen red men, squaws and

papooses have taken winter quarters on the other side of the river, about a mile above Vinton.

A case has just been decided at Davenport in which Judge John Dillon held that intoxication cannot be punished under the statute of Iowa by a Justice of the Peace.

Two men were recently convicted of keeping gambling houses, at Anamosa, and one of them fined \$150, and the other \$250.

The frame work of the Depot of the Dubuque & Sioux City Railroad for Cedar Falls is all ready for raising. The main building is 30 x 100 feet, and will have a platform running around the whole, ten feet wide, making the structure 50 x 120. A very good sized depot, but it will be none too large.

Prairie wolves are very plenty this winter, and seem to be in first-rate condition. Mr. Wells of Webster City trapped a big one a short time ago, which measured 5 feet 3 inches from the tip of his tail to the end of his nose.

The track of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad is laid 5 miles west of Marengo.

Money is being raised in Muscatine to contest the legality of the railroad tax levied upon the citizens of that county to pay the interest on railroad bonds voted several years since.

There were 44,387 hogs packed at Keokuk up to the 12th of this month. The price ranged from \$5.00 to \$5.50.

On the night of the 13th, a foundling was left at the door of Mrs. Dow, in East Waterloo. It died on the following evening.

Wheat was selling in Independence on Monday of last week [January 14] at 55 to 57 cents, and corn at 16 to 17 cents.

On Tuesday night of last week [January 15] we had one of the hardest snow storms that has visited this country for many years. The snow commenced falling a little after dark, accompanied by a heavy wind, and continued until morning, reaching the depth of about 14 inches.

On Thursday night we had another storm, which lasted nearly all night, adding 8 or 10 inches more of snow, making the depth in the timber where not moved by the wind, from 20 inches to two feet. The roads were so filled with

drifts last week, after the snow of Tuesday night, that they were almost impassable, and but little traveling has been done. At this writing, we have had no Eastern mail for a week, but are in hopes of receiving a batch to-night.

Fire was discovered last Tuesday night at 8 o'clock at the City Market House [Oskaloosa]. It caught by the accidental fall of a stovepipe.

Butter and eggs are, just at this time, very scarce articles in this vicinity [Council Bluffs].

Mr. J. R. Middleton of Wright County would have received the first premium on Sorghum Molasses, from the State Agricultural Society, but for the fact that the proper entry was not made on the Society's books.

EARLY CLOSING. — Most of our merchants in Dubuque have agreed, during the winter months, to close their stores at 7 P. M.

In consequence of the great scarcity of silver change some merchants of Iowa City have issued "shinplasters" of small denominations. They are made payable on demand, and are found very convenient.

THE SLEIGHING. — Continues excellent, and it is being well improved. Sleds and sleighs of all sorts of shapes and styles are being constructed, upon which to navigate the "ocean of snow."

Our sidewalks in Council Bluffs are at present in a condition very unfavorable to pedestrians. Being covered with ice, and very slippery, it is quite unpleasant walking, and requires no little care to keep "right side up," as the feet continually manifest a disposition to "secede."

Judge George G. Wright met with a serious accident on his return home from Des Moines recently. He was thrown from a sleigh, and knocked senseless; but he is now doing well.

Sarah Lee, a colored woman who was injured by the explosion of a camphene lamp at Muscatine one day last week, died of her injuries.

A school teacher at Genoa Bluffs, Iowa County, was recently fined \$25 and costs of suit, for severely chastening one of his scholars.

A man named Baker was arrested in Independence, on the 12th, for beating his wife, and fined \$10 and costs. Served him right.

A Female Seminary has been located in Council Bluffs, commencing its first session on the 23d of the present month. The fact that Mr. J. B. Rue is to be the Principal is sufficient to ensure its success.

The Literary Society, which has been in operation in our city [Winterset] for several weeks, meets regularly every Friday evening in the First Presbyterian Church, and we are informed it is in a flourishing condition. Questions are debated, essays read, and a paper, edited by the members, is read at every meeting of the Society.

Antoine LeClaire has presented St. Marguerite's church of Davenport, a magnificent organ of French manufacture, costing some \$1300.

A woman in Marion County recently gave birth to triplets. On three previous occasions she produced twins. We hope they are all Republicans.

If anybody happens to be under the necessity of having an arm, leg, or the *skull* operated upon, Dr. C. C. Biser has a new case of instruments. Wonder if the editor of the *Republican* won't be "after" having his skull made thinner.