

Political and General News.

CALIFORNIA ITEMS.

The steamer Panama, with U. S. Mails, and news from San Francisco, arrived at San Francisco in 16 days and 6 hours from Panama, having accomplished the shortest passage ever made between the two ports.

Five men were hanged, in San Pablo Bay, on the 24th of May. Their names and former residences are as follows:—Dr. James Knox, of St. Louis; John Allen, of Burlington, Vt.; James F. Graham, of North Carolina, nephew of Hon. Wm. H. Graham, Secretary of the Navy; a Mr. Davis, of Maine, and an Indian boy.

Newspapers are increasing in numbers and in different sections. The San Diego Herald and the Los Angeles Star have recently been added to the number.

Long Island Indian, named Frank Brewer, was found dead in Montgomery street, on the 24th inst. He is supposed to have been drugged to death for the purpose of robbing.

The Indians have been troublesome in the southern section of the State. A company of white men, under a Capt. Irving, a representative of the military, were sent to the Indian reservation at Los Angeles Valley. The citizens volunteered and went in pursuit. But the last accounts received, it is said, the Indians of a certain Mission had destroyed Capt. Irving and his 11 men.

Gen. Morehead's expedition, reduced to forty five men, left San Diego on the 11th of May. His destination is unknown.

The cap of the steam-boat of the steamer New World blew off, while she was on her passage from Sacramento to San Francisco, on the 4th of June, the steam rushing out and killing two persons, one name unknown, the other, Peter Marks, fireman. Terrence Bellow McManus, one of the Irish patriots, who escape from New South Wales had been known here for some time previous, arrived here about the 5th of June, and has received a most cordial and enthusiastic reception by all classes of our community.

Crimes had increased to such a fearful extent in San Francisco, and so totally had the Courts and Police failed in meeting out adequate punishments, that a volunteer committee of our most respectable citizens has been formed for protection. A robber having been caught in the act of stealing, was summarily tried by them, found guilty, condemned to death and hung the same night.

The coroner's inquest upon the body of the executed man went extensively into the evidence connected with the whole proceeding, and in their verdict implicate the Committee of Vigilance as the cause of his death.

Seven men were drowned at Park's Bar last week. Their names are J. Stull, H. Modersberg, Charles Cox, Mr. Hodge, Samuel Miller, Jorgan and Vincent, Frenchman.

The citizens, in indignation and devotion of the last great fire, have expended largely on the new buildings and improvements, which followed upon the path of the fire storm, like the grass and herbage which springs up again when the tempest has passed away.

Reports from the placers and quartz mines are generally favorable. But they should always be received with several grains of allowance. Rumor lives in the architectural aspects are very good. Politics are rather at a lull in the State, but it is a kind of ominous stillness prefiging the onset of two armies. The two parties have generally organized in the different counties.

Dis.—Very suddenly, on board the U. S. surveying schooner Ewing, yesterday at half past 12 o'clock, Ewing Midshipman William D. Cook, aged 24 years. He was on duty on Friday, and had with neuralgia of the stomach, seemed a little better in the morning, went to sleep at 8 o'clock, and at 12, when the physician who had been up with him all night, went to his bed, he found him dying, probably from apoplexy.

MAN HUNG BY LYNCH LAW.

From the Alta Californian.

About 9 o'clock on Tuesday night a man carrying a bag containing something apparently quite heavy attracted the attention of the watchmen at their station on Central Wharf. He jumped into a boat with his bag, and pulled out towards the end of the wharf. But a few minutes elapsed before Mr. Virgin, a gentleman who keeps a shop by the wharf, came down to the boat and found in pursuit of a person who had just robbed his office of a small iron safe, containing a considerable sum of money. The man with the bag was at once suspected, and a number of boatmen started immediately in pursuit. After a sharp pull they overtook him, when he threw his booty overboard. After a severe struggle one party of boatmen succeeded in capturing the man, and he was taken up by the bag, and taken to contain the stolen safe. He was conveyed on shore, and at once taken possession of by some of the vigilant committee, who conducted him promptly to their headquarters, where he was tried in presence of about eighty members of the concave, sitting with closed doors, by them convicted and sentenced to be hung to the Portland square that very night.

The precise mode of trial was of course a secret. During the proceedings the citizens had accumulated in large numbers about the building and Portland square. The populace was very much excited, but more orderly than we ever recollect to have seen such a numerous assembly on any similar occasion. Some disparagement was manifested at the secrecy of the Committee's proceedings, but when the result was known there was a very general approval manifested, although there were many who deemed the punishment of death too severe for the offence, and others thought he should be executed in broad daylight. As soon as the sentence was passed, the bell of the California Engine house near by commenced ringing the prisoner's funeral knell. Capt. Benjamin Ray of the police applied at the door of the Committee room and demanded the prisoner, but was refused several times, and although others of the police were upon the ground they saw it was of no use to attempt to enter.

About 1 o'clock, Mr. Samuel Brannan came out and ascending the bank opposite, announced the result of the Committee's deliberations, stating that he had been fairly tried, convicted upon the strongest testimony, and so defence except a denial of the robbery. He gave the name of John Jenkins, and stated that he had been allowed to confess, but was sent for death, and that Mr. Mies had been sent for to visit him. The crowd present promptly approved of the action of the Committee. From that time the excitement began to increase and the matter was freely discussed by knots of citizens at the street corners, around the Committee room and in the squares. A very large majority were in favor of the execution.

The prisoner was perfectly composed during this time and indulged in a cigar. The clergyman promptly responded to the request to pray with the prisoner and remained with him for nearly an hour. If we are correctly informed his presence had no particular effect upon the condemned man, who doubtless confidently anticipated a rescue by the police.

About two o'clock the doors of the committee room were opened, and the condemned was for the first time presented to the populace. He was a tall man of very great muscular development and with a rather forbidding countenance. He was smoking a cigar and appeared rather pale but composed. His arms were pinioned and his hands tied behind him, while he was surrounded by a rope thickly manned by armed men, many others closing on them determined to prevent his escape. In this manner, followed by a large crowd, he was conducted to the public square. His arrival was announced with a shout and every description of vociferation—the wild scenes of confusion and excitement prevailing here we have witnessed for a long time. The moon obscured by clouds, shed no light, and the picture presented was wild and awful in the extreme. Some person climbed the liberty pole to ring a bell for the execution, but a loud shout of "Don't hang him to the liberty pole," arose. Voices screamed out to the man to be shot, and a rush was made for the edifice, upon the corner of the square formerly occupied as the Custom House. A rush was at once made for the end of the building, a block rigged and a long rope run through it. In the meantime a number of the police who were on the ground made several attempts to obtain possession of the prisoner, but they were roughly handled and prevented; had they persisted they would have been ridled with balls. Several citizens denounced the execution and sought to side the police.

The prisoner by this time was nearly dead with fear and rough handling, when a rush was made towards him, a noose thrown over his head, and the rope manned by twenty ready hands, and the heavy weight of the convicted felon swept through the air and dangled from the block. A few fearful struggles, a quivering of the poor man's body, a few nervous wincings and the crowd gazed upon the lifeless corpse of him upon whom such speedy and terrible vengeance had been executed by an outraged people. As he swung to and fro and turned round and round a feeling of awe appeared to spread through the crowd, who could not be otherwise than impressed by the terrible occurrence. Slowly they dispersed, but when day broke there were still many gazing upon the swollen purple features of the doomed man. At six o'clock the Marshal, Mr. Crozier, repaired to the spot, cut down the body and consigned it to the dead house. Thus ended the first execution that ever took place in San Francisco, where more crime has been committed within the past year than in any other city of the same population in the Union, without one instance of adequate punishment. Of the guilt of Jenkins there can be no doubt. He has been kept in the police for months as a desperate character from the penal colonies, where he had passed many years as a transported convict.

FINANCIAL OPERATION.—We lately heard a story illustrative of the early days of York County—those good old days when everybody was "boned" as the saying was long ago. There were two of the earliest settlers in the western part of York (now Adams) county—both were of the honest old German stock—and as one of them is still living, we suppress the name. Peter, it appears, had increased the size of his farm by annexing thereto a small tract adjoining, and lacked about a hundred dollars of the sum necessary to pay for the new acquisition. He called upon his neighbor George to borrow the amount. George brought out an old bread basket, and counted out the desired number of "hiblers"—and then, of course, the two sat down to two large earthen wares of cider, and as many pipes of tobacco. After smoking over the matter for a while, it occurred to Peter, that in similar transactions he had seen or heard something like a note passing between the borrower and lender, and he suggested as much to George. The lender assented to the propriety of the thing—paper, pen and ink were produced—and before long the document was concocted, stating that George had loaned Peter one hundred dollars, which Peter would repay to George in "three months" (three months). This Peter signed, and thus far our two financiers had made the thing all regular and ship shape.

But at this point a difficulty presented itself. They both knew that notes were made in the operations of borrowing and lending which they had witnessed—and they knew that the document which they had just made was of the same nature, and that it was not a note, but a receipt. It was an eagle for the borrower or lender to take charge of the paper! Here was a dilemma. At length a bright idea struck George. "You had better money to pay, Peter—so be sure you make it die paper, so as you can see as you have to take it." This was conclusive—the common sense of the thing was unanswerable, and Peter pocketed the money and his own note, "so as he might see as he had to take it." Three months elapsed, and finally to the day appeared our friend Peter, and paid over the promised sum to George. This being done, the mugs and pipes were again paraded. After puffing a while, Peter produced the note, and handed it to George, with the remark, "Now you must take die paper, so as you can see as die money had been paid."

We Yorkers may be trusted.—York Gazette.

FEDERAL HONESTY.—In past days, the editors were always writing about what they were pleased to call "Looo-Poco Robbery and Rascality," but we have heard nothing of these gentlemen relating to Galphin and Corwin.

Mr. Secretary Corwin, his fees and McManus.—Mr. Secretary Corwin will leave for Ohio next Wednesday. He may, or he may not come back. The best interests of the country and of the whig party will spare him and his style of administering the Treasury Department. His interest in the Mexican claims is a great one, and he is a fortune for an Ohio freedman politician, which he, a true since hardly dreamed of. He can now be at his ease, if he will, in Ohio, without molestation or hindrance, at least until Congress shall raise a committee of investigation, and authorize it to send for persons and papers relative to the awards made to the principal claimants, and the payment of the same to the principal claimants, and the principal claimants. The cabinet officers of the federal Administration are honest men—very!

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fectly clear, and the stars shone forth with remarkable brightness. In this state of the heavens the rain commenced falling quite smartly, increasing in volume as it fell, and lasting some four or five minutes.

SINGULAR DISEASE.—The Annapolis correspondent of the Baltimore Sun gives the following account of a fatal disease which has appeared in that vicinity: "A disease is now raging in the county of Anne Arundel, between South and West rivers, which has proved to be as fatal as the cholera. The early stage of it is marked by an eruption of the skin, a swelling of the muscles of the throat, partaking of the character of the measles. There is nothing alarming in this stage of it, which continues for three or four days, when all on a sudden it fixes itself upon the vitals with a violence and fatality which are arrested by nothing that has, as yet, been tried."

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