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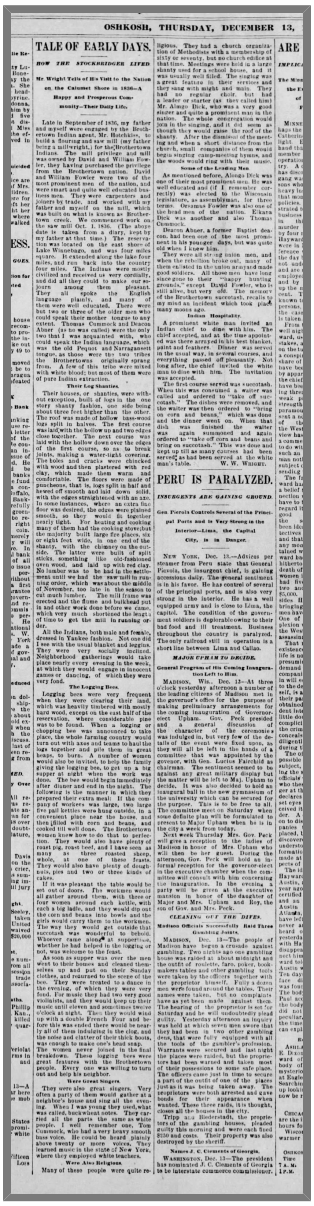

OSHKOSH, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13,

TALE OF EARLY DAYS.

HOW THE STOCKBRIDGES LIVED

Mr. Wright Tells of His Visit to the Nation on the Calumet Shore in 1836—A Happy and Prosperous Community—Their Daily Life.

Late in September of 1836, my father and myself were engaged in the Brothertown Indian agent, Mr. Hendricks, to build a flouring and saw mill (my father being a millwright), for the Brothertown Indians. The mill privilege and mill site were on Stockbridge creek, which my father had purchased from the Brothertown nation. David and William Fowler were two of the most prominent men of the nation, and were smart and quite well educated business men. They were carpenters and joiners by trade, and worked with my father and myself on the mill, which was completed and ready to run before snow came. We commenced work on the saw mill Oct. 1, 1836. (The above date is taken from a diary, kept by my father at that time.) The reservation was located on the east shore of Lake Winnebago, and was four miles square, the north line being four miles, and ran back into the country four miles. The Indians were mostly civilized and received us very cordially, and did all they could to make our sojourn among them pleasant. They all spoke the English language, and some of them well educated. There were but two or three of the older men who could speak their mother tongue to any extent. Thomas Commock and Deacon Abner (so he was called) were the only two that I was acquainted with, who could speak the Indian language, which was the old Pequot and Narragansett tongue, from which the language of the Brothertowns originally sprang from. A few of this tribe were mixed with white blood; but most of them were of pure Indian extraction.

Their Log Shanties.

Their houses, or shanties, were without exception, built of logs in the one story shanty fashion, one side being about three feet higher than the other. The roof was made of hollow logs—most of the logs for this purpose being basswood—with the hollow up and two edges close together. The next course was laid with the hollow down over the edges of the first course, so as to break joints, making a water-tight covering. The holes and cracks were chinked and daubed with mud, mixed with hay, which made them warm and comfortable. The floors were made of puncheons, that is, logs split in half and hewed off smooth and laid down solid, with the edges straightened with an axe. In some instances, where an extra floor was desired, the edges were planed smooth, so they would fit together nicely. The chimneys were built, and many of them had the cooking stove—but the majority built large fire places, six or eight feet wide, in one end of the shanty, with the chimney on the outside. The latter were built of split sticks, something like old-fashioned cob and stick chimneys of pioneer days. No lumber was to be had in the settlement until we had the saw mill in running order, which was about the middle of November, too late in the season to cut much lumber. The mill frame was erected and the flume and bulkhead put in and other work done before we came, which very much shortened the length of time to get the mill in running order.

All the Indians, both male and female, dressed in Yankee fashion. Not one did I see with the usual blanket and leggins. They were very socially inclined. Neighborhood gatherings would take place frequently, and dancing was the order at which they would engage in innocent games or dancing, of which they were very fond.

The Logging Bees.

Logging bees were very frequent when they were clearing their land, which was heavily timbered with mostly hard wood, except on the east half of the reservation, which was mostly pine, and was to be found. When a logging or chopping bee was announced to take place, the whole farming country would turn out with axes and teams to haul the logs together and pile them in great heaps, to burn. A number of women would also attend, to help the family provide the logging bee spread, which was supper at night when the work was done. The bee would begin immediately after dinner and end in the night. The following is the manner in which they prepared their extra meal: If the company of workers was large, two large five gal kettles were hung outside, in a convenient place, and filled with pork and then filled with corn and beans, and cooked till well done. The Brothertown women know how to do that to perfection. They would also have plenty of roast pig, roast beef, and I have seen as many as three roasted sheep, which, at one of these feasts, they would also have plenty of dough-nuts, pies and two or three kinds of cakes.

If it was pleasant, the table would be set out of doors. The workers would all gather around them, with three or four women around each kettle, with each a big ladle, and they would dip out the contents into wooden bowls, which girls would carry them to the workmen. The way they would get outside that succotash was wonderful to behold. Whoever came along at supper-time, whether he had helped to the logging or not, was welcome to the feast.

As soon as supper was over the men went to their homes and cleaned themselves up, put on their best suits of clothes, and returned to the scene of the bee. They were treated to a dance in the evening, of which they were very fond. For music they had two very good violinists, and they would keep up their music until eleven and sometimes twelve o'clock at night. They would commence with a double French Four and before this was ended there would be nearly all of them indulging in the fling, and the noise and clatter of their thick boots, was enough to make one's head sing. The women never joined in the final breakdown. These logging bees were great features with the Brothertown people, and they were willing to turn out and help his neighbor.

Were Great Singers.

They were also great singers. Very often a party of them would gather at a neighbor's house and sing all the evening. When I was young they used what was called, buncwinni notes. They carried all the parts the same as white singers. I knew a young man named Commock, who had a very heavy, smooth bass voice. He could be heard plainly above twenty or more voices. They learned music in the night of New York, where they employed white teachers.

Were Also Religious.

Many of these people were quite religious. They had a church organization of Methodists with a membership of sixty or seventy, but no church edifice at that time. Meetings were held in a large shanty used for a school house, and it was usually well filled. The singing was a great feature in their services and they had a number of good singers. They had no regular choir but had a leader or starter (as they called him) Mr. Alonzo Dick, who was a very good singer and quite a prominent man in the nation. The whole congregation would join in the singing, and it did seem as though the rafters would raise and the shanty. After the dismissal of the meeting and when a short distance from the church, small companies of them would begin singing camp-meeting hymns, and the woods would ring with their music.

Some of the Leading Men.

As mentioned before, Alonzo Dick was one of their most prominent men. He was well educated and of a humane character. He was elected by the Brothertowns legislature, or assemblage, as they termed it. Orcanus Fowler was also one of the head men of the nation. Eleazer Dick was another and also Thomas Commock.

Deacon Abner, a former Baptist deacon, had been one of the most prominent men of the whole tribe, but was quite old when I knew him.

They were all strong Union men, and when the rebellion broke out, many of them enlisted in the nation and made good soldiers. All those now here have since gone to their "happy hunting ground," except Alonzo Dick, who is still alive, but very old. The account of the Brothertown secretary, recalls to my mind an incident which took place many moons ago.

Indian Hospitality.

A prominent white man invited an Indian chief to dine with him. The chief accepted, and at the time appointed was on hand, dressed in his blanket, paint and feathers. Dinner was served in the usual way, in several courses, and everything passed off pleasantly. Not long after, the chief invited the white man to dine with him. The invitation was accepted.

The first course served was succotash. When this was consumed a waiter was sent to the kitchen for "more succotash." The dishes were removed, and the waiter was then ordered to "bring on corn and beans," which was done and the dinner went on. When that dish was finished the waiter was again summoned and again ordered to "bring on succotash and bring on succotash." This was done and kept up till as many courses had been served as had been served at the white man's table.

W. W. WRIGHT.

PERU IS PARALYZED.

INSURGENTS ARE GAINING GROUND

Gen. Pierola Controls Several of the Principal Ports and is Very Strong in the Interior—Lima, the Capital City, is in Despair.

NEW YORK, Dec. 13.—Advices per steamer from Peru state that General Pierola, the insurgent chief, is gaining accessions daily. The general sentiment is in his favor. He has control of several of the principal ports, and is also very strong in the interior. He has a well equipped army and is close to Lima, the capital. The condition of the government soldiers is deplorable owing to their bad food and ill treatment. Business throughout the country is paralyzed. The only railroad still in operation is a short line between Lima and Callao.

MAJOR UPHAM TO DRIVE.

General Program of His Coming Inauguration Left to Him.

MADISON, Wis., Dec. 13.—At three o'clock yesterday afternoon a number of the leading citizens of Madison met in the governor's office for the purpose of making preliminary arrangements for the coming inauguration of Governor-elect Upham. Quite a general discussion of the character of the ceremonies was indulged in, but very few of the details of the event were fixed upon, as they will all be left in the hands of a committee that was appointed by the chairman. The sentiment seemed to be against any great military display but the matter will be left to Maj. Upham to decide. It was also decided to hold an inaugural ball in the new gymnasium of the university which can be secured for the purpose. This is to be free to all. The committee met on Saturday when the program will be fully arranged and presented to Major Upham when he is in the city a week from today.

Next week Thursday Mrs. Gov. Peck will give a reception to the ladies of Madison in honor of Mrs. Upham who will then be her guest. During the afternoon Mrs. Upham will receive a formal reception for the governor-elect in the executive chamber when the committee will consult with him concerning the inauguration. In the evening a party will be given at the executive mansion in honor of the daughter of Major and Mrs. Upham and Boy, the son of Gov. and Mrs. Peck.

CLEANING OUT THE DIVES.

Madison Officials Successfully Raid Three Gambling Joints.

MADISON, Dec. 13.—The people of Madison have begun a crusade against gambling. Two nights ago one gambling house was raided at about midnight and the outfit of roulette, faro, poker, hoodle and other games found there. Arrests were taken by the officers together with the proprietor himself. Fifty dollars men were found on each of the tables. Their names were taken, but no complaints have as yet been made against them. The hearing of the proprietor is set for today. He will probably plead guilty. Yesterday afternoon an inquest was held at which seven men swore that they had been in two other gambling dens, that were fully equipped with all the tools of the gambler's profession. Warrants were secured and last night the places were raided, but the proprietors had been warned and taken most of their paraphernalia away with them. The officers came just in time to secure a part of the outfit of one of the places just as it was being taken away. The proprietors were both arrested and gave bonds for their appearance when wanted. These three raids, it is thought, will break up the business.

Trips the Electricraft, the proprietors of the gambling houses, pleaded guilty this morning and were each fined $250 and costs. Their property was also destroyed by the sheriff.

Names J. C. Clements of Georgia.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13.—The president has nominated J. C. Clements of Georgia to be interstate commerce commissioner.

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