

THE SUN-DANCE OF THE BLACK- FEET.

The most important sacred festival of the Blackfoot Indians is the sun-dance, which is called also by the whites the medicine-dance. The tradition runs that it originated in the thankoffering of a woman for the recovery of her sick child; accordingly, it is usually instituted by a woman who has come successfully out of some trial. It is generally held when the wild fruit is ripe, in July or August, in a lodge especially constructed for it, and may continue for seven days. The ceremonies have been described by the Rev. John McLean, who witnessed them at the Blood Indian camp in Alberta Territory, Canada. The sacred fire was burning in the sun-lodge, and was used by the people for lighting their pipes. The fuel was supplied exclusively by young men who had performed some valorous deed, such as stealing horses from a hostile tribe, and thought the duty an honorable one. Two bundles of birchwood brush were placed in the form of a cross on the sacred pole. A bower of brushwood by the side of the lodge was occupied by the woman who had instituted the ceremony, her husband, and a medicine-man, fasting and praying. Prayers were offered at stated times by virgins. Dramatic representations of heroic adventures were given, and sham fights presented. Representations of actual battles; these were succeeded by feasts of berries cooked in fat, smoking, and conversation. A young man who had been successful in a horse-stealing expedition came up, in fulfillment of a vow, to make himself a sacrifice to the god. An old medicine-woman cut off one of his fingers, held it up to the sun, and dedicated it to him. Two young men presented themselves to be consecrated for admission to the noble band of warriors. One of them stretched himself upon a blanket on the ground. An old man made a speech over him relating his brave deeds, each incident of which was received with applause and music. Then four men held him while a fifth made incisions in his breast and back. Wooden skewers were inserted in the breast incisions, and connected by lariats with the sacred pole, while an Indian drum was fastened to the skewer in the back. The young man went up to the sacred pole, and while his countenance was exceedingly pale and his frame trembling with emotion, threw his arms around it and prayed earnestly for strength to pass successfully through the trying ordeal. His prayer ended, he moved backward until the flesh was fully extended, and, placing a small bone whistle in his mouth, he blew continuously upon it a series of short, sharp sounds, while he threw himself backward and danced until the flesh gave way and he fell. Previous to his tearing himself free from the lariats, he seized the drum with both hands, and with a sudden pull tore the flesh on his back, dashing the drum to the ground amid the

applause of the people. As he lay on the ground, the operators examined his wounds, cut off the flesh that was hanging loosely, and the ceremony was at an end."—*Popular Science Monthly*.

CURRENT EVENTS.

Edmunds Law Prosecutions.

Joseph A. Bunot, of Echo Valley, was arrested Saturday, July 5, by United States Marshal McLellan on the charge of unlawful cohabitation. He was examined before Commissioner Perrin at Ogden, and bound over to await the action of the grand jury at Salt Lake, in the sum of \$1,000, while his alleged wives were bound over in \$200 each.

Closing the Temples.

In response to a number of inquiries we republish the dates for the closing of the Temples:

Manti Temple, July 18 to August 20.

Logan Temple, July 18 to August 25.

St. George Temple, August 15 to October 14.

Mount Carmel.

W. J. Jolly writes from Mount Carmel, Kane County:

"Our crops are good and the health of the people is satisfactory. Matters are generally in a prosperous condition. A furious wind prevailed on the second inst. which caused a great deal of fruit to be blown from the trees and some damage to the roofs of buildings."

A. E. Hyde Dismissed.

Tuesday, July 8th, Commissioner Greenman passed on the case of A. E. Hyde, who was arrested on a charge of inducing a witness in a criminal case to leave the Territory. The evidence was insufficient to justify the belief that he had committed the offense, but showed rather that the witness wanted money to leave. The case against Mr. Hyde was accordingly dismissed.

Judge Miller.

Hon. J. A. Miner, the newly appointed judge for Utah, who is to succeed Judge Henderson on the bench of the First District, attended the session of the Supreme Court on July 11th. The gentleman has an urbane appearing countenance, is of portly build, and one might judge him to be about fifty years of age. He has not yet been sworn in.

Not Officer Reilly.

There are a number of rumors going about regarding the shooting of Dr. Bascom, on the night of the Opera House fire. One is to the effect that the pistol which was accidentally discharged was held by a policeman who had a scar on his face. It is a sufficient refutation of this statement that Mr. J. J. Reilly is the only officer on the force who has a scar on his face, and he was not at the fire. While it was in progress he was on duty at the R. G. W. depot.

B. W. Brown's Case.

The dispatches announce the commutation of the sentence of Byron W. Brown, of Lehi, Utah County, to one year and eight months' actual imprisonment. This action was taken by President Harrison. Mr. Brown was convicted of perjury because he said he did not believe in polygamy, and was sentenced to three years in the Detroit prison, and to pay a fine of \$1000. The fine was remitted. This will release Mr. Brown on August 3.

The Old Folks Treat.

The number of old people who will participate in the treat being prepared for them by the general committee is likely to be very large. An organization has been effected in Ogden to look after the veteran excursionists from Weber County. The company from that part of the Territory alone will probably not be less than 250. We are requested by the Old Folks' committee to reiterate their cordial invitation to all people over the age of 70 years to join in the interesting and festive occasion.

Dr. Bascom's Case.

On the night of July 3rd, during the progress of the Opera House fire, Dr. Bascom was wounded by a pistol shot, said to have been fired accidentally, during a dispute with a policeman. There has been an effort to hush the matter up, but in view of the reports of the affair that have become widespread and contain statements of a serious nature, an investigation of the circumstances should be had. The story that it was a "stray shot" that caused the doctor serious injury has not been acceptable thus far.

A Scientist's Discovery.

PARIS, July 8.—Paul Gifford, the French scientist, has discovered a new propulsive force, condensed, liquified gas. Three hundred drops of this compound is contained in a small steel receptacle under a rifle barrel, and each time the trigger is pulled one drop falls into the breech behind the bullet. The contact with air causes it to volatilize instantaneously, with an expansive force far exceeding gun powder, and expels the bullet with terrible velocity, accompanied by neither noise nor smoke.

Equalization of Taxes.

The Territorial Board of Equalization met in this city July 11.

There were present R. C. Lund, E. G. Woolley, John E. Booth, C. R. Hank, J. N. Kimball and F. J. Cannon.

Chairman J. E. Dooly was unavoidably absent owing to pressing business in Salt Lake.

The board examined a number of witnesses relative to the value of property throughout the county. Some of the board left for Salt Lake last evening.

July 12 the board visited Utah County and prosecute their labors at that point.—*Ogden Standard*.