

other way, the subject, so far as relates to the Constitution, falls to the ground. Why should not the people have the opportunity to express their will on this important subject?

RETURN TO VIGILANTES.

The dispatches bring word from Sacramento, the capital of California, that yesterday (January 3) the city board of trustees ordered all saloons to be closed from midnight until 6 a.m.; revoked the licenses of numerous disreputable resorts; directed that all known criminals and tramps be driven from town by the police authorities, and ordered the arrest of every man without visible means of support. The police force was increased by over fifty citizens, who volunteered to serve as special officers, and still further additions are to be made to the guardians of the peace. It is announced that in fact "a semblance of martial law has been inaugurated." Besides the adoption of the measures named, a citizens' committee of safety has been formed, and it is intimated that a reign like that of early California vigilantes may follow if the outlawry of the past few weeks does not cease.

The cause of these sensational proceedings is in the carnival of crime which is said to have held sway recently, and which the police have failed to cope with. There have been three brutal murders in close succession (the object being robbery), numerous assaults to rob, and a vast number of burglaries. Husbands reported that their wives refused to remain at home alone, and many residents threatened to move out unless the authorities gave them adequate protection.

Such a condition may seem anomalous in a state or locality where it is so easy for officers to get all the assistance necessary in enforcing the law, and can be accounted for only on the hypothesis that the police department in the California capital has been woefully lax in its policy toward the criminal class. It would make little difference how comparatively small the police force was, if proper discipline were enforced the city could not be easily placed in such a position as that described. Sacramento has a population of 35,000—about half that of Salt Lake—and four or five good policemen should have made a much better showing than has been done in this instance, where all the guilty parties have escaped thus far. Whatever necessity there may be for a committee of safety or vigilance committee seems to arise, therefore, from official incompetency.

The direction of the new movement, however, will effect a change, as it aims at the class from which most of the criminals are drawn—those who are not known to follow any legitimate business but are usually designated in law as being without visible means of support. With these in jail or out of town the "reign of terror," as it is called in the telegrams, will end quickly. In the meantime, other cities will need to be on the alert for the influx of vagrants, and to be protected therefrom must give them the alternative of moving on or going to jail.

One interesting feature may be noted in connection with the Sacramento

business. That is the attitude assumed toward the alleged "industrial army," which last year evoked such a large amount of misplaced sympathy in California and elsewhere. This winter "General" Kelly—the same that was detained in Ogden in April last—has been raising another "army," and established his headquarters at Sacramento, preparatory to an eastern campaign as soon as spring opened. Among the orders issued by the Sacramento municipal authorities was one to the effect that Kelly and his "industrialists" be notified that unless they immediately sought work they would be arrested as vagrants. The reason for this action was that on New Year's night Kelly made a speech on a street corner, in which he said that if men out of employment could not obtain work at \$2 per day, they should go to the back doors of different houses, and, if refused, take what they needed by force. As Kelly's headquarters have been the meeting place of known thugs, vigorous action was directed thereto. It is announced that the "general" and some of his leading henchmen, not relishing the alternative of work or the jail, only stayed in the city over night after the notice was served. This illustration may serve as a pointer to show that 1895 will not experience an "industrialist" demonstration similar in all respects to that of 1894.

As to the probability of old vigilante methods being resorted to in Sacramento, there does not seem to be a very large share of it. The show of earnestness on the part of the people, and a little efficient work by the police, will settle the trouble, which never should have arisen if the police department had been alive to the exigencies of the situation as they appeared. An active, well-directed force of peace officers, even if small, dispenses with the necessity of vigilance committees.

CARBON COUNTY OFFICERS.

The newly-elected officials of Carbon county probably will feel less worried now that a probate judge has been appointed, the President having selected L. M. Olsen to fill the position. The occasion for anxiety was that in the state of affairs which existed the new officials could not qualify as provided by law. Several days must yet elapse before the new probate judge can assume the reins of office. A question submitted from Carbon county in this regard asks: "As the law requires the new officers elected to qualify on or before January 1st, how is this to be accomplished?"

Replying to the inquiry, it may be stated that the date—January 1st—is incorrect, as the law of 1894 makes a change from the old statute in that regard. It provides that, within thirty days after receiving notice of their election or appointment, the officers shall qualify; and falling in this, that the county court shall fill vacancies caused thereby, etc. Under this provision the Carbon county officers-elect had thirty days from the time they were officially notified of the results of the election. As this notice was not sent out from this city till December 3rd, the time had not elapsed

by January 1st. If it shall have passed by before the new probate judge can act, there may be a new question arise, though the law seems explicit on the subject.

THE COUNTY'S DEBT.

The investigations of the new county court of Salt Lake county, and the conclusions of law reached by the county attorney, have presented anew to the taxpayers a very unsatisfactory condition of affairs. The opinion furnished the court by Attorney Whittemore appears to state the case clearly. The county has exceeded its lawful indebtedness upwards of \$98,500, through the issuance of warrants by the old county court. Months ago the News pointed out what was being done in that direction, but it was not to be expected that those then in office would heed the suggestion. They were not operating that way. Now, however, that a clean and lawful administration is to be anticipated, the new incumbents are impelled to present the facts before the public, and have done so in a plain, dispassionate statement.

The history of the recent administration of county affairs may be told in brief, without undue reference to alleged extravagance and improper expenditures. The old court spent the county funds up to the limit, and asked the taxpayers to bond the county that it might have a broader swing with the cash to be borrowed. The voters, however, said in effect, "No; you are getting all the money we want you to spend, and we object to going in debt to supply you with more." The bonds were not issued, but the admonition given in the refusal to vote them was unheeded. Debts were contracted, and the taxpayers were plead with and urged a second time to borrow. Again they refused to vote the bonds, thus giving a second and more emphatic notice to the selectmen that the contracting of debts was disapproved of, and should be stopped; but again the will of the people was disregarded, and the figures show the result.

Now the demand comes from certain quarters for a renewal of the bonding proposition. One of the ex-selectmen declared, when the second refusal of the taxpayers was recorded, "We'll make them bond!" This seems to be in about the position the county is now placed, with the new selectmen practically without funds to proceed, and with a heavy debt hanging over them; for honest obligations must be met, and no repudiation thereof be thought of. In this situation, brought about by an unjustifiable extravagance, the present officials well may display to the public a full and fair exhibit of the financial conditions, that the blame therefor may go where it properly belongs, and the new administration be given such support as shall be deemed consistent and expedient under the circumstances.

As to bonding the county, the proposition to do so hardly can be said have unqualified approval, even in the present emergency, when former experiences are taken into consideration. Perhaps confidence in the new administration may outweigh the aversion to incurring further debts, but if so,