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The Tammany Defence.

The annual message of Mayor VAN WYCK sent to the Municipal Assembly on Tuesday is almost entirely devoted to an explanation of the reasons of the increase of nine eight million dollars a year in the current expenditure of the city, and the net increase of over twenty and a half million dollars in the funded debt of the city during the last fiscal year. The Mayor asserts that the increases are due to the payment of what he calls the wasteful and extravagant obligations incurred by the city during the administration of Mayor STRONG and to mandatory legislation adjusting salaries and otherwise increasing the burden of taxation, for which those in charge of the municipality at present can in no way be held responsible.

The truth, known of all, is that the city has had good returns for the money spent or contracted for by the Strong administration. But leaving aside the Mayor's personal attack on the Strong administration, justice compels us to state that the defence of the Tammany administration here put out in this matter has substantial merit. The Mayor has been criticised for having taken the expenses of the year 1899 as the starting point and basis of his comparison with those of the present year. The year 1899 was undoubtedly better for his purpose than the year 1898; but the Mayor asserts that it was not until 1899 that the financial workings of the Consolidation act began to show. There is a measure of truth, at least, in this statement.

If the Mayor had been wholly fair he would have made some reference to the new officeholders and the increase in salaries of employees, which were voluntarily and directly made by the present administration without any legal compulsion. It is a matter of common knowledge that such additional offices have been created and increases to the payrolls made very frequently within the last three years. A detailed examination of the payrolls is not likely to show that these new names and increases of salary have swelled the expenses of the city more than a million of dollars during the last three years. But the bulk of the increase in municipal expenses is accounted for in other ways. Generally speaking, the Mayor's statement must stand.

Nothing is going to be gained in the coming campaign by the arguments of those who are trying to oust Tammany and reform the city, by denying or attempting to obscure the facts of the case.

The Killing of Saul's Calf.

Here is a story of larceny, tragedy, terror, mob violence, law and diplomatic controversy involving the friendly relations of the two great republics of the North American continent, all growing out of the killing of a yearling calf, belonging to U. T. SAUL of La Salle county, Texas.

The narrative begins with that event, which occurred at four o'clock in the afternoon of Oct. 6, 1895, in the second term of CLEVELAND, and ends with a message in regard to the consequences of the calf's death recently sent to the Congress by WILLIAM MCKINLEY. This slaughtered calf has occupied the attention of four successive Secretaries of State and of numberless minor officials. It has occasioned the violent death of four human beings, including its owner, and a good many thousands of dollars. More than any recent event it has embittered the hereditary hate of Mexican for Texan. Its disturbing memory has become the concern of no end of tribunals and commissions, ranging from a Coroner's jury in a frontier county of Texas to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate. The whole complicated story of the affair, besides possessing considerable human interest, affords an excellent illustration of the thoroughness with which the machine we call Federal Government does business when once set in motion.

Having strayed near the highway at Mr. SAUL's ranch on that Sunday afternoon of Oct. 6, 1895, the calf, recently deprived of its parent by shipment for export, was unfortunate enough to encounter two wagon loads of nomadic and predatory Mexicans of the low Indian type which infests more or less the borderland near the Rio Grande. The party consisted of FLORENTINO SUASTE, his alleged wife NICOLASA BAUTISTA, and their children, CONCEPCION, MARTINA, MAURICIO and PEDRO, in one wagon; and in the other JUAN MONTELONGO, or MONTEBALLO, and his wife CASIMERA REYES. MONTELONGO shot the calf, and he and SUASTE proceeded, in violation of Article 882 of the Revised Statutes of Texas, to reduce it to veal and to divide the same between the two gypsy-like family establishments. The hide, head and refuse of the butchery were deposited in the brush, about one hundred and fifty yards from the road, where they were discovered and identified at sundown that same afternoon by JOE HOCUT, one of SAUL's cowboys.

The boss of the ranch was at his home in Cotulla, three miles away. JOE HOCUT sent young WOODLIEF THOMAS to tell him what had happened to the orphan calf. SAUL got Deputy Sheriff SWINK, and then, along with the boy WOODLIEF and a ranger, they started on horseback in pursuit of the Suaste-Montelongo party. Not far from Cotulla they met some other Mexicans in a covered wagon. They searched and found no veal. These Mexicans informed them that further down the road they had encountered two wagons, travelling south. SWINK sent the boy WOODLIEF home, remarking that there might be trouble. The ranger recollected that he had an engagement. So two of the party went home and SAUL and SWINK rode on, into the darkness and the wilderness, in pursuit of the calf's remains.

About nine o'clock they overhauled the Mexicans, and found them, in the act of unharnessing their teams to lay up for the night. Exactly how the firing began has been a question in dispute for years between Mexico and the United States. It has been the subject of protracted, exhaustive and expensive investigations by both Governments. The theory of the Mexican Department of State, based on the accounts given by the women and children of the Mexican party, has been that SAUL and SWINK began firing without explanation or parley of any sort, and that the return fire was in self defence. The State Department believes, under Mr. OLNEY, Mr. HAY, etc., Mr. DAY and Mr. JOHN HAY, with no evidence to support it, but with much ingenuity and persistency maintained that although the testimony of the survivors is preponderantly in favor of SAUL and all are interested parties, the weight of probability is against the Mexicans, all interested parties and witnesses of the affair, although the women swore that, in compliance with our laws, SAUL and SWINK had the cause of the row, and in favor of SUASTE, who was a citizen officer of the law and of RIOS, who is described by agents of the leading citizens of Corpus Christi and of Texas as a good and law-abiding citizen, and a Mexican. Nevertheless, the certain fact remains that Mexicans, and people of that public sentiment there, is that the peaceful Mexicans while travelling in Texas with their wives and little children, were set upon by a party of Americans and peaceably slaughtered.

The undisputed facts are that in the affray JUAN MONTELONGO was killed, both the woman NICOLASA and her child were wounded, the child dying soon after from his wound, and both FLORENTINO SUASTE and the rancher SAUL were also shot, SUASTE dragged SAUL (pathetic fancy of fifty yards from the road, and went on foot to Encinal for assistance, both horses having run away. When the party from Encinal reached the scene SAUL was still alive, but no chat before they got him to Cotulla on a handcar. The wounded SUASTE and the surviving Mexican women and children were put in the Cotulla jail.

Cotulla has been characterized by Consul General DONNELLY of Eagle Pass as "a young town and small for its age, but holding the record of Southwest Texas for murder and lynching." The death of SAUL aroused much feeling, and there were threats of taking FLORENTINO SUASTE from the jail and saving the State the expense of his trial and execution. For three days the State Rangers guarded the jail, then they were withdrawn, and SUASTE and his family were left to the sole protection of the jailer, CHARLES LUTZ UNDERWOOD, a man described as neither physically nor mentally strong. At midnight on Oct. 11, five days after the killing of the calf and the death of SAUL, FLORENTINO SUASTE was taken from the jail and hanged and shot to death. Here is UNDERWOOD's sworn account of the mob's proceedings so far as he witnessed them:

"I was in the jail on the night of the lynching. There was no one now to guard the jail, no deputy or ranger. About 12 o'clock that night I heard some one shaking at the door. I got up and looked out of the window. I saw about three or four men at the door. I asked, 'Who is there?' They answered, 'Rangers.' I came down barefooted and unlocked the door. It did not occur to me that they were lynchers. As soon as I opened the door I saw the men were masked. I knew at once they were lynchers. I said, 'My God, men, let the law take its course.' They wired me and forced the keys from me. I said to them, 'Now you have the keys, but open the doors.' They did not talk except in low tones and by motions. They tried to open the cell door themselves, and couldn't. They then put the keys in my hands and made motions with their pistols. They forced me to open the door. I myself opened the door. They found SUASTE at once. They pushed me ahead, so that I could not see them take him. They took him out. They told me to say nothing, or I would be served in the same way. I made no outcry, but waited until next morning. I told SWINK the next morning, he was the first man I met."

The Mexican women who witnessed the taking out of SUASTE have sworn that the men who entered the jail were not masked. CONCEPCION SUASTE says:

"They came and knocked on the door and the jailer came down with the lamp and opened it. He just opened the door and let them in.

"Q.—What did they do then? A.—They just took the father out. One took him by the leg and the other by the arm, and drug him out of jail.

"Q.—Was he able to walk? A.—Yes.

"Q.—Did you see him when they hang him, or did they take him off? A.—They took him off.

"Q.—You heard them shoot? A.—Yes.

"Q.—How long was it before they killed him? A.—They killed him at once, as soon as they took him out, and then threw a rope around his neck and drug him off.

"Q.—Did they kill him on the ground? A.—Yes, and then hung him to the mesquite tree."

In an interesting statement which forms part of the record, J. GUY SMITH, the courageous editor of the Cotulla *Isonomy*, gives this picture of the state of things at the capitol of La Salle county:

"I am free to say that justice has not been done. It is the third lynching in this town from that same jail, but no lyncher has ever suffered. No lyncher need fear to suffer if the same methods are followed by the authorities for getting at the truth and enforcing the law. Why, one of the members of the Grand Jury that investigated that lynching had an altercation afterward on the street with the Sheriff and openly accused the Sheriff of having been in collusion with the lynchers."

A lawyer who lived in Cotulla at the time has testified that he met the mob going to the jail and harangued them, advising them to desist. He adds:

"The participants are well known. I remember one in particular. An old man who carried the rope. He now holds an important county office."

Consul-General DONNELLY, who was charged by the State Department with the duty of inquiring into the affair, and who performed his task with extraordinary thoroughness although he found, as he says, that in Southwest Texas an investigator is *persona non grata*, adds this interesting particular:

"The very Justice of the Peace who held the inquest (SAUL's inquest) and examining trial, and committed SUASTE without bail, I am reliably informed, was the leader in a former lynching. But he is none the less popular."

The diplomatic, legal and legislative sequel of the killing of SAUL's calf is worth summarizing.

In President CLEVELAND's time Señor ROMERO notified Secretary OLNEY that no proper investigation of the affair had been made by the local authorities, and requested the United States Government to take the matter up.

Near the beginning of President MCKINLEY'S Administration the matter was referred to Governor CULBERSON of Texas, who in turn referred it to the District Attorney for the district in which is La Salle county. The Texan District Attorney reported that the written testimony taken by the Grand Jury had been destroyed by the burning of the Cotulla court house. He added:

"So badly did the officials, municipal and political, decide and prefer to act as the people of La Salle on the night that it is extremely difficult to secure witnesses against the perpetrators of the crime."

This report successively reached Austin, Washington and the City of Mexico. In due time Mr. ROMERO notified Secretary SHERMAN that the Mexican Government had instituted its own inquiry, the results of which he communicated, and in the usual terms of diplomacy the Mexican Minister demanded indemnity for the "murder" of JUAN MONTELONGO and little PEDRO SUASTE, for the injuries of NICOLASA BAUTISTA, for the imprisonment of the two women and the minor children, and for the lynching of FLORENTINO SUASTE.

The State Department, through its President, General DONNELLY, to investigate the facts, and on August 19, 1897, Secretary SHERMAN informed Mr. ROMERO that he was ready to discuss the question with a view to making an adjustment of the claim "on a basis of justice and the United States."

Mr. ROMERO's comprehensive investigation and reports, he intimated, in the Department of State, to determine of itself. Mr. ROMERO said