

attacking and robbing tents and stores, and helped themselves to whatever they fancied, without money and without price. Their outrageous conduct at length aroused the inhabitants, and they formed themselves into a kind of police and military organization, seized numbers of the "Hounds," or "Regulators," as they styled themselves, put them upon trial before a court which the community instituted, found nine of them guilty of robbery and other crimes, and punished them with imprisonment and fines. This organization of the people may be considered the first Vigilant Committee of San Francisco. It scattered and suppressed effectually the organization of the "Hounds."

At the election on the 1st of August, in accordance with the proclamation of Governor Riley, Horace Hawes was elected Prefect, and John W. Geary First Alcalde. The council assembled, the Alcalde and Prefect gave their addresses, and the city was organized by a regularly constituted elective government. The Baptists dedicated the first Protestant Church in the town, on the 5th of August, of this year, (1849). Several other denominations were already organized, and were progressing towards the erection of houses of worship.

During the month of October steam navigation became a feature in business transactions, the iron steamers Pioneer, and Mint, and the old propeller McKim, having commenced their trips between San Francisco and the interior towns. The Senator was soon put upon the Sacramento and San Francisco line, where she continued for years, and with a safety and pecuniary success perhaps never equaled. On the 25th of the same month, also, political matters took form by a Democratic meeting on the Plaza. Rowe's Olympic Circus opened on the 29th of the same month, and thus inaugurated the commencement of theatrical entertainments. One month later, a day was observed as one of thanksgiving and prayer for the advent of the new State of California, in obedience to a proclamation of the Governor. Thus early was the custom of the Eastern States acknowledged and instituted on the Pacific Coast. Probably pumpkin pies were not so generally discussed as in New England, but the day and the sentiment were not forgotten.

An election was held on the 13th of November, 1849, to elect the first officers under the new State Constitution, and, at the same time votes were polled upon the acceptance or rejection of that instrument. In San Francisco only five out of two thousand and fifty-six votes were thrown against it. At this election Gabriel B. Post and Nathaniel Bennett were chosen State Senators; and William Van Voorhies, Edmund Randolph, Levi Stowell, J. H. Watson, and J. A. Patterson, members of Assembly. It was the first election for State officers.

The Court of First Instance, under Judge William B. Almond, by order of the Governor, was organized on the 12th of December. Its jurisdiction was limited to civil cases, and to sums exceeding one hundred dollars. The object was to lighten the duties of the Alcalde's Court, which had become too onerous. All who ever stood in the presence of the Court of Judge Almond, can never forget the amusing scenes which occurred there, where decision was rendered by the Judge with a promptness and result which often astounded lawyers, witnesses and contestants.

December 24th is remembered as that which saw the first of those great fires which, at intervals, have laid the buildings and the hopes of many of the citizens of San Francisco in ashes. On the morning of that day, Dennison's Exchange, on the