

THE KENTUCKY FEUD.

A VENDETTA, or war of factions, which it appears has been going on for ten years past in Rowan County, Kentucky, without attracting much attention outside the State or encountering serious interference within it, culminated on Wednesday of last week in a remarkable and sanguinary battle. A sheriff's posse, consisting of 100 picked men from neighboring counties, armed with Winchester rifles, besieged the town of Morehead, and closed in upon the desperate Tolliver gang, who were the leading spirits of one of the warring factions. Incoming trains were stopped outside the town during the hostilities; peaceable citizens, women, and children, barricaded their houses and awaited the issue. Business had been virtually suspended for many days past, as the town was "run" by the Tollivers. For two hours the fight went on. The Central Hotel, in which the desperadoes held out against the sheriff's men, was riddled with bullets. It became untenable, but there was no surrender. The battle ended with the killing of four of the gang, and the wounding and capture of four more, while the others escaped in the woods. The killed included Craig Tolliver, the chief of the band, and two of his brothers.

This is but one act of the drama; and, unless tradition and precedent, as prevailing in that section of the country, be conspicuously falsified, it will not be the last. The origin of the feud was a quarrel between the Underwoods and the Holbrooks over the expulsion from the county of a rascal and horsethief named Martin. Friends of the two families took up the matter in good old Kentucky fashion, and ere long the Underwoods were exterminated, though not before they had brought down a proportionate number of Holbrooks. But the vendetta did not die with them. It had spread over the whole county, and got into politics. In 1884, one Floyd Tolliver, as the friend of a defeated candidate of one of the factions, started a fight in a hotel at Morehead, and got himself killed by the same Martin who had been the original cause of the war. Martin escaped lynching only to be filled with buckshot by Craig Tolliver (a brother of the deceased) and his followers. A new faction was now formed, with Craig Tolliver at its head, and composed principally of Democrats, while the Martin party was made up mostly of Republicans. The scenes of strife and carnage which ensued finally attracted the attention of the Governor of the State, and troops were sent to Rowan County to arrest the principal belligerents. The latter had, of course, plenty of political influence; and, though they were arrested according to orders, the prosecution was withdrawn on condition that they should leave the State. They did so; but no sooner was order restored in Rowan County than Craig Tolliver appeared in Morehead, and announced himself a candidate for Police Judge. None had the temerity to oppose him, and he was elected. Here was a chance for reprisals! Judge Tolliver lost no time in issuing warrants for the arrest of the two Logan boys, sons of an old opponent in the Martin faction. The Logans resisted, killed the Marshal who broke into their house, and were themselves both shot dead by Tolliver's men. It was this crime which brought about the summary vengeance last week.

Several morals might be drawn from this brief eventful history. An obvious one would be, that the law of the State should take its assassins in hand, and hang them for the first murder, instead of

waiting for the county to rise up and avenge the twentyleth. But all that the Kentuckians will learn from the lesson, we fear, will be that it is the safer plan to keep the vendetta out of politics.
