



ENTERED AT THE LINCOLN POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
THE GOURIER PUBLISHING COMPANY.

OFFICE 217 North Eleventh St.

TELEPHONE 90

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Subscription Rates—In Advance.

Per annum.....	\$2 00	Three months.....	50c.
Six months.....	1 00	One month.....	20c.
Single copies.....	Five cents.		

For sale at all news stands in this city and Omaha and on all trains.
A limited number of advertisements will be inserted. Rates made known on application.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, APRIL 6, 1894.

"It is to be hoped that the Civic Federation will last long enough to at least reform the methods of bringing party candidates before the people. By the present plan only a very few of the individual members of any party have or can have any influence, much less choice, in the selection of candidates for which the party is held responsible. To say it is their own fault in not attending the primaries is to add insult to injury. They are more helpless at the primaries than at the polls, for at the latter they can scratch and substitute, but at the primaries it is the dose or nothing," says a correspondent: "Take for example the last republican city convention in its organization and working. What had the members of the republican party, say of the Fifth ward, to do with it? It so happened that a candidate for treasurer, Mr. Aitken, and a candidate for mayor, Mr. Parker, both lived in the Fifth ward. Now if Mr. Aitken was the best man for treasurer and Mr. Parker the best man for mayor why shouldn't they both have been elected? But no; whether it is ward etiquette or party etiquette the unwritten law is 'only one candidate for city office from one ward'; and so at the primaries the voters of the republican party in the Fifth ward came out at noon, gathered in groups, looked wise, buttonholed, drove carriages, smoked and wore badges till seven o'clock, for the sole and only purpose of saying whether Mr. Aitken should run for treasurer or Mr. Parker for mayor.

"What right has the Fifth ward to say that Mr. Parker, or the Sixth ward to say that Mr. Woods or Mr. Harpham shall or shall not run for mayor? What right have they to decide more than any or all of the other wards? Ward lines are not so rigid nor the city so immense that a resident of the Sixth ward may not be as well and as favorably known in the Third as in his own. In the same way for treasurer or other city officers, why shouldn't a ward having no candidate of its own have the right to express its preference among others; or even if the ward had a candidate, and some individual voter preferred the candidate of some other ward, why shouldn't he have the right to say so by his vote at the primaries?"

"Next comes the convention. It is supposed to be a delegate or representative convention, but that's old style. The new way is for the successful candidate of each ward to be allowed so many chips for his own use, and the wards having no candidates put in their proportion of chips known as commercial or marketable chips. The game is for each candidate to secure as many of these chips as possible. Each chip counts a vote. Whenever he can buy or borrow enough others to make his own nomination sure the combination is turned off and the rest must take their chances, though as a rule he will help those that have helped him. Sometimes the diversity of interests is so great that it is hard to make the desired combination. In this last republican convention one would suppose that after 100

unsuccessful ballots for mayor it would have occurred to some of the delegates that the republican voters of Lincoln were not enamored of either of the three candidates before the convention and that some other citizen of Lincoln would do just as well. It probably did occur to a great majority of them, but they were not delegates—for the time—they were chips. After voting more than 100 times without result not even 'Raymond the Regardless' would have dared to get up in convention and nominate Mr. Harpham.

"The object of this is not to criticize the candidates of the convention, but only to show that the voters of the republican party had nothing to do with their selection. There are 400 voters in the Fifth ward and in the other wards that had as little to do with the naming of a candidate for mayor under present methods as any 400 men in Texas. There is nothing at all new about this, neither is it peculiar to the republican party, and it has been peculiarly fatal to the latter simply because that party is in the majority. The result of the elections show that the city convention for the last six years at least has been regarded as a farce and of no binding authority whatever, and it is this well-known fact that gives the only shadow of justification to the position of Mr. Raymond, though perhaps few would have been bold enough to have flung the added sneer and contempt of first taking part in the convention.

"The only strange thing about it all is the general feeling that there is no remedy—that it must always be so. Why not abolish the convention? We have, to start with, the ward committee and the central committee. As election approaches the candidates for ward alderman and other ward offices are talked over and finally the ward committee makes up the ward ticket by placing on it all the candidates for each office that have been certified to it by the proper number of voters. In the meantime candidates for the city offices, mayor, treasurer, city clerk, etc., have been talked over and in the same way the central committee has placed upon a ticket all the candidates for each city office. This ticket is certified to each ward, the ward committee adds its ward ticket, thereby completing the ticket to be voted at the primaries. It is easily seen that at such a primary election every voter could make his choice from every candidate for every office in the city. The result of the election would be certified by each ward committee to the central committee. The latter would canvass the returns and announce the chosen candidates of the party and send a certified copy of the party ticket back to each ward committee to be voted at the election. We don't know how much or if any of this plan is new, but there are certainly many advantages in it. The cost and disgrace of the convention, together with all its belongings of bargaining and bribery would be avoided and this would of itself bring out more and better candidates who are now hindered by disgust of the process. Abolish the convention and reorganize the primaries."

MY SOLID GIRL.

Thou knowest not, oh, maiden dear,
How much I do admire
Thy beauty; how each passing year
But deepens my desire
To call thee mine. Oh, let me hear
From those dear lips of thine
One word of love! I almost fear
To worship at thy shrine,
So many years thy praise I've sung
In vain. Speak, then! And make—
Immortal one—an old man young
Again. My heart doth ache.
Why so hard-hearted? Why so cold?
Is it because thy clothes
Are thin? Ah—pardon me—I'm bold,
But then the dear Lord knows
I meant no harm at all. On thee,
O love, O angel fair,
I'm all broke up! If thou on me
Wert all broke up, I swear
I'd happy be! But would I? No;
To pieces thou wouldst whirl!
Whilst now, sweet Venus of Milo,
Thou art my solid girl.

—JAMES COURTNEY CHALLISS.