

Fred Whelan

Lincoln Just Sake

# THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEB., SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1895.

## OBSERVATIONS.

THE "Daily Drift" poet of the esteemed *Journal* finds it difficult to drift away from thoughts of the Rev. Chapin's sermon. Mr. Bixby seeks to make reply to Mr. Chapin's arraignment by clever sarcasm. "Newspapers are valuable adjuncts in the work of reform, but they cannot do the entire job of human regeneration," he says. "The preachers must stand by them and keep the crossings clean of obstructions. More will be written from time to time upon this very important and timely theme, but for the present let us turn our attention to the selection of noble, pure and high minded men to fill the county offices." It is thus that the facile Bixby treats the serious charges brought by a reputable minister against the *Journal*. This is the *Journal's* idea of a reply.

The editor of the morning paper assumed his responsible duties in remote antiquity.—I believe it was about the time the morning stars first sang together; and somehow time in its flight has distanced him. He is still among the morning stars. Antedeluvian projects are dear to this editor's heart, and he is loath to leave the glories of the decayed past for the more pressing themes of the much alive present. He is a good and great man; but his quality of goodness might be enhanced, and he might be a much greater man if he would come down from Mt. Ararat and stride through a few thousand years, and fetch up at the goal of today, and interest himself in some of the projects for the weal of living men and women, leaving the entombed ancients to crumble away in oblivion. He is the ostensible head of a pretentious newspaper, and when, after his long tramp down the centuries, he finally regains consciousness in the sphere of the thistness of the now, he will find that there is much to engross his attention in the turpitude into which the *Journal* has fallen. It is not to be believed that the ancient and honorable editor would condone the acts of his associates when he at last reaches the point where he can read his own paper. It is more natural to suppose that, good man as he is, he would rise in his wrath and break things. Great will be the surprise of this kindly, benevolent gentleman who has spent his days in logrolling for Jove and the has-beens of the beginning of time, when he is made to realize that his paper, the *Journal* has become the recognized champion of a corruption beside which the filth of the Augean stables is but common dirt; when it is brought home to him that his newspaper stands and has stood in the way of honest endeavor to stamp out evil and wrong doing, and is claimed as the organ of those who blacken our municipal life; when he knows that the *Journal* is looked upon as the enemy of good government and the shielder of criminals. When this glad day comes, when Mr. Gere falls down

to the earth of today and takes up the cudgel in behalf of existing humanity such serious accusations as those contained in the Rev. Chapin's sermon will be met with something more than ridicule in the columns of the *Journal*. Can't somebody undertake the task of jarring him loose from fold Ararat?

Many persons have pretended to be the mouthpiece of the west and have attempted as Mr. J. K. Miller has attempted in the *June Arena*, to say what the west thinks and demands. In the first place the west is not a unit, and any person who attempts to state con-

has been most effectually rescued from these men and their parties. True the governor is a populist; but Holcomb's election does not signify populist supremacy, and anyway Holcomb is a long way above many of the politicians of his ilk who have been elected to office in some of the western states.

This man Miller says that prominent among western ideas is the belief "that the national banking system so far from being the best system of paper currency ever invented by man, by its operation has demonstrated itself to be the most vicious and dangerous. That

Don Cameron in Pennsylvania believes in free silver; and Steve Elkins in West Virginia believes in the purchase of election precincts and whole states; and the late W. Jennings Demorest in New York believed in prohibition; but the east does not as a whole believe in free silver, or in dishonest politics, or in prohibition. Because of certain conditions in Kansas or Colorado it cannot be said that the west, meaning the whole country this side of the Mississippi river, is in accord therewith.

Lancaster county, Nebraska, isn't the only place where public sentiment is crying out against the degraded jury system. The following from the *New York Home Journal* is as applicable to the conditions that obtain in Nebraska as to those of New York: "New York is again agitated over the subject of jury reform. The immediate cause of the general interest in this matter is found in the extraordinary conditions which surrounded the trial of a high police officer, Inspector McLaughlin, on the charge of extortion, the trial itself being one of the results of the memorable Lexow police investigation.... In the McLaughlin case, as will be remembered, the presentation of the case, the arguments of the counsel, the charge of the judge, and the deliberations of the jury consumed but three days, while nearly three weeks were required for the empanelling of the jury. This is true of the first trial, which resulted in a disagreement, as well as of the second, which led to a conviction. What is the cause of this odd disparity? Primarily it is the assumed necessity of excluding men who have positive 'opinions' about the guilt or innocence of the defendant, and who are not ready to swear that, in arriving at a verdict, they will overcome their prejudice and follow strictly the evidence and law presented to them at the trial. This is a statement of the law as it is to-day in this state; a few years ago the law was even more strict, for it excluded men merely for having an opinion about the case, irrespective of the ability or inability to govern themselves entirely by the legal evidence. In many states this is still the rule, and any talesman who declares that he has formed an opinion thereby renders himself ineligible..... Men are but too anxious to escape jury duty, and the excuse of 'prejudice' is so simple that they seize upon it with the greatest avidity. Thus the men who would make excellent jurors escape by pleading bias, while those who are actuated by unworthy motives and who are anxious to enter the jury box glibly assert their perfect freedom from all bias and virtually beg the court to accept them. But why do the intelligent and respectable so avoid jury service? Because at present it involves too great a sacrifice both of their business interests and of their self-respect. It is evident that, the worse the system, the lower the character of the men who will consent to serve under it. Jurymen are treated



G. M. GARTER, Blair Neb.

cisely what the west thinks undertakes a difficult task. For instance Nebraska refuses to be held accountable for the vagaries that have found such forcible expression in various form in Kansas and Colorado and Oregon; and the man who would say what the west thinks, basing his statements on the emanations of a Llewelling, a Waite and a Penoyer must leave Nebraska out of his summary. In Nebraska we have, on one or two occasions, been perilously near the assertive fanaticism that has obtained such a firm foundation in some of our emotional sister states; but the good judgment of the people has, in the main, overcome the mouthings and manipulations of such men as Damn-the-Constitution Schrader, C. H. Van Wyck and Jay Burrows. The state has never at any time been wholly given over to these iconoclasts, and within the last year it

this is part and parcel of the most gigantic, mischievous, and wicked scheme ever forced upon any nation." Mr. Miller is not speaking for the whole west when he says this; for Nebraska is a part of the west and the dominant opinion of the people of this state does not endorse such an idea. The same is true of Iowa and other western states. Mr. Miller, in common with many others, mistakes the clamor of a few loud mouthed persons, for the true voice of the people. It is a great mistake. In Nebraska are many people who believe there are defects in the national banking system; but the people do not believe that is "a part and parcel of the most gigantic, mischievous and wicked scheme ever forced upon any nation." Mr. Miller presumes to say what the west thinks on other and kindred subjects, and he makes many mistatements.