

# THE COURIER

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## OBSERVATIONS

What we need in this community, dear friends, is not a new organization of any kind, but a united and vigorous clubbing of the croaker and the speedy extermination of the newspaper "enterprise" that seeks to set the whole city by the ears. A little of the old spirit of pull together would make a surprising change in local conditions.—State Journal.

Sublimely characteristic is this precious paragraph of puny puerility from the editorial columns of the morning paper. It is redolent with the odor of official pap. It reeks with the stultified littleness that abides in the editorial office of the Journal. It savors of the corruption and viciousness that have for years been the impelling force of this abominable newspaper, abominable because it is dishonest and malignant. Lately there has been a temerity in this city equal to the task of telling the Journal what an abomination it is—what a daily outrage it commits in appearing as an apologist for crime, a receiver of stolen goods from the storehouse of municipal rottenness, a votary of the prostitutes of the city, male and female; of the gamblers, boodlers and thugs of the city and state. No wonder that the Journal, disturbed for once in the placid enjoyment of its plunder, wants to "club the croaker." The Journal's viciousness has provoked a reputable minister in this city to proclaim its degradation from the pulpit. And Mr. Gere's paper would have the Rev. Mr. Chapin clubbed. Newspaper enterprise the Journal would have exterminated. Just how the Journal is going to club and exterminate is not evident. "A little of the old spirit of pull together" is what the Journal advocates. But what honest

man would so humiliate himself as to "pull" with the Journal, the accomplice of rogues? What newspaper would join issues with this mendacious publication? The Journal can "pull" as of yore, but it cannot hope for decent companionship. Neither can it club the croaker into silence or achieve the extermination of truth-telling newspapers.

This week people have been talking of war in all seriousness. Congressmen and senators have wrapped themselves in American flags and fired volley after volley of vocal patriotism—or bombast. The newspapers have talked glibly of the Monroe doctrine, and printed statistics about the standing army and the naval equipment. Idle men and adventurers have gone about in a most terrible sanguinary mood. The whole country has been carrying a red, white and blue chip on its shoulder, shaking its fist under Johnny Bull's nose and crying, "You just dare to knock that chip off—will you?" It has all been very patriotic and sentimental and interesting. It has been pleasant to see the president and both houses of congress dwelling together in such delightful and unprecedented harmony. It has been good to see such men as Charles Antipathy Dana, who for years has been pounding the Stuffed Prophet of William Street, salaaming in respectful deference to the war-like President Cleveland. The country has had something to talk about, and that in itself is a good thing:

But how absurd it all is, after all! Just as if there was a possibility of Great Britain and the United States going to war! It's a good deal like one of those comic operas that Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan used to give us. It's highly theatrical and spectacular, but wholly unreasonable. The chances are Venezuela is right and England is wrong and it is probable that Venezuela will get what it wants, but it is not probable that the two greatest nations on the earth will go to war about it. In the first place a war between these two countries would involve the whole civilized world. One thing that will prevent such a war is common sense. Another thing is business. Finance—commerce rules the world and this power isn't going to allow itself to be injured to the extent that such a war would injure it. The head of the Rothschilds said the other day, "I am for peace." That settles it if nothing else does.

President Cleveland has been accused of jingoism. His message to congress that left a trail of financial panic around the world has been called political artifice. If Mr. Dana has changed his long continued policy of contemptuous abuse to that of enthusiastic commendation, other of the journalistic dragons have been roused to fury by the scent of blood. E. L. Godkin, of the New York Evening Post, for years the high priest and incense bearer of the solemn mugwamp tribe, suddenly ceased his chant of praise on the publi-

cation of the president's message and began forthwith to belabor the execution. The Washington correspondents are talking of a third term, and accusing the president. Mr. Cleveland is hardly a man to resort to such extreme measures to promote third term sentiment. His message to congress was undoubtedly justifiable, tho' it might have been couched in more conservative terms. It was not any more flamboyant than the declaration that issue regularly from the British Foreign Official. Lord Salisbury and his predecessors have so persistently voiced belligerency that the English people do not go into convulsions every time the government animals roar. In this country the people are not used to this sort of thing.

Mr. Newbranch as he looks "Through Colored Glasses" sees things rather darkly. I imagine the glasses are not colored at all—only smoked. Inasmuch as he looks through glasses it is too bad that he does not, now and then, place before his eyes an amber lense and see the world in a softened glow, or changing the glass, see the beauty of violet light. The smoke on the glass takes all of the beauty and light from the picture. It leaves it hard and material. Mr. Newbranch, in this issue of The Courier takes the organism of a babe and carries it through life and drops it at the grave, a mere mass of wasted molecules, and he compares it to a house of blocks, and asks if the human organism or life can go on after the molecules have separated, any more than the house of blocks can exist after it has been toppled over. Mr. Newbranch has stated his case strongly and vividly—his writing is commended to those discriminating persons who value good English and appreciate the power of expression. But Mr. Newbranch insists on smoking his glass. The smoke obscures the sunlight and, it may be, hides the truth. We do not know what we are; but those of us who do not use smoked glasses believe we are something more than a mass of molecules, and that belief is something more than belief because it springs from instinct. From the very earliest time, when the morning stars sang together at the birth of the human race, there has been innate in man a feeling that the life spiritual may, nay must, have an existence beyond the vault that receives the decaying flesh. And this feeling, this faith, if you will, that has come down through centuries unnumbered and remained alert and hopeful as the human mind has been enlightened—surely there is something in this to weigh and outweigh any theory of Mr. Newbranch's that the human body is nothing but an aggregation of molecules—that with the decay of the molecules ends all. Whatever may be the truth mankind will keep on as it has kept on letting the sunlight of hope play on the molecules of materialism. At any rate if we cannot prove we are right Mr. Newbranch and all his fellows with all their smoked

glasses cannot prove that we are wrong, and it seems better to be looking forward to something beyond than to anchor ourselves to materialism and say the grave is the end simply because our feeble vision cannot carry beyond.

The definite announcement by Congressman George D. Meiklejohn that he will be a candidate for the republican nomination for governor next year has been followed by a considerable expression of enthusiasm. Mr. Meiklejohn is thus far, the only man in the state who has boldly announced his candidacy for the governorship, and he is properly entitled to consideration at this time. Perhaps the predominant trait in the character of this young man who aspires to be governor is determination—positiveness. Mr. Meiklejohn is open and candid and at the same time forceful and energetic. Who but Meiklejohn would have the temerity to announce his candidacy nearly a year in advance of the nominating convention! This act of his is closely in accord with his character. Most candidates prefer to wait until a few months before the convention before making public announcement of their desire. They think such a policy safer. Mr. Meiklejohn, regardless of the consequences, erects his standard and invites attention.

Seven years ago the coming month a young man took the oath of office as lieutenant governor and for three months occupied the chair of the presiding office of the senate. My recollection is that he was thirty-two years old at that time. He was modest in demeanor. At the president's desk he was dignified. On the floor he was genial with a certain amount of reserve. He had a way of looking you square in the face. Somehow he impresses everybody with his honesty, his sincerity, his force. When it was necessary for him to cast a deciding vote he was always ready for the emergency. He never dodged. He was always there and always ready to declare himself. Senators and others were attracted by this quiet, strong personality, and I remember frequently to have heard politicians say "that young man will be governor some day." There was much promise in his private character and public performance. And two years later George D. Meiklejohn had an opportunity of showing the mettle that was in him, and he fulfilled the promise. Many people of Lincoln remember vividly that scene in the house of representatives when Mr. Meiklejohn, upholding the law, and Sam Elder, himself a vagabond and in this instance representing disorder and outlawry, struggled for supremacy before the joint session of the house and senate. Not one man in ten thousand would have shown the confident firmness that Mr. Meiklejohn exhibited. It was a critical time. Populist frenzy was at a dangerous point. Anarchy was imminent. But the young man of thirty-four was a solid wall of strength, and Sam Elder had to yield.