

THE COURIER

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OBSERVATIONS

Particularly refreshing is the statement that "poor Charlie Mosher" will make good every dollar lost through him, within five years after his release from the penitentiary. The ex-Napoleon is penniless now, it is said, and he will leave Sioux Falls without a dollar.

Mr. Mosher will have to make money rapidly to make good his promise. He would have to make a net profit of from \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year for five years to enable him to take up all his obligations. As Mr. Mosher will have nothing to start with, and as there is no probability of his finding a mine of Monte Cristo, it will be seen that the fireman of the Sioux Falls pen has before him an undertaking of considerable magnitude.

Mr. Mosher always had the reputation of being a money-maker, and there are those who believe him capable of doing what he says he will do. But those most familiar with his operations are disposed to doubt his money-making ability. It is asserted that he never made any considerable amount of money legitimately, and the history of the Capital National bank and the Western Manufacturing company goes to prove the truth of this assertion. Declaring fraudulent dividends on bank stock, issuing false certificates and forged notes, is one thing, and earning money is another thing. It is a fact that the Capital National bank, in addition to the money that Mosher stole, lost vast sums in the regular course of business as the result of the lax policy of Mosher and Outcalt. The bank lost money steadily for years, and it is even stated that it never did pay an honest dividend. Mosher made money out of the prison contract, but he probably spent more corrupting legislators and other office holders than he made. On the

whole it is doubtful if Mosher ever was a money-maker, properly speaking. He was a manipulator and a money-taker, but not a money-maker.

So it appears that if the man who, with able assistance, wrecked the Capital National bank, is to restore from \$250,000 to \$500,000 to defrauded victims in the space of five years, he will not only be under the necessity of changing his morals, but his business methods as well.

As to the sincerity of his purpose, any expression of opinion at this time is premature.

The article in last Saturday's Bee, reprinted in Saturday evening's News and Sunday morning's Journal, is one of the series commenced a year or so ago and that will end with Mosher's liberation, the purpose of which is to extenuate the bank wrecker's crimes, and pave the way for his return to this city. These articles are adroitly written, and considering the fact that the ex-financier is penniless and without resources to pay for such services, they must be regarded as purely friendly efforts—that is if we accept the statement that the convict is wholly without means.

Of course a man of Mr. Mosher's reputation would not knowingly tell an untruth, or permit one to be told in his behalf, and if we are not impressed by the story of his impecunious condition, there may not be an imputation of his veracity, but a charitable belief that shoveling coal at Sioux Falls has not only fed the prison furnaces, but also fired his imagination, and caused the man who broke the bank to become, involuntarily, a Bob McReynolds or a Rudyard Kipling. Rather well authenticated information of frequent movements of money from Lincoln to Sioux Falls covering a period of two years and a half, and lack of knowledge of any considerable disbursement, together with other facts and circumstances, contribute to a belief that whatever may be the privations and deprivations of "poor Mr. Mosher," impecuniosity is not one of them. When he shall "start life anew" it is probable that he will have not only a wealth of experience in his own right, but at least a moderate supply of wealth of a more tangible variety.

Will Mosher return to Lincoln? is a question often asked. Mosher has extensive business interests in this city and there is every reason to suppose that he will come back to Lincoln. The people here accepted the great fraud with little perturbation, and what little excitement there was at the time soon

boys, I did wrong, but I atoned for it, and now I am going to start in all over again." nine out of ten would take his hand and wish him well. There is no doubt but he would be generally recognized and given a footing. The faint mutterings and imprecations of the helpless men and women who lost their all, even hope, through Mosher, would scarcely be heard at his reception.

Mosher left securities and much valuable property in the keeping of people here in Lincoln. When he comes back he will make an effort to regain possession of his own. He may not recover his property in every instance, and should some of his old friends take advantage of him, it is possible that he might be induced to depart from his long persisted in policy of silence, and tell the truth about his confederates.

This suggests the idea that there is, after all, something to admire in Mosher. There are villains with some good qualities. In taking the responsibility for the wrecking of the bank wholly upon himself, and in refusing to implicate in any way any of his pals, he displayed a manliness in striking contrast to the pusillanimous course of R. C. Outcalt, who for three years has been going up and down the state whimpering like a child and bearing a coward's tales. Mosher is much more of a man than his "vindicated" ex-associate.

So "seven-eighths of the church members of Lincoln are on the road to hell." Brer Wolfenbarger is to be congratulated on the thoroughness of his investigation and exactness of his figures. Mr. Wolfenbarger is a careful, conservative man. He does not, like many of his zealous colleagues, make rash statements. He does not jump at conclusions. A less careful person might, in the excitement of a public address before an audience of emotional conglomerate sociophobists, have said off-hand that the whole tribe of church members of Lincoln is on the road to hell. Not so, with the cautious Brer Wolfenbarger. He figures it all out and announces with convincing earnestness and exactitude that seven-eighths of the church people of this town, where culture and morality have been supposed to luxuriate, where the curfew nightly sounds a tribute to the holy ardor of our councilmen, are on the way to perdition. It is a bit discouraging to learn through the annointed lips of the high priest of prohibition, that only one-eighth of the church members of the city are within the pale. Brer Wolfenbarger's pronouncement suggests the heathenish idea that it hardly pays to be good.

Brer Wolfenbarger go a little farther and separate the one-eighth from the seven-eighths? We want to know, for certain, where we are.

Brer Wolfenbarger says: "The administration is so rotten that the man in the moon holds his nose when he sails over Lincoln." The administration is Mayor Graham, and Mayor Graham, as those who remember the issues of last spring's campaign are aware, has a most excellent mother. The high priest continues and goes after the "old antedeluvian mudsills who sit in the Amen corner and shout 'Amen' when the nobility and purity of the Lord Christ is dwelt upon, go out to a Third ward McKinley meeting." The public generally will be interested to learn that the antedeluvian mudsills who say "Amen" in church and Mr. Lindsey's lieutenants in the Third ward are the same. Col. Fritz Westermann and other commissioned officers in General Lindsay's regiment will no doubt rejoice at being classified as "antedeluvian mudsills."

The high priest, continuing, makes a characteristic allusion to the "gambler who is a member of the republican central committee." Brer Wolfenbarger evidently has a poor opinion of this moral and cultured community. He doesn't consider the forgiving spirit and Christian charitableness of a people who say God speed to a round half dozen of defaulting office holders in the space of three years. He doesn't consider the Christian weakness of a people who, having disgorged to one gang of robbers, turn obligingly, to be held up by a succeeding band. He doesn't consider the gentle policy of the authorities in dealing with the unfortunate criminal class. He doesn't consider the beneficent influence of the Matutinal Oracle, the State Journal, in inducing slumber while the bad men ply their trade, thus saving the good people from harassing annoyances. I have not the facts and figures with which to refute Brer Wolfenbarger's dictum of the seven-eighths, but does it not seem that he is lacking in proper appreciation of the wonderful forbearance of Lincoln people? Surely forbearance is a virtue.

The World-Herald joins the dispute between the Salt Lake Herald and the New York Mail and Express as to the relative culture and morality of the east and west. The World-Herald refers to "young New York girls disposed of to bankrupt adventurers for the sake of a foreign title," "Manikin's gracing the streets of the American metropolis, known as dudes and chappies, be spectacled, de-Americanized and with effeminate voices," etc., etc., and speaks for the wholesome culture of the west. The World-Herald stands up for culture with the same enthusiasm that it stands up for Nebraska. And Mr. Hitchcock's paper is right. Culture is the thing. In this state the people wade about in it knee deep. It is all pervading. We have more culture than corn.