

think. That the written word is frequently not the expression of what men think is the only explanation of the distance between what they say and what they do. There is no doubt that the double primary system will come nearer expressing the choice of the largest number of voters than any other.

The politicians who have controlled the primaries since Lincoln was a pup do not like it and they do not dare to say so. They might just as well declare against the purity of the ballot box. But they have not yet figured out how they can control the result. *And they are busy thinking.*

The Courier desires to call Mr. Austin's attention to the following note received from Mrs. Lamaster, the mother of the little girl whom he says starved to death. Lamaster is now working for the farmer who loaned him the money to hire the hearse, which neither her own need nor the necessities of the sick children could prevent the mother from hiring. So long as a funeral is made an orgy of ostentation and ceremony by white folks who ought to know better the wretchedly poor and ignorant cannot be expected to do things more philosophically. It will take Lamaster several weeks' work to pay for the hearse, and meanwhile his family is being supported by the county. The county commissioners is the community represented by three men. I do not know a member of that community who does not make a funeral an occasion of ostentatious ceremony: services, casket, flowers, undertaking mummings, procession, monument and all. In view of which the community cannot expect poor Mrs. Lamaster to step up on a plane that no one else has reached.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER,  
Lincoln, Nebraska.

My attention has been called to an editorial in the Sunday Call, giving a quotation from The Courier and in commenting on same says: "With much deference to the opinion of the Courier, the Call still holds that an innocent helpless child has died of hunger and neglect in the family of Lamasters and it matters not what may have been the conduct or the condition of the father, the united effort of organized charity with all its good intentions has failed to supply the wants of this helpless starving and freezing family."

I desire to enter my protest against such a falsehood being made public as there is not the least foundation for such a statement, nor any fact on which the shadow of such a report could be made and whoever wrote the article drew on his disordered imagination for his picture and never endeavored to verify it by calling on me, or others acquainted with the facts. I had plenty of both fuel and provisions on hand at the time and have not been out of supplies this winter and never been denied any supplies when I have asked for them.

I do this in justice to them who have assisted me when I have been in need and that the public may know the true facts in the case.

LULA LAMASTER.

Lincoln, Neb., February 9, 1897.

### STORIES IN PASSING.

A customer had left a copy of "Gospel Hymns" in an Eleventh street restaurant the other evening. About 10 o'clock one of the night force ran across the book and in fifteen minutes the whole crew—cook, waiters and dish-washers—were sitting on the counter at the lower end of the room wading into the song at the top of their voices. The night clerk had a splendid tenor, untrained but pure and rich, and he "led the meeting." And there was dragging there. "Pull for the Shore" and "The Lily of the Valley" went with a shout. Presently the clerk led them round into softer music—"Jesus Lover of My Soul" and "Blest Be the Tie." When they struck "Rock of Ages" there was actual feeling in their voices.

"Why, damme!" said the cook, "I feel like when I was a kid at Sunday school."



Deadwood, South Dakota.

The new rich Gold Fields of Ragged Top are only nine miles distant from Deadwood. The history of the Ragged Top district is a most convincing demonstration of the truth of the miner's maxim, "Gold is where you find it." There is absolutely nothing at Ragged Top that indicates the presence of gold. It has been passed over scores of times as unworthy of notice. And yet it is today the scene of the most remarkable and sensational discoveries of gold that have been made since the romantic days of '49. Paupers have become wealthy in a few hours. Mines change ownership daily. Two new towns have been laid out. Buildings are being erected as fast as the limited facilities at the disposal of the inhabitants will permit. The Ragged Top district offers remarkable opportunities for men who are quick to act. It is situated on the Spearfish branch of the B. & M. R. R. and is best reached by taking the Burlington's 6:15 p. m. train for Deadwood.

"Buttered toast and eggs straight up!" yelled the waiter as a customer came in and gave his order.

The restaurant vesper was over.

A man near Beatrice dug an artesian well several years ago, and expected to make his place famous by the medicinal properties of the water. He built a large bath house, laid out extensive grounds, and altogether went to an expense of something like twelve thousand dollars.

But the project fell through. There was something the matter with the water, the well was unreliable, and people didn't seek his establishment as the man had expected.

After it was clearly demonstrated that the whole thing was a failure, a friend one day asked the projector how much he had lost in the enterprise.

"Not a cent," replied the man readily. "It was worth six thousand dollars to learn the geological condition of the soil in this part of the country, and it was worth six thousand more to find out what a big fool I am."

It was a little incident of the Albigensian crusade and the place was Beziers. For days the siege had been going on. Outside, the army of the church was furious from the delay. Within the city the people were growing desperate. Food had given out, the walls were down in places, the leaders killed.

At evening the last assault upon Beziers was made. The walls gave way and all the savage fury of northern France was turned upon the city.

The first man to enter the town was the Abbot of Citreux with his followers pressing eagerly behind. For in those days churchmen were warriors as well. One of the Bishop's men asked him how to distinguish heretic from orthodox. Then came the monstrous replay, "Kill them all! God will know his own!"

And the slaughter began. Every soul in Beziers was murdered, every man, woman and child put to sword. The city was burned and not a living spear of grass left to mark the spot.

Four Lincoln gentlemen spent a day at Niagara Falls several summers ago. Having heard of the general custom of fleecing strangers practiced there, they engaged a carriage for the day, agreeing

to each pay two dollars and a half, or ten dollars in all.

The driver took them about and seemed a lively, well-informed fellow. Toward evening at the last stop before returning to the hotel, he took one of the gentlemen aside.

"You seem to be the leader of this party," he said, "and if it would be convenient could you just pay me the ten dollars and settle afterwards with your friends. This would save trouble to all of us."

The Lincoln gentleman accommodated the driver, and after a short wait the return was resumed.

That evening after dinner the Lincoln gentleman who had been addressed by the driver, spoke to his friends of having paid their carriage bill. Then the sad truth came to light. At some stop during the afternoon the driver had spoken to every man in like manner, addressing him as leader of the party and suggesting that he pay and "square" with the others afterwards. And every man of the four had tumbled.

It is not often that such a delicate bit of flattering nets a man thirty dollars in one day.

A long, dusty street runs down between lines of huge old maples. Birds fly across from one side to the other. An old red cow moves lazily out from the shade and eats at the road side. A dog noses in and out among the trees and disappears across a meadow. Gnats swarm in the air and flies dart back and forth. The street is quite deserted. It is noon.

At the end of the street is an iron bridge, painted red, with a gleam of water below it. And beyond is a high hill of green, sprinkled with flowering fruit trees. On the crest of the hill a large white house stands above the trees with glimpses of barns and cribs beyond. A gravel path leads straight up through the garden from the iron bridge to the house.

I know it well. It is my home. And I am coming back to it after ten years.

A gentleman who enlisted during the tail end of the "late unpleasantness" tells this story:

"Our regiment had gathered at Saint Louis and was being transported down the Mississippi to Memphis, where we were to guard a line of railroad running east from that place. The boat, which had been pressed into service hastily,

was a creaky, water-dipping sidewheeler that constantly threatened either to blow up or sink to the bottom.

"My friend Carter and I though both pretty young had just been promoted to the rank of corporal. We were sitting on the edge of the deck, talking it over and watching the sun slowly sink behind a woody point up stream.

"Suddenly Carter lost his balance and went overboard. We were directly in front of the wheel and his chances for further promotion were slim just at that moment. But as he went down, one arm stuck straight up like a signal-board. Before the hundred men standing about had fully realized what had happened, I had caught Carter's hand and jerked him on deck.

"As we started up to the deck above, a fellow soldier was tacking a large, rudely-printed notice against the cabin. It read, 'Corporals hereafter not allowed within ten feet of the boat's edge. By order.'"

And now he had come back. Twenty years ago they had been vitally interested in each other. Twenty years ago they had parted. A slight misunderstanding, a word or two, and he had gone away, leaving nothing but a bit of blue ribbon. She was to send it, he said, if ever she wanted him to return.

How she had treasured that ribbon, dearly, tenderly, as a last token of his love. It was faded and worn and yet she kept it. Often she had wept over it when she was weary and she felt as if her life was empty. Twenty years of loneliness and regret, and merely a little bit of faded color holding back the sunshine from her heart. Why did she not send it to him. She did not know exactly. At times she would seal it in an envelope and address it to him, for she had kept track of him in all these years. But invariably something held her back, and she would tear open the envelope and weep over the ribbon as if her heart would break. She had treasured it so long that the ribbon had become a part of her life and she could not bear to give it up.

But now he had come back of his own accord. After twenty years of silence they were to meet again. And she still kept the ribbon. What memories. What thoughts. How long it all seemed. Had he changed? And what of his love? Would he come to her for the bit of ribbon? Could she give it up to him? And the twenty years that were gone, what of them? H. G. SHEDD.