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OBSERVATIONS.

The socialism cannot be denied that stops short of a redistribution of the wealth of the world, and affirms every industrious and thrifty man's right to pure air, earth and pure water in sufficient quantities, to keep him and his family alive, although the air is defiled and poisoned by anybody or any corporation that has money enough to build a big chimney or run a steamboat or a train of cars, and the purity of the water is dependant upon a city council whose original capacity to tell fresh water from salt water, seems to have been entirely destroyed by disuse. The people of Lincoln are long suffering, they are pathetically patient. They do not question the wisdom and disinterestedness of a council which year after year has provided water strong enough to kill the grass on the lawns and eat up the pipes through which it is conducted into the human stomachs which it also disagrees with and finally destroys. Every Monday night the council meets and wrangles over questions which concern the health, wealth and comfort of this community, and it finally comes to some conclusion, with more or less unanimity, without any regard at all to the health, wealth or comfort of the community, but with especial regard to the wealth and specific political futures of as many individuals of the council as can get in on the deal. There are always exceptions to these sweeping charges. True patriots have been and are now in the city council and they may yet be able to lead it to pure water. It would be inexped-

ient, not to say unhealthy, for even THE COURIER, which has no aspirations for political influence, to intimate that so respectable a looking and patronage distributing company of men as the past and present city council, are capable of trading and trifling with the city water. But digging more wells in the F street salt basin excites more suspicion than any newspaper can arouse. The F street well kills babies and invalids as well as lawns, and yet the people are not maddened at a proposition in the council which, if carried will increase the pestilence. If some of the people do not like it there are still enough who will vote for these unnatural city fathers to re-elect them. Notwithstanding that their records show their services to have been valueless to the city, because they have been loyal in certain directions they will be re-elected and the water will grow saltier in consequence. The people of Lincoln are "easy." For many years have they drunk of bitter water all because they do not remember the minutes of the council, at the primaries. It has been suggested that the location of the F street well is on the line of the Burlington; whereas the South street well's furnaces must be filled with coal from the Rock Island cars. If this be so the Rock Island Agent must be asleep. A little rustling on his part might be productive of blessing to the whole city.

Miss Fairbrother makes a curious charge in her last issue against the *Journal*, so absurd that it is worth while, just for fun, to take it out of inuendo and put it into a direct statement. Miss Fairbrother says in regard to the excerpt from the *Rocky Mountain News* copied and commented upon by the *Journal* and reprinted by THE COURIER, that in all probability the *Journal* incited the editor of the club notes in the Denver paper to write aspersions on the official organ of the woman's clubs of Nebraska in order that the *Journal* might copy the same as an impartial, unbiased opinion from a competent critic of the aforesaid organ. The ridiculousness of such a charge only needs to be put into plain words to disprove itself. No one could read the *Woman's Weekly* the past season without getting the impression that the *Woman's* club of Omaha is managed by a ring whose whole idea is self aggrandisement rather than the greatest good of the greatest number. Such charges decrease the efficiency of the club without improving the situation which, if it exist, can best be reformed from the inside. The club is big enough and vigorous enough to eliminate in time, all elements that work it harm; anyway it ought to have the unfettered opportunity. If Miss Fairbrother were a member of the Lincoln Woman's club, it might now be considered hopelessly corrupt.

As it is, the small or large differences of opinion which exist in any large body of men or women are argued, voted upon and settled without the knowledge of the public and without any permanent disagreement. Its usefulness increases every year. The departments work in harmony with the central government and, according to present indications, it has a large future before it. The criticisms of Miss Fairbrother's paper by Omaha women and club women all over the state bear upon a partizanship and an occasional intemperance of language which are the real causes of the lack of loyalty to the official organ. With these personal characteristics of Miss Fairbrother the *Journal* has nothing to do and they are so apparent that a club editor in another state spontaneously writes of them as she might any other phenomena. Miss Fairbrother is an original and vigorous writer, but she writes from too narrow a personal standpoint. Journalism is business and business is a game of cut-throat. Those who play it can not be unanimous, can scarcely be honest. In order not to lose faith in every thing human, it is necessary while trying to attain your own ends to look upon the strife from your opponents point of view as well as your own and acquit them, if possible, of everything but the competitive instinct and methods which the commercial system we live under has evolved. A system which has advantages in awakening enterprise and keeping it alive but which is nevertheless impossible to reconcile with the practice of the Christian religion, except on Sundays in the sanctuary. And only there, because the rules of trade are temporarily suspended.

Now that the funny insides of the *Sunday World-Herald* and the *Sunday morning Call* are identical, the day has lost spice.

The Malone episode is only a constantly recurring incident of the spoils system. Malone displaced a fire chief and is displaced by another and less experienced man, not because he is not efficient but because he is of a different political faith from the mayor. So long as a man is deprived of his job for reasons not connected with the efficiency of the service rendered so long will the people be but imperfectly served. It will probably take Mr. Weidman a number of years to reach the efficiency which Mr. Malone has attained, and in the meantime the risk to property and lives is greatly increased. The system is at fault and not the mayor, for the job of an experienced officer. Mayor Graham's predecessors have followed the custom, his successors will follow it, until the office is placed under civil service reform rules.

The strife between the old chief

and the new one as to which should ride in the fire chief's wagon, should a fire occur, which did not, entered domain of broad farce. The spectacle of the former chief sitting in the red enameled wagon with his foot on the big gong prepared to make an impressive round of the stations in his final invoice of fire department property and being thwarted in his innocent valedictory scheme by a fireman who, in obedience to the new chief's order's held back the horse, is juvenile and crude. It belongs in the sawdust ring or on the vaudeville stage with the big Dutchman and the red headed Irishman, whose national belligerent characteristics the chiefs effectually represent.

Trades unions have gained in popularity with the whole people to a remarkable degree in the last fifteen years. The newspapers all over the country are in sympathy with the miners in their strike against unjust weighing scales and the tyranny of the company stores and the system of being payed with credit tickets on them instead of with money. The willingness of the mine-owners to come to terms is due as much to public sentiment as to the coercion of withdrawn labor. The company stores have been a scandal for years. Their operations have had all the freedom of a monopoly, their proprietors have oppressed the miners with the arrogance of unrebuked power. The agreement provides that no mine owners shall have any financial connection with a store. If this agreement is kept one of the abuses which has been the main cause of most of the mining strikes of late years will be swept away. There is something in the life of a miner which makes him restless and extravagant, childlike in expenditure. Daylight sobers, steadies, and makes a man more reasonable. By daylight a man sees an object without the grotesque elongated shadows which an artificial nearby light casts on everything. By daylight he can see all around it and he is brought into comprehending relations with the whole world. The medicinal sunlight rarely falls upon the miner. Down in the ground his vision must adapt itself to the distorted effects of the little lamp in his cap, and up above the ground he is a hard customer to deal with. Because he is ignorant and easily led by demagogues he has been a longer time in getting his rights, though turbulence and discontent have been the record of all mining communities. Where they should have been treated with an enlightened fairness, mine owners have presumed upon their ignorance to impose conditions upon them which trades unions of all other branches of labor have long since done away with. The present strike is the first one of the many which