

## OBSERVATIONS.

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and ate raw meat and where his instincts still drag him to hunt and kill. But there is so much wood mythology in the poem that is contained in no book, and that I strongly suspect Mr. Kipling made up when he wrote the poem, that a dweller in inland North America, five thousand miles, more or less, away from the scenes alluded to, finds the poem not familiar enough to be attractive. Utterly unknown and strange food is a dainty to very few palates. But Mr. Kipling's Jubilee poem is a gift to the world of so great importance that if he wants to write in Choctaw for a year he can do so and we will attempt to extract the meaning from his compositions.

The indignation which seized the people when Auditor Moore's deficit was revealed to them has evaporated now that he is sentenced to eight years in the penitentiary. The scene in the court room last Tuesday when Judge Cornish sentenced the prisoner satisfied the most vindictive. The horrible convict life was revealed to those present. Every man there had a vision of the cell, the cot, the dark dead air, the monotonous shuffling lock-step march of the prisoners, the coarse fare served on battered ware, the absence of everything that makes living worth the while, and the remorseful anguish of the defaulter by night and day. Good conduct will cut off part of his sentence, perhaps two years. But at the end of six years, the monotonous, cheerless existence passed in the company of degenerates under the stern watch of other men who, in his honest days, were below his own social grade, will have transformed Mr. Moore as completely as transmigration into another body. Sympathy for him and for his innocent family cannot effect the justice of the sentence. The judge only did his duty, but there was not one who envied him his function that day. The victim of speculation and the money squeeze received his sentence with sobs and confession of guilt. The public, so far as Eugene Moore is concerned, are satisfied that justice has been done, and when he emerges from the six years of silence there will be none to reproach him.

The street car company is not receiving, nor has not much interest on the investment. The attempt to make the citizens of Lincoln pay the taxes due the city from the company will probably fail. Many of the decisions which have been rendered lately encourage THE COURIER to hope that technicalities are losing power to influence judge and jury. The Moore defense was technically strong, but the judge brushed it away with the remark to the effect that the money had been stolen from the state and the state was competent to hold the thief responsible and punish him. Public justice demands that the street railway company pay every cent of the taxes due the city or release their property to the city to be operated by the city. That experiment might be well be tried in Lincoln. Its success would encourage the believers in municipal ownership to run their own gas and water plants. The company is antagonizing the taxpayers of Lincoln by refusing to pay taxes which individuals have paid at the cost of much self-sacrifice in these last few years. But retaliatory measures like those proposed by Mr. Mockett at the council meeting on Tuesday night are

unwise. The company has begun to make improvements and, if forced to, will eventually pay taxes like other people. In the meantime a justly exasperated people can await the slow event of the law. The receiver says that the company cannot afford to sell more than eleven tickets for fifty cents, or to furnish each car with a conductor. When the delinquent tax case is tried, the affairs of the company will be subject to a scrutiny, from which these questions can be decided. To a passer-by the street cars do not appear to be patronized by enough people to justify severe treatment of the company.

Why can not the street railway company place slot machines in the cars for ticket buyers? This plan would not necessitate a conductor and would greatly accommodate the public.

From a University Stand-point.

The University field is cold, bare and lifeless. The north wind whistles shrilly through the long ties of empty benches, heralding the approach of winter. The goal-posts raise their heads uncannily, like old scare crows in a frozen field.

No more afternoons of will enthusiasm. The streaming colors of gaily decorated coaches; the cheering crowds are gone. The magnificent battles of master strength and noble prowess are over. The campus is given over to the play of the elements. Hero worship, ever fickle, has turned her pretty head from the long haired giant of the gridiron to the handsome tenor of the glee club or the latest leader of the coalition, for Thanksgiving has come and gone and with it was sounded the death knell of the autumnal sport.

James Whitcomb Riley, who was with us last week, was entertained by one of the college fraternities, of which he is a member. The young men of the organization found that they had a great opportunity of understanding the character of this Hoosier poet, so dear to every true western heart. They came to know the man as a brother and they learned many things of his nature. His very face and his every action show that Riley is a combination of the humorous, the pathetic, the mysterious. And when one comes to know him, it is this mysterious side that stands out with more prominence than any other. One feels that according to circumstances he would do one of two things—write poetry or go insane. And happily, Fate drew his slip for the former. But that strange, half mad element is still there and is constantly cropping out. He is full of surprises; in fact his whole life was full of surprises. As a boy he ran away with a circus. As a young man he disappeared for months, only to return and tell of the pleasure of painting signs upon the roadside fences. Then his poetry was a surprise and his career has been a wonder to those who knew him as a boy. In latter life this mysterious element of his life found expression in a different way. Eugene Field and Riley were the closest of friends and when possible, Riley was always running up to Chicago, or Field was scaling away to Indianapolis, where they visited with each other like big, overgrown school boys. They often lectured together throughout Illinois and Indiana. Then, at these times, the two men, so familiar in their delicate humor, their wealth of human sympathy, and above all, in the rapture for little children, instead of lunching together or attending some reception arranged for them, would steal away and walk arm in arm to the morgue. There they would view the corpses, not for the purpose of identification, not for curiosity's sake, but out of that mysterious something that was a part of their nature. One day, passing the morgue, without a word of good-night, they would

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part and silently return to the hotel. Now Field is dead and Riley takes the walk no more. Only now and then on rainy, drizzly nights, the old longing comes over him and then by himself he steals away to his strange, mysterious communication.

Her boy, who was on the team, had persuaded her to come up to the game. It was his last season and his last game and as she had never before seen a game he was so urgent that she could not refuse. Her son had had a friend bring her up to the game in his drag and there she sat with many millions stealing unwelcomed into her heart. It was all so new to her—the crowd, the color, the enthusiasm, that for a moment she took real pleasure in it all. And then when the teams came on and she plainly saw that a favorite her boy was, a slight flush crept over her cheeks and her eyes sparkled with pleasure.

The play began; her son's friend explained it all to her and she began to think her former fears had been groundless although her son hurled himself at the opposing line with such seeming recklessness. Then came her first real shock. There was a plunge, a scrimmage, a sudden stop. Then the players separated. She noticed that her starwath hero had not arisen. A form was stretched full length upon the ground with one of the others bending over it. Her heart beat wildly, with fear and the color went out of her cheeks. But before she realized it, her son was up again and once more making those fearful plunges at the line. She could not understand it.

The game went on and others were

struck out insensible; little by little the exultation of the sport came over her and hardened her heart to such sorrows.

It was all but over and enthusiasm had reached a white heat, for the score was tied and her son's team had pushed the ball up to the opponents' goal line. The sun had sunk away in a bank of purple-yellow clouds and darkness was stealing in between the eastern walls. Then, in the semi-darkness something happened. The playing ceased. Uncertain figures ran out from the side lines, one with a medicine case in his hands. A death-like stillness came over the vast throng of spectators. She heard her son's name murmured in sympathetic tones by hundreds, and saw the fear in men's faces. The student turned the drag and drove up to the end of the field, near the goal line. The mother sat, silently watching the wretched scene, with blanched face and trembling hands, being convulsively the stem of a rose which she clutched tightly.

The drag drew up behind the line, just as the prostrate form was helped from the ground and the lines formed again. There was a moment's silence, a rush, and a plunging figure, with the ball, went reeling over the line almost in front of the drag. The game was ended; a mighty shout went up and the crowd made a rush from the bleachers. But before they could reach the team a woman's figure had alighted hurriedly from a carriage, pushed her way into the midst of the players, and throwing her arms passionately about the neck of her son, kissed him full upon the forehead.