

# THE COURIER

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SARAH B. HARRIS,

Editor

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## OBSERVATIONS.

Manager Zehrung is being requested through the press to require all ladies who visit his opera house to remove their hats or bonnets. When Mr. Zehrung makes this rule, a corresponding one should be made regarding spitting. The men who complain the loudest and most bitterly about the theatre hats are the greatest offenders against a primary rule of neatness which forbids expectoration in a place where a woman's gown must necessarily come in contact with it.

Manual stealing is more frequently detected and punished than the more frequent, safer diversion of the people's money to an individual's pocket by conventional, legislative or political procedure. In the former case the thief and his criminal propensities are easily recognized. In the latter, if the hypocrisy is deep enough, frequently only one person is ever sure of it and that is the man himself, who must listen to the sentence pronounced by his conscience or divine part of himself all the days of his life, until the time when it is written "and the man died."

One of the most deplorable results of the Cuban war is the appearance of war articles in all the magazines. The civil war of thirty years ago still survives in the magazines. The Century is still publishing a series of reminiscences, interest in which is confined to the surviving actors in the scenes described or to technical students of war and its conduct. The civil war ended thirty-three years ago and the magazines are just beginning to warm

to their work. Thirty-three years ago the camera was still a primitive and cumbersome machine too heavy to keep up with the army. It has been reported that the Cuban campaign was supplied with more cameras than big guns and reporters and fancy sketch artists were all over the scenery. Hence if the civil war, which unfortunately occurred in the infancy of photography, is still being pictured and discussed in the magazines, how long is the Cuban war, which has taken place in the very ragtime of journalism and photography, likely to live in the magazines?

If the taxpayers who are groaning because the taxes, insurance and repairs on many a piece of property within the city limits, equal, and in many cases exceed its earning capacity, would but talk with the councilmen who opposed the salary reduction measure introduced by Councilman Webster, they would appreciate the hopeless situation of the city so long as the personnel of the council remains as it is. Altho' the pay of a councilman is small, there are few in the present council whose taxes are as large as the individual salary they draw from the city. The salary reduction measure was received with greatest indignation. Drawing from the city more than they put in, they were, with few exceptions, incensed that the real burden bearers should ask to be relieved from a weight which is crushing the value out of their property and destroying the credit of the city. When the income of such a man who lives in a large house with servants and horses and carriages and all the superfluities and luxuries of life, is largely decreased, as quietly as possible he sends away his servants, sells his horses and carriages and shuts up his barn until his income and expenses balance. The faithfulness and worth of the servants and the soundness and breeding of the horses have nothing to do with the case. The master has not the money to pay for these qualities and the establishment is reduced. How different is the conduct of the poor men who have the city's business in hand. The measure of retrenchment actually set them spluttering with wrath because it was suggested that the measure was incited by the very people upon whom the council's extravagance bears the most heavily, viz.; the taxpayers. The men who pay the bills are the very ones to suggest that the council shall no longer allow a hundred dollars a day more than the income of the city, that it shall reduce the number of the city's servants and curtail expenses until a balance is reached. The soundness of such measures appeals to every one and every body except that one that sits every Monday night to recommend and adopt the buying of meters, the purchase of new pumps, the employment of more firemen, the grading of level streets, et cetera, et

cetera. There is no record that the council has seriously attempted to balance accounts and reduce the \$36,500 a year which will eventually increase the taxes on property until a golden age would have no effect upon the local situation. The council is competent to legislate the city into solvency or a condition in which we can pay our debts without borrowing and increasing a debt which must be paid by increased taxation.

There are other reasons why Lincoln is bankrupt, among the largest items of which is the lighting contract, and the most important of which is the inequality of assessments. The latter is illustrated by a card issued by S. W. Chapman, who ran for assessor in the Fourth ward in the recent election. On one side of the card was a list of some assessed valuations in that ward, among which were these:

Farmers and Merchants Ins. Co. Bldg., Fifteenth and O streets	\$ 5000
Putnam house, two lots, Twelfth and K	5000
Dr. Hagard's modern house, 1300 G	600
An "old shell" next lot east	600
Zeiger's vacant lot 10, between Eleventh and Twelfth on G	800
D. E. Thompson's vacant lot, opposite	300
Winger's home, northwest corner Thirteenth and J	1200
Hooper's four houses, northeast corner Eighteenth and M	1200
Courtney's mansion, southeast corner Eighteenth and L	600
Double house, northeast corner Twelfth and G	700
Vacant lot, northwest corner Twelfth and G, opposite	80
D. E. Thompson's house, two lots, H and Fifteenth	2400
Vacant lot 2, block 158	400
Nice cottage house on lot 3, block 157	350

The fine Italian band of Mr. Thompson may be inferred in the assessments of his property in this ward. The building on the corner of Fifteenth and O streets when owned by Mr. Raymond, from whom Mr. Thompson purchased, it was assessed at \$10,000 in comparison with its present rating of \$5,000. Mr. Chapman promised on the other side of the card if elected "to begin at once to make a study of the property of the ward with a view to proper valuation, regardless of politics or religion, race, color, present or previous condition of financial servitude of the owner." An examination of the list will show that the Putnam house, a modest enough residence on K and Twelfth streets, is assessed at exactly the same value as the block four or five stories high, full of office rooms and situated on the corner of the principal business street and Fifteenth. The latter is certainly many thousand dollars more valuable than the former, though other reasons for the disproportion will readily suggest themselves.

An election day will come when the names of democrat and republican will be meaningless and a mayor and council will be selected with single reference to the business ability and integrity of the candidates. Let us hope that such a council and mayor will have been elected when the electric light contract is under consideration. At such a time neither free silver, gold standard nor loyalty to the

president will bear any important relation to the question under consideration. At such a time the need of a council and mayor which and who can understand the relation that the debit side of the city account book should bear to the cash side will be imminent, and unless the men are there when the hour arrives, the delinquent tax list of the year following will probably bear the names of all those who have survived the present list.

THE COURIER has devoted columns to the subject of oppressive taxation in consequence of the extravagance of the council and the subject is threadbare enough, but so long as the city continues to sink deeper and deeper in debt THE COURIER will continue to consider the causes until, for very weariness, the council may consider the case of the people as against their temptations to give work to this one and that one and to be large purchasers of city supplies. The readers of these columns are not so weary of reading as they are of paying the patronage bills of the council.

Every now and then a life is spent nobly for mankind and when it is over and the unasked multitude gives its verdict the cynics admit an exception to their customary denial of the worth of living. Colonel Waring was one of those conceited men who thought he saw how and knew how to accomplish a task that had foiled every other man who undertook it. Like the last prince in the fairy tale who rescued the princess after hundreds of other princes had only tried it and lost their heads, Colonel Waring never doubted the genuineness of his inspiration or that he could waken Manhattan from her slothful dreams. He was the greatest sanitary engineer in the world. Not that there may not be others who knew as much as Colonel Waring knew, but he is the only one who, with a superb intellect, has been able to convince thousands of average men to trust their city to him and give him carte blanche to purify it. He dared to defy the spoils system and accomplished the expurgation of New York by uniforming scavengers and teaching them to believe they could hold their jobs only by proving their faithfulness and fitness for the work upon which he bestowed a dignity. Since that time the daily cleansing is done at less cost but Colonel Waring showed how it could be done, and, of course, the system having vitality, has adapted itself with increasing perfection to its functions. After he had cleaned New York he was consulting sanitary engineer for the cities of the United States. Although he was in receipt of a sufficient income, Colonel Waring was too busy drawing plans of sewers, crematories and planning water systems, to accumulate the usual self-made man's fortune, which takes more time, patience and shrewdness than a college educa-