

THE COURIER

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OBSERVATIONS.

Most of the men who have been mentioned as candidates for the position of United States senator, if elected, would be a credit to Nebraska and be of real assistance in the deliberations of the senate. They are men who have studied the principles and history of the republic, they have demonstrated a scholarly and practical knowledge of constitutional law and have shown, either by a choice of the law as a means of livelihood, or by a discussion of public affairs with their fellows, an interest in affairs of national import as distinguished from those which bear immediate relations to their own income. A man who does not possess an absorbing interest in the affairs of the nation is surely not a statesman, and in the United States senate would be of little use to his country or his state, because his own business, which has always interested him to the exclusion of other matters, will still bear the same relation to the people's business. But curious accidents happen in politics and sometimes a man is elected to a most important position in spite of his entire lack of the mental and moral characteristics fitted to make him serviceable to those who elect him. Such accidents happen oftenest in a state legislature, because the body is small enough to respond individually to promises of assistance, political and financial, from importunate candidates, who go to the senate with the determination to make good what the place has cost them. Thus, when approached by the agents of trusts who live in Washington and disburse an enormous corruption

fund, these purchasers of senatorships are easy to reach.

Of those capable of serving the country well and of being a credit to the state several reside in Lincoln, one in Omaha and one in Nebraska City. We would be much gratified if the senator chosen should be a good man from Lincoln, but rather than the state should be unworthily represented local pride must give way. I do not believe that the coming legislature, composed of men of a high average of intelligence, will vote for a man who has devoted his life to money getting, to tricky politics, to foisting his tools into the mayoralty or into the council, upon whom later he might depend to help his business at the expense of the taxpayers and to the consequent loss of value to every building and lot in the city. Such a man is one of the senatorial candidates. He would be an injury to the state and would mean the loss of good council to the nation. At no time in the nation's history has there been greater need of patriotic, unselfish statesmen as legislators. A man who boasts that he has never voted is not patriotic, nor is he a statesman, or he would have learned the primary lesson of democracy. A great struggle between trusts and the aggregate composed of individual voters is sure to occur this winter in congress, as it has before, a struggle between the few and the many as to the rights of the former to the larger share of the wage of the latter. The eventual victory of the few means the pauperization of the many, or hard times. The question of imperialism and the difficulties of planting American ideals and habits of thought in our new islands, is of secondary importance to this one. Nebraska should send to the council of the states a man not impatient of the cry of the people heard since society was organized and plundered by a few heartless members of it, whose love of money developed money getting into a conventional system, so old that even the victims do not recognize its full injustice. The position of United States senator is one of exceeding dignity and power, and should be bestowed upon no man who has not shown an unselfish interest in his city, state and country, and who has not repeatedly demonstrated his wisdom in a large way for impersonal ends.

Mr. D. E. Thompson is a candidate for the United States senate. Is there any reason why he should be elected? Does he believe that a public office is a public trust? Has he served this community or state in anyway? Is there any indication that he is interested in constitutional development? He has lived in Nebraska for a quarter of a century and his reputation, good or bad, is founded upon his connection with the Capital National bank of this city and his withdrawal from it a year before its failure, his possession of Mr. Mosher's gas stock, his

manipulation of the city lighting contract to the great advantage of the gas company and to the disadvantage of the city, his intimacy with and direction of the most unscrupulous of the city politicians, and finally, the universal distrust and suspicion which measures proposed by him excite.

Gillett, the cattle p'unger who ran away in Kansas the other day from two millions of liabilities, was like Ernest Terah Hooley and many other new rich men whose early life was passed among the poor, his relatives and friends. Gillett always wore a big diamond and carried a few large sparklers in his pocket, and he was fond of rattling them, as he talked with his friends. He must have an evidence immediate and dazzling of his wealth. He never grew used to it. The Kansas City Star says of Gillett that he believed every man had his price and he did business on that theory. When a man brought a suit against him in Abilene once, he went to the attorney of the man and offered him \$1,000 to "throw his client." He paid lawyers twice as much in fees as they expected and gave his preacher presents of \$50 at a time. The enormous business deals of Gillett seem wonderful when it is remembered that four years ago he hung around the town of Abilene all summer trying to get the position of deputy sheriff at \$50 a month. The desire to give large sums unexpectedly and ostentatiously is also a characteristic of the new and unlettered rich. The habit does not presuppose generosity, however, so much as a desire to surround oneself with people who are more or less subservient for the sake of their partizan help should it be needed. It is the cheapest way of getting power. That it was not generosity or sympathy is evident from his desertion of his business friends after involving them in inextricable difficulties.

From their illuminated covers to the funny pictures at the back, turned loose among the advertisements, the Christmas magazines are a joy. The cover of The Century is a water color drawing by the famous painter of scenes in the life of Christ, Tissot. It represents the wise men bringing their gifts to the baby born in a manger. Bowing low, in robes of old reds and greens shot through with gold, they offer trays filled with burning incense and myrrh and the perfume and scented smoke ascend in thin lines beyond the edge of the picture. Blended like a Turkish carpet the cover, as color, is worth a frame. Doubtless these wise men who brought gifts to the new born knew what to offer a sovereign in spite of the rather tiresome exordiums about giving something useful which always seem like a reflection on the judgment of the wisemen who brought only myrrh and incense in thin jars of gold, jewell-topped, to a homeless

baby. If they had been less wise they would have brought untypical and material things for the baby and his mother. In the back pages of good old Harper's there is an illustrated story of a man seized with the passion of utilitarianism. This man urges his wife and children to bestow useful presents. The children accept his advice and buy their father a doil house, tin soldiers and other toys, telling him when they present it, he will need these things to give to them. For instead of the usual purely sentimental gifts of Christmas he has bought them shoes, woollen clothing and other things, which, to the well fed, well born, well clothed, are lacking utterly in idealism. Christmas time is commonplace by grown people sometimes. Children know better and spend all their store of strength or pennies for something which expresses not that love which they owe, but that which is spontaneous and unmeasured. Guided by the purest sentiment they give trifling gifts procured by renunciation of play and sweetmeats as the wise men presented their priceless incense in the stable. And if it were not for them poetry would die.

Lewis Carroll's letters to children which The Century publishes on this children's month, are not disappointing to us, to whom Alice in Wonderland, and Behind the Looking Glass, was half the delight of childhood. Instead, unexpectedly, these new chapters are added to those we know by rote and the author who was enthroned in my childhood, is revealed as not unworthy his coronation or insensible to it.

The notable numbers in the December Scribners are the translation of Part one of Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung, by F. J. Stimson, with illustrations by Maxfield Parrish, who has the rare gift of picturing mythological or romantic beings who have no existence outside of story or tradition, so that the imagination accepts the likeness as a good one, and some very beautiful sketches by John Ruskin, and an appreciative criticism of the critic's own work by M. H. Spielman. The war story by Richard Harding Davis is, as usual, profusely illustrated and very unexpectedly has no picture of himself as he looked when giving Colonel Roosevelt, or General Shafter pointers on how to run the war. If it were not for the standing of Charles Scribner's Sons such an omission would be internal and indisputable evidence that Mr. Davis did not write the article. Therefore they must have paid him extra for leaving it out. Voluntary modesty on the part of Mr. Davis is improbable. The frequent desire of the collectors for the picture of a male angel may be gratified if they will turn to page twenty-five of the current number of Harper's magazine. The reason for the exceeding rarity of