



THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEBR., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1899.



ENTERED IN THE POSTOFFICE AT LINCOLN AS
SECOND CLASS MATTER.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

—BY—
THE COURIER PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO

Office 1132 N street, Up Stairs.

Telephone 384.

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Subscription Rates—In Advance.

Per annum.....	\$1 00
Six months.....	75
Three months.....	50
One month.....	20
Single copies.....	05

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return postage.

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OBSERVATIONS.

Robin Hood had a better reputation than he deserved because he occasionally gave a part of the booty he had taken from rich nobles, to the poor. To pay your debts before you allow yourself to be dramatically generous, to take care of your own children before you give to other little ones, to let charity begin at home, in short, are rules which will not secure a man any startling reputation, but when a man is tried by them and fails to pass, he is neither just nor generous, but only fond of posing for the virtues which he has discovered other people admire. Even though such a man gave all his goods to feed the poor he could not enter that kingdom reserved in the hearts of a community for the man who is just, gentle and sincere. Robin Hood's alms were a swagger virtue assumed because he loved admiration and to feed his own vanity. The man who does not hesitate to drive a too-sharp bargain and to betray the trust placed in him by two thousand depositors can not reasonably hope to redeem his reputation by a trumpery gift of a barrel of flour and a ton of coal to the hungry and cold.

The action of Street Commissioner Lindsey in condemning the walk in front of the building in which THE COURIER is printed is an example of the street commissioner's knowledge of his business. Leaving ice slides and sidewalks made up of loose boards which fly up and hit the pedestrian who is not careful to step in the middle of each board, allowing the alleys

to be piled with all sorts of swill and refuse, Mr. Lindsey, because THE COURIER has called his attention to those things he has left undone which he draws a salary for doing, condemned the walk in front of THE COURIER building. The walk is made of broad slabs of stone and is in good condition. The condemnation shows that the street commissioner never inspected the walk he condemned and is ignorant of the condition of the walks in the heart of the downtown district. All that THE COURIER has said about Mr. Lindsey's ignorance and neglect of his duties, and about the necessity of employing an honest and efficient carpenter is emphasized by this sidewalk notice served on the owner of THE COURIER building because the publisher of this paper has repeatedly called the attention of the council and the public to the street commissioner's entire neglect of the duties of his office. Thousands of dollars annually secured by claimants who have sued the city for damages accruing from defective walks could be saved the city by the employment of an efficient man who is capable of rendering an equivalent to the city for his salary, instead of this pensioner who only displays activity when the publisher of this paper calls the public's attention to the most flagrant and inexcusable instances of neglect. The city council in permitting this officer to retain his place, does so at the obvious expense of the taxpayers who must pay the damages awarded for broken bones and sprained backs. For the salary paid the present politician the council can secure the services of a carpenter who can inspect and repair the walks dangerous to pedestrians. By refusing to adopt so simple and safe an expedient the council runs the risk of incurring a suspicion that their plans and speeches for economy are for effect and the spring elections and not based on a realizing sense of the city's poverty and need of economy.

The letter which drew the prize offered by the Burlington railroad for the best letter on Nebraska is printed on another page. It is remarkable for its plain and veracious statements. The cheerful mind of the writer, J. Gustave Kluck, and his inclusion of his wife in all his victories, not oratorically and consciously as though paying her a magnanimous compliment, but as a historical verity. He says: "My wife and I made money and loaned some money to my neighbors on interest." "God blessed everything that my wife and I put our hands to." "We have now 980 acres of land paid for, which, at a low estimate of \$30 per acre, is \$29,400." "I often talk with my wife where we could have gone and done better. She says 'Nowhere but in Nebraska.'" Kluck was a German boy who landed in New York in 1864 with \$64 in his pocket. He worked as a farm hand in Wisconsin

for ten years and saved \$1,150. Then Mr. Kluck (which must have been originally Gluck) had two inspirations, to marry and to emigrate to Nebraska. He was obedient to both and he now has 980 acres of land, horses, hogs, cattle, poultry, a big house, money at interest and eight children. Such emigrants as he make a country rich and great. They settle on the land, cultivate it, and improve their holdings, leave healthy, industrious descendants and go to their final rest with half a century's harvests to their credit. By their toil, bread is made cheaper to the mechanic and the whole laboring world. They do not live by exploiting the work of other men's labor or brains but the time card they turn in to the Almighty is filled with day's works and the most genuine service to humanity. Mr. Kluck's letter is an interesting story of a life of humble toil and self-denial and should be read by everybody who wants to know why he should stand up for Nebraska. The committee which awarded the prize to this homely record of labor and its rewards took little account of rhetoric or phrasing. The points were evidently veracity and the evidences of experiments with Nebraska soil, climate and institutions. Mr. Kluck consulted his diary in which he has written down the principle events of his life, such as his coming to this country, his marriage and his journey to Nebraska, the purchase of land, the building of a small house, the size of the crops from year to year, and the building of a big house and the constant purchase of more land, items not rhetorically suggestive, but just what any man who contemplates moving to Nebraska wants to know.

The indignation created by Bishop Potter's remark that something answering to the saloon, i. e., a place of inexpensive recreation and refreshment, would always be a necessity, seems unreasonable. In addition, the bishop added "that until coffee houses or the like were as plentiful as saloons, the mischiefs of the saloon, which nobody recognizes more clearly than I, will continue. The saloon will be driven to cover, but it cannot be abolished. Something better, something wholesome, harmless, undefiled and undefiling, must take its place and so expel by substitution." Of course a prohibitionist can not understand why the saloon, as an institution, can not be abolished and he has no patience with anyone who recognizes some good in them. I am told a respectable saloon is clean, no drunken men are allowed and no man who is in the habit of being made boisterous or quarrelsome by liquor is encouraged to become a habitue of the place. Surely a place which teaches self restraint and is clean is not as horrible as the saloon appears to most good women who can not quite sympathize with the longing for the companionship of

his own sex, and the desire for a stimulant to cure that bored feeling which many respectable and temperate men feel after a day's monotonous or harassing work. Surely regulation of the saloon is better than the dives which exist where prohibition is the law and coffee houses, with the same comradery and freedom, would be better still. Bishop Potter has lived among the poor of New York and he knows what he is talking about, viz.; that a decent saloon is better than a groggery and that in many localities the saloon is the debating club of the poor man. Numbers frequent them who never become drunkards and are not bad men, strictly speaking. Nevertheless much of the wickedness and vice is hatched in the saloons. But they have lasted so long that it is only by a process of gradual substitution that their number can be lessened. If the fanatics would hear reason and decrease the tax on liquors and pass stringent laws in regard to adulteration fewer men would be maddened and the lecturers would be able to trace fewer murders and lunacies to liquor. But the reformers hate whiskey so, they cannot think temperately or experiment philosophically.

It is just America's good luck that the late war should have occurred in the administration of President McKinley rather than when Grover Cleveland's colossal conceit weighted this country down. President McKinley has no elaborate theories to which he conforms his own conduct and endeavors to force the country to agree to. Like Abraham Lincoln, President McKinley does the next thing. He does not live but a day at a time and he does not try to fool the country into believing that he does. Since the war began he has done his best and that best is well. He has kept his country with him, which was more than Grover Cleveland ever did. He has shown an enlightened love for his country and good sense, he has not gone fishing when his presence was imperative, but he has faithfully remembered that he is the representative of nearly 70,000,000 million people and that infallibility is not a human characteristic. He is accessible to the leaders of his party and he is not stubborn. For all these qualities that our president has, let us be thankful.

The long-winded protest to the senate of the United States against the ratification of the treaty was signed by Grover Cleveland, Charles Francis Adams, Andrew Carnegie, Charles H. Elliot, Carl Schurz, Herman Von Holst, Samuel Gompers, Edwin Burritt Smith, William G. Sumner and fifteen other men accustomed as are these, never to agree with the people, Carl Schurz, since his first deplorable appearance in this country, has been endeavoring in sentences a paragraph long, to convince the American people that they need teutonic instruction