

THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEBR., SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1899.



ENTERED IN THE POSTOFFICE AT LINCOLN AS SECOND CLASS MATTER.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

THE COURIER PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO

Office 1132 N street, Up Stairs.

Telephone 384.

SARAH B. HARRIS,

Editor

Subscription Rates—In Advance.

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

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OBSERVATIONS.

Taken altogether the results of Tuesday's election in this city are very satisfactory. The defeat of Mr. Barth was freely predicted, but it is so much easier to vote a straight ticket that even a less welcome candidate than Mr. Barth is likely to get through on a party nomination.

The new excise board that will probably enforce the laws impartially and call a saloon a saloon, whatever the saloon keeper's name and whether he runs a hotel in connection with it or not. Although excisemen do not draw large salaries and not a large proportion of their time is given to their functions, no three men have so direct and important a relation to the morals of the city as the members of that board. It is well also that the membership should be representative of the parties in the city.

It is held by the body of voters, irrespective of party, that no stockholder in the gas company and no employee of the company should be a member of the council. Not that there is anything derogatory in either relation, but there is a bargain to be made with the gas company and from the nature of commerce there must be two parties to it, the city and the company. In order to satisfy the citizens that their representatives are legislating in the interests of the city no member of the council should be a stockholder in the gas company. If for no other reason than to relieve that body of suspicion. For this reason the defeat of Mr. Lawlor was fortunate for the city, the council, and the gas company too, which is entitled to a reasonable,

unprejudiced settlement of terms with the city.

The newly elected mayor has the respect and confidence of his party and of the citizens in general. His record in the council is creditable and his future is most auspicious.

The triumph of the Columbian fair belonged to the landscape gardener. Just and many and more pictures had been exhibited before, just as many and just as beautiful buildings had been erected in one spot before, just as many samples of dry goods, pottery, machinery, furniture, tinware, etcetera, had been exhibited before. But never had buildings, lawns, statuary, water and artificial lighting made such a pact of heavenly harmony. The unavailing regret of many who were unable to spend more than a day or two at the fair, is mitigated by the fact that, though they did not see everything, they saw it all. Mr. Olmstead had arranged it so that a view from any commanding point was a vision of such well composed parts that, given the point of view, the mind may reproduce it again without labor. Persons ignorant of musical composition are appalled at the mere memorizing of long compositions. It would of course be impossible to anyone not a phenomenon were it not that a sonata, or fugue, or work of any kind is a structure as intelligible to a musician as an edifice is to an architect. The eye is not less responsive than the ear and it is, in general, better educated. Mr. Olmstead did not make his composition so complex that it could not be comprehended in an augenblick by each one of a multitude. And when given the key each one can reproduce it.

Some pictures and an article, Landscape Gardening for Factory Homes, by William Howe Tolman, in The Review of Reviews, present some very attractive back yards to cottages of a factory town. A very brief rule by Mr. Olmstead for the effective planting of a small plot is "the avoidance of straight lines, keeping the center of the plot open and massing the flower effects." Mr. Tolman relates the story of an Ohio manufacturer who employed Mr. Olmstead to plant the grounds about the factory. Mr. Olmstead had the set piece in the center of the grounds removed and then he pointed out how, "by making little bays and inlets of shrubs and flowers along the sides of the lawn, a pleasing effect might be secured. Next he suggested that the two stable sheds opposite the factory should be connected with an arch, the roof painted vermilion, the sides olive, thus forming a harmony of color restful to the eye." The result was such a transformation that this remarkable manufacturer determined to preach the gospel of beauty to the villagers. So he offered prizes to the children under sixteen who could show the best kept

back yards, whether lawns or planted in flowers and vegetables. The best planted and cultivated vegetable gardens were to be rewarded by prizes of ten dollars each. To take charge of this work he employed the services of a landscape gardener, who could be consulted by any of the employes. An audience of four thousand people thronged the auditorium when the prizes were distributed. This report of a village revival is reprinted here in hopes that it may induce some public spirited, beauty loving citizen of Lincoln to do likewise. Doubtless members of the city improvement association would be willing to undertake such a work here if a small contribution could be secured to begin on. The education of the people in the factory district of Dayton, Ohio, referred to, has proceeded so far that "they insisted successfully that a stable located on the fair grounds and utilized as a bill board, should be removed to a distant part of the grounds and be replaced by a wire fence." The time of year is approaching when the ugliness and squalor of many yards even in the best parts of the city will be apparent. The efforts of the city improvement association to mitigate the unpleasant conditions of a summer in Lincoln have not been seconded as they should have been. Unlike Dayton there is no manufacturer to take the place of a patron saint and initiate movements of benefit to the whole commune. A popular subscription placed in the hands of the association to expend in some such way as the one I have quoted, or better still, the appointment of a woman like Mrs. M. D. Welch as street commissioner, would transform Lincoln and increase the value of real estate. Referring to the Dayton renaissance again: "Viewed from no higher plane than that of commercialism, there has been a decided increase in the value of property, evidenced by the statement of John C. Olmstead, who visited the factory last October, and said that K street, opposite the factory, was one of the most beautiful streets in the country, when the value of the lots and the size of the houses were taken into consideration."

Plays which have the greatest vogue, like The Little Minister and Shore Acres are free from Frenchness, yet it is only occasionally that a playwright dares to leave out the risqué. Shore Acres is still playing to crowded houses and The Little Minister was sold out a month in advance as soon as the New York people found out what it was and before Maude Adams left New York to fulfill her Chicago engagement, it was still necessary to engage one's seats a fortnight ahead. Notwithstanding the evidence of the box receipts that indicate in this and other similar plays an overwhelming preference for the tender pastorale, the tone and coloring of which are English rather than

French, first class comedians like Jefferson de Angelis or Francis Willard will accept a play which has nothing English about it, except the title and the words of the dialogue. The consequence is that men and women of reputation and ability play to sparsely filled houses where they might play to crowded ones. There is danger of course in pruning and trimming a play until one of the Sol Smith Russell kind with an impossibly magnanimous and sublimated hero is evolved, but if the public must choose between the two, they choose the Sol Smith Russell kind. The moralist ought to be gratified by this reflection and the pessimist discouraged. It means that in a crowd of men, ninety per cent prefer to spend their money for legitimate recreation. Managers are a long time learning this. They are dazzled by the short and dazzling successes which a few translations from the French do attain. In so large a city as New York it takes a long run and a large auditorium to accommodate the audiences, educated in depravity.

But no record breaking runs have been made with risqué plays. Such plays do not have the re-enforcement of the family man's family. The former goes first, and if edified takes his family as soon as he can get seats, but he will not do so, if the play is indecent, no matter how much he may have been pleased by the Frenchness himself.

The difference between Shaksperian or Anglo Saxon realism and the Frenchness I have been speaking of is that the former appears as a part of life and it is neither eliminated nor made conspicuous. In the French play it is the central motif to which everything else is subordinate. Zaza and Tess of the D'Urbervilles illustrate as well as anything the French and the English treatment of the same subject.

That Americans are gradually coming to a self-consciousness of the Anglo-Saxon standpoint, in contrast with the Latin point of view, may last of all reach the New York manager who sits in his office, lighted by gas or electricity, while the sun shines above the city, and reads plays by long-haired, wild-eyed men, or listens to sopranos and tenors, or inspects candidates for his ballet. A season's work under these conditions spoils his appetite for the simple and healthful and renders him an unreliable judge of the tastes of a few million people who go to bed at ten o'clock and work by daylight.

Miss Willa Cather, the brilliant young dramatic critic who has been a correspondent of this paper for several years, disclaims approval of Richard Realf as a quadruple bigamist, while reproaching me for calling him a sot and a bigamist. Both are ugly words but Miss Cather admits that he led four women to what they supposed