



# THE COURIER

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## OBSERVATIONS.

**A Constitutional Monarchy.**

Queen Victoria reigns without much regard to popularity, while the president of the United States, especially in his first term, cannot always do, what from his immeasurably superior point of view, is best for the people, because of his human desire for a re-election. The Queen has a royal patience, the royal indifference to the temporary disapproval of her people and a wholly royal self-confidence.

William T. Stead says the Queen's position closely resembles that of a permanent editor-in-chief appointed for life by a proprietary of millions of shareholders, who never writes his own leading articles, who must accept a staff nominated from time to time by the shareholders, but who has ample opportunity to influence everything that is written in the paper and to effect the promotion of every member of the staff. The influence of such an editor-in-chief who has been sixty three years in office, over the ephemeral leader-writers and sub editors, who are appointed for brief periods, must, necessarily be exceedingly great. When her staff are unanimous they can publish what they please, and she must sign it. But when the staff (as sometimes happens) differ among themselves, she can and usually does, exercise the casting vote. In the times of political interregnum, while the nation is changing the temporary staff, she takes the whole control of the paper and carries it on till her new assist-

ant is appointed. Such an analogy enables us to form some idea of the immensely important part which the Queen has played in the government and development of the British Empire since she came to the throne. The foregoing is Mr. Stead's somewhat famous parable of the relation of Queen Victoria to the business of government of the Empire. Although really shorn of the veto power Queen Victoria's influence on events and the policy of the nation is really much greater than our president's. Hers is a power which the Prince of Wales will not inherit. Sixty-three years of experience, conscientious study of the needs of the people and correspondence with the sovereigns of Europe the Prince cannot assume with the crown.

No man and no other woman has ever reigned so long and so well as Queen Victoria. The kings of England have had a scandalous personal history and only the queen, Elizabeth, who can be compared to her was not a mother. She was jealous, vindictive and her policy was not always broad, temperate, wholesome and virile. Queen Victoria has been singularly free from prejudice either personal or national. Not once in the sixty three years of her reign has she lost her temper and made a diplomatic mistake for that reason. Frequently she has scolded and been out of temper about her own affairs when a woman's willfulness would not affect the affairs of the nation but as the queen, steering England for the English, she has been superhumanly calm and reasonable.

**The Telephone Franchise.**

Excessive disappointment is felt and expressed at the failure of the Independent telephone company to get a satisfactory franchise. If a general expression could be obtained from the business men and housekeepers of Lincoln there is every indication that it would be in favor of granting the franchise. Nevertheless there is a strong objection on the part of the people to speculation in city franchises. The applicants from Plattsmouth who are the principle stockholders are men of character, of long residence in the state and thoroughly trustworthy. But that is not the question. The city of Lincoln needs repaving. It needs more and better street cleaning and suburban watering. It needs a city park with flowers, grass and trees. The fire department has too few firemen and is in urgent need of new apparatus. A suitable city building is out of the question, but the city needs larger rooms for records and for conducting the business of the city.

The assets of the city are taxes and one which has never been considered until lately—franchises. The burden of taxes in this city is very heavy indeed upon owners of real estate. Bond, stock and mortgage holders are scarcely taxed at all, which is one reason why there is slight sale for

real property in Lincoln. And we have given away to railroads, overland and urban, to gas companies and telephone companies, franchises which they can sell in New York for enough money to pave all the streets, keep them clean, enough to light the city, water it, patrol it, police it for a year and have something left for a park and the ornaments and recreations of city life.

The council which granted the Bell company a franchise for nothing for fifty years without reserving regulating rights as to charges, did an injustice to the whole people which that company has still forty years to wreak. Their poles and wires are on and in our property. They erect their plant on our land, they disfigure the streets with unsightly, unpainted poles yet they charge for the use of the telephones without regard to the gratuitous favors from the city, without which their franchise would be valueless. Then here is another company which makes a much more reasonable request and offers to put in telephones and charge less than half the present rate, for their use, not as a philanthropic measure to the people but because the company has tried running telephones at that rate in other places and found that it pays. The establishment of this company in this city means a saving to each subscriber of from eighteen to thirty dollars a year. All things considered therefore, it is better that some new company should be allowed to enter the city, if not on our terms, then on theirs. By no other means can the present exorbitant and unreasonable rates be reduced and the poor service be improved.

If the new company will accept a franchise which binds the members of the company not to sell the stock to a competitor all the benefits of genuine competition will be ours. If this new proposition is made to the council there is every reason to suppose it will be granted.

**State Universities.**

The childless, the rich, the poor and the middle classes are taxed for the support of the state university. Only a few of those who are taxed send their children to the school. The proportion is as two thousand to the heads of Nebraska families. It is reckoned, and correctly, I think, that the few who attend the university are enabled thereby to be of more service to the state and that thus those who have paid for the education of other peoples' children receive the worth of their money. If it should appear that university graduates are of no more use to the state than other citizens, state legislatures will be harder than ever to convince of the needs and usefulness of the university.

So far the experiment in Nebraska has been a success. Nebraska university is a young institution but its

alumni are distinguished in the towns where they are settled, some have a state prominence, and others are founding a national reputation for ability and probity.

Thus in spite of the license allowed the under-graduates the system of education seems to force the seeds of good citizenship which ripen after the students have been graduated. During their under-graduate period while their living is being supplied to them by their parents the conduct of the male students is irresponsible and does not indicate that they will ever be of much use to the state. As soon as they have received the bounty of the state, and begin to know something about the price of things and how hard it is to earn it, how intimate is the connection between the banker and the butcher, between each member of a community and every other member, the silly notions fostered by constant association with twelve or fifteen other fellows who have sworn a childish oath of constancy, begins to wear off, and the youth, who was a hopeless isolate begins to find himself, and soon after that the state will come into her inheritance.

**The American Republic.**

Of course the Boer singly or in groups are welcome to come to America if they can evade the pauper law, which most of them can who hate the English enough to emigrate out of their society and their sunlight. We will let them vote as soon as they can get naturalized which will not be fifteen years, by any means. We will not afflict them with sumptuary laws. The men can serve as jurymen just as soon as they can speak English, which by the way they will very much object to. They will find, much to their disappointment, that in spite of the Revolution we keep English institutions, that our freedom and manner of speech is English, that our laws, procedure and law courts are English, that our constitution is English, that most of our classical literature and the basis of our study of literature is English, that our method of doing business is English, that our traditions are either English or Irish, that, in short, we look like, act like, think like, and are like our cousins of Great Britain between whom and us there is a bond too strong and vital to be broken by a nation whose ancestors have no literature and whose history is without record of steady, normal, constitutional development. Should they come in any numbers to America, settle upon the land which we can now farm profitably without slaves, send their children to our schools, which though far from answering the purpose they were designed for, are much better, than Dutch schools, and join in our political life, they will comprehend what a real republic means. The Boer farmer is not in the habit of working himself and in a country where a proprie-