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SARAH B. HARRIS, Editor

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OBSERVATIONS.

The Lancaster Issue.

Wellmeaning republicans keep reiterating the statement that a republican legislature is of more importance than the risk of D. E. Thompson's election for six years to the United States senate. This is the very sort of pleading which has given corrupt politicians control of various sections of this country.

A few years ago republicans were in absolute control of this state. How did they lose it? Not by any intrinsic virtue in the opposition, but because high-minded republicans grew disgusted with the action of county and state conventions, which nominated such men as Tom Majors and Tom Benton and Bud Lindsey. Republicans have just this distinguishing characteristic: they will not continue, to vote, for an unworthy, dishonest, perjured candidate because he is called by the name, republican. Conventions may be tied up; one respectable candidate is frequently only nominated by the agreement to accept some other candidate entirely unfitted for the duties of a representative office. A convention may be manipulated and finally controlled by its immoral members. Its members, though composed of individuals vote in groups and the most righteous delegate by the strength of usage and convention, and the unpopularity attached to "kicking" often votes for an undesirable nominee. Before the last Lancaster county convention assembled it was well understood that the majority of its membership was for Thompson and its recognition of and approval of his candidacy was foreseen. It is doubtful, if the convention had been confronted with the proofs of Thompson's agreement with the populists, if he would have been

nominated. Nevertheless the candidates since his political treason has been established, fall back upon the instructions from the convention and refuse to withdraw their support.

Lancaster county has come to a parting of the ways. If the residents of this county signify by their votes next Tuesday that, they approve of a man who has denied every cardinal principle, of republicanism, whose record for repudiation of duty and responsibility has been again and again brought to their attention, the rehabilitation of republicanism will be again delayed. But on the contrary, if the Thompson candidates are defeated, it will be by republican votes. A defeat means republican disapproval of men of Thompson's character. A defeat of the republican candidates for the legislature means an assertion of the best elements in the republican party. Mr. Thompson's election to the senate of the United States will place at least half of the federal patronage of Nebraska in his hands. Who will profit from such power? Who will in turn, rule this county of Lancaster and his half of the state? L. L. Lindsay, Tom Benton and other representatives of the sort of politics which has demoralized this county and state and will continue to demoralize it, until rebuked by republican votes. Six years of servitude and humiliation, under a man who has confessed, that he is willing to trade republicanism for a seat in the senate. Six years of service to a man who has no conception of duty or of any obligations whose performance is not paid for in money or place. Is it worth the price? Republicans and democrats of New York are striving to free themselves from the control of Platt and Croker, but the state and city of New York are serving a sentence to both these bosses. Governor Roosevelt has pried Platt's fingers loose from some of the state patronage but in New York city "Tammany is supreme and Croker is its prophet." New York is wide open; policemen receive a monthly rent from saloon keepers, procurers and gamblers. Part of this rent is paid to Tammany, part to the chief of police and the policemen keep a share.

This is a new state. Nebraska was settled by the best men and women; emigrants, with the blood of the Puritans in their veins, a courageous, conscientious people who came west for love of freedom and to get away from conditions so long established that protests were without avail to change them. I deny that republican success in this county is more important than a protest against the continuance of a policy which has demoralized Lancaster county, is insidiously working in the state and will finally exterminate the Puritan influence. This influence has made this country great and powerful. The Puritans who came West and are now trying to cleanse Nebraska of corruption cannot all claim Puritan ances-

tors. They belong with the Puritans because they are willing to desert the flesh-pots and to relinquish chances of preferment, in order to establish a high standard of party virtue. The election of the Thompson candidates in Lancaster county will be a severe commentary on republicanism in this county. It means the recognition of treason, and the firmer establishment of methods and of politicians whose supremacy is the chief misfortune of democracies.

The depravity of Mr. Thompson's public denial of his agreement with the populists affirmed by the affidavits of fourteen, old and reputable members of the last legislature, of Mr. Schwind and Mr. T. S. Allen is another demonstration of his unfitness for the exalted office he seeks. His denial shows that he is willing that all people should know how lightly he esteems his own word. The fact of the agreement has been fully established and yet he is willing over his own signature to deny an authenticated document thus proving that he does not respect himself.

The legislators who convene in Lincoln sometimes comment upon the low moral tone of this city and its neighborhood. Disinterested legislators from the various counties of the state have made this observation so many times that there must be some truth in it. On Tuesday the devotion of the rank and file to the republican party will be tested. It is a paradox, but there is little doubt that the most devoted republicans will vote against the republican candidates for the legislature. It is a republican county and if they are defeated it will be by republican votes.

If there are enough of these republican votes they will signalize the beginning of a new and more exalted republican regime in this corner of the state and that is of far greater importance than the election of Richard O'Neill, John J. Trompen, A. W. Lane, John H. Mockett, Jr., C. R. Tefft, E. J. Shellhorn and Charles R. Warner to the legislature.

Some City Functionaries and Their Services to the City.

Lincoln has a health officer, a few *distrain* policemen and some ordinances, all for the purpose of suppressing nuisances and securing to each American citizen his guarantee of life liberty and the vain pursuit of happiness. Ordinances, policemen, and health officer are however, ineffectual in suppressing nuisances, which not only make happiness impossible but which menace the health of whole neighborhoods. For instance a man on South Eleventh street in the downtown district has been allowed to slaughter five hundred chickens a day in his basement where the live chickens are kept in such numbers that some of them have not standing room. The air of such a place is indescribable and the neighbors have

complained again and again without obtaining relief. The ordinances in regard to slaughtering animals within the city limits are specific, the health officer and the policemen wear the blue and brass of authority, but all three are only for show and to make Lincoln look like a city. The chicken slaughter house has been moved into another part of the city, a locality just as thickly settled, with citizens who likewise possess noses and a desire for healthful surroundings. The chickens which this merchant buys are shipped from Lincoln to various buyers in Omaha and elsewhere. Before killing them they are detained in a crowded, reeking cellar long enough to catch all kinds of chicken maladies. The meat of such cruelly treated chickens is unwholesome and the butcher is shipping pestilence to Omaha as well as infecting his immediate neighborhood. The health officer prepares a monthly report to the council which is of statistical value and he tacks yellow and scarlet cards on to houses that shelter patients with infectious diseases. His services are therefore indispensable, but occasions such as the foregoing where one man perverts the comfort and menaces the health of a neighborhood, indicate that Lincoln needs something more peremptory and more determined than the functionary called "health officer."

Spelling.

For three or four years The Courier has commented upon the poor spelling and muddy composition of college graduates. The cause and cure of illiteracy among the under-graduates is now being considered by the faculty of the University of Chicago.

Colleges and universities do not teach spelling and the common English branches, but legitimate university work is interrupted by the inability of the under-graduates to express themselves lucidly either orally or on paper. There is sufficient evidence that fifty years ago the product of the public schools could both spell and write. The theme readers at the university or the examiners of written examination papers at the western colleges of the United States will testify that the papers received from the under graduates would really disgrace a grammar school scholar. The causes of deficient English knowledge are variously ascribed, but the number of subjects taught and the attempt to raise the accomplishment of each grade to a limit just beyond the ability of the average pupil, are two reasons which occur to me. The state university has established a certain standard of admission, undoubtedly based on the standard adopted by older state universities, who in turn, have followed the example of Harvard, Yale and the universities of the east which are fed by a highly developed system of academies and high schools. It is gratify-