

OBSERVATIONS

BY SARAH B. HARRIS

Use of Patronymics

Mrs. McKinley has prevented the naming of a hotel in Canton after President McKinley. It has been suggested that we need a law in this country to protect the names of celebrated people from desecration. The owner of the hotel doubtless had no such thought. Unless a man is conducting some business that he is ashamed of, he considers it an honor to the patron he names it for. The saints were honored, or fathers thought they were, when they called their sons by saints' names. The cigars, teas, towns and hotels were named for presidents, not in despite, but in honor of the men to whose promoters they were patron saints. And after all the common uses of life are not derogatory. The McKinley hotel should be a comfortable hostelry. If it were all that a hotel can be the name would not be dishonored or misappropriated. In England there are numerous Victoria inns and Shakspeare play-houses. King Edward does not mind. As the hosts to the brother of an emperor we are likely to have our heads turned. They are none too strong, and the favor of royalty has made an aristocrat of every mayor whose city Prince Henry will visit on his short tour of this country.

Dignity is inherent in the man. The labors and accomplishments, the character of McKinley and the affection of the people for him will suffer no diminution because of hotel keepers who christen the building in which travelers are warmed, fed and lodged the "McKinley." It would be painful should some cigar manufacturer attach McKinley's name to a cigar and advertise it with his picture, but to call the hotel in his native town by his name is different. Many travelers will go to Canton to see McKinley's home and grave, and to talk with neighbors and friends of the man who has made Canton famous. To see the name of the man for whose sake they have made a pilgrimage on the hotel which welcomes them would not be painful. There is a very short step between some Americans and snobbery. A sudden access of dignity and importance attained by people who have made their fortunes by selling calico, or wheat, or coal, or beer is unbecoming and induces their neighbors to say spiteful things. We are the sons and daughters and grand-sons and grand-daughters of men and women who worked with their hands, who rose before the sun, who labored earnestly that their children might go to school and enjoy larger opportunities. It is just as well not to ignore the fact that we are made of dust and to dust we shall return; just a little handful that blows about the street and that hotel-keepers and draymen and all the toilers of the city step on, brush from their clothes and regard with disapproval. Selah.

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Chinese Exclusion

New Yorkers are preparing to build a trolley road in Shanghai, China. This country is laced with railroads and the great railroad building epoch is past. China is almost virgin soil. The Chinese are not educated to travel. It has been cruel want that has driven them to emigrate. It is almost certain that congress will pass another exclusion bill. But if the Chinese are not allowed to come to America, America will go to the Chinese. The coolies will go to work laying ties in China for an American company as they laid ties in California for the trans-continental companies. The new trolley road will be twenty-three miles long. The motormen and conductors will be Chinamen and the workmen who build the road will be natives. The Ameri-

can invasion will make more work, and to Chinamen work is food and there is not enough to go around. Hunger drives them to the traditionally hospitable American coast and we drive them back because they are so hungry they will work for just enough food to keep them from starvation and the foreigners who have been here a year or two longer have grown accustomed to a higher standard of living and object to its being lowered to an oriental standard which is just one degree above starvation. The workmen can not be blamed for wanting to have the Chinese kept out, but with the progress of our own civilization, which is nothing to boast of now and the raising of the standard of living in China consequent upon an era of intra-urban and overland railroad building it is likely that the Chinese, too, will consider pianos, kid gloves and dress suits among the necessities. When this period arrives the American workman just arrived from Ireland will consent to let foreigners from China into the country.

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Self-Interest

Reform must accomplish its object along the route of least resistance. Legislation is the last resort rather than the first. The farmers of Kansas have kept in mind the truth that two can play at the same game. If the man that starts the game could retain a monopoly of it for any length of time his fortune would be made. The first trust that was organized was startling and after a dozen had been organized there was something like a panic, not financial but political. Men were afraid their constitutional liberties and the pursuit of happiness were about to be denied them. They quoted the Declaration of Independence deliriously and the stump speakers threatened the downfall of the republic.

The farmers living near the town of Solomon, Kansas, organized the business of selling grain. One man on an average is as smart as another, and if grain men can combine and keep the articles of agreement, so can farmers.

Mr. C. H. Matson in the Review of Reviews tells how the farmers of this wheat belt, beginning with Solomon agriculturalists, organized a grain sellers' trust to counteract or disarm the grain-buyers' trust organized by a syndicate which speculates in grain. One-fourth of the area of Kansas is devoted to wheat. The region especially favorable to wheat culture is an elliptical area in the center of the state beginning about twenty miles south of Nebraska and extending south into Oklahoma. It includes twenty-seven counties and produces about seventy million bushels of wheat per annum. The farmers possess this wheat first. It is an enormous energy and they are just beginning to realize their advantage over the middlemen who must buy of them.

The wheat market at Solomon in 1900 was controlled by three syndicates which paid fourteen cents less than the Kansas City price. The normal price was ten cents below. One of the most successful wheat farmers of Kansas, in collusion with his neighbors, organized a farmers' co-operative shipping association. The shares were \$12.50 apiece. No member could hold more than sixteen shares and the majority of the stockholders held only one. A member has only one vote no matter how many shares of stock he holds. According to the by-laws of the association every member must sell his wheat to the association, but a provision is inserted allowing him to sell it to an outside party providing he pays into the association a rebate of one cent a bushel on each bushel disposed

of to the outside party. This postscript is the saving clause of the by-laws and of the association. The syndicate can not undersell it or drive it out of business, because if the syndicate offers higher prices the farmers sell to the syndicate, but they go first to their own elevator, have their wheat weighed, and when they have received the money from the syndicate they return and pay into their own elevator company the rebate of one cent a bushel.

It has been the policy of this Solomon model to make friends of the railroads. The managers of the farmers' elevators do business according to the instruction they have received from all corporations. When cars are denied on one road, they shipped over another, until there were plenty of cars offered them by the agents of the first.

With an investment of only \$2,500, Mr. Matson says, the farmers' association at Solomon handled 132,000 bushels of wheat during the first ten weeks it was in business, on which it made a profit of from one to three cents a bushel. An average profit of one cent a bushel would give the association \$1,320 profit, or over fifty per cent of the investment in ten weeks.

If the state association of grain growers proves successful the farmers can meet the grain trust on equal grounds and both associations, the buying and the selling association, can do business without prejudice or coercion. If the farmers can hang together and perfect their organization it is the most powerful trust yet effected. Its units are men and they raise their product. If it cohere, the steel trust is an insignificant comparison. The Kansas model will be copied by the farmers in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and all over the country.

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Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic

The Courier has frequently asserted that the public school system in this country is deficient because although it teaches the pupils a little chemistry, a little botany, a little of all the sciences and endeavors to give them a taste of literature and history, high school graduates finally emerge after going to school for a matter of twelve years without having acquired the knowledge that is primarily necessary to make them of use in business. The graduates from the high schools of the state are in the university, and an examination of the papers composed and written by them will convince the most lenient and the most patriotic that the grade school teaches many things but it has not taught English spelling, composition, a legible handwriting, and arithmetic.

Mr. David R. Forgan, president of the First National bank of Chicago, recently addressed the graduating class of Lake Forest university. He asked them what were the educational qualifications which they would find most useful, and answered the question himself from the vantage point of a successful and distinguished career. (1) "To be able to write a good, legible hand, to make good figures and to place them correctly—the units below the units, the tens below the tens, and so on. (2) To be able to add, subtract, and multiply rapidly and accurately. (3) To be able to express yourself clearly, briefly and grammatically in a letter and to spell the words correctly.

Very simple accomplishments, you say! Yes, and very rare. I have taken many young men into business in this country and I can scarcely recall one who had these accomplishments."

Twelve years' schooling and still unable to spell the words of his native tongue, or to write clearly and legibly, or to place a column of figures in plumb, perpendicular lines and then to add them rapidly and accurately! Yet this is the state of unpreparedness to meet the demands of employers and the necessities of business in which the high school graduate leaves school. The exceptions are so rare that it is not worth while to mention them. It is essential that the boy who must earn his living should know these

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The Maurice Grau Opera Company gave a special performance in honor of Prince Henry at the Metropolitan opera house in New York city on the evening of February 25. In this program each of the prima donnas and all the great tenors took part. The schedule of prices charged was as follows:

Orchestra chairs, \$30.00; Dress Circle, \$15.00; First rows Balcony, \$12.50; Rear rows Balcony, \$10.00, and standing room, \$5.00.

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