

## The Commoner.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

ber of newspapers receiving city advertising down from eighty to five.

8—Dismissed the old Aqueduct board that for years had been wasting time and money in land condemnation proceedings. Put in another board pledged to wind up work by June 1 and go out of existence. It did wind up the work in time, saving the city about \$3,000,000. Incidentally the mayor lectured supreme court judges for making improper appointments in these condemnation proceedings.

9—Decreed and enforced a safe and sane Fourth of July in New York City with patriotic and athletic celebrations in every park. This action decreased fatalities for the day from twenty (average per year) to one; woundings and maimings from 200 to five; fires from fifty to four.

10—Started the baseball season in New York presiding over the first game and giving the local players such an abundance of luck that they are now close to the lead in their respective leagues.

11—Visited and complimented the child gardeners of De Witt Clinton Park, admired their gardens and tasted some of their products, spoke words of cheer and told them that "back to the farm" is a good slogan.

12—Cordially welcomed Weston the walker at the end of his transcontinental trip, hailing him as "old friend" and eulogizing his display of vigor and grit.

13—Sold all superfluous automobiles owned by city, stopping officials' joy riding, saving \$500,000 annually in auto repairs. Set the good example of walking to and fro (six miles) between his home and the city hall.

14—Saved the life of Mr. Shepard, an editor, during a blizzard on Long Island last winter. In the darkness and storm Mr. Shepard fell from a railroad trestle and broke his legs. The mayor climbed down to him at considerable risk, covered him from the cold, and then fought his way to a place where he could obtain assistance.

15—Excused the official rat catcher from jury duty on account of the importance of his office—then, finding him a learned man, swapped classical quotations with him, and said: "As we read in 'Don Quixote,' 'The mountains breed learned men and philosophers are found in the huts of shepherds.'"

16—When Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, president of the Society for Prevention of Crime, called on the mayor with a cargo of advice, the latter gravely discussed a great city problem with him, calling his attention to Lecky's chapter on the oldest profession in the world, St. Augustine's confessions, and Lilly's works, with

which the mayor assumed Dr. Parkhurst was perfectly familiar.

17—Refused a street permit to a missionary who wanted to preach Christianity to the Jews. The mayor inquired whether Jews have not a good religion of their own, and whether it is not true that Christianity owes much to the Jews.

18—Out of his private purse gave a dinner worthy of Lucullus to Prince Tsai Tao of China. Gave a particularly jolly dinner to the newspaper boys of the city hall. The landlord tried to serve the wrong sort of wine, but the mayor insisted on receiving what he had ordered and paid for.

19—Vetoed aldermanic permit establishing a tag day in Richmond borough for the benefit of the ladies of a certain hospital. The mayor said that he believed such official action was illegal and was certain that it was unseemly—especially employment of children to "tag" or beg.

20—At the dinner of the Newspaper Publishers' Association denounced William Randolph Hearst as a forger and falsifier of public documents. Mr. Hearst sued newspapers that published the mayor's speech, but failed to sue the mayor.

21—Warned magistrates to try each case carefully, and see to it that the humblest citizen obtained justice. Warned them further not to allow anybody, especially clergymen or politicians, to influence their decisions.

22—Informed newsdealers that they need not pay graft to politicians and aldermen for use of stands and promised to protect them from persecution.

23—Deprived fifty resorts of the vicious and dissipated of their all-night licenses, while carefully protecting those all-night cafes and restaurants that proved they serve legitimate night workers.

24—Shut up theaters that were giving improper and debasing plays.

The foregoing list gives only a few characteristic instances of the sort of work Mayor Gaynor has been doing since taking office. He has accomplished apparent impossibilities with ease and tranquility.

In the spring of 1909 the bureau of municipal research, a private organization which avowedly exists for the "promotion of civic betterment," published a little pamphlet entitled "What Should New York's Next Mayor Do?" It made fifty-eight suggestions for improvement, and the newspapers laughed at its idealism and declared that it was looking for a superman for mayor.

But the newspapers laughed too soon, for, as Dr. Allen, the chief of the bureau, told the writer, in February, 1910, the bureau found that Mayor Gaynor had already done or was doing forty-five of the fifty-eight good things.

Since then he has accomplished most of the others, and the researchers' whole program is only one little item in the general and widespread reform work of this administration.

In doing these things Mayor Gaynor had no communication with the researchers, and knew nothing of their program. He simply did the right thing because it was right.

When he first took office grafters rested easy. They had seen other good mayors who had been helpless because of their ignorance of graft and grafting. They supposed that Mayor Gaynor would for a brief time storm about in a blind sort of way and then subside.

But the contrary happened. He did not storm at all. But he had most uncanny knowledge of all the crookedness that had been going on, and now and then he struck, reminding one of Milton's lines in "Lycidas" concerning Cromwell and parliament:

"But that two-handed engine at the door  
Stands ready to smite once and smite no more."

Whatever flourishing evil the mayor smote crumpled right down and no longer afflicted sight or troubled the city. No one fought back. When the grafters realized Gaynor they folded their hands and sat down solemnly waiting for him to pass by. To them he is phenomenal and not at all agreeable, like an earthquake, volcano, pestilence or other dispensation of Providence. They recognize the grim archness with which he contemplates them and their doings. But they don't grumble—what's the use?

The mayor is not a great talker, but his sayings, when he does speak, are unusually pointed and pithy. Here are a few of them extracted from speeches, letters and other public papers:

"The way to do things is to do them.

"Be a good man and you will be a great magistrate.

"Let the good man in office take care that

he does not set a precedent for a bad one.

"Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath—  
The Bible.

"I forgive everybody everything every night.  
"History teaches beyond a doubt that to govern least is to govern best.

"What another saith of thee concerneth more  
him that saith it than it concerneth thee.—  
Epictetus.

"Don't strut in office.

"Pay no graft. I will protect you.

"We want all bad men off the (police) force.

"Don't let's call names. Let's get together.

"Find out what you can agree on, don't keep  
harping on your differences.

"Nagging at me does no good. Come and  
help me.

"Let every deputy (tax commissioner) who  
sets down manifestly a wrong valuation be dis-  
missed at once.

"Find some one trying to corrupt a deputy  
and we will have him indicted.

"No meaner man exists than one who shirks  
taxes at the expense of his neighbors.

"Policemen must not make laws, but enforce  
those that exist.

"Policemen should not be like sheep in the  
presence of politicians nor citizens sheep in the  
presence of policemen.

"Learned men are to be found everywhere.

"I never talk of cranks. I call them 'alert  
people.' Jesus Christ was by some considered a  
crank."

The mayor during the campaign outraged Tammany traditions by quoting the Bible and Epictetus. This afforded the paragraphers opportunities for much humor of the slap-stick variety. But the mayor spoke simply what he thought. Christ is a very real character to him. One of the first acts by which he attracted wide attention, when a young lawyer, was his writing a history of "The Trial of Christ," viewed from the legal standpoint. As to Epictetus, Mayor Gaynor himself is a stoic and well worthy to sit down and discuss the high things of philosophy with the wise old Greek slave who has told us how we may all have what we want if we will only want what we have.

Taking all things into consideration this is likely to be an economical administration—but saving is not the main consideration. The main consideration is to give New Yorkers what they are paying for. To the mayor's mind they are willing and able to pay and ought to pay—and then again they ought to receive what they pay for.

His ideal is not cheap service, but honest, adequate, high-class service. The city is now engaged in immense improvements to provide for the 10,000,000 people who will soon be included in the population. Instead of trying to skimp these the mayor stimulates their progress. He does not exercise ingenuity in seeking difficulties, but in seeking ways of overcoming difficulties. Nothing is too good for the great wonder city of the world that New York will be in a few more years.

Ruling the city is easy to his honor, nor do the numerous and ever-growing social calls embarrass him, but he sometimes feels the need of all the philosophy that Epictetus taught on account of friends who are more attached and enthusiastic than thoughtful and judicious.

In spite of precautions taken to exclude all who come to the mayor during working hours on other than city business a few escape the guards, gain his honor's desk, and blithely waste his time. So far he has refrained from drastic action, but the sword of Damocles hangs above their heads, and if they desire to do the city's chief a particular service they will stay away from the city hall unless called to it by real business.

Another thing that at times annoys his honor is the expressions of joy and surprise emitted by intelligent magazines and newspapers when he does something good for his fellow citizens. What did they expect him to do?

For thirty years in Brooklyn his life was an open book. Whether as a young reporter, a lawyer or judge his ideals, his principles, his actions were always the same. He was always the champion of citizens' rights and liberties—the upholder of the highest ideal of public service. As such he was elected independent of bosses and without the expenditure of a dollar.

Why should people be surprised at finding a man who is sincere?

Brooklyn, N. Y.

If the Roosevelt-Sherman fight is pulled off at the New York state convention front seats will command a high price.