

The first number of THE CONSERVATIVE by the Morton Printing Co., Nebraska City, was issued July 14th. It is edited by J. Sterling Morton and devoted largely to the consideration of economic questions of which Mr. Morton is a close student. Matters pertaining to the early history of the state will receive considerable attention, making it of special interest to the early settlers. It is a publication that should find a place at every fireside in Nebraska.—Fairbury Gazette.

THE CONSERVATIVE, the new paper published by J. Sterling Morton at Nebraska City, is a weekly journal devoted to the discussion of political, economic and sociological questions. The sixteen pages are twelve inches long by nine and one-half inches wide and divided into three columns of thirteen ems each. The typography is extremely neat and the contents are very interesting. Mr. Morton, in philosophy, is a positivist. He has convictions and in speaking or writing he never shows any doubt of the reliability of his inspiration. He has proved by accomplishment that ideals are worth having. He came to Nebraska in the early days before we had a right to a star in the flag. He built a home on the edge of Nebraska City where he could have land enough for a manor, and he named it Arbor Lodge. Thirty years or more ago he planted trees which now overshadow and protect the lodge which was then in the wilderness. His example and efforts to plant a treeless state have caused thousands of trees to be planted and innumerable birds to stop and rear their families in a state they had hitherto ignored in their migrations. Perceiving the difficulties which the early settler had in getting the trees to live, Mr. Morton established Arbor Day. The results can only be estimated by the early settlers on the prairie. From a treeless, bird-abandoned state ornithological statistics show that Nebraska contains a greater variety of species of birds than any other state in the Union. The increase in the rainfall is also directly due to the increased cultivation of timber as well as crops. In his efforts for the preservation of the early history of Nebraska, Mr. Morton has shown a scholarly appreciation of the value of records, documentary and traditional, not often exhibited by the pioneer. A file of THE CONSERVATIVE will be invaluable to the future historian of the West and of the Aborigines. The Indian stories of Spotted Tail and White Cow, published in the issue of July 21, relate to the beginning of the present epoch in which the Indian has accepted the supremacy of the white and acknowledged the futility of struggling against him, and has begun to try, in spite of racial obstacles, to be like him. The value of such a paper, published by a man who has already done much for his state and country, is great and deserves full appreciation.—Lincoln Courier.

**ITEMIZED ACCOUNTS.** Public money disbursed by state and county officers should be accounted for itemizedly. The county and the state should pay no more than individuals pay for similar services and commodities. The taxpayers in Nebraska, and in Otoe county particularly, ought to demand a rendition of accounts from each and every public servant, which shall clearly show where each dollar, dime, nickel and cent has gone. Itemized accounts should be required from boards of education, from county commissioners, from sheriffs, judges, treasurers; and, in fact, from every public official.

Suppose we begin here in Otoe county by having a thorough investigation of the cost of bridges and roads during the last five years? What objection can there be to having an expert accountant and a reputable civil engineer thoroughly examine into the disbursements for repairing bridges and roads in Otoe county during the past five years?

Every account of money expended in building or repairing a bridge should state precisely where that bridge is located. It should give its geographical position by naming the quarter section, township and range upon which it is located. The amount of lumber required for the repairing, together with its cost, ought also to be lucidly set forth. In short, the accounts for repairing bridges in the county of Otoe ought to be made so plain that no one could question the propriety of their payment. Each bridge should be so distinctly designated and the work so accurately described that every citizen after examining the accounts can go to and examine the bridges and find out whether the accounts are reasonable or unreasonable.

At another time THE CONSERVATIVE will take up the question of the power or right of the county commissioners to compromise taxes and pay premiums to those who have been delinquent in paying their just dues to the county and state, by accepting fifty cents on the dollar of their accumulated delinquencies. The power of the county commissioners to suspend the operation of statute and fundamental law by accepting less than lawful taxes from one class of citizens and only legal taxes from all other citizens is questionable. Taxation must be equal. It cannot be when delinquents are rewarded with reductions, by county commissioners.

**OLD TIMES.** In the year 1855 the editor of THE CONSERVATIVE employed as a "devil" and general roustabout in a small printing office which was domiciled in the "Block House" of old Fort Kearney on the present town site of Nebraska City, a young lad known as Johnnie Freeman. He was about sixteen years of age, a steady, intelligent and attractive youth. But the allurements of plains life and the stories of gold in California were too much for his

strenuous ambitions and so he traveled across the plains to the golden coast, as a director of a six-yoke team of oxen, early in 1856. Since then through many vicissitudes, commercial and otherwise, Mr. Freeman has permanently established himself as one of the leading citizens and capitalists of Woodland, Yolo county, California, where he has a magnificent home and all the surroundings of luxury and comfort that money can purchase. Mr. Freeman has also a large ranch in Nevada.

The Carson (Nevada) Appeal says:

Yesterday the Appeal office was the recipient of a pleasant call from J. W. Freeman, of Stillwater. The gentleman introduced himself as once having served as devil in the Nebraska City News office when J. Sterling Morton was its first editor. As the editor of the Appeal served his reportorial apprenticeship on that paper and learned to set type there, the two settled down to talk of old times, until the typos of the Appeal began to call for copy and Mr. Freeman who has heard the call before said he guessed it was time to go, and slid out.

Mr. Freeman is now a cattleman of Churchill, and is unloading cattle at the top price. When he did the devil's work on the News in the fifties it was currently reported that he only had one pair of buckskin pants, and once when the weather wet them until they shrunk on him like he had been moulded in them, he was unable to get them off and so slept in them. When reminded of this ancient report he admitted the truth of it then and there.

## CURRENT COMMENT.

### Good Sense and Temperance.

Rev. Osborn Mordaunt, rector of Hampton-Lucy, Warwickshire, made a statement before the parliamentary liquor commission that for 22 years he had managed the public house in his village, but he had abolished the sale of intoxicating liquors to the public and greatly raised the moral tone of his parish thereby. This again raises the question propounded by Rev. Dr. Rainsford in New York about a year ago, Why should not the church interest itself in such things as a social factor? Why indeed should it not establish temperance saloons and clubs and do it on a business basis? If the church intends to become a living force, veritable salt in the community, it must come down to the everyday needs and wants of the world.

The poor have no clubs. The liquor saloon, with its bright lights and evening papers, offers an attractive center to the workingman who has no other place to spend his evenings aside from a sordid home perhaps. In many cases the visitor has no other motive in view than a little change of scene, a chance of chat with a friend or a game of dominos or cards. Propinquity thus may lead him to take alcoholic cheer, with no set purpose in that direction. We