

### A NEBRASKA ARTIST.

The Nebraska patrons and admirers of "Puck" will be pleased to observe that among the best caricaturists employed upon that wonderfully instructive and amusing periodical, is the name of John Cassel an Otoe County man, who was born and raised on the old Cassel farm just below Nebraska City, where his respected parents still reside. His work is a credit to his family and the state which produced him.

### C. J. SMYTH AND THE OCTOPUS.

In the New York Evening Post of December 17, 1901, the Hon. Constantine J. Smyth, formerly attorney-general of the State of Nebraska, appears as a defendant of himself and his administration of the office in which he so long rattled around. Mr. Smyth's plea is exceedingly puerile. He says that the Standard Oil Co. is a trust and that it was his duty as attorney-general to move against that trust; that he did so move; that the aforesaid octopus resisted the action and attacked the anti-trust statute upon every conceivable ground, and that Mr. Woolworth, ex-president of the American Bar Association, headed an array of counsel representing the trust; that the court listened to their contentions for a year; that it resulted in a complete victory by Smyth over Woolworth, of the state over the Standard Oil octopus, and the establishment of the validity of the anti-trust law in all of its parts.

Then, saith Smyth, the case was sent to referees to take testimony, and he (Smyth) tried to get the depositions of certain officers of the company, but failed; and then, as a substitute for the testimony which was desired, he took the deposition of one George Rice, with which he was not satisfied. Then he applied to the court for an order on the trust to permit him to inspect its books, and this application was singularly enough resisted by the Standard Oil Co. Nevertheless, the Court granted the application, and thus, according to Smyth, the success of the state in the contest was almost assured. Smyth then declares that we have a statute which provides that if the party upon whom such an order already made fails to comply with it in the time limited, the other party may present to the Court an affidavit showing what he claims the books contained, and this affidavit will be taken as true. The time in which the Standard Oil Co. might elect to pay the order expired a few days before Smyth's term of office came to an end, and this melancholy fact, according to Smyth, dumped the whole matter over into the hands of his republican successor, Mr. Prout. Now Prout, according to Smyth, has done everything that he ought not to have done and nothing which he ought to have done, in regard to getting the Standard Oil Co. to quit doing business in the state of Nebraska.

One thing that Smyth fails to state in his elaborate defense, dated at Omaha on December 11, 1901, is the terrible oppression and extortion which the Standard Oil Co. has put upon the people of Nebraska. This deaginous octopus is selling oil at from 9 to 20 cents a gallon, for which we paid in the early days \$1.50. Another thing which Smyth omits to mention is the great benefit that would accrue to the people of this state, provided the Standard Oil Co. could be driven out of business herein

and the market for oil be supplied by retailers from one end of the commonwealth to the other.

And yet another thing that Smyth omits to mention, is that this suit was instituted, as was that against the Argo Manufacturing Co. at Nebraska City, and the National Starch Co., for the sole and exclusive purpose of influencing public opinion in order to get votes for Bryanarchy and its candidates in this and other states.

### CHRISTMAS TREES AGAIN.

The Conservative is in receipt of four numbers of the Vermont Phoenix, published at Brattleboro in that state, each one of which contains an article against the vandalism of Christmas-tree dealers, and The Conservative with great satisfaction reproduces the following:

The Phoenix wishes to call attention editorially to this paragraph sent last week by its South Windham correspondent:

"There is one factor in cutting evergreen trees for the New York market

### The Christmas Tree Vandalism.

that has been overlooked in all discussions that I have seen, and that is that those who cut them, cut only the tops of the trees, cutting from one to ten feet from the ground, leaving the limbs below where the tree is cut off to grow, covering the ground and preventing anything else from growing, which is positive damage. If those owning trees will observe in how short time these little trees will produce timber through judicious trimming it would do more than anything else to correct the evil. The practice of selling them as shrubs is like killing the goose that laid the golden egg, for on very much of the land that grows spruces nothing else will grow."

This correspondent is a man of intelligence, who knows what he is talking about. He was born and raised among our Vermont hills. His statement shows that there is nothing whatever to the claim that the young spruces and firs are sold because the farmers want to get rid of them to clear and restore their pastures. The trees are sold, with no knowledge of their actual value, because there is a present paltry dollar in them, without regard to their future worth and possibilities. The vandalism is worse than we supposed, or at first charged. It gives one the shudders to think of the old hills and pastures covered with the desolation of these sawed-off skeletons.

A large number of small spruces and firs, at least 12,000 to 15,000, cut in

### Another Business Proposition.

Marlboro, have been drawn to the railroad station at Brattleboro this week for shipment to Philadelphia for the Christmas tree trade. The Philadelphia dealer who makes the shipment pays a stated sum for the trees on the stump and hires them cut and drawn. The trees are sawed off close to the ground, and tied in bundles closely bound with stout twine. A car piled high will probably carry 2000 to 2500 trees. The men employed in the work say that the farmers get "a dollar a load," which means a dollar for about 200 trees, half a cent apiece, five dollars for a thousand. On a liberal estimate of the cost of cutting, drawing, shipping by rail, and storage and handling in Philadelphia, or any other city, it is apparent that the cost per tree to

the dealers can hardly exceed 15 or 20 cents a tree. The Philadelphia dealer said in conversation that he "should not consider himself a salesman" if he could not get five dollars apiece for the larger trees. A fair margin of profit surely between grower and consumer!

The work of cutting these young trees for the city Christmas trade has been going on in other parts of the state for several years. What this trade means in the way of forest destruction the country over is appalling to consider. These young evergreens are cut in Vermont every year literally by the hundred thousand, and the work is doubtless going on in every other section where firs and spruces grow—unless the farmers in other sections are wiser than those of Vermont. We are cutting off the grown forests at wholesale to make lumber and paper stock, and at the same time are at work at the other end destroying the young growth that would otherwise replace them in part. It is true that in many cases a judicious thinning out of the young trees would be advantageous to those remaining, but when the axe and saw take everything, as is the custom, the loss is irreparable. And what any one farmer or land-owner gets in return for this vandalism is hardly enough to pay him for the tools to do the work with! This is sad degeneracy from the thrift and farsightedness of the farmers who made our hill towns and farms what they used to be.

While we are discussing in a pedagogic way the profit there is in tree-planting and tree-growing as a business proposition, there is need also to discuss this end of the proposition—that of destroying the young growth which nature herself has planted and given a ten or fifteen years' start in life. While Audubon societies and nature classes are showing commendable zeal in trying to save the birds and the flowers, suppose our practical men of affairs begin to consider what this wanton destruction of young trees means?

A few thoughtful men in the cities, who see what the trade involves, have been calling a halt for two or three years past against the unrestricted use of evergreens at Christmas. The crusade may yet have to go hand in hand with that against the wearing of bird plumage in women's hats. Even when it won't do any good unless the majority of men prove more amenable to sense and sentiment than the majority of would-be fashionable women have done.

The Phoenix, in its article last week, greatly underestimated the number of young spruces and firs which have been cut in Marlboro and are being shipped from the Brattleboro station to the Philadelphia market for the Christmas trade. It is apparent that the shipments already made, and to be made, will reach at least 20 car loads, making no less than 30,000 to 40,000 of the young trees. Probably 25 car loads have already passed through Brattleboro from the North. But this is only a small part of the trees which have been cut in the central part of the state, as the great volume of those shipments goes down the other side of the mountain by the way of Bennington.

The corporation is the embodiment of the idea of organization, and organization is the handmaiden of civilization. When we fight the corporate idea we fight civilization and progress, and it is to be hoped that Virginia will not take any such stand.—Richmond Times.