

It is rather early
DANGEROUS. for either political party in Douglas county to promise a congressional nomination to Hon. Frank Ransom, because, with his great versatility in politics, he may, before autumn comes again, belong to the other party! It is dangerous to deal in futures political, where an acrobatic genius is concerned.

The tawny tide of
A POWER AGENT. the Missouri runs along by all the towns on the eastern border of the state with great power, and ought to be utilized. Why can not barges be constructed that can be moved so as to get the strongest current in the river, and from the shafts which the current turns upon those barges, power be transmitted to the shore for use in factories, the whole length of its banks? Will some electrical or mechanical engineer invent a barge or system of barges, by which each town may utilize the Missouri river as a power agent?

The fact, stated in
THE COLLEGES. his recent book, by J. H. Canfield, that the college course fills the mind of the student with Ideals, is not very much of a reason in favor of that course. A student, graduated full of College Ideals who goes out into the industrial activities of this republic and meets a whole lot of strenuous young men full of Reals, is quite liable to get knocked out. When an Ideal student of theories and books, fresh from the training of a lot of professors, runs up against a Real worker in the agriculture, commerce or manufacture of the United States, the latter gentleman is not ordinarily killed, or even maimed by the collision.

There is as good mental discipline evolved in the counting rooms, in the railroad offices, in the banks and the great manufacturing plants of America as can be developed in any University. The best education that a human being can possibly secure, is that one which will enable him to live most completely in this world, and to begin that sort of satisfactory completeness in living at the earliest possible period of existence.

The ladies of
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. various southern communities have taken up arms some with appearance of determination against the further public performance of this play in their towns. They say it misrepresents their fathers, and is cruel and unjust.

They are right in what they say and in everything they ask; but they can never win. Mrs. Stowe's book, which is very little read today, was nothing more nor less than an incendiary doc-

ument; it did a great work, whether for good or for harm, and has passed on to future generations for their judgment. But the play that was founded on it has swung loose from its foundation and has a standing of its own now. It is the great American play today, nearly forty years after the order of things it represents has passed off the earth, and it is quite possible that in it one of the deathless possessions of the race has found birth. These things that last for hundreds, thousands of years, take their origin in very insignificant and unsuspected ways some times. It would be queer, would it not, if the people of the 40th century should know the America of the 19th only from Uncle Tom's Cabin, just as some of us only know the Roman Empire from the play of Julius Caesar?

Uncle Tom has become altogether impersonal. We think the ladies of the south need no more take offence at it than need the ladies of Rome at the representation of the customs of their ancestors in the other play mentioned.

CRIME AND CRIMINALS.

Editor of The Conservative:

In a recent communication on the above subject, kindly given to the public by your journal, a reform of our criminal code in the matter of penalties and punishments was proposed, and I should like permission to present other considerations in support of the measure. The former article was but a *text*, the sermon may be preached at any time, by anybody, and everywhere.

The most deliberate and careful scrutiny fails to discover more than one side to the question, for no argument can be formulated in favor of the destruction of immortal souls, nor defense made of measures tending to such result.

Even so mean and meager a consideration as the *economy* of the reform proposed, is a recommendation for its adoption, for prison labor, which means work without wages, is demoralizing to the business of a community, and ruinous to those affected by the unnatural and unjust competition. It is cheaper to maintain an invalid in the hospital than to have the whole community stricken by contagion. And it is cheaper to detain a criminal in idleness than to destroy an industry demanded by the general need, and in the prosecution of which the many thrive. This is a fact universally recognized and in many states provided against by legislation.

But this is a narrow and belittling view of a broad and commanding subject. There can be no estimate for a lost soul, speech nor thought can com-

pass it, and when, by the gallows or the dungeon, we have deprived a criminal of opportunity for reformation, we have committed a graver offense and accomplished a more enduring wrong than is possible to the most vicious and determined desperado. And yet our present system of punishment accomplishes precisely this, and does it continually. Not by accident, not by failure of plans, not in a moment of anger and passion, not at the behest of hunger and want, not from a sudden impulse of hatred, revenge or despair, but with deliberate purpose and preparation do we condemn our brothers to eternal death! In so far as we have the power, and are able to thwart the divine purpose, we occupy ourselves with the manufacture of criminals for eternity.

It is amazing that the enlightenment of the present age, and especially of this liberty and justice loving country, should so long tolerate a system so brutal and so senseless, and yet, such is the force of custom, such the indifference of this busy and money loving age, that we hear no outcry against the unspeakable enormity, and by an inconsiderate and culpable silence educate our children to its continuance.

We make large and continuous outlay of money and labor, are patient and persistent in persuasion and appeal, for the enlightenment and Christianizing of heathen lands, and then with an inconsistency at once shameful and shameless, hasten home to perpetrate worse than heathen barbarities in our own. Could inconsistency further go? Or Satan's plans be more aptly abetted?

The plain fact, simply stated, is that authority to condemn to death is *nowhere obtainable upon the earth*, and it follows, of necessity, that every willful destruction of human life, by whatever means and by whatever name, is *murder*. It is violation direct of God's simplest and most imperative command "*Thou shalt not kill.*"

The fundamental declaration of our government is that "all men" (not *some men*) "are created equal" and "have the right to life and liberty." Whence, then, comes authority to kill or license to enslave? If all men are created equal, the man on the bench is not superior to him at the bar, and may not make disposition of these Heaven bestowed rights. They are beyond him. It is no answer to say the judge was chosen for this very purpose, for his electors could not confer an authority they did not themselves possess. One might as reasonably undertake to supply cards of admission to seats in Paradise, or a government issue license to steal and rob and burn.

The utmost we have authority to do