ROUNDS OUT BUSINESS YEAR

Annual Banquet of Commercial Club and Installation of New President.

SECRETARY'S REPORT SHOWS YEAR'S WORK

New Enterprises Established in Omaha and Opportunities Pointed Out for Further Development in that Line During Year.

About 100 members of the Commercial club Monday evening enjoyed the most gratifying annual banquet in the history of the organization. The gratification arose not only from the fact that the menu and service were an improvement over those of former banquets, but from the further fact that the reports of the officers of the club were of a far more satisfactory nature than any that have ever been listened to by the members at any of the annual functions heretofore. The tables were neatly decorated with clusters of fragrant flowers and the guests were occupied for nearly two hours in discussion of the feast.

It was about 8 o'clock when the retiring president, C. S. Hayward, invoked order and read his annual address, a document of considerable length and full of praise for the work of the organization in the past and promise for further effort in the future. It covered practically the same ground as the report of Secretary Utt, the salient points of which are given below. At its conclusion he introduced the new president chosen at the meeting of the new directory Friday evening, Euclid Martin.

President Martin's Address.

The latter called attention to the continued growth of the club since its organization, March 23, 1893, declaring that its influence has kept pace with its growth. At no period has its influence been more potent for good than during the year just ended, for which credit is due largely to the retiring executive committee. Every enterprise is successful as its energies are properly directed with unanimity of purpose. There must always be some leading spirit or factor and where this influence, personal or otherwise, is directed by honesty of motives and singleness of purpose and with proper intelligence results are healthful or beneficial. All commercial bodies are in a large degree public in their functions and must be prepared to receive praise or criticism without reference to service rendered, but if they have the knowledge of duties well performed and have adhered to what seemed best they have accomplished the purpose of their existence. In many cities such organizations comprise only manufacturers and shippers and direct their efforts accordingly, but the Commercial club of Omaha is composed of manufacturers, jobbers, retailers, bankers and professional men, all impelled by a sincere desire to build here a great city.

"There are very many subjects," said President Martin, "in which the general welfare of the community is involved aside from those specifically mentioned, such as will always be found in every energetic city, and while we must adhere strictly to the basic principle which forbids absolutely the subject of politics, yet I am convinced that we are entirely justified and compelled by the very act and form of our organization to give attention to such subjects as appeal to the property interests of our citizens. Our own experience must convince us that it is incumbent upon all good citizens to lend their influence to the end that property is not confiscated through unjust levies of taxation, made necessary in many instances by negligence of officials; that great care must be exercised in order that property may be protected from destructive fires and that the city may be preserved from the ravages and blighting influences of unjust corporations in their exercise of granted rights in the form of franchises." The president invoked a continuance of the loyalty heretofore given the club by the citizens.

Treasurer's Report.

Alfred Millard, treasurer, submitted a report showing that the receipts of the club during the year were $13,562.30, that it has on hand and in bank nearly $200, with $2,275.35 of resources and is for the first time out of debt.

Secretary Utt was introduced by President Martin as "Old Statistics," and submitted the report which is subjoined, and which was received with applause.

Brief talks were made by others at the invitation of the chair. Judge Keysor told why he was glad that he was a member of the club, but intimated that the officers had made one serious mistake during the year in that not one of them had been arrested for contempt and the result of the election had banished their golden opportunity in that direction. Recent travels in the east had convinced him that here is one of the very best spots on earth, that Omaha has a future and that it will compare with many an older city with larger population.

One of the reasons given by J. F. Carpenter why he was glad he was a member of the club was that as far as his memory served him it was the only thing to which he had ever belonged that was out of debt.

R. C. Peters spoke briefly as a real estate broker, and the discussion was happily closed by Rev. Edward F. Trefz, who took occasion to commend the club's impulse to take a hand in municipal politics. He declared that the School board should be taken out of politics.

Report of Secretary Utt.

The following is the report of the secretary of the Commercial club for the year ending December 31, 1899:

The membership has increased, the club has no debts, the rooms have been kept in condition and current literature kept on file; the restaurant is having increased patronage and the club is equipped for the best service in its history.

An extensive correspondence is conducted in the interest of the city, literature relating to Omaha has been distributed and a large number of people have been seen and enlightened. When the town of Herman was destroyed considerable money was promptly raised and sent to relieve the citizens. A large excursion was taken to Hastings to affiliate with the people of western Nebraska and a return excursion was entertained by the club.

During the year the clearings reports have been very misleading as to Omaha because they have shown a large decrease in branded transactions. The facts are that there has been a large increase. The year 1898 showed a per cent increase over 1897, and from the best figures obtainable the same is decidedly true of 1899 over 1898. Commercially Omaha and South Omaha are so interwoven that they constitute one business community. They are closer than Kansas City's business center and stock yards interests. Prior to this year the transactions at both cities were included in the clearance reports. They were included the first two months of this year. During March, April and May, however, the transactions of South Omaha do not appear. This club took the subject up with the view of restoring the old basis, which resulted in a part of South Omaha's business reappearing in the reports, and this has continued to the present time, but it is still very unsatisfactory and makes Omaha's clearances show one-third less than they really are.

Provided the ratio of increase had been kept up after January and February as during those months the clearings would be for 1899, $319,561,523, and for 1899, $405,812,146. The bad effects of the report are understood when it is considered that the outside world judge a city by its clearings reports, and that Omaha made the poorest comparative showing of any city in the union, and with 27 per cent increase, which was the real showing, it would have made about the best showing.

Indian Supply Depot.

Three years ago we secured the passage of an act by congress establishing an Indian supply depot at Omaha. The act has been inoperative because no appropriation was made for its maintenance. We expect that an appropriation will be made this year for this purpose and the depot opened for purchases. Senator Thurston is chairman of the senate committee on Indian affairs and will materially assist us in attaining our object.

The club has considered the establishing of a quartermaster's depot in Omaha for the purchase and distribution of army supplies. A bill has been presented in congress authorizing such a depot.

We should have an auditorium. All neighboring cities already have, or are building them, and the time would seem to be at hand for Omaha to do likewise. A strong auditorium committee appointed by the club could raise funds during the year 1900. An auditorium is a necessity, a convenience and profitable to a city. We cannot successfully enter the list as a seeker for large conventions without it.

The home patronage bureau of the club is a valuable feature that has lately developed and promises to be a success. There are 150 factories in Omaha and South Omaha that employ and support one-third of the population of this community. This number would be increased several thousand if our citizens would patronize more freely the products of our factories, and this would be an incentive for new factories. The majority of the factories in the city have joined the bureau and its success seems to be a foregone conclusion.

Beet Sugar Culture.

For several years the club has given serious attention to the sugar beet industry, which must ultimately be one of our best sources of wealth. We have practical guarantees that if a sufficient acreage of beets can be assured to supply a factory a plant will be built. During the last year, under the auspices of the club, several small patches of beets were raised in the vicinity of Omaha and the showing was very favorable. There were fifteen tons of beets produced per acre with 15 per cent sugar and 82 per cent purity, making it certain that in the vicinity of Omaha the beet industry would be very profitable.

Such beets should be raised for $35 per acre and sold for $4.75 per ton. It is proposed the coming season to raise a large acreage of beets for the double purpose of securing the profits in their cultivation and also the building of a factory. The three factories in the state offer to pay the freight provided the beets are sold to them. This item of freight is worth $10 per acre to the beet growers. Heretofore the grower has had to pay the freight. If beets should be raised as proposed and profits be favorable, next year a large acreage can be had and a factory secured as a consequence.

The club has secured a flouring mill that will be constructed and put in operation by spring. An organization is now under way for the building of an additional flour and cereal mill, and $35,000 of the capital is already subscribed.

Another enterprise under consideration by the club is a plant to manufacture a furnace that is simple, clean and economical. This furnace will burn a ton of good slack coal and supply the same units of heat as a ton of hard coal, furnishing uniform and constant heat. It saves the difference in the price of coal. Hard coal is so high and soft slack coal so low that the value of the furnace to consumers of heat is apparent. It is necessary to raise $41,000 to build, equip and operate a plant to make 600 furnaces per annum. Of this amount $32,000 is subscribed.

Omaha's Implement Business.

The implement business has taken an impetus in Omaha that is very gratifying. There are four large transfer houses, handling the goods of about twenty eastern factories. They have sprung into sudden importance and have added new factories. There is an opportunity for the establishment of an additional mammoth distributing implement warehouse at Omaha. It is in demand and would be profitable. There is scarcely a limit to the implement and machinery business available to such an enterprise. Besides the above there are thirteen large implement and machinery jobbing houses in Omaha. During the year the John Deere Plow company and the Dempster Manufacturing company have located large distributing houses in Omaha and six large implement firms have arranged for the building of business blocks. Several implement firms have selected Omaha as a location and will establish here during the coming year. The manufacturing feature has taken life. Agricultural implements can be made as cheaply at Omaha as at any point in the United States. The Anderson Manufacturing company will commence the manufacture of their goods in Omaha March 1. Another factory doing a good business is negotiating to raise additional capital at Omaha and move to this point. One of the largest implement factories in the country now located in the east proposes to locate a branch factory in Omaha to manufacture farm tools with a capital of $100,000, provided $50,000 of the amount is raised in Omaha. The proposition will soon be placed before the public.

Every building in Omaha well located on tracks is occupied. The Demoster Manufacturing company was compelled to locate away from the trackage against its wishes. What we need is a promotion company made up of strong citizens that can command capital and be in such a position that when parties come to this city to locate they can secure anything they may require at a reasonable figure. Such an organization could borrow capital and erect buildings and their investment would be safe. The coming year makes such a company almost a necessity if Omaha expects to be equal to the opportunities offered.

The Merchants' and Manufacturers' association of the club during the fall and spring offered inducements that brought several hundred merchants to Omaha to buy goods. Better results were secured this year than heretofore, both in attendance and value of purchases. Sixty firms belong to this branch of the club and it affords a great example of the work being done.

Transportation Matters.

The transportation situation in Omaha has been improved in many respects and has not depreciated in any. During the six years prior to the establishment of this club the rate situation was changed in many ways against Omaha without our knowledge or consent, although during that time there were several organizations formed to prevent such actions. During the last six years several favorable adjustments were made, so this club has been a preventive as well as a cure. During 1899 several changes favorable to Omaha have been made in Nebraska class rates. Strenuous efforts have been made to remove some other grievances.

The most pointed controversy that arose during the year was the rate war brought about by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railway, on urgent request of our shippers, in the reduction of the packing house differentials from Omaha to points in southeastern territory. The contention was to reduce the difference between Omaha and Kansas City and St. Joseph from 6 cents to 3 cents per 100 pounds. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy demanded arbitration, which was finally conceded. The final arrangements for arbitration and the decision will soon be reached.

Another feature of the club work on transportation matters is classification. This is liable to be overlooked by shippers until changes are in effect and it is too late to apply a remedy; it is continually up for consideration and is passed on by the roads twice each year. During the last year changes have been very pronounced, but about all of our shippers are well pleased with the status of the classification situation.

Tributary Territory Extended.

The building of the Illinois Central into Omaha is a marked event in our transportation history. The line is so situated that it commands business from the north, south and east. It connects Omaha by a line of railway under one management with the lakes and the gulf. It affords the shortest line to St. Paul and is stimulating our facilities in that direction. The rate basis is not yet finally established, but our just demands are fairly placed before the officials and we expect they will be equal to the broad-minded policy for which they have a reputation. This line will also give Omaha better access to northern Iowa, to which we have had no gateway, not only to points on its own line, but points on connecting and cross lines such, for example, as the Minneapolis & St. Louis railway. In addition to the reported Central, the Chicago & Northwestern and Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railways have built extensions in northern Iowa, giving more territory to Omaha. Also the B. & M. railway has been making extensions west in a territory that will become almost exclusive to Omaha. This line is reported booked for various extensions in new territory. The Great Northern has reached a point where it will build to Omaha perforce. The Minneapolis & St. Louis will reach Omaha by way of Storm Lake within a year or two. The Chicago & Great Western is anxious to build to Omaha and a new line from Kansas City east of the river is projected.

As the business of Omaha grows it becomes more of a loadstone to draw railroads and we may expect many additions to our present facilities.

We practically have two grievances that are proven thorns in our rate situation. While they are not malignant and affect only certain lines of trade they are irritating and annoying. We refer to the bridge tolls assessed on Iowa local rates and the differential in distributing rates in effect from Lincoln. We have labored strenuously to secure them from our rate situation, and we see so far, although at times it has been almost accomplished. We have hopes at the present time, for certain reasons, that an adjustment will eventually be made.

Omaha's Passenger Service.

Commencing with the exposition our passenger service has been continually improved by an increase in the number of trains, including those that bring people into Omaha in the morning and take them out in the evening, a train service particularly valuable to retailers. Until this year the passenger depot facilities were exceedingly poor, but this has been remedied by the building of two fine depots and material improvements on others. A marked transportation feature connected with Omaha is the Omaha Bridge and Terminal Railway company. This organization represents a large investment of eastern capital and is based on its faith in Omaha. During the last five years the enterprise has lain dormant, but it has now revived with the business generally. During 1899 it has invested $500,000 in Council Bluffs and Omaha, making connections with all the roads on either side of the river and erecting two convenient depots for the transaction of business. This company is a valuable adjunct to Omaha and will be strongly felt in many ways to our advantage, such as inducing roads to build to Omaha, the location of factories and the additional investment of capital.

The Stilwell system will be reorganized in February and will pass into the hands of competent parties with plenty of capital to improve the property, build connections and make it a strong feature in our transportation affairs.

It is predicted that 1900 will be the most prosperous year in the history of this country and more than an ordinary proportion should fall to this section.

PAUL MARTIN WINS CONTEST

Will Represent Creighton University in the Struggle for Oratorical Honors at Grand Island.

Paul L. Martin won the oratorical contest at Creighton university Monday night and consequently will represent that institution in the intercollegiate state contest a Grand Island March 16.

Second prize was won by John A. Bennewitz and fourth by David H. Murphy. Michael O'Hern and James Woodard tied for third place.

University hall was crowded with friends and relatives of the contestants. Not for years, members of the faculty say, has it held such a large audience. Applause was liberal and frequent.

The first contestant, Mr. Murphy, took for his subject "America at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century" and he confined himself almost exclusively to matters social and commercial. His style was direct, frank and candid.

Mr. Bennewitz chose the "American Volunteer" as his theme, the tendency of his argument being to cast a halo about the brow of the boys in blue. He has a good presence and delivery and as he dealt less in abstractions than some of the other speakers was thoroughly in touch with the audience.

Paul Martin, the third contestant, spoke upon "War." He pointed vivid word pictures of its horrors and told under what circumstances it is justifiable. He enjoyed perfect self-possession, seemed full of his subject and his style was sprightly, energetic and vivacious, while his composition was marked by frequently varying periods and unexpected turns which relieved it of monotony. His voice—a full deep bass—was another point in his favor.

Had the result of the contest depended upon elocutionary skill alone James E. Woodard, the fourth speaker, would have been a winner, hands down, but unfortunately for him his manuscript, previously submitted with those of the other contestants to a board of judges, had been marked down on thought and literary style and this reduced his average. Nevertheless, he was a favorite with the audience. His stage deportment, physical bearing, voice, expression and gestures were excellent and all evinced careful training and an inherent talent for the graceful art of elocution. His subject was "American Character."

Michael O'Hern is a prepossessing young man of magnificent physique, tall, straight and athletic. Applause greeted him as he arose. He spoke upon "The Lesson of the Nineteenth Century" and handled his subject so ably as to retain the good impression he had created at the start.

Music was furnished by the University orchestra.

Six of the principal institutions of learning of the state will contend for oratorical honors at Grand Island March 16.—The winner of this will represent Nebraska in the interstate contest at Denver in April, wherein ten states will be represented.

SAID SHE HAD BEEN ROBBED

But the Matron of the People's Store Finds $40 in the Woman's Hose.

A woman who said her home was in Neola, Ia., created a scene in the People's store Monday by declaring she had been robbed of $40.

"Either that clerk took it," she cried, pointing to a young woman behind the counter, "or that negro woman," indicating a fat "aunty" who was an interested spectator.

The case was turned over to House Detective Ed Cook, who conducted an examination.

"You are sure you didn't put it in your bosom or your hose?" he asked.

"Certainly not! I never put money in such places. I came in here with $50. I spent $10 for dress goods and put the four other $10 bills in this purse, and I know one of these two has got it."

The detective conducted the woman through the store, calling at each of the counters she had visited in her previous rounds, all the while plying her with questions. Finally she was turned over to the house matron. They retired to a private room, and a moment later both emerged smiling, the matron with the four $10 bills.

"Found them in her hose," she said. "The crowd in the store bewildered her and she'd forgotten about putting them there."

The woman from Iowa then apologized to the clerk and the negress and withdrew pleased, but very much ashamed of herself.

The modern and most effective cure for constipation and all liver troubles—the famous little pills known as DeWitt's Little Early Risers.

Marriage Licenses.

The following marriage licenses were issued Monday:

Name and Residence.	Age.
D. H. Smith, North Brookfield, Mass.	44
Mabel Boyd, Omaha	21
James Wilson, South Omaha	47
Mary Goldsby, Sheridan, Wyo.	40
Louis J. Paschal, Omaha	23
Lottie Tretorst, Omaha	18
J. E. Olson, Wahoo	22
Ella K. Patterson, Wahoo	24

HESS DEFIES SCHOOL BOARD

Announces His Intention of Fulfilling Duties of Truant Officer.

COMMUNICATION SENT TO THE ATTORNEY

Temporary Arrangement Made for Supplying the High School Cadets with Guns—Cowie Absent from the Meeting.

The chair of Member A. M. Cowie was conspicuously vacant at the regular meeting of the Board of Education Monday night. G. G. Irey, the other member under charge of bribery, was also absent from his post, his friends being still uncertain as to the date of his return from Pennsylvania.

Ex-Member George H. Hess, however, nothing daunted by the recent disclosures affecting his official integrity, sent in a communication virtually setting the will of the board at defiance. He stated that he had been legally elected truant officer by a majority vote of the board and wished the fact understood that he had carried out his duties so far as he had been permitted up to this time. He served legal notice that he stood ready to fulfill all the duties attendant upon the position. The communication was referred to the board's attorney.

The board gave a hearing to a delegation from the South Side Improvement club relative to the need of that locality for a public school building. J. Harry Minds, spokesman of the committee, pointed out that children were obliged to walk over a mile to attend recitations at Tenth and Phelps streets. The structure there, he said, could only accommodate five grades and was poorly heated and lighted. He asked that the board consider the erection of a new building at the earliest possible moment. The delegation was requested to put its request in writing.

The High school committee recommended that the request of the senior class to abandon the present commencement arrangement be granted. The class wishes to substitute the address of some well-known speaker for the sophomoric declamations of the graduates. The report was adopted.

Rifles for the Cadets.

A temporary arrangement was made for partially supplying the High school cadet battalion with rifles. Forty pieces will be borrowed from the state adjutant general's department and others will be secured later.

The names of Miss Emma J. Ure and Miss Florence McHugh were presented as candidates for positions at the High school and on ballot they were elected. The additions are made necessary by the increased attendance. Miss Ure will take the place vacated by Mrs. Craven at $80 per month, while Miss McHugh will go on the additional list at $70 per month. The resignations of Miss Minnie Burgess and Mrs. Elizabeth Craven, previously received, were accepted.

The High school committee reported that the following numbers had been successful in the recent teachers' examinations: For grammar school, Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 15, 17; for High schools, Nos. 17 and 18.

The committee on supplies recommended that seventeen pianos be rented from Hospe Brothers under a proposal by that firm to apply the amounts paid for rent upon the eventual purchase of the instruments. The secretary was directed to enter into contract with the music dealers.

A resolution was presented by Howard and passed notifying the council that inasmuch as the board paid a fixed rental for the use of the fifth floor it be provided with better elevator service and more satisfactory heating accommodations.

A resolution was passed that the alley in the rear of the Pacific school be brought to grade at once, the board to bear one-fourth of the expense and the city three-fourths.

A report was received from the superintendent of construction to the effect that the Cass school would be ready for occupancy next Monday. It was suggested that the opening of the new sixteen-room building would make changes necessary in the district boundaries and the subject will be taken up at a latter meeting.

The committee on claims presented a detailed list of expenditures amounting to $2,832.13. The items were allowed as read.

MR. LOBECK'S POPULAR LOAN

Councilman Tells the North Omaha Improvement Club About It—Club Proceedings.

The North Omaha Improvement club held its regular weekly meeting Monday night, the new president, C. H. Grattan, presiding for the first time. The president stated that the new standing committees would be announced next week.

The matter of the opening of Brown street from Twenty-fourth to Twenty-seventh was brought up and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Robert Houghton, Ed Mullery, W. T. Nelson and George W. Craig, was designated to call upon the mayor and request him to appoint appraisers to assess the damages to the property owners today, so that the council could act in the matter at tonight's session.

After considerable discussion the club passed the following resolution:

Whereas, The contract for putting in and repairing sidewalks having expired, we respectfully, but earnestly, protest against the reletting of the same, believing that the city can and should look after this work and have it done by day labor, and we are opposed to the city letting any contract for work that is not absolutely necessary under the law.

Councilman Lobeck stated that he had proposed a written amendment to the bill, providing for the issuing of $3,000,000 of bonds for the purchase of the water works by the municipality, to the effect that $1,000,000 of said bonds should be issued in amounts of $100 each, said bonds to be offered to the citizens of Omaha in the form of a popular loan, and that the matter would come up at the council meeting tonight. Councilman Karr was present and went on record as favoring the popular loan idea.

A resolution calling upon the council to make a levy for park purposes sufficient to raise the sum of $30,000 was passed after some discussion, during which Councilman Karr said that he would not vote to confirm the mayor's appointees on the Park board the next time they came up for confirmation unless at least one of them lived north of Dodge street. An effort was made to get Councilman Lobeck to agree to the same plan, but he cleverly changed the subject without giving the promise. A committee consisting of W. I. Kelrstead, J. Y. Craig, Councilman Karr, Robert Houghton and John Morrison was appointed to bring the park resolution before the council.

W. T. Nelson addressed the club on the matter of personal taxes, showing how real estate in Omaha is paying more than its share of the taxes, while personal property escapes.

BOARD DOES LITTLE BUSINESS

Fire and Police Commissioners Express Sympathy at Death of Charles J. Karbach.

The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners met Monday night and transacted a small amount of routine business. Charles Coffin and John F. Engel were appointed as regular pipemen on the fire department. Chief Redell reported the sale of a lot of old hose and iron wheels for $21.65. A. A. Bebout, sergeant of the police force, was given his annual ten days' leave and Officer Frank D. Mitchell was allowed ninety days' leave without pay. Robert E. Allen was appointed a special sanitary policeman to fill the place of Louis Littlefield, resigned. Eighteen new saloon licenses were granted.

Resolutions were adopted expressing sorrow at the death of Charles J. Karbach and showing the esteem and honor in which the members held their departed member. The resolutions were signed by a committee comprised of M. H. Collins, F. A. Kennedy and V. H. Coffman.

...AMUSEMENTS...

"The Liars"—

A comedy in four acts by Henry Arthur Jones. Presented for the first time in Omaha, at Boyd's theater, Monday night, by Otis Skinner and his company.

THE CAST.

Sir Christopher Deering	Otis Skinner
Edward Falkner	Frank A. Sylvester
Gilbert Nepean, Lady Jessica's husband	E. A. Eberle
George Nepean, Gilbert's brother	Harry Hyde
Freddie Tatton, Lady Rosamund's husband	W. C. Andrews
Archibald Coke, Dolly's husband	H. Rees Davies
Walter at the "Star and Garter" at Shepperford	Alfred Edwards
Taplin, Sir Christopher's servant	Harold Winters
Gadsby	Lewis Webster
Mrs. Crespin	Clara Everett
Beatrice Ebernoe	Emma Lindberg
Dolly Coke, cousin to Lady Jessica	Ethel Strickland
Ferris, Lady Jessica's maid	Blanche Neat
Lady Rosamund Tatton	Helen Strickland
Lady Jessica Nepean	Nanette Comstock

As a dramatic entertainment Omaha theater-goers have seen nothing better so far during the present season than Henry Arthur Jones' comedy, "The Liars," and it is extremely doubtful that a more advantageous opportunity will present itself during the remaining portion of the season, despite the fact that there are a number of excellent attractions booked for appearance here between now and the middle of June, which marks its close. This may appear to be a rather broad statement, but doubtless every one who was fortunate enough to see the splendid presentation given Mr. Jones' equally splendid play by Mr. Skinner and his excellent company Monday night will agree with the writer upon that portion of the assertion that it is the best in its line that we have enjoyed this season.

Not that the play is faultless or the presentation perfect, but the faults of both are so insignificant and are so clearly overbalanced by the good points of each that one who found fault with either would justly be classed as overcritical. The theater program is authority for the statement that "The Liars" is a comedy, but so many dramatic situations grow out of the bright repartee that it may properly be classified as a society comedy-drama. It is a play touching upon domestic infelicity, pointing a strong moral, and will doubtless appeal strongly to the fair sex. In fact it is a woman's play. It deals exclusively with English society, and human heart motives and passions constitute its theme. The central figure in the story is a neglected wife, Lady Jessica Nepean, who welcomes the devotion of another man almost to the point of sacrificing her honor. Both are saved on the brink of the social precipice by the kind, restraining hand of a mutual friend—a bachelor, Sir Christopher Deering. So deftly is the story told, so effectively is the contrast between the husband's neglect and the other man's intense love revealed, that one cannot but help sympathizing with the two who come so near making the fatal mistake. Yet bitter as is their parting, there is a feeling of relief when after Sir Christopher has convinced both lovers of their mistake, Lady Jessica leaves for her home upon the arm of her husband.

There is not much of a story told in the play, but it is its evolution which affords the entertainment. The action is started by Lady Jessica Nepean, the neglected wife, amusing herself by a flirtation with a very serious admirer, Edward Falkner, a man who has achieved all sorts of things in Africa. She meets Falkner at a country inn, where a little dinner was anticipated. The brother of her husband, however, discovers the pair and then begins a complication of lying on Lady Jessica's part and those of all her friends to shield her from the fury of her husband, Sir Christopher Deering finally induces the woman to tell the truth, and the play ends pleasantly.

The character of Sir Christopher Deering, a sort of a social meddler and a mender of broken hearts, is portrayed by Mr. Skinner and is one of the most satisfying and artistic that he has ever attempted. Monday night he was at his best and was never seen to better advantage here. His delivery of the final warning to Lady Jessica and Falkner in the last act was indeed impressive and entirely free from staginess. His speech is the epitome of the play. Miss Nanette Comstock is also seen to advantage in the role of Lady Jessica, although it is not altogether an admirable one. The different emotions of the character are always at her finger tips and she handles the part with the finesse of a thorough artist. The other parts, save in perhaps a single instance, are all commendably done.

The engagement of Mr. Skinner continues for three more performances and will close with a matinee and an evening performance Wednesday.

ACTIVE IN LABOR'S FIELD

Clerks Meet Wednesday to Reorganize—Omaha Man Honored by Building Trades.

There is renewed activity in local labor circles since the holidays and the workingmen are beginning to get into shape for what they hope will be one of the most prosperous years that Omaha laborers will have seen in a decade.

On Sunday afternoon the retail clerks held their first meeting since the holidays began. During the rush of that period union matters were overlooked by the clerks and a meeting will be held Wednesday for the purpose of electing officers and outlining the work for 1900.

O. P. Shrum has just returned from the meeting of the National Building Trades' council at Milwaukee, where he was elected sixth vice president of the organization. He will make his report to the local council at its meeting Thursday night.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

James Dinsmore of Hebron is registered at the Murray.

John D. Stough of Ponca is registered at the Merchants.

Milton Doolittle of North Platte is transacting business in the city.

Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester of the Otis Skinner company, are at the Murray.

R. R. Whitman, advertising manager of the Kansas City Journal, is at the Millard.

Mrs. H. Hallman of Baltimore, and son, Leon Hallman of Chicago, are in the city.

James Peagins, a stockman with ranches at Woodbine, Ia., and Alliance, Neb., is at the Murray.

Judge W. W. Slabaugh of the district court left for Chicago last night for a brief visit with friends.

Mrs. Mary Nesmith, accompanied by her daughter, Barbara, of Shenandoah, Ia., is in the city having her eyes treated by an oculist.

EASILY PROVEN.

There is Not the Slightest Necessity for Leaving Omaha to Look for Proof.

The experience given below by this well known citizen of Omaha is easily proven. The proof he offers for his convictions can safely be left with the reader. It is a difficult matter to describe an aching back or any of the ills caused by disordered kidneys. How to cure the trouble is of much more importance and the most exacting citizen of Omaha cannot ask for any better authority on this point than that given by Mr. A. Rauscherf, house and sign painter, No. 105 North Twenty-eighth avenue, whose office is at No. 105 South Fifteenth street, telephone No. 1080, who says:

"Backache? Why, I had it so bad for two years that it awakened me at night and when the attacks were at their height trouble with the kidney secretions set in. When I went to Kuhn & Co.'s drug store for Doan's Kidney Pills I had very little faith in their merit, but half a box cured me, although I took more to make the job certain. It seems curious that after using liquid medicines and other preparations for my kidneys Doan's Kidney Pills should effect such a wonderful and rapid cure."

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