



THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEB., SATURDAY, JULY 27 1895.

OBSERVATIONS.

If all politicians were patriots what a patriotic place Lincoln would be! The town couldn't hold all the patriotism. As it is, it can hardly hold all the politicians. Lincoln is one of the most intensely political cities of its size to be found anywhere in the country. A large portion of our people eat and drink and sleep and dream in politics, and measure their existence, not by days and weeks and years, but by campaigns. Something of an attempt to cover the local political field has been made in this week's COURIER, and the extent of the field can be judged somewhat by the showing made.

In Lincoln, and in fact all over Nebraska, the crop of politicians is fertilized by the frequency of campaigns. There are so many offices and the terms are so short and the elections are so numerous that men are drawn into politics with the idea that everybody will have his turn—that there are enough places to go around, and that waiting is sure to bring its reward. But if there are many offices there are a hundred fold more politicians, and experience has shown that the chances of success in politics are not any more alluring than they are in business. It is exciting however, and men sometimes keep on trying until they have worn the hair off their heads and the shoes off their feet, and then retire unsatisfied—a high private in the rear ranks.

The usual talk of an extra session of the legislature is now heard. About this time after every session of the Nebraska legislature in the last ten years, it has been shown conclusively that the business of the state could not be conducted without an extra session to rectify the blunders and make good the omissions of the regular session just ended. Those persons interested in these projected special sessions always make a startling showing of figures, and the credulous are convinced that an emergency really exists. But somehow or other the emergency is safely passed and the state manages to get along tolerably well without an extra session.

It is a fact that an extra session is now being seriously considered and it is made to appear that unless the governor makes a call, the state's business will be severely crippled. It is being figured out that a session at this time would save the state a great deal of money. Of course no one will deny that the legislature did many things it ought not to have done and left undone many things it ought to have done; and it is doubtless true that some embarrassment will result from the carelessness and inefficiency of members of the last session; but the state will somehow manage to surmount the difficulty. Governor Holcomb has too much sense to call an extra session.

An extra session would be expensive; it would not be able to afford much

relief in the directions sought, and it would bring flocking back to Lincoln all that herd of nondescript ragamuffins and disgusting scamps that trooped upon the heels of legislators, and fed on the putrid morsels of blackmail and general political corruption. It would bring about another visitation of that festering parasite Walt Seeley, a professional lobbyist, and of that other abhorrent specimen of Nebraska manhood by the name of Barber, assistant secretary of the senate; and with Seeley and Barber would come all the other vultures and night fowls that subsisted on the carrion of dishonor and corruption. There were good men and true in the last Nebraska legislature, and there is no intention to defame them; but the body as a whole was not a source of pride, and the people of Nebraska will be content to worry along without another session at this time. Special sessions are always humbugs. One called now would be several degrees worse than a humbug.

It would better to submit to a great deal of inconvenience than to convene the legislature again. It would be better to do almost anything than have another session of that body that passed away last April unhonored and unsung. The republicans controlled it, and it is to the discredit of the republican party, that they did. The legislature was wholly ineffectual as a proper law-making body; it was extravagant and shiftless and indifferent to the welfare of the people of the state; and there is no reason to suppose that an extra session of the same body would be any improvement on the one lately ended.

It is cheering to note that now, in the dulllest month in the dulllest year in a decade, Lincoln shows signs of unmistakable activity. Numerous building enterprises are under way, the various improvements of this sort easily aggregate \$500,000. And one of the most important building enterprises is that of the Nebraska Telephone company. This company is not only erecting a large building on Thirteenth street, south of O, but it is voluntarily placing all wires in the business part of the city under ground, at a total cost of \$100,000. Mr. Eiche tells me that his company is placing itself in a condition to meet the needs of a city of 200,000 inhabitants. May the company speedily be called upon to meet this demand.

THE COURIER has not hesitated to profess its allegiance to Rev. Irl Hicks, and that allegiance will not falter so long as events vindicate his prophecy. Of course when the weather shall go back on the venturesome St. Louis forecaster THE COURIER will follow the weather and go back on Hicks too. But thus far the weather conditions have amply sustained Hicks, and I observe that people are beginning to regard him in a serious light. I am told that a well known speculator in grain in this city visited Hicks in St. Louis several weeks ago and gave him a liberal fee

for a definite forecast of July and August weather; and it is said the weather prophet makes a handsome pecuniary profit by services of this sort for market traders. Speculating in grain is commonly believed to be a devilish form of gambling, and I suppose Hicks with his clerical title can justly be accused of being accessory before the fact. But have you noticed that his statements concerning the weather published in his almanac, have made remarkably close connection with succeeding facts? Since attention was first called to Hicks' prophecies in these columns, several months ago, he has not made a single slip so far as this section is concerned. It will be remembered that he said the rainy weather in June would continue into July, and Nebraska as a whole, and the west as a whole, have had an abundant rainfall in that period. To be sure there is a part of Lancaster county, contiguous to Lincoln that has not been particularly wet; but Mr. Hicks did not make his prophecies with special reference to Lancaster county.

This summer if you have been looking for land so wet that the water just oozes out of it, you have found it in the so-called arid and semi-arid regions of Nebraska. Down here in Lancaster county and the south eastern part of the state, where we usually have more water than we can drink or make use of in other ways it has all but disappeared until the water in the arid west is in the proportion of about 16 to 1 as compared to the supply in this erstwhile soggy section.

Various reasons have been assigned for the unusual, not to say phenomenal drouth in Lancaster county, especially that part of it comprised within the precincts of the city of Lincoln. But those people who are regular attendants upon Sunday school and who are on speaking terms with their Bibles, have little difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon. They forget not Sodom and Gomorrah and all the wickedness that stalked and rioted in these ancient cities, and they remember the wrath that was visited upon them in punishment thereof. Neither are they unmindful of the vice that existed along with the hanging gardens, in the fair Babylon of old, and they know that Babylon was wicked and was destroyed. And they know of many cities that were wicked in their generation and that were made to suffer. They know the fate that overtook Rome; and knowing these things and firm in the belief that history repeats itself, they readily account for the local plague. Is not Lincoln a wicked city? Has it not grown steadily worse in the face of divers warnings? Have not the Bealls and the Chapins and the Shepherds and the rest raised their voices in solemn protest and spoken in thundering tones of condemnation? And have not the people mocked? Do we not know that we are bad and impenitent, and is it not apparent that punishment is being visited

upon us? This is so plain that everybody can see it.

Have you ever, gentle reader, ventured down town of a pleasant Saturday night in summer? If you have not you have never seen one of the most interesting phases of Lincoln life. If you have you have seen that which has made you think of the scenes in some smaller eastern or southern city, or suggested the incidents of old country fete-days. You have seen, ere the glimmer of the sun has given way to the shades of night, young men sally forth with the Saturday night look on their faces, carrying in their pockets a residue of their week's wage and on their backs Sunday raiment donned aforetime. You have seen the white muslin dress and the yellow hat with pink flowers, the white shoes and what-not of the unconventional Saturday night maiden. You have seen the white dresses with enclosed femininity issue one by one, or rather, two by two, and increase and multiply until they have overwhelmed the main thoroughfare, and forced the tide of humanity to overflow into the side streets. You have seen the holiday young man and the holiday young woman appear and gather in force, aided by a smattering of plainer elder-folk until as they march up and down O street, they sweep everything before them. You have seen early in the evening the young man and the young woman sauntering along hand in hand; later as the crowd loses in number and restraining influence and the closing of the shops makes a more uncertain light, you have seen or may have seen arms and waists become intermingled, and conventionality ushered out with the dying week. If you are observant you have noticed a transitory care-free expression on faces marked by the lines of trouble and age, an expression of temporary relief and gaiety; you have observed the pleasure of the people in spending money. It is a general holiday, and you note the good nature and liveliness of the people who are enjoying it. As you thread your way along through the crowd in light summer clothes you are attracted now by some dazzling show window, now by the music and exhortations of a Salvation army band or group of plain evangelists. At the street corners you hear the piping voice of the fruit vendor or are accosted by the man with the lung tester or some other similar device. As the evening wanes the man with the little hand cart makes his appearance, and you may stop and exchange a nickel for a wienerwurst or hot tamales. It is a democratic, cosmopolitan, free and easy, supremely interesting gathering of humanity—this Saturday night reunion—like a market day in old Ireland, or bourgeoisie fete in France and if you have never observed it, you will enjoy the sight.

One wonders where the people who crowd the thoroughfares Saturday night keep themselves the rest of the week.