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OBSERVATIONS.

B. Fay Mills who conducted a revival in Lincoln a year or two ago is stirring up the people of Des Moines. The church people prepared the way for him by prayer, and praise of Mr. Mills and when he came, for a while, they still upheld him. But his fireworks did not ignite sinners to repentance and he turned upon the churches. He said they were behind the times, out of touch with the people, and of no real use in spreading the gospel of Christ. The churches retorted, that however imperfect the service they were performing for religion, he showed very poor judgment and some malice in attacking them before unbelievers and non church-members whom he was trying to convert by a daily exhibition of hysterics very painful to a civilized audience but which they had not criticised for fear of turning some one away whose heart he may have reached. Then B. Fay Mills called them hypocrites and pharisees which relapse into bad temper closed his effort to convict the Des Moines folks of sin and to induce them to repentance.

Mr. Mill's methods are those of the negro preacher: exaggerated tremolo, and tears, heart breaking appeals and reproaches, with no address to the intelligence or reason of the audience which has assembled for no other purpose than to be, and to see others, tortured. Mr. Mills has a certain amount of magnetic influence and for years he has been in the habit of seeing audiences respond by writhing and groaning whenever he turned on the current. The people in Des Moines went to hear him as they would go to any show of which they did not consider themselves a part. The great soul-winner's reputation was at stake and he

began to call names and to lay his defeat at the door of the church. Let us hope that the incident will end the career of B. Fay Mills.

In the discussion which his charge that the church did not answer the needs of the people, aroused, a lawyer of Des Moines was asked if he thought the gospel of Christ a success, "Gentlemen," he replied, "I am not in a position to intelligently reply to that question. It has never been tried." Individuals like Count Leo Tolstoi, and a few of the settlement humanists in New York and Chicago, are trying to love their neighbor as themselves, to judge not, to envy not and to be compassionate. The social and religious meetings, which occur every night in the rooms of the settlement house are filled with people whose preachers have come to them, thus fulfilling the command: "Go ye into all the world" etc. But it is true that churches as corporations do not literally obey the law of Christ. Preachers say that the exact application of the golden rule is impracticable and that Christ never intended it for a working rule for others and so on. Although there is more tenderness, charity and good works in the church than any other corporation, there is still not enough to season the world.

The Iowa legislature is considering the case of the department store. The question is, is one large store worth all the butcher shops, grocery stores, china, shoe, jewelry, leather and furniture stores that supply the citizens with commodities. The proprietors of which in turn deal with each other in endless interchange.

The department store has the advantage of the individual dealer because it can make a prize offer out of any one of many commodities without affecting the original stock. When a Lincoln department store offers soap at less than manufacturers price, it effects every grocer here. Because he sells groceries and only groceries. If he makes his soap lower than he can buy it again, he has no drygoods to sell at an exaggerated margin and get back his soap money. Public sentiment is a weak factor and not to be counted upon most of the time, but occasionally it is aroused enough to ignore an immediate bargain for the sake of self preservation.

The Iowa legislature is considering a bill which defines the stock of a retail merchant and taxes everything which can not logically be classed under that stock. For instance, it draws the line between drygoods and china-ware between clothing and furniture. And if a drygoods man wants to sell china-ware, clothing and furniture he will have to pay a tax not imposed on the separate dealers in those articles. Such a bill would be extremely difficult of application. The line between many lines of goods is so indistinct. Who can say when a shawl becomes a drape or a rug, or an embroidered frame

should go to the picture dealers? Nevertheless the American people when exasperated and outraged have decided more complex questions than this with success.

The present legislature is composed of men who hold their situations on account of their advocacy of the under dog. They are opposed to trusts and to everything else which imposes on the many to fatten one. If aroused to a sense of injustice they are likely to do what they can to make it inconvenient for the oppressor in all branches of the oppress business.

Mr. Freling C. Foster a member of the printing firm of Foster & Co. is a candidate for the position of public printer.

Mr. Foster was born in Brewster, Mass., 40 years ago. He began work on the Register of that city while a boy, and has been a printer since. At the age of 20 he came to Chicago, where his reputation as an inventor and a wide-awake student of all improvements in his line is well known. His long years of thorough business training, and his reputation as a printer should leave no doubt in the minds of the public as to his ability to fill the position he seeks.

From recent Washington dispatches it appears that Senator Thurston has united with Senator Allen to defeat the confirmation of Judge McHugh in the Senate. Senator Thurston has made a number of mistakes since he assumed his role of director to the Republican party of Nebraska and his action in this matter is not the least of them. Judge McHugh has incurred the bitter enmity of Allen and the other Populists because he came out openly in support of McKinley and the Republican platform. He is well qualified in every way to fill the position to which President Cleveland appointed him. He has the almost unanimous support of the bar in his district. Since acting as Judge he has made a most favorable impression both here and in Omaha. His confirmation would be a graceful acknowledgement of the assistance rendered the Republican party by the sound money Democrats. Yet all this has no weight with Senator Thurston. Not satisfied with what he has already received himself and with being sole dispenser of the political pie in Nebraska, he wants this office for his law partner, and therefore all questions of the best interests of the party or the wishes of the bar or of the majority of the Republican party whom Senator Thurston is supposed to represent must be set aside, and the confirmation defeated in order that Dick Hall may be made Judge. It is a mistake which Senator Thurston will have cause to regret in the future. Mr. Ed. Sizer sent to Senator Thurston the strongest set of endorsements ever prepared by a candidate for office in this district. There is no question but that the appointment of Ed. Sizer U. S. Marshall of this district would greatly

strengthen the party. As an organizer and fighter E. I. Sizer is without an equal in the state and in this position he would be able to give considerable attention to reorganizing and building up the party. But Senator Thurston wants to give another position to a Lincoln man—a personal friend who, so far from strengthening the party would be a source of weakness in this district. Those in a position to know claim that this friend will receive his appointment, thus making the appointment of Mr. Sizer out of the question, and Senator Thurston will have driven one more nail into his political coffin.

City politics are very quiet just now. Local politicians are waiting to see what the legislature will do with the new charter bill. There seems to be a strong feeling against a police and fire commission appointed by the Governor. There is a fear that Tommie Allen or Tommie Warrell might be appointed and the citizens of Lincoln are not yet ready to turn over their municipal affairs to the "post-office Tommies" or men of their ilk. A great many business men republicans and democrats alike are in favor of reducing the number of councilmen and above all in reducing the expenses of the city in some way, but while there are some good points in the new charter as proposed, still its adoption as a whole would be far from satisfactory to a majority of tax payers. However it will probably be thoroughly discussed and amended before its passage even if it is allowed to pass at all.

The New York Journal of January 17 contains a picture of Nebraska's Devil Corkscrews that grew or were made in the Bad-Lands before the song of the morning stars grew inaudible.

"What are they? As to this there are several theories. Some think they are fossil gopher holes—the underground homes of rodents related to modern gophers, which lived perhaps a couple of million years ago. Another theory is that geysers made them, another that lightning caused them, but Professor Barbour is certain that they are fossil plants, and that they grew, great forests of them, in water ages and ages ago.

"The Substance of his House," poems by Prosser Hall Frye. Mr. Frye is a new comer in the English department in the State University. The poems are full of melody and mystery. Some are puzzles which I can not read, or reading a line or a stanza, fail to comprehend the meaning of the whole. "The Substance of his House" was not written for a literal mind, but for one which knows how emotion and experience are transmuted into color, music, verse. Still the phrases recur as the parts of a rebus which I can almost make prose of: "If this means this, then, the line will paraphrase so." Mr. Frye is a symbolist, an impressionist, a painter of wet weather