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OBSERVATIONS.

It is fitting that Secretary Morton should have one last scrap with congress before he leaves it. As Secretary of Agriculture, he has strengthened opposition in his political opponents, as well as antagonized those of his own party. He, no more than President Cleveland, considers the unity of the party as an object worth striving for. Without concession or compromise they have both striven to impress their own individuality upon Congress and the nation. They have both succeeded in smashing a united party into unrecognizable atoms. Mr. Morton is a disintegrating, an explosive energy, and he cannot help knocking things in his locality to pieces. Before he went to Washington the party in Nebraska, through Mr. Morton's influence, had already created animosities which only the sod can cover. At his birth the fairies gave him everything by which success is won except one, and that is the power to succeed. He has brains, integrity and force. But wherever he goes he antagonizes the instruments which he must use to attain his end. However laudible and beneficial to the race that design may be, the congressional representatives or that part of it which inhabits the United States, being a combination of belligerent Irish, stocky Dutch and bull-headed English, must be entreated gently and deferred to. The descendant of Irish, Dutch and English ancestry prefers to hang on to an old foolish custom rather than give it up, although he would laugh to scorn a new project no more foolish than the one which he respects because of its age. A case in point is the "Deceased wife's

sister" bill which "The Lords" have refused to pass every year for fifty years.

Legislative bodies will not allow any man, especially a cabinet officer, to pose before them as of superior virtue and integrity. Mr. Morton refused to distribute the seeds which congress had authorized. His reasons were cogent, but that had nothing to do with the case. Here was a gentleman farmer from Nebraska informing Congress that it had authorized a silly and wasteful and needless distribution of seeds to agriculturalists who did not need them. If Mr. Morton had been able to accomplish his end without making his own wisdom and virtue the reproach of each member of congress he might have ended the seed distribution fiasco. Instead of that "what reforms he has accomplished in the agricultural department have been secured in the face of the most vigorous opposition both from his own party and from republicans. He will leave Mr. Cleveland's administration with probably more enemies than any other member of the cabinet, but with full satisfaction of having carried through, in a number of instances, his own peculiar ideas of departmental administration against the combined opposition of the politicians in both branches of congress." Considering the antagonism which his reforms have created in congress there is little hope that they will be permanent. Mr. Morton says he is going to Japan. Well, there are many abuses there that need attention. The Japanese are small and Mr. Morton may succeed in doing them good.

It is to be regretted that when a bank fails, the cash on hand and that which is constantly coming in from notes which fall due, is not paid to the depositors, but to the lawyers and the receiver, who hold their jobs as long as there is anything in sight. Because of their number and their impotence, depositors' claims are the last ones to be considered. In the case of the quondam Capital National the money which is being paid in is absorbed by the men in charge of the obsequies, which will last until the youngest defrauded depositor is dead. Then what is the use of a receiver or an absorber? The people want a transmitter.

Mr. Bryan's proposal to insure the depositors against loss is reasonable and just, and gives the abused majority a chance which it has not had so far.

The new populist officers of the state are fashioned like the governor. They are large bovine herbivorous animals, used to the open air and ignorant of the drawing room or opera house pitch. But they never decline an opportunity to make a speech, however inoffensive the audience. Their voices have what is called "the section line pitch." It is meant to reach a long ways and it would, if the walls of the building did not pre-

vent and bounce it back on the ears of an intimidated people. Naturally the pitch that is convenient for an hoy! or a hulloo! is impossible to sustain. When the secretary of state speaks, after the first sentence he gasps and inhales barrelsful of air every gasp and exhales it with a spasm that is most painful to us, though his powerful frame may not be disturbed by it. Withal he has a pleasant, boyish face and seems anxious to improve. When he arrived in Lincoln, the place of his new splendour, it was not more than a fortnight until he discarded the buffalo overcoat which he wore when he arrived, and appeared, immensely pleased himself at the change, in a new fox coat. He would not be obliged to get a new voice, for he has plenty, only he does not use it economically or easily. He seems to have ideas and, as I have said, his personal appearance is prepossessing.

The legislature as a whole are well disposed towards the university. The members would have less business sense than their success has demonstrated that they possess, if they showed an unwillingness to grant the university appropriation. The university is a poor man's school and returns and will return an hundred fold to the state which supports it. The agricultural college by introducing scientific methods on the farm will make farming more profitable. In a decade's time an undiversified farmer will be a curiosity and a crop failure an impossibility. That an agricultural state has neglected for so long the study of agriculture is a reproach and we are paying for this neglect now. Within itself the state has all the resources, undeveloped but potential, that make prosperity. Some of the best scientists in the country are in the faculty of the agricultural school. It is their object to make the dairy, the poultry yard, the cattle range and the arable field, yield their economic maximum, with a corresponding lessening of labor. In the last fifty years the productiveness of all kinds of labor has been multiplied. The farm machinery has enabled the farmer to plant and reap more acres in the same time. It has not increased the productiveness of the ground and until lately agriculturalists have not tried to bring in certain desirable elements in vegetables and to discourage those which are not food. This is the method used at the agricultural school. They are developing the beet with the most sugar, the potato, wheat and corn containing the largest quantity of the special characteristic for which it is grown.

When agricultural schools were started, an unknown number of years ago, everybody made fun of them. The newspapers said that to learn how to plow you must plow, etc. The man who underestimates today the benefits of an agricultural school is a specialist so deeply immersed in his own topic that

his opinion on any subject of practical value to the world we live in has ceased to be of any value. Mr. Harrington Emerson, formerly a professor in the state university, who lived in Germany as a boy and passed through the gymnasium and afterwards through the university, said that the German fellows and professors were like men digging a well, each one only separated from the other delvers by a few feet of earth but utterly unconscious of the fact, ignorant as well of the light and air above them, occasionally they look up when the shadow of a passer-by is cast upon their work, or when they send up the result of a season's digging. But they are so far down that the surface of the earth and the men that walk upon it are nothing to them. Though the diggers occasionally send up something of permanent value to mankind. Their acquaintance with the present is limited and their opinion of it's needs worthless. Such was Mr. Emerson's characterization of the specialist on a subject whose study took him away from mankind. It is a definition which obstinately recurs whenever I hear one of these worthies criticize any modern function or institution not fusty and mouldy with age. But the worthies have their place and if they occasionally forget it, the world does not, so they do no harm and much good.

If it were not that the endurance of a great corporation is the sum of the units of which it is composed—a thousand or two thousand man-power, as the case may be, the railroad companies would have gone into bankruptcy like so many of their individual patrons. A dispassionate consideration of the duties and relations of a railroad company, (it does not have any privileges), to the public is rare. Newspapers are on one side or the other. There is justice and injustice on both sides. Meanwhile the interests of both are identical. The company has all the advantages of an absolute monarchy so far as its own affairs is concerned. With a man like the recently deceased President Roberts, of the Pennsylvania road, who had a special railroad genius, the system was like an army in the field under the control of a general. The whole field is within his vision and he can make his flexible forces advance or retreat as the character of the ground and the position of the people and his opponents change. Legislative action, which is the only method of expression the people have, is slow and frequently planned to meet tactics, which, long before the bill can go into effect, have served their purpose and been abandoned for others. The following statement of an old complaint of the people against the rates and the defendant's reply is worthy reading.

It is the favorite argument of the western farmer and his representative in the legislature that railway rates are kept unreasonably high in order to make them pay big dividends on watered