

# THE COURIER

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## OBSERVATIONS.

Few of us are generous enough to refrain from enjoying the "I told you so" victory when the disaster we prophesied occurs. The confessions from the state treasurer and auditor have made a republican victory even in the city more doubtful than ever before. Our only hope is to nominate a man whose character is above reproach, who has been tried and not found wanting. The Courier warned the members of the last republican state convention that the nomination of a machine politician with nothing else to recommend him would result in a populist victory. In articles that were widely copied in the state papers the Courier foretold the condition of affairs which the Eastern papers are now discussing under scare headlines.

The prestige of the war has played out even in Nebraska, where the Grand Army still has an obstinate hold on politics. Prestige and ancient history have nothing to do with the case. The voters at the republican primaries this spring must select a man for mayor who has the respect of the people as well as a claim upon the party for services rendered. Eventually it makes very little difference to the taxpayers what the politics of the mayor is. On and before election day many citizens are convinced that their welfare depends on the election of the party nominee. Afterwards the mayor stands on his own merits. If he is honest and capable the people of both parties recognize it. It is only to a very few men that politics is of more importance than their own business. If the mayor administers the affairs of the city economically and efficiently each

man's pocketbook will be, by so much, the heavier. Therefore, republicans! by the experience of the past in state and city, by the needs of a tax-ridden people, by their needs and their threats, nominate a good man for mayor. One whose reputation for integrity is of such long standing that even a mayor's opportunities will be ineffectual to destroy it.

At this time, when the bad conduct of two state officials has brought discredit upon the republican party, there are signs of a general moral convalescence that I have not seen before. Steady old partisans who have had absolute faith in the party leaders, have begun to discredit their judgment and the young men who have been satisfied and inspired by the historical meaning of republican are disgusted with the history the republican party is making. Under these conditions the machine is in danger of going to pieces and there is a chance for the nomination of a strong man. Read the handwriting on the wall or this humble member of the press will have another opportunity to refer to its gift of prophesy.

The following letter was received from Mr. Wakefield, the secretary of the Transmississippi Exposition in answer to a criticism that the editor of this paper made on the entirely Omaha personnel of the directory:

Editor Courier:

I have your letter to the manager of the Transmississippi Exposition in relation to the circular sent you by the department of publicity, giving information in relation to the organization of the board of lady managers.

Your writing would indicate that you entertained very bitter feelings against the exposition and whether this feeling arises from knowledge that the exposition is calculated for and against results of a valuable advancement of the material interests of the state of Nebraska and from the result and benefits which every district, every city and every town must feel and participate in the benefits thereof, or whether from some lesser feeling, is perhaps not a consequence.

The fact that you, as a citizen of the state feel compelled to combat the efforts of the progressive citizens of the state in endeavoring to secure for the state we love so well the benefits and advantages that can only be derived from an undertaking of this sort causes us a strong feeling of regret. You have not, perhaps, fully realized the work thus far done by this exposition management, nor do you seemingly realize the fact that \$410,000 of subscriptions to the capital stock of the corporation have been raised in aid of the exposition in and within Douglas County, Nebraska; that not as many as half a dozen subscriptions have been obtained from outside of Douglas County, and that they do not amount in value to so much as \$300.

Should directors of a corporation be chosen from among others than stockholders?

When Omaha raises the above amount and proposes to raise an additional amount, bringing the total subscriptions to at least \$600,000, do you not think that it is proper and incumbent upon

the state as a state to appropriate one half as much as the city of Omaha itself raises for the purpose? Is Omaha and Douglas County a part of the state of Nebraska or is it a section peopled by persons opposed entirely to the interests of the remaining interests of the state?

Your letter would seem to indicate that you, as one of the citizens of the capital city, entertain in this sort of feeling toward the modest metropolis.

Before I came to Nebraska from Pennsylvania I was proud of the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburg, though I was a resident of one of the smaller towns in the smallest county in that great state.

I am to day proud of those two cities. Do you think that it was wise for Nebraska to appropriate \$100,000 for participation in the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 and now refuse to participate in an exposition designed to illustrate the resources, products and capabilities of the transmississippi territory, comprising two-thirds of the United States in area?

I cannot but believe that you have not given the subject full, earnest and careful consideration, but have viewed the proposition from a somewhat prejudiced standpoint. I trust you may be disposed to lay aside any prejudiced views or any personal interests you may have in the matter and join in the common effort of the patriotic citizens and women of the state to advance the material welfare of the state by aiding in all ways possible and at all times the promotion of this great enterprise.

Yours very truly,

JOHN A. WAKEFIELD,  
Secretary.

Mr. Wakefield evidently expects to be answered with a rousing disclaimer when he asks: "Is Omaha and Douglas County a part of the state of Nebraska, or is it a section peopled by persons opposed entirely to the interests of the remaining citizens of the state?" Seriously, if the exposition is a success the rest of the state will be benefited as much as Omaha, perhaps more, for the state will not suffer from the after effects of a fictitious and temporary rise in the value of real estate, board, lodging, etc. In order to make it a success the people of the West and of the East must spend a great deal of money. The West in making the exposition worth coming 1,500 miles to see and the East in coming to see it. Now the middle class in both these sections has been drained of money. It was the plain people at the Columbian Exposition that made it a success. The rich people were there, but they were lost and unnoticed in the multitude of farmers, mechanics and country people. There is not enough of the leisure class in this country to make or unmake the fortune of a show. They can stay at home or go abroad at will. They are not enough to count. The World's Fair was the holiday of a lifetime for the plain people who dwelt on the coast, on the plains and on the mountains of this country. Styles which were old fifteen years ago were worn in perfect ignorance and implicitly at Chicago in '93. Draped overskirts and Bologna sleeves were as plentiful as at a fancy dress party. In their wedding

clothes the wearers were spending the savings of twenty prosperous years. They spent them and now the next generation will have to earn their own education money. Not that all who could afford it went to the World's Fair in Chicago, but that great show is so recent that a smaller one is not apt to attract the people of the East who did not spend their money at Chicago. Whether there is enough strength in the "spirit of the West" to awaken sectional pride and unite the transmississippi people in an effort to show the rest of the country what they can do remains to be seen. The West has never been "solid." The people come from everywhere. They have not been welded together as the South was by an effort to preserve any characteristic institution. If an exposition could effect this it would be of questionable benefit. To be an American is better than to be even a Nebraskan, and Nebraskans know it. Yet every citizen of the West will take pride in showing the East what we can do. Although it is still not quite obvious what advantage the exposition will be to Nebraska. By the way, speaking of the name Transmississippi, why not Cismississippi? The people on this side of the river are getting up this show—with the help of the newspapers—why not name it, unless it is too late from our point of view? If the Eastern people come here many of them will get a view of the East from the West for the first time. Cismississippi would transpose their position mentally. If names have any meaning or influence the show should have been baptised from this side.

The most interesting book about books I ever read lies before me. "Six Modern Women," by Laura Marholm Hansson. The book is a translation from the German. Laura Marholm, the writer of this book, is a German authoress of Norwegian extraction, who is celebrated for her literary criticisms and the beauty of her style. Eight years ago she married Ola Hansson, the Swedish author of "Sensitiva Amors," "Young Scandinavia" and a novel called "Fru Ester Bruce." Laura Marholm was the first to introduce her husband to the German public by means of two articles in the "Neue Frei Presse," which appeared some time before the intuitive critic met the Swedish author. The translator's introduction says that in all her writings Laura Marholm looks at life through the spectacles of a happy marriage; she believes that matured thought and widened views can—in a woman's case—be only the direct result of marriage, and consequently she considers marriage to be absolutely indispensable to every woman, and that without it she is both mentally and morally undeveloped. According to Ibsen, a woman is first of all a human being and then a woman. Laura Marholm places