

# THE COURIER

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## OBSERVATIONS.

In sentencing ex-Treasurer Bartley to twenty years in the penitentiary there is reason to suspect that Judge Baker has made a grand stand play. The opprobrium of his leniency to C. W. Mosher still rests upon him and election time is fast approaching. THE COURIER can not be accused of any maudlin sympathy for the convicted treasurer. W. Morton Smith, the former editor of THE COURIER, was the first to announce, several months before the state convention, that the treasurer was short in his accounts and for that reason was making desperate efforts to secure the nomination of McNish, who could be relied upon to keep the discrepancy between the actual cash on hand and that which should be in evidence, a confidential matter between the new and the old treasurer; a relationship and consideration by the old for the new, sanctioned by the established custom of Nebraska state treasurers. It will be remembered that in a series of editorials Mr. Smith, whose republicanism was of the staunchest and most uncompromising quality, made definite charges against the state house ring and that in the state convention which assembled soon after, no candidate to succeed him, who was known to be favored by Bartley had much chance of recognition. It will also be remembered that the snow storm which covered up McCall was predicted by Mr. Smith. He said that the self-respecting republicans of the state would not vote for a man who is known to the public principally by his

abbreviated first name or by his habit of wearing a blue shirt. Events proved that the "Toms" and "Joes" and "Jacks" were strong enough in the convention to nominate one of their number for governor but powerless to get enough votes to elect him. The disasters, which one after another have befallen the republican party in this state, are due to the character of the ring which has managed conventions and superintended state campaigns for the last twenty years. When Mr. Bartley was still treasurer and hail fellow-well-met with the bankers Mr. Smith did not hesitate, when investigation had convinced him that the funds of the state were being improperly used, to present to the public the results of his investigation. In view of this record THE COURIER is not afraid to express the opinion that Judge Baker in sentencing the defaulting state treasurer to twenty years in the penitentiary and by the grandiloquent, outraged-virtue speeches by which he interrupted the judicial proceedings of the trial, disgraced the bench. The ex-treasurer was steadily decreasing the debt he owed the state. There is considerable doubt of a criminal intent, though the evidence of juggling with the funds is clear. In doing which he did not offend against the traditions of the state treasurer's office, which has enabled treasurer after treasurer to enrich himself in four years. The public is justly exasperated at the system, and Judge Baker has taken advantage of the feeling to give Mr. Bartley a cumulative sentence for the sins of his predecessors and for his own (Judge Baker's) political behoof. Does Mr. Bartley deserve fifteen years more than Mosher and twenty years more than Outcalt because he was succeeded by the nominee of another party? The capital bank conspiracy was a deliberate plan to rob and to place the swag where, after punishment, it might be recovered and enjoyed. Mr. Bartley's attempt to manipulate, with profit to himself, the state funds, is authorized by the practise of his more fortunate predecessors, who were able, except in one case, when the time arrived and the man with it, at which and to whom the funds in the treasurer's keeping must be delivered, to present so far as the public is aware, a satisfactory statement.

It is doubtful if the vicarious sufferings of Mr. Bartley will assist Judge Baker to attain his object. The people will remember Mosher. That man reached immortal fame in Nebraska in a very short time, and he carried others with him into that bright light that drives office seekers into curious and ineffectual deeds of expiation. Mr. Bartley should be punished, but not in excess of much greater criminals. And the unwisdom of the law which makes such manipula-

tions of state funds possible should bear the results of its construction.

The condition of the A. S. Raymond house which the Sigma Chi fraternity has occupied for nine months is an excuse for the statement that education does not educate. Fraternity members designate outsiders as barbarians. Barbarians pillage and desecrate. They know no law but that of force, no motive but their own pleasure. The property of others belongs to them if they are strong enough and quick enough to get it. Members of the Sigma Chi fraternity have been known to orate with horror on the losses to civilization occasioned by the northern hordes who sacked Rome. They deplore, in pretty periods, the destruction of priceless manuscripts and of the sculpture of an age never to be equaled in artistic production. Then they return to the chapter house on R street, break into rooms locked up by the owners and stored with the private property of the landlord and his wife. In trunks and bureau drawers they find various articles more suited to their own glory and adornment than to that of the absent house owner, who is anyhow not to be considered, not being a fraternity man. Without scruple the careful housewife's folded treasure is appropriated. Unconsidered trifles are thrown upon the floor and left to be trampled upon and kicked about by the successive intruders who tramp in and out according to their own caprice. The most curious and unexplainable claims to gentle blood and breeding are made by these tenants. Perhaps that is the secret which the fraternity so carefully guards, namely, how a man can do the deeds of a Bowery loafer and be at heart a gentleman. Yet the fraternity system is firmly established at the university. It plays an important part in the social life of the school. Fraternity friendships are made, and generally kept for life. Fraternity members have the advantage of introductions to college men the world over. The system has much in it, of both evil and good. It is especially adapted to satisfy the gregarious instincts of the very young men who insist upon its excellence in all respects. The herding tendencies of the race are older than the organization of the first tribe and they will last as long as the race does. But unless the club life is infused with and softened by a consciousness of the ethical responsibilities of the fraternity and the individuals of it to the community, it becomes in spirit and in conduct an outlaw. I have no doubt that there are members of the Sigma Chi society who deplore the sacking of the Raymond house and who tried to prevent it. Yet in the general condemnation expressed by the community and by other fraternities the Sigma Chis bear the blame and the manly fellows

who are known to be members, suffer unjustly but inevitably in the general condemnation. If the membership wishes to restore to the local chapter the good name which the fraternity has elsewhere they will reimburse Mr. Raymond for the damage done his house and furniture. Otherwise the fraternity can have no hope of filling the annual losses with good men.

The last number of *The Woman's Weekly* contains an excellent editorial on the subject of the expediency of the housekeepers of the town where the state federation is in session, being obliged to entertain the delegates. Very few mistresses of Nebraska houses keep more than one maid of all work. Many of them do not keep any. The presence of one or two strangers in the house makes it impossible for the mistress to leave it, so that she misses entirely the inspiration of the addresses and business. Miss Fairbrother suggests that each club pay its delegate's expenses at the hotel or that the delegate herself do so. By doing this the session would reach a commercial dignity that it lacks. The city in which the session is held would profit through the landlords and through them all the people who supply them. There is no reason why the delegates should not pay their board except that of custom. And if the custom is not founded on good principles club women will be the first to see it and give it up. THE COURIER invites correspondence on both sides of this subject. Miss Fairbrother said that:

When the state federation meets in a city it should be a red letter year in the club life of every member of that town or city. The best speakers and brightest women should be on the program. The clubs should leave a great deal and take away nothing except the inspiration of a fine meeting and the energy which comes from contact with each other. Instead of that, the experience has been that the women are taxed to the utmost for time and can obtain but a very slight portion of the good which should be theirs alone.

If all were expected to go to a hotel, pay their bills like self respecting citizens and give something to the meeting in return for the something they receive, it would place the meetings on a different plane, give all the women an equal chance to enjoy and make the club self respecting and respected. If the clubs paid their way, too, it would be possible for the state meeting to be held in towns of smaller size than could be possible under the present foolish way of doing things. The smaller cities need the inspiration of the state federation more than the other, really, and it would be a benefit all around.

The testimony of C. W. Mosher appears under big head lines in the daily papers as though it were of any consequence what he said. Without corroborative evidence his statements have no more relation to facts than the marvellous stories told by Baron Munchausen.