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### OBSERVATIONS.

It is hard to believe that those members of the council who tried to force it to accept the altered contract between the city and the Des Moines Brick Manufacturing company were working for the interests of the city. With no money in the treasury to make the payments at the limit of the time specified, that is, the first of April, and with the doubts that exist about the legality of using the repair fund for repaving, Messrs. Barnes, Stewart and Woods, who endeavored to force the council into keeping a contract, important provisions of which had been changed since their acceptance of it, are in a position before the people who hire them and pay the bills, hard to justify. This brick contract has all the points recognized by experts as belonging to those deals between cities and contractors, the profits of which are divided between the latter and their agents. But appearances are frequently deceiving, and it may be that these councilmen are animated by an unselfish desire to get as much brick as possible into the city, careless of whether the Des Moines Brick company is paid or not.

Neither the council or the taxpayers realize the very serious condition of the city of Lincoln. The taxes have been raised to such a point that probably there is not an owner of real estate in the city who would not be glad to sell his property if he could get back what the property has cost him, plus the taxes. It is no longer a question of making a good appearance before strangers, but a question of

giving up the property when it is distrained for taxes. Many cities in this country have had the same history and in every case their deserted streets and haunted stores are due to an irresponsible, boodling council who made contracts when the city had no money to pay for them. A conservative council, made up of men like O. W. Webster, would save the city from the ruin which certainly impends over it, if the councilmen in the council represent anybody but the taxpayers. I repeat that many a city whose prospects were just as good as Lincoln's, subjected to the same treatment from which this city is now suffering, has lost in population and in values. Unless the council keep within the revenue, the disadvantages of living here will outweigh our advantages of culture, climate and capital, and the mould will settle on one of the fairest cities ever despoiled by boodlers. These cities which have seen better days would resent being used as an awful example, but there are numerous cases in Illinois and Iowa whose histories will warrant such a reference to them.

The relations between the citizens and their business managers, the city council, (with some honorable exceptions), are at present abnormal. Between the business manager and his employer the fullest confidence should exist. When this is disturbed, one or the other should retire from business. A man can serve himself and his employer too. He cannot faithfully serve himself and his employer and, at the same time, share the profits of those who sell to his employer, for the plain reason that the amount of the profit depends on the price which the proprietor pays, and the agent's bribe increases by so much the price of the article bought. For such a reason all government employes, whether elected or appointed, are forbidden to receive gifts. All railroad managers or agents in whatever capacity representing the property of another, are forbidden to receive gifts. The propriety of such restrictions is apparent to those who have lived under a representative form of government long enough to have observed the very demoralizing effect of "companies" upon a once trusted and trustworthy agent.

"Corn Tassels," the new and complete edition of Mr. Dunroy's poems, is a poet's impression of the Platte river, the corn fields, the "draws," the creeks with their thin fringe of cottonwood and willow, the sky that reaches from east to west and from north to south, and the breezes that blow through all the seasons.

The likeness is good; it is satisfactory to her children. So far as I

know, no one, except Mr. Dunroy, has been able to get a good likeness of Nebraska. Mr. Bixby has tried, but he was not "raised" here. He was a boy in Michigan or Wisconsin and his poetic ecstasy is aroused by cool springs in mossy dells and forest covered hills and plains. Upon Mr. Dunroy's child retina the vast blue concave, which is the most characteristic feature of Nebraska's looks, because there are no lakes to merge into it and no mountains to intercept it, made an impression which none but a native can appreciate.

"Beyond the aching  
eye's deep straining,  
Yet other levels  
boundless lie;  
And farther still  
is yet remaining,  
A floor which meets  
the bending sky."

Those who are familiar with the Platte will recognize also the truthfulness in the lines on "The River Platte."

The broad old Platte, with  
shifting isles of sallow sand,  
Enwinds like a silver ribbon  
blotched with spots of gold  
Throughout the grass-paved  
floors of marshy prairie land.

In summer low, the grasses bend,  
Emerald, tinged with gold, they dip  
And fringe along the marge, and send  
A shadow in the depths, that makes  
A boundless dome, beneath the bed,  
Through which the river's waters wend.

And in the rank tall grass that grows  
Along the bank, the blackbirds build  
Gray nests, and lay, and tender shows  
The pale blue eggs against the gray,  
And where the water shallower flows,  
The bittern wades and catches frogs  
Found basking where the sunlight  
glows.

On either side the river lie  
Vast fields of emerald nodding corn,  
And waving seas of wheat and rye;  
And in between are willow groves  
And humble homes set high and dry,  
With straw-built sheds and stacks of hay,  
And droves of cattle grazing by.

Like jewels strewn upon the ground  
The wild flowers shine amidst the  
green;  
The air is ravished with the sound  
Of bird song. The waters lisp and kiss  
The banks; with murmuring profound  
They pour along toward the sea,  
Through boundless prairies reaching  
round.

The Platte is just as unique, if not so useful, as broader and deeper rivers. Mr. Dunroy has indicated the shallowness and the irregular current, the low, marshy banks, and the little riverside cots as an artist might.

In the days when only frontiersmen lived in Nebraska—not so long ago—

alas we are all the "new rich" out here with the vulgarity of plenty of money left out, New Yorkers, Bostonians, and gaitered and monocled Englishmen were always on the search for something for and of and by Nebraska, something flavored with Indian, sod house, prairie dog and sunflowers to take back with them and prove to their folks that they had really been in the land of the Cheyennes and the Sioux. I have seen a Boston tenderfoot from Commonwealth avenue, who was never in his life more than six hours distance from a "baath" tub, carefully cradling a buffalo skin reeking with the fumes of family life among the Indians. Everybody knows what they are: stewed dog, very gamey; perspiration, Indian perspiration, of the vintage of—and a variety of other essences extracted from the Indian's tent, where this buffalo hide was preserved and etched by the squaws. Yet the traveler clasped it to his white casteel breast nor minded the effect upon his stomach because it was "Nebraska." There are many still who do not wish to believe that Nebraska is anything but the land of dime novel romance. Mr. Dunroy's book is an impression of the winds of the prairies, of the everlasting sun, of the skies of Nebraska. It is a souvenir of the white man in Nebraska and a sign of the future.

What makes the other churches hate the Christian Scientists so? The latter are not aggressive. They believe in the power of the spirit. They are obedient. They love their neighbor and they keep a tranquil mind. Death and loss of money and position is apt to embitter other church members, but Christian Scientists accept good and bad fortune as the results of a Father's love and wisdom and keep a tranquil mind. They accept what Christ taught literally and endeavor to practice it in meekness, gentleness, patience, love, charity, submission characterize these people. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Yet a few weeks ago I heard a young woman at the head of one of the Christian organizations of this city announced that she thought they were inspired by the devil. As medical practitioners they seem to be wrong. But they can cure a sick mind, and that is often more painful and harder to bear than physical injuries. For lack of proper medical attention, doubtless, many a Christian Scientist, his wife or his children have died. What of it? The sect has increased the sum of tranquility, kindness, charity, content. It has not increased the death rate, but lowered it, for the mind cures have changed

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