

ury. If they wish to deliver that which is paid them for the state to the state, they can sleep with a good conscience, but if they prefer sleeplessness and riches to an auditor's salary and a good conscience, the state, according to this decision, cannot punish them for acquiring thousands at its expense. In this incredible position has the exact interpretation of the law placed the people of Nebraska and the state auditor. While Eugene Moore was being tried the newspapers of the state refrained from expressing an opinion. For once they allowed the case to be tried in court and the verdict justified their sense of propriety, but they are making it up now by anathematizing the law which compels such a decision.

Americans are getting tired of banqueting and lionizing foreigners, and paying out dollars to hear them lecture, and of being repaid by abuse as soon as the lecturer is far enough away to call us names. The English are insular and that means that they are convinced of their own superiority. They may consent to listen to a Swede or a Frenchman or a bloomin' American, but they do not lionize him, they never lose their critical attitude, or forget for one instant that he is not an Englishman, and therefore not worthy of much consideration. Nansen is a cold blooded Swede who is repaying our hearty and generous reception by criticising our hotels, our railroads and our manners to our quondam enemies and relations, the English. He came to America to make money. He made it. We made him free of the best we had, but he has not anything good to say of us. So did Trollope; so did Dickens, and Kipling and Mathew Arnold. But the artists and singers and speakers keep coming because we have money and minds open to all forms of beauty and cannot learn that we are not elegant and that the old world despises us. American actors and actresses complain that the New York theatres are full of English members of the profession, while, when they go across the water, the English give them but scanty welcome. Americans are lacking in insularity and need to cultivate it. We have made the inventions which have boosted civilization further along than those of any other nation. We are publishing the best newspapers, writing the best books, painting the best pictures and we should not forget it.

Franklin Matthews, a writer in *Harper's Weekly*, is contributing a series of articles to that paper on the west. Under the head of "Bright Skies in the West," Mr. Matthews gives the crop and poultry reports of Kansas and Nebraska. The report of Kansas occupies three of the broad columns, while that from Nebraska fills about a sixth of the space. The author says that "It is not easy to get crop statistics in Nebraska for the reason that the state board of agriculture devotes itself to a state fair once a year and not to the kind of work that is done in Kansas. You may gather facts about Nebraska mortgages easier than about Nebraska crops and products. Governor Holcomb sent me what he said was the estimate of the state board of agriculture. The chief fact about the Nebraska figures is that they show that corn is still king in that commonwealth. The value of the 33,000,000 bushels of wheat raised was, in Nebraska, \$23,000,000; of the 230,000,000 bushels of corn raised, \$42,000,000; of the 69,000,000 bushels of oats \$10,000,000; of the 5,000,000 bushels of rye, \$1,800,000; of the 4,600,000 tons of hay, \$14,000,000. The total value of the

farm products at local market prices was \$99,000,000; dairy products, \$9,500,000; eggs, \$2,250,000; poultry, \$5,500,000; live stock, \$44,000,000—a total of more than \$161,000,000, against a total of \$230,000,000 for 1897 raised in Kansas.

"It should be recorded, in strict regard for truth, that in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and ninety-seven Corn ceased to be King in Kansas. The empire was overthrown by a revolution, and that revolution consisted of changes in farming methods. To go back further in the logic of events, it is truthful to say that the hard times in a great measure brought about these changes and developed the new farming in the Middle West."

In view of the increasing unpopularity of the state fair the state board of agriculture will probably devote their time hereafter, as the Kansas board has done, to fostering agricultural diversity. The Kansas board has a system of correspondence which Mr. Matthews says "is probably unmatched by any other state in the union. It keeps constantly in touch with all sorts of farmers and notifies them of the results in important experiments. It issues its reports quarterly, and they are not the cut and dried affairs that such documents usually are. They not only contain information, but entertainment. They are prepared by Secretary Coburn, whose work is so valuable that he is the only republican official of importance that the populists did not oust when they came into full possession of the state government. Mr. Coburn is a man of decided sentiment, which is mixed up in a picturesque way with the practical method he employs in looking after the affairs of his department. His reports bear in red ink such titles as these: "Cow-Culture," "The Helpful Hen," "The Beef Steer and His Sister."

The agricultural college of our state university is doing similar work to that of the Kansas board, which has succeeded so well as to put the Kansas products \$61,000,000 worth ahead of Nebraska, notwithstanding the fact that the latter's average rainfall is much higher than that of Kansas. The difference is in the head work and "the fostering care of the state agricultural board of Kansas, which long ago learned that a state fair was of no especial benefit to the agricultural interests of the state, but that the farmers and fields were waiting for intelligent advice and development. The faculty of the Nebraska agricultural college is in sympathy with the farmers, but a board composed of farmers and devoted to the agricultural development of the state occupies a point of vantage not possessed by a faculty of scholars, however devoted to the subject it is employed in teaching.

Mr. Matthews says that in leaving for the west a Chicago editor said to him: "An American race of giants is to come out of the Middle West." I think you'll find indications of it. They are the most intelligent people on earth. The native-born population number 90 per cent of the whole. They have had hard times and have been in distress, but whatever may be said of them and their vagaries, they are already beginning to produce giants in intellect."

Mr. Proudpop—You surely don't believe in infant damnation, do you?

Mr. Sourmug—Well, we are told that heaven will be a place of peace and rest.

"What is the 'winter of our discontent,' pa?"

"When you have to write summer jokes with the thermometer ten degrees below zero."

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The Passing Show.

WILLA CATHER.

Mr. E. S. Willard is one of the most discerning character actors of his generation, one of the keenest intellectual interpreters of modern drama, and as such he deserves to be taken seriously. Acting has become one of the most intensely subjective of the arts; players have their own playwrights, who are *en rapport* with all their personal mannerisms and predilections, and who write for them one part over and over, one part placed in different surroundings, set off by different foils, thinly disguised by the costumes of different centuries. Actors usually prefer adapting their parts to themselves rather than themselves to their parts. This is a perfectly legitimate and often admirable form of art. It is one, however, which necessarily subordinates the actor's creative intelligence, which in time quite blunts the edge of his intellectual acumen, and finally paralyzes the purely creative impulse altogether. This has been the history of all those gifted young temperamental actors who achieved success too early—of Mantell, of Charles Coglean, of John Drew, of Edward Sothorn. Having once charmed by peculiar gifts of temperament they were assured that those same qualities would charm again and ceased from that travail of the intellect which inevitably accompanies artistic progression, and with their own hands built the wall which shut them from the stars.

I like Willard because he is the antithesis of all this; because he is so calm, so self-contained, so ascetic, so seemingly concentrated upon his work each night and so careless of the results. I saw him every night last week and it was always the same. You go into the theatre with much the same feeling with which you open a novel by Henry James. You may not be greatly moved at any time, but the most respectable part of your mentality will be awakened, refreshed, interested, satisfied. You will see a theme perfectly handled, an idea developed with consummate skill, and a high artistic conception admirably portrayed.

There is no man on the stage today, Richard Mansfield excepted, who keeps his personality so entirely out of his work as Willard. Behind each part you recognize the same piercing mentality, but his physical and emotional personality he leaves behind him when he steps upon the stage. He has no favorite attitudes which are always applauded, no thrilling intonations like Sothorn's famous "sweet-heart," which always makes the same hearts flutter. He is altogether above the desire to please. When he presents a character to the public, he presents a character of his imagination. He gives to that character not only a motive but tastes, standards, mannerisms, personal attributes all its own. No two characters could be more wholly different than his "Professor" in "The Professor's Love Story" and his "Bailey Prothero" in the "Rogue's Comedy." Different not only in moral tone, but in physical, emotional and mental attributes. He seems nightly to have approached and made the acquaintance of his character again, to have introduced himself to it anew, so wholly is it a thing apart from himself. He seems each time he plays to feel afresh the subtle pleasure of character study, to stand by and watch with keen enjoyment while the strange chemistry of the soul is at

work, to never weary of experimenting with a given spiritual organization in a given environment. His work has a scholarly flavor; it smells of the midnight oil.

His analysis is so clear, so accurate, so penetrating that it is almost dispassionate. Undoubtedly he lacks the warmth, the magnetism which is the chief charm of strongly temperamental players. You never for a moment feel that the man's whole self is speaking to you across the footlights, you hear and see only a cleverly wrought character, an artistic creation. And you catch the player's spirit, critically and dispassionately you watch his character. His appeal is to your intelligence.

He appeared here this year in "David Garrick." It is his first season in the part, I believe. It is as thoroughly admirable as his other impersonations, and, like them, just a little cold. While he was here he spent his days out at the Carnegie library surrounded by dusty tomes on the life and times of Garrick. I used to drop in of an afternoon just to see that quiet, studious gentleman there; it rather renewed one's faith in the seriousness of the drama.

To me the most remarkable thing about his "Garrick" is the way in which he reproduces the atmosphere of the time. He plays the historical "Garrick." The note of modern intensity is never sounded. This is a "Garrick" of other times and other manners, a player of the Drury Lane theatre; always somewhat theatrical, often declamatory, who reads Shakspeare as the actors of the eighteenth century read him. In the tippy scene I fancy Mr. Willard rather overdid this theatrical side of the man when, in speaking to the woman he loves, "Garrick" forgets his odious part for a moment, and talks of the true inspiration of the stage. He spoke for her ear alone, and even "Garrick" would scarcely have indulged in declamation then, however florid his usual manner. In the last act, when entreating the girl to quit his apartments and return to her father, this tinge of the theatric is almost entirely absent, and I thought the character became more convincing from its absence. Yet it is in the tippy scene that Willard does his best work. Under "Garrick's" feigned intoxication, his hatred of himself and his

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