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## OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. Woodward is chairman of the committee for the revision of the city charter. Would it not be well to appoint someone to revise his revision? Say some common man who comprehends the parts of speech and their relation to the ideas of a statesman and patriot. Otherwise the next generation of patriots who are now in school will lose their way when they undertake to explore the city charter. In a maze of pronouns and dislocated sentences the meaning of their venerated forefathers will be likely to escape them, and should they chance to be councilmen their notions of what is the law according to the charter must be as vague as the present revisor's.

Walt Mason explains in a department conducted by him in one of the city papers that gentlemen do not spit on the floor in public places. Well, the objects who use the Funke and the Oliver for target practice must be called something and "men" is so dignified and honorable and ancient a term that I hesitated to apply it to the nasty and numerous habitues who ruthlessly and selfishly destroy pretty gowns and transform an elegant opera house into a disgusting place. The offense in question is committed by well dressed men whose appearance indicates that the occasion is worth dressing for. But ladies in their vicinity tuck their gowns about them and endeavor to protect themselves and their frocks against the tobacco spitters, but in vain, for they seem to think that all the proprieties were complied with when they assumed

tall collars and expansive cuffs which they take pains to keep jerked into the view of their nauseated neighbors. Tall theatre hats are a nuisance, but a manager who discriminates against them without isolating a corner and a tank for tobacco chewers has only begun his public service.

The report of the secretary of the Lincoln charity organization society is encouraging to those who have persisted, in spite of opposition, in the scientific treatment of pauperism and poverty. According to this report the average number of applicants for aid in the first three years of the association's existence, viz.; in the years 1893, 1894 and 1895, was 751. In the last three years the average number applying for aid was 533. Since the establishment of the wood yard the number of applications have been fewer. The last two years the number has dwindled to an average of 456. The society is a clearing house and investigating committee. When an application for aid is made to the society the secretary refers the application to the church or society or club of which the impoverished applicant is a member. In the year ending October 31, 1898, it is known that 30 were Methodists, 10 were Baptists, 50 were Catholics, 2 were Episcopal, 16 were Presbyterian, 4 were Seven Day Adventists, 4 were members of the Salvation Army, 8 were United Brethren, 10 were Lutheran, 2 were Congregational, 4 were Christian, 2 were Hebrew, nine were miscellaneous and 207 belonged to no church, or 153 were church members, while 207 had no church connection. The Episcopal, United Presbyterian, Congregation and Hebrew churches have the reputation for looking after their own poor and these statistics show that it is, at least locally, well earned. The report further states that 102 applicants came from Nebraska and 24 from Omaha, which is remarkable in a report supposed to give only the names of things instead of the real facts.

When the agents of the society are satisfied that help outright is needed applicants invariably receive it, but unremitting effort is directed to helping the poor to aid themselves and the steadily decreasing averages of the last three years indicate that the intelligent attempts to lift the poor out of the pauper class have been successful in a large number of cases.

The W. C. T. U convention in St. Paul decided on Monday to give up the Woman's Temple which the union throughout the United States has made self-denying efforts to pay for. The object has never seemed quite adequate to the contributions demanded. To what degree the temple was to extend the cause of temperance or what relation that sky scraper bore to the rum fiend has never been clear to the rank and file of the W. C. T. U.

workers. Local societies have nevertheless loyally continued to make donation to an object which only faith in the board of directors made expedient. The first cost of the building was enormous and the rentals which were counted upon to pay the mortgage have not paid the interest on it, while the local temperance work has suffered from the amount subtracted from the local subscriptions to send to Chicago. The only arguments used by Mrs. Matilda B. Carse, to whose complicated financiering much of the difficulties surrounding the temple is due, to show the temple's connection with temperance, has been that it was a nucleus, whatever that means; that it was something for women to be proud of that women had accomplished, and that its final success would be a fitting monument to Miss Willard. But in the face of the impossible sum to be raised and the fact that an exhaustion of the union's resources for this purpose would not materially benefit the cause of temperance its release to the mortgage holder has at last been decreed by a large majority of W. C. T. U. delegates. Mr. Marshall Field, who holds the mortgage, has been very generous and offered to contribute \$50,000 in cash and \$50,000 in stock, but as \$100,000 is a small fraction of the debt on the temple, the convention very wisely decided not to continue the diversion of temperance funds from their legitimate object any further.

Every now and then the papers contain accounts of wonderful inventions by Tesla or Edison or some more obscure inventor which, when adopted, will revolutionize business and systems of war. Yet nothing revolutionary has resulted from the telephone or the phonograph. Business to be sure has been facilitated by the former, but we could get along without it easily. The phonograph is beautiful, but it is a toy and an exhibition freak rather than anything of commercial importance and these are the two most marvelous inventions of the century.

Incredulity is of course quite apt to be confounded and Mr. Tesla may be able to focus his machine in New York on a receiving machine in Paris with thousands of miles of the earth's curve between the two, but it is easier to believe it after it is accomplished than before. The reputation of a wizard is enough to make us gape and gasp whenever his name is mentioned because we have been brought up on fairy tales and do not really know anything about either the possibilities or the limitations of electricity. There are plenty of people who believe in the Keely motor, and there are just as many who are willing to take Tesla's word that he can transmit electric energy without wires by pointing a funnel and make it hit the receiver 2,000 miles away through a section of the earth. When he does this it will be time enough to believe that light

does not move in straight lines but can be made to turn a corner. But previously we prefer to cling to demonstrated truth, even though we are like Gallileo's contemporaries who refused, for conscience sake, to believe that the world is round.

Mr. Wanamaker has placed \$20,000 in the bank and advertised that he will deliver it to any person who can prove that any legislator of the legislature soon to convene in Pennsylvania has been bribed. The sum is large enough to make bribing on Mr. Quay's part very costly as well as risky. As with certain candidates who will come before the Nebraska legislature this winter, there is a justifiable suspicion that money will be used to get votes which can be attracted in no other way, this move on the part of Mr. Wanamaker is clever indeed. The man who is willing to take a bribe if it is large enough, will, of course, sell his self-respect to the highest bidder and unless Mr. Quay can afford to overbid the market price of \$20,000 a vote quoted by Wanamaker, it will be dangerous and futile to offer anything.

So long as nobody has been able to discover any difference in Pennsylvania and Nebraska virtue some such expedient might be useful in encouraging the Nebraska legislature to vote for a senator who will be a credit to Nebraska instead of a large dealer in votes, whose notions of statesmanship are expressed in figures of how much it can be made to pay.

Stepniak, in his book on the Russian peasantry, says that the agricultural class constitutes 82 per cent of the entire population which, in 1886, was sixty-three million souls. Therefore he says in Russia the agrarian question is the national question. "On the moujiks rest the financial, military and political power of the state as well as its interior cohesion and prosperity." In the emancipation acts of 1861 and 1866 the individual allotments of land were not large enough to enable the peasants to raise enough to support life and pay their taxes from harvest to harvest. Thus they have had to borrow money and for security have mortgaged their labor. So that in effect they are again enslaved. As a result of the heavy taxation which amounts to over 92 per cent of the net produce of the land and the small acreage cultivated by each peasant starvation is decreasing the population at an otherwise unaccountable rate. "A mortality exceeding 17 per thousand is abnormal and due to some preventable cause. This standard is reached in Norway, in the rural districts of England and even in large centres of population of the United States. In England, whenever the death rate rises to 23 per thousand, a medical and sanitary inquiry of the district is prescribed by