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OBSERVATIONS.

The election of the Hon. M. L. Hayward as United States senator after a weary struggle is very gratifying to the party and the people in general. There is little doubt that Senator Hayward has been the choice of a large majority of the people from the start. Although many of the candidates from this city were able and honest men, who have been identified with the party in this state for twenty years or more, and it would have been gratifying to Lincoln had one of these men been elected, yet the state, as a whole, through the country press and through representative delegations, desired the election of Senator Hayward. In this respect the legislature has accomplished the same result as a popular election, albeit somewhat more tardily.

Senator Hayward's election will strengthen the republican party, and he is a man worthy of the honor. It is to be regretted that the election has been deferred so long. The legitimate expenses have been great and the friends of all the candidates, as well as the candidates themselves, regret the heavy expense the latter have been caused.

When the legislature adjourns it has been proposed to give a banquet to the Lancaster delegation. A number of prominent citizens have asked THE COURIER to publish the proposition in order that the enthusiastic gratitude of those who are interested in Lincoln may have time to increase in volume and depth before the occasion arrives. These devoted men having laid aside

all personal considerations in order to serve the district which elected them certainly deserve some public recognition.

Therefore has it been decided to give them a banquet, decorated with flowers and the national colors. For their course has been characterized by patriotism, both national and local. In order to have the expression as full as it is in reality, all classes and conditions of men are to be invited to the spread. Such unselfish devotion ought not to go unnoticed. Future delegations in reading of the rewards conferred on the Lancaster delegation for its distinguished services in the legislature of 1899 will be encouraged also to be disinterested and loyal to the interests of their constituency.

In view of the postponement of the understanding between the gas company and the council which the resort to the supreme court threatens, Mr. Walter J. Lamb's advice to the council to offer a franchise to any responsible company willing to furnish gas at the price offered by the council, has met with the approval of consumers. If the council is not legally competent to fix the price of a commodity delivered through street conduits and by overhead wires the only other resort is to invite competition or for the city to erect gas and electric light works of its own. Many of the largest private business houses in the city have put in plants and will doubtless be willing to furnish the council with figures regarding the cost of the system in use now as compared with the cost of the light formerly furnished by the gas company. If the company is furnishing gas and electricity to the city as cheaply or almost as cheaply as the city can build and operate its own plant it would be inexpedient to increase the number of city employes and departments. But an intelligent attempt to find out the cost of furnishing gas and electricity may result on the part of the people in a decision that the company is furnishing light at only a reasonable profit. Neither the council nor any reasonable citizen has any grudge against the company, nor wishes to deprive the company of a legitimate profit. But there are indications that the price may be lowered somewhat without confiscation and with the results of an increased use of gas and greater harmony and confidence between the consumers and the company.

Not one of the many men who have labored in the city council has the experience and knowledge of Councilman O. W. Webster. For about twenty five years he has been more or less directly connected with the legislative body of the city. He has an exact memory, he depends, with reason, upon his own mental processes, he is not afraid either of stating his conclusions or of sticking to them. If he had been more politic and less outspoken

he would have made fewer enemies, but his friends would have had less reason for their confidence and approval. The political mistake he made a few years ago weighed against him in the last election. But Mr. Webster's services to the city are of so unique and valuable a character, it is ungrateful to remember his transgression, if it were a transgression, against him. Stored away in orderly sequence in Mr. Webster's memory is the political and financial history of Lincoln for the last quarter of a century, together with a knowledge of the bosses and influences which produced the events and elected this or that city officer. He is so good a councilman for the very reasons I have quoted. It is upon him that the transient race of reporters and newspaper men depend for information and light upon any past or contemporary subject of municipal interest or legislation. Therefore is it, that everybody who knows this very modest gentleman is rejoiced that he is recovering from his severe illness.

I have been watching with some interest reviews of Richard Realf's poems by literary critics whose opinions have a high value in the New York magazine market. So far not one has concurred with Walt Mason's estimate of Realf's poetry. As to Realf's character, it was unworthy to be a part of the same personality which wrote the poems—some of his poems. In regard to the discussion which has arisen over Miss Cather's palliation of his character because of his poetry, the critics of the critic are undoubtedly right. A sot and a bigamist is a sot and a bigamist, no matter what divine gift, meant for a clean little soul, fell upon him as he lay in his cradle. Much was given him, but he buried his life in a pigsty and on that last day in San Francisco when he took his life and his life back to the owner it was wrapped in so foul a napkin, and reeked so of broken vows and bestiality, that it was well for him, no being of three score years and ten was his judge. He had destroyed the lives of four women. His own misery does not count for much when compared with woman's woe multiplied four times and just as poignant to commonplace, innocent souls as to the soul of the criminal genius who caused it.

He took his life because one of his betrayed victims dared to follow him and complain of her wrongs and wreaked a hysterical, maddened revenge upon his manuscripts which she found in his room. When Realf came in and found her tearing his papers, he said the end had come, and, like a coward, laid his death to the woman rather than to the too-long delayed result of his crimes. He was a debauchee, he had broken all the vows which the ordinary ungifted citizen of this country keeps as a matter of

course. If he had not been dowered with what we call genius, the friends and neighbors of the women he destroyed might have gone after him in a posse, caught him and hung him, where many a poor wretch born with a clouded brain, has hung. Realf does not deserve pity of the sort he played for in his last poem. Like kings and queens a genius should be uncommonly good, rather than hold a license for imposing on creatures who cannot create but only humbly admire. To the blind and the dumb the world is pitiful, and he who takes advantage of dumbness or blindness loses caste, may be stoned, and ought to die. But the genius who has an extra sense, more powerful and wonderful than all the common ones we possess, is, forsooth, to be excused when he scruples not to deceive and betray us—the dumb and blind from birth.

To the blind no joy so great as seeing, to the dumb no benefice like speech. The writer who can create an immortal poem, a play, or a novel, think you he does not know he is happy beyond all men? Would Poe have changed places with the richest man he knew of? We owe them much these men of genius, but when they brutalize themselves as though by prescription we have learned that their crime is all the greater because much they have received.

And the genius is dependant upon us—the commonplace—for an audience and for wages.

If he choose to behave like Poe and Realf we grant him an audience but keep back most of his wages and the devil pays him with death.

I agree with Walt Mason, the constant, though not unkindly, critic of the publisher of this paper, that women, above all, should uphold righteousness and take treatment for hysterics. Let us not be deceived by a man who writes about himself as a martyr pursued through life by fiends thirsting for his blood. He is only a man we have spoiled by praise, credulity and our agreement not to apply the rules of life to him. And let us acknowledge the truth that our own low standard and mean appraisal of goodness compared to brilliancy is chiefly responsible for masculine imperfections. Guarded from evil by an environment of customs and physical conditions, chivalrous women will do their best to protect the defenseless half of the world from temptation, and refrain from the commendation of criminals who have defiled the temples where genius dwells.

Acting under the direction of Napoleon, Ducroc wrote Barere thus: "It will be proper that Citizen Barere insert in the journals articles tending to animate the public mind, particularly against the English." It must have been a desire to animate the public mind against our own government that induced the pastor of the First