

THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEBR., SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1899.



ENTERED IN THE POSTOFFICE AT LINCOLN AS SECOND CLASS MATTER.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

THE COURIER PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO

Office 1132 N street, Up Stairs

Telephone 384.

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Subscription Rates—In Advance.

Per annum.....	\$1 00
Six months.....	75
Three months.....	50
One month.....	20
Single copies.....	05

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OBSERVATIONS.

The County Convention.

Although a number of good men were nominated in last week's republican county convention, none of the nominees has any reason for attributing his nomination to his own fitness and integrity. On the contrary, the nominations were the result of trading. That the large part of the republican ticket consists of men, with irreproachable reputations, and possessing the good will of their fellows, is due to luck rather than to the exercise of any deliberate, discriminating judgement by the convention. The candidates who came before the convention, had arranged with the chairmen and other candidates a number of combines. In these combines men who have not the entire respect of their fellows who have been guilty of accepting money from gamblers and of transferring part of it to a former mayor, or who were under serious suspicions of dishonesty, were coupled with better men as a pill is imbedded in jelly to make it more palatable to the patient. By this curious but only nominal concession to the squeamishness of a part of the convention every combine contained a pill more or less nauseous, and in order to elect the really eligible men it was thus necessary to vote for a man or men who had no qualifications and many disabilities for the office for which they asked the nomination from the convention.

No convention could better illustrate the superior qualities of the

Lincoln system of nomination. The county system now in use is not representative. It gives the chairman of each delegation an opportunity to control more votes than he is entitled to as an individual. To be sure, any member of a delegation can demand a poll of the delegates from his ward and secure it, but to this action there is attached a certain stigma (it is the same disability which is connected with the name of kicker) and most men are too constitutionally timid, too experienced in the good results of cowardice to attempt it. Consequently the ward or precinct is voted as a unit by the chairman, where if its humble constituents had an opportunity to vote their sentiments in a booth separated by an inch and a quarter plank from the autocratic and threatening eye of the ward boss, who is chairman of the delegation, the tender germs of conscience, good judgement and the duty they owe the neighborhood might spout into secret defiance of the boss.

The unpopularity of calling for a poll of the delegation after the chairman has announced its unanimity might have been observed when the republican rulers of Lincoln and the current republican candidates were talking over the composition of the convention, the ironical proceedings of which is now under discussion. At these conferences many prominent republicans—honest and influential, were rejected as impossible and inexpedient because it was suspected they had formed a habit of independent thinking and would be likely to ask for a poll of the delegation. Which teaches that to be a man and not a sheep or a mouse shuts the door to political preferment.

Inasmuch as men admit and ratify by their conduct that in politics they are either sheep or mice and as easily led into a trap or vanquished, the Lincoln system should be extended to county nominations. The Lincoln system reassures the timidest and most frightened delegates. It dissipates the fear of the reproaches and reprisals of the boss or of injury to that hopeful political pasture which most sheep look forward to, having found out that their own efforts yield a scanty living.

There is a recurring rumour every year that the central committee intends to abolish the Lincoln system in city politics. Such an event would destroy the reforms really accomplished by the Lincoln system since it has been in force here and would betray the citizens again into the hands of the ward wolves who batten on the primary system up to the adoption of the Lincoln system, the real basis of which is man's timidity coupled with his predisposition to righteousness when it can be safely practised. The principle being in accordance with human nature, the system is justifying itself every spring and fall to the increas-

ing satiety of the saloon politician. And if there is one effect of the saloon worse than another, it is the saloon keeper in politics. He has no ideals of liberty only purposes to serve. One member of the city central committee, is a saloon keeper whose impatience with the Lincoln system has been expressed.

French Justice.

The reflections that have been made upon French hysteria since the Dreyfus affair got into the cable would make a city library. But the decision of the court of cassation to revise the matter in spite of the threatened revolution shows that the French people are not afraid to do justice, nor to revise a verdict though the army and the majority of the bureaucracy may oppose it. The most radical republicans over there believe that the republic will be strengthened by a fair trial of Dreyfus. A republic which can be jostled by jury trials or any of the various methods of awarding justice to all is not worth saving and the brave French souls who insist upon giving Dreyfus a trial believe that the quality of their freedom is not rickety enough to go to pieces if justice is done a long suffering Jew, even if it involve administering a rebuke to the heads of the army bureau. Any way the French have shown they deserve freedom, by insisting upon its extension to all.

As to Street Names.

The proposed change in the names of the streets in Lincoln has the advantage, as a system, of infinite expansion. If the most hopeful members of the city council have good reason for the belief that this city needs to prepare itself for two hundred and twenty-second street, the catalog system recommended by Professor Fling is perhaps expedient. The objection to the present system is that it is too monotonous, that the alphabet and the numerical system in combination deprive our other wise pleasant streets shaded by soft maple, cottonwood, catalpa and rare elms of character. The new system is no better and is even a little worse. Convicts in the penitentiary are designated by a number, their cells by a letter, and the row by another number. As a basis of classification it is perfect. The gaoler or one of the guards can conduct a lurking attorney, or a broken hearted old woman to the exact convict and cell desired instantly. But we are neither convicts nor books in a library and most of us do not wish to be easily discovered by a number and letter. Neither is it desirable to adopt a system of classification constructed solely for the benefit of strangers. It is well enough to erect a sufficient number of guide posts to convince strangers who venture out by themselves, with no map and no compass that they have lost their way, but the

streets should be named according to the convenience of the free holders who live on them, whose homes make the district beautiful or ugly as the case may be. The unbeautiful system we have, was adopted solely for the convenience of strangers with cataloging instincts who thought it would be to the advantage of science to checker board the homes of this city by letters and numbers at right angles. The revised system is more hopelessly undiversified than the present one, because the new system proposes to number away from O street north and south counting O street as one. Then the only difference between P street and N street would be in the points of the compass. The former will be known as Second avenue north and the latter as second avenue south. If strangers are as helplessly imbecile as these plans for their geographical enlightenment indicate, every guide post should be fitted with instructions as to the best way of distinguishing the left from the right hand and the north from the south et cetera. Then the new system means the addition of a word to every address. This means an increase of a third in the expense of lettering the guide posts. It increases the cost of printing. It consumes time in writing. In newspaper offices it means the printing of a new list and among the postmen who do not get reconciled and accustomed to a new address in much less than a year, the confusion in delivering mail matter would cause immeasurable trouble.

The other reform proposed, namely the acceptance of the present system, only adding to the lettered streets a name beginning with the letter they are at present known by, would have the index advantages urged by Professor Fling without the disadvantage of having the streets north and south of O street identical except for the affixed words north or south. Besides, the streets could then have a real name.

Frank Thompson.

When a man succeeds in America—and success means making money or a name or both, usually if he makes money, fame is conferred upon him too, in America—it is customary for the newspaper paragraphers to look for a humble origin and to point with pride to the opportunities which a free country and new enough not to be entirely rid of its aborigines, offers to industrious talent. When Frank Thompson, president of the Pennsylvania railroad, died on the fifth of this month, it was expected that the newspapers would announce that "he began life, a humble mechanic in the company's shops at Altoona" and they did. Harper's Weekly says: "That he was ever a humble mechanic is highly improbable. American mechanics are rarely humble under any circumstances and there was little to make