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OBSERVATIONS.

Paving.

When the brick intersections were being laid on Eleventh street and N street few people were able to understand why it would not be better to wait until the contiguous property holders were ready to pave the blocks between the intersections. Now that the landlords on both sides of P street wish to pave the street that bounds their holdings there is no fund to pay for the intersections.

In vetoing the council resolution which ordered the paving done in spite of there being no funds in the treasury to pay for it, Mayor Winnett has the support of a very large proportion of the tax payers of all parties. The Mayor has that very rare qualification of a public man—greater scrupulousness in incurring obligations which the city must pay than in expending his own income. Anxious to keep the letter of the law and obedient to the spirit of municipal government, Mayor Winnett is striving to do his duty and make no mistakes. Even the P street landlords who are inconvenienced by the very bad condition of the street must confess the singleness and purity of the Mayor's reading of the law and of his conduct.

Whenever a student of economics begins the study of practical city politics and city administration, he is immediately shocked by the reckless spending of city funds by mayor and councilmen. Conservative business men who live within their income carefully apportioning their household expenses to their earnings, reverse their rules of living when directing

how much the people shall be taxed and how and for what purpose the sum shall be spent. The cities of the United States are all in debt. No matter how rich, they have borrowed money and a very large proportion of the amount annually raised by taxation is paid out in interest. In Lincoln last year—the city year ending in September) \$55,817.50 was paid out as interest on the bonds, and \$18,000 was paid as interest on paving bonds, making a total of 73,817.50. The paving bonds are, of course, paid by the city treasurer but the property holders pay the tax as a special assessment so that the amount cannot be subtracted from the income of the city. The levy for last year was \$167,385.63, much of which has not been collected. Reckoning upon the whole amount of the levy being collected, which it has not and cannot be, the \$55,817.50 of interest money, the whole of which must be, and is, paid annually, is almost exactly one third of the total income of the city.

If preceding mayors had been governed by the standards which control Mayor Winnett the city would not now lack a paving fund. The mayor of Lincoln is entitled to the loyal support of all students of economics, of all over-burdened tax payers whose interests for the first time in municipal history are being considered. The mayor has ignored the blandishments of the agents of the asphalt company who assure him, after the manner of all agents selling articles on the installment plan, that they are not anxious about the payment for the work and are willing to take chances and all that. He is a man who does not mix propositions, nor allow them to become complex. If there is no money in the treasury for paving he is not willing to make a contract binding the city to pay monies which will involve it in a lawsuit. Being assured by council for the asphalt company that the city is safe and that a contract for paving when there is no money in the treasury to pay for paving is expedient and will involve neither him nor the council in difficulties, does not seem to be effectual in inducing the mayor to change his mind. The trouble is, the mayor has had experience. It is his habit to consider only the elements of a bargain and in a contract for paving when there is no paving fund he cannot see anything but trouble.

The Chaperone.

In Europe where young women, of even the daughters of middle class families are not permitted to go to parties, to go "buggy-riding," and to other places of entertainment with young men unaccompanied by a much older, or by a married woman, there are very few young girls shot by impatient and jealous sweethearts. Not being granted any privileges whatever, the young men of Europe do not assume the right of life or death over the young women they admire. The

chaperone is not a romantic feature of society either in this country or Europe but her presence is a constant reminder of the claims of society and family upon both the young man and the young woman.

Miss Mahoney who was shot in Peoria last week was a victim to the American custom of allowing young men to monopolize the society of young women. Her parents did not approve of the young man who wanted to marry her and he concluded to shoot her. He supposed that he loved her and he was certain that if he killed the girl he would be revenged upon her parents and justify their unfavorable opinion of him. Incidentally he shot himself. Crazy young lovers generally do. If he had not shot her he would have had to go to work or lose his sweetheart, and he preferred murder and death either to the loss of his sweetheart or to the necessity of work. If he had never seen Miss Mahoney except in the presence of her mother or guardian, he would have acquired no unreasonable hopes and his plans might have been tinged with temperance and reason. At any rate European murderers of this sort are very rare and in America they happen every day. Even the young peasant girls of Europe are accompanied to dances by their parent. The bachelors make calls on them but the father and the mother and the children, who can stay awake, appropriate his call and keep him from vain imaginings. No young girl anywhere so unprotected from herself and from maddened egotism as the American girl. In the last ten years the number of girls who have been killed by silly men is greater than the total number of dead in the Spanish American war.

Tammany.

The Mazet committee has shown conclusively just how Richard Croker has made his fortune and is daily adding to it. By his own testimony, evoked by the skillful questioning of the chairman of the committee Mr. Croker confessed that the patronage of the city of New York was deflected to this or to that one according as Croker gave orders. The Mazet committee has also shown that Mr. Croker controls the police and that the police do not interfere with the pool rooms, which run day and night.

In retaliation Mr. Croker has accused the Mazet republicans of besmirching the fair name of the city: The police tried to drag a man to jail who cheered John Proctor Clarke for denouncing Croker at a meeting of independants and republicans last Saturday night. The police did not dare arrest Mr. Clarke but when he said that Croker's pockets were lined with the gold paid him by the proprietors of pool rooms and an unknown man in the audience cheered, three policemen immediately pounced upon him and would have dragged him off had not the audience and Mr. Clarke per-

emptorily demanded his release. The periodical revolt against Tammany has about reached another climax. It has been proven for about the tenth time that the organization exists for the purpose of enriching the leaders by the profits of allowing criminals to slug and rob the citizens of New York who do not trouble themselves about politics. Such revelations have succeeded in past times in creating an interest in municipal politics among those who buy and sell and walk the city streets, and it is hoped this election is an anniversary of the other occasions when Tammany has been defeated at the polls. The only trouble is, between Platt and Croker there is only a difference in name and not in principle.

Mediaevalisms

When we read of times and people long past and dead, of knights clad in armor who rode out to adventures of rare thrill and of import vast we are filled with a bootless longing to be, at least, a spectator in the fourteenth century. To be sure, life was not very comfortable in the seven hundred years between the ninth and the sixteenth centuries. The richest people were very cold in winter and when it rained were without mackintoshes or umbrellas. The menus served to kings and queens were unspeakable. If the same cold, badly cooked, unseasoned messes were served to an American laborer by the wife of his bosom in the year of our Lord 1899, the result would depend upon family discipline, but in most households such a revival would cause a tragedy. The men and the times were interesting but brutal and there were no bathtubs. The priests and bishops frightened peasant and peer too by threatening eternal punishment to those who stayed away from confession, or were slow in contributing what the clergy demanded.

Without the discomfort and expense of presenting a play from the middle ages, leaving out the old armor and the costly properties and stage settings of the time of Old King Cole, Lincoln people can see a genuine survival of, let us say, the times when priests pretended they had the direction of the soul, after death. Father Reade of the pro-cathedral, to all appearances, is genuinely convinced that he can locate a soul in heaven or hell or in the intermediate place. His calm assumption of a power and perception, that even his Holiness Pope Leo XIII is slow to claim, is an unmistakable characteristic of the priest of the middle ages. Even the best and most rigid of Catholics do not claim nowadays to be able to speak positively about the exact stage a departed soul has reached. About what happens to the soul immediately after it has escaped from the body even the most pious, the most believing, are doubtful. They cannot answer the questions of little children nor their own. Father