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OBSERVATIONS.

The Library.

Referring to a file of the State Journal of December 1875, I find that the city library association was formed by a union of those who wanted a public library with an older Lecture and Library association, formed for the purpose of bringing the best lecturers to Lincoln and of accumulating a fund for a public library.

At this time when a modern library is about to be built it is salutary to consider the efforts and sacrifices the pioneers made to start the first one. In the Journal of December 12th, 1875, an account of the first public meeting held for the purpose of starting the library, is printed. The meeting was held in the academy of music, which just then was the only hall large enough for public meetings. About one hundred men and women were present. The euphuistic reporter calls them "ladies and gentlemen." The stage was filled with books donated by the audience, the nucleus of the library. The meeting was called to order by Mr. E. J. Cartlidge who nominated Chancellor Benton for chairman. The Chancellor said that the object of the meeting was to listen to a committee's plan for a library and reading room. General Webster was called upon and favored the adoption of the report of the committee. He said there was no one who could af-

ford to buy his own books who could not afford to give twenty-five dollars for a life membership in the library association. And some of the most intelligent families in the city, General Webster added, were not able to purchase a library. "By this cooperative plan the book fund will be of sufficient size to make one good library where all of us may browse."

Judge Mason said that when men united to push any enterprise forward it was bound to be successful. If the library project could be popularized he had no doubt of the result. He spoke very eloquently of the united efforts of men for the amelioration of men. "A few weeks ago," he said, "we raised \$10,000 to aid our friend to rebuild his opera house. If we could raise that much for him and an opera house we should be able to raise one hundred life memberships for a library. That would mean \$2,500, a very respectable capital to start with."

Mr. Harwood from the Lecture Association said that it was organized two and a half years before for the purpose of raising a fund to establish a library, when there should be \$200.00 in the treasury. All in the association were heartily in sympathy with any movement that would accomplish the avowed object of the association he represented, more quickly than the members had been able to.

A committee of ten was appointed to solicit life memberships. It was composed of Mrs. D. G. King, Mrs. C. C. White, Mrs. J. J. Gosper, Mrs. Ada Van Pelt, Miss Cole, Mr. J. L. Franklin, Dr. L. H. Robbins, Mr. N. S. Harwood, Mr. George V. Kent and Mr. W. J. Turner.

Hon. T. P. Kennard said that organizing libraries was not exactly his line of business, but he as a state commissioner was instrumental when the town was laid out in having a property worth then about \$6,000 set aside for just such a purpose. This property having been diverted from its original purpose, he advised the citizens of Lincoln to ask the next legislature to return their property.

Messrs. Kent and Harwood called upon those present to subscribe for life memberships and secured the names of W. W. Wilson, S. W. Little, D. B. Alexander, J. W. Hartley, O. A. Mullan, H. W. Hardy, J. R. Webster, T. H. Leavitt and O. P. Mason. Annual members: J. M. Stewart, Wm. Barr, J. L. Franklin, M. D. Ballard, W. W. Holmes, Mrs. George Gerrans, Lewis Gregory, George V. Kent, E. T. Roberts, Charles L. Harris, H. E. Hitchcock, Samuel Aughey, L. J. Bumstead, C. B. Parker, E. J. Cartledge, L. M. Rhodes, L. C. Burr, C. C. Burr, Mrs. L. V. Park, Miss N. Cole, C. H. Gere. The meeting adjourned to convene in a week and listen to the report of the committee.

Mr. T. H. Leavitt has written an interesting account of the beginnings of the library which is published on

another page. He himself did more than one man's share to get books for the bookless. His interest in the public library of Lincoln has not been affected by his removal to Boston where there books and books and quantities of very literary people. And among them all there is not a soul who yearns more after the comfort and the culture of the whole world than Mr. Leavitt.

Retribution.

Believers in the old-fashioned hell held that punishment was suspended until after death. Shakspeare knew better. He punished the murderer, the liar, the glutton, the drunkard, the adulterer in this world. Men who shoot will be themselves shot. Goebel was murdered because he was a murderer. One half of Kentucky is camped on the trail of the other half. Every murder is the beginning of a new feud. It is an endless chain whose first links were forged by slaves for their masters. Nobody knows, not even those who pretend to, how long the lawlessness cultured by slavery will last. We are all one country and it is supposed that we are all living in the same century, but the people of the south have not reached the development of the north. And in revolutionary times and the decade that succeeded the intellectual life of the south was more vigorous and stimulating than that of the north. It was not by chance that so many of the founders of this government lived in the south. They had a vital interest in the union. They were scholars, statesmen, jurists and their energetic and dynamic belief in democracy stimulated the whole country.

After the invention of the cotton gin when slavery became so peculiarly a southern institution its effect upon the fibre of the south became apparent. The speeches delivered in the United States senate and house of representatives by the southerners in the period between 1829 and 1860 testify to the degeneration of a people. The speeches forever hark back to the deeds, services, aristocratic birth and bearing of their ancestors. When a people boast in legislative halls of advantages of birth the beginning of the end is denoted. The speeches are full of these silly and childish assertions, and of contemptuous references to the character of the men of the north. To own a human being, to have the right of whipping, selling or killing him, develops a contempt for humanity. And before slavery was extinguished in the south the men of the south had lost their ancient respect for law and humanity. The emancipation proclamation freed the slaves but no president or enactment did anything for the white men whom slavery had displaced from their position as leaders of the democracy, to rebellious members of it, who had

lost their rank in the country and their place in the century. The number of lynchings and murders in the southern states far outnumber such crimes in all the rest of the country. The southern respect for law has been murdered. Every man has cultivated something which he calls honor, but which does not prevent him from shooting anyone who violently and personally disagrees with him in politics, rivals him in love or is shrewder in matters of business. Southerners are like children who express their rage without restraint and without caring if such expressions injure others as well as themselves. They have lost their place in the procession and they beat their heads against stone walls and shoot off guns at those who enrage them.

Mr. Goebel was not elected by a majority of the votes cast for governor, Governor Taylor was. Even northern democrats admit the fact of Governor Taylor's election. Nevertheless the shooting was a surprise to the southern democrats who have so long been in the habit of flourishing pistols at republicans without securing a return fire that they were entirely unprepared. The fierce threats of the mountaineers who swear they will shoot unless justice is done and the fact that the numerical support of Governor Taylor is unquestionably greater than that of the Gobelites, have for the first time induced them to agree to a conference, with a view to a peaceable settlement, with the leaders of the other party. If the shotgun and rifle are to decide elections in Kentucky, after this, it has been demonstrated that both sides can shoot.

Mr. Goebel was a man of action and of resources. He believed in winning by hook or by crook. He was a most corrupt politician. He fought with whatever weapons were handiest and most effective. He was beaten with his own weapons and while the man who shot him is no less a murderer his death is a logical result of his defiance of law. Mr. Goebel entered into a conspiracy to destroy the ballot and he broke the law which guarded the sacredness of human life. His assassin accepted Mr. Goebel's own rules and beat him at the game.

Genesis.

Occasionally a man who cares not a penny for the general public, begins to desire to be presented with an honorable office. In order to secure it, he must convince the public, first that he loves it, secondly that he wants to serve it because he can serve it better than any one else, and not from worldly ambition or because he has a plan to get rich which as a senator he can put in operation. The great showman Barnum has left a record showing how easy it is to fool the public. It is therefore not impossible for a designing man to con-