

# THE COURIER

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Office 1132 N street, Up Stairs.

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SARAH B. HARRIS.

Editor

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## OBSERVATIONS.

### A Soldier's Widow.

The fund for Mrs. Lawton has reached the sum of \$98,000, which is more than enough to pay off the mortgage on her home in California. The people of California have contributed generously and in very large numbers to this fund. The widow and children of Colonel Stotzenburg were left with very slender means. Through Colonel Stotzenburg's devotion to and knowledge of his duty in the face of cowardly and treasonable criticism the First Nebraska made a famous record in the Philippines, which the Nebraska legislature, recognized, by passing a vote of censure upon his treatment of the men who formed a weeping escort to his body afterwards; his men who cheered him as he leaped into the field where they crouched under a deadly fire, and who cheered him as he ordered a charge upon the entrenched Filipinos. Colonel Stotzenburg did more than lead Nebraska troops, he patiently drilled them day after day so that when the time came for action they were soldiers enough to follow him anywhere. In recognition of the silent heroism of his character, of his stern and unflinching obedience to his soldierly training and convictions, the individual citizens of the state who appreciate the meaning of Colonel Stotzenburg's ser-

vices and the sting of a state's official ingratitude should contribute to a Stotzenburg fund for the widow and children of the brave soldier who fell before the trenches of the Filipinos at Quingua. The good sanitation of the camp of the First Nebraska was due to Colonel Stotzenburg's discipline, ("to his treatment of his soldiers,") their soldierly, envied record, is due to his training. He made soldiers out of raw recruits in the short time of the encampment in the Alameda and before the actual beginning of hostilities near Manila. It was not by chance that the First Nebraska was at the front during its stay in Luzon. Colonel Stotzenburg had made a fighting regiment out of the Nebraska volunteers. Colonel Stotzenburg knew it; the commanding general in the Philippines knew it and the First Nebraska was assigned a post at the very first where trouble was expected and where it began. It was not by chance that the First Nebraska was kept busy fighting, that it was kept at the front and that other men and other officers were assigned safer and less glorious duties. Considering these things it seems to me the people of Nebraska have a duty to perform to the widow of this man who so unhesitatingly led the charge at Quingua.

The Courier will receive subscriptions for this fund. If every citizen of Nebraska who knows how Colonel Stotzenburg kept the name of Nebraska high up, where the men of all nations saw it and knew that a great fighter, a great military commander, was keeping it there, will give in proportion as he has prospered and as he treasures the fame of his state, we can perhaps convince Mrs. Stotzenburg that Nebraska is not unmindful or ungrateful. Colonel Stotzenburg was in the direct line of promotion. If he had lived no subscription would have been necessary as it is now. If he had lived, the path of glory lay as straight and plain before him as it lay before General Lawton at the close of the civil war. The two men were singularly alike in their avoidance of military ostentation, their quick perception and action on the battle field and the trust and confidence in them as leaders felt by soldiers who had been with them in battle.

Unless Colonel Stotzenburg had made that last gallant charge across the rice fields the loss of life would have been very heavy. While his superior officers ordered a retreat after he had run into the field where the men had lain for hours under a burning sun, Colonel Stotzenburg ordered them to run towards the Filipinos whose inability to stand a charge he knew. The other officers before his arrival were standing under the trees debating how to extricate the men from their perilous position. When Stotzenburg came up he comprehended the situation and

the one thing possible. He might have staid behind the trees, ordered a retreat, and been on his way to the rank of a general now, but he did not. He ordered a charge, led it, and fell with a bullet through his heart. When a Lincoln boy, a young lieutenant, just out of the hospital came upon his body he threw himself down beside his colonel and buried his head in the trampled dust and wept. The men returning from their captured trenches took up the slender body, and wailing carried it back to camp. When a man dies as Stotzenburg died, for others, and leaves his family in want, his family are frequently saved from want by the gratitude of his countrymen. Colonel Stotzenburg's family has been singularly ignored. He went into the war a comparatively young lieutenant. Notwithstanding the brilliancy of Colonel Stotzenburg's victories, his name was not frequently in the newspapers. He gave all the credit to the men of the First Nebraska and that name flashed around the world.

### Marriage and Divorce.

Recently the discussion of the question of marriage and divorce, more particularly of divorce has been revived. It is asserted by those who urge amendment of divorce laws with the view of establishing stronger bonds of matrimony or at least of increasing the difficulty of severing those bonds that the number of divorces annually granted is increasing with alarming rapidity. The probabilities are that such assertions are absolutely without foundation in fact. They are most frequently indulged by those irresponsible speakers and writers who if not sensational are torpid. Lancaster county has a population of about seventy-five thousand, about two-thirds of whom reside in the city of Lincoln. The records of the courts show that during the past ten years marriage licenses have been issued and divorces granted as follows:

LICENSES ISSUED.	DIVORCES GRANTED.	PER CENT.
1890-536.	76.	14.
1891-579.	67.	11.
1892-570.	105.	18.
1893-614.	92.	15.
1894-48.	55.	11.
1895-471.	75.	15.
1896-390.	51.	13.
1897-467.	74.	15.
1898-499.	66.	13.
1899-545.	77.	14.

Total	Total	Average annual
5,159.	738.	14.

These statistics do not indicate that there has been any severe break in the general level of marriages and divorces during a period of ten years. Nor is there anything to indicate that what has obtained here is not general throughout the states. There appears to have been a marked increase in divorces in 1892 over 1891,

and a slight decrease in licenses issued. The year 1892, was phenomenal in many respects. Both licenses issued and divorces granted reached the lowest stage in 1896. The horrors of the crime of '73, never before fully realized, so completely engrossed the attention of many people that year as to cause some to forget their anticipated plans while others became oblivious of present misery. On the whole there does not appear to be any present necessity for amendment to the divorce laws or the adoption of a uniform system by all the states.

### The Lincoln School Board.

In considering the subject of English in the public schools of Lincoln I regret that I have seemed to under-rate the services of the present school board. The board as a whole is composed of scholarly men with a single mind to the interests of the schools. The system of education in use at the present time does not educate ninety-eight per cent of the pupils. It is not exacting to demand that the half a million dollars which eight years' maintenance of the grades costs this city should prepare the children fairly well for life, that it should furnish them a working knowledge of English. The system does not do this. Excluding all the "natural spellers and writers" who are rare, the average product of eight years' instruction in the Lincoln schools has a very small vocabulary of words he can spell, he cannot, or does not use simple, accurate English and his work as a clerk, as a reporter and as a stenographer is, in consequence, slovenly and unsatisfactory even to the least exacting employer. This system however is not the invention of the Lincoln school board. The same system, with variations, is operating all over the United States. Elsewhere also the high school is considered as a preparatory school for a university or college that an overwhelming proportion of the pupils never enter. The public school system begins at the top with the education of a few and works down, where it should begin at the bottom and work up. Every grade is a component part of the system, but so far as it goes every grade should be an integral part. As it now is, the high school teachers are doing grade work, and the university professors are doing high school work. After long encouragement of fads the pupil, whose parents can afford to keep him in school, arrives at that point of educational progress where he begins to specialize. This is just the point where previous practice of five finger exercises in grammar, arithmetic, orthography and geography will leave his attention free to occupy itself with the characteristic problems of science or literature. But the system has not been disciplinary. His mind is rigid and untrained and elementary knowl-