

ity the Boer farmers and the English would have sustained a prolonged diplomatic discussion with the Boers in the place of vantage. As it is, the discussion will continue with the English in the place of vantage. Kruger's selfishness has simply ousted the Boers from a commanding position and European statesmen are discussing his strategic mistakes. Even his Teutonic cousins, the Germans, are unwilling to receive him as a guest. The responsible members of the governments of continental Europe are not hospitable to this particular kind of a refugee.

Kruger is to the Transvaal what the Empress Dowager is to China and his administration has cost the Transvaal a bloody war and a large bill of indemnities. In the early seventies, after promising his support to President Burgers, an educated, liberal-minded man, whom the Transvaal voters had brought from Cape Colony to reorganize the corrupt and inefficient Boer government, Kruger preached, a crusade against modern innovations in Burger's absence. He succeeded in ousting from office "Stim Piet" Joubert, who was temporarily acting as the head of the state. "By 1877 he had so alienated the Boers from Burger's administration that British annexation was welcomed as political salvation. Kruger immediately accepted office under the British, but was discharged in disgrace when it was discovered that he was secretly fomenting insurrection. After Gladstone conferred independence on the Transvaal, Kruger got the presidency by craft, to the disappointment of Joubert, who had done the fighting." Since his administration began Kruger and all his relatives have grown enormously rich, by exactly the same means which makes the name of Croker hated and contemned by democrat and republican alike.

The crocodile tears, Kruger shed when Emperor William sent him word that he was not at home are said to have deceived some of the members of the Reichstag who think the Emperor should have welcomed the old man whose tears and sobs while he carefully sorted out the largest sized jobs for his sons touched the Boers. The Reichstag has a working majority of men who are not easily overcome by appeals and it is pretty certain that Emperor William will not be reprimanded by his Reichstag.

Comparative Lincoln.

An act of Congress in 1896 directed the labor commissioner to investigate and report upon all cities in the United States containing more than 30,000 population. The current number of the Bulletin of the Department of Labor contains the result of the inquiry into the 129 cities large enough to be investigated. A consultation of this report discovers that New York City is the largest in population, and area, the richest and the earliest incorporated. Falls River, Massachusetts, has the highest birthrate, 38.75 to every 1,000 inhabitants. St. Joseph Mo., has the lowest birthrate 9.37 to every one thousand. Mobile, Alabama, has the highest marriage rate 23.6 per one thousand. Scranton, Pa., has the lowest 5. per one thousand. Lincoln, Nebraska, is the fifth healthiest place in this country. The four cities in which the death rate is lower are, Tacoma, Washington, 8.64, Rockford, Illinois, 8.47, St. Joseph, Mo., 8.02, Seattle, Washington, 7.43. Lincoln is among the five poorest of the 129 cities, considering the assessed valuation as a basis. Lincoln's assess-

ment is \$4,777,835. Joliet, Ills., is assessed at \$3,120,500. Quincy, Ills., \$4,620,353. Sioux City \$5,823,248. Kansas City, \$6,138,864. Lincoln is also among the five highest taxed cities. Per 1,000 population, the rate is \$77.15. Joliet, Ills., \$91.00. Peoria, Ills., \$84.50. Quincy, Ills., \$77.20. Sioux City, Iowa, \$70.00. In the assessed valuation per capita of real and personal property the average Lincoln citizen belongs in the list of the poorest five cities. In consideration of which poverty the citizen of Lincoln is listed with the citizens of four other cities who pay least of the 129 for maintaining police courts, etc. The Allentown, Pa., citizen pays 30 cents, the Lincoln citizen 48 cents, Johnstown, Pa., 49 cents, Altoona, Pa., 52 cents, and South Bend, Ind., 52 cents.

In order to obtain the foremost and hindmost city in the United States, according to this table, The Independent has credited the five cities mentioned first as 5 plus 4 plus 3 plus 2 and plus 1. The five cities mentioned last are credited as 5 minus 4 minus 3 minus 2 minus 1. Every time a city occurs in either the first or last five its equivalent numeral is set down, and the sum total of all the numerals equals its final rank as a city. The following table shows the five highest cities and the five lowest by the foregoing method. Five first American cities: New York, plus 25; Boston, plus 18; Philadelphia, plus 12; Malden, Mass., plus 8; Chicago, plus 7. Five last American cities: Joliet, Ills., minus 17; Lincoln, minus 13; Atlanta, minus 9; Quincy, minus 9; Johnstown, Pa., minus 7.

Although it is discouraging, that according to this original system of computation Lincoln is among the five worst of the one hundred and twenty-nine largest cities in the United States it is stimulating to reflect that Lincoln, thirty years ago, was smaller than an Iowa whistling station. In thirty years Lincoln has become the one hundred and twenty-sixth best city, everything considered in the country. It is flattering to be ahead of Atlanta, Quincy and Johnstown, and undesignated thousands, especially considering the start they had in wickedness, wealth and municipal sophistication. Omaha is neither among the five best nor among the five worst and thereby misses advertising. There is also a certain satisfaction in being the worst there is, if we cannot attain the best. Criminals occasionally are unable to repress their satisfaction in the Judge's words that tell the world of their extreme wickedness. It is therefore not without a sense of distinction that Lincoln takes her place among the five worst cities in this list of one hundred and twenty nine.

Shoppers.

It is a favorite amusement of western editorial writers to expatiate on the pleasure women take in doing their shopping in the afternoon so that they can catch the six o'clock cars home which are carrying tired men who have worked all day to provide these extravagant, silly shoppers with the means to shop. These shoppers are not the women of leisure who ride home in carriages, but mothers of five or six children and housekeepers, who before they enter the shopping regions must plan the days luncheon and dinner and the next morning's breakfast. They must dust, make beds, wash dirty, but fascinating little faces, comb out yards of yellow tangle on restless heads and get their owners off to school. These mothers must hurry, if they mean to shop in the afternoon,

so that when the children come home from luncheon there, may not be much time lost. Hurrying down town in the short, winter, pre-Christmas days, the shoppers find the counters thronged. Behind the barricade are the tired, nervous shop-girls whose services are perfunctory because they are exhausted and the air is made up of second-hand breaths. The shoppers wait a long time for change and the thousands of articles offered for sale, the criss-crossing desires, answers, demands, outstretched hands and interfering feet and elbows would irritate and puzzle a good-natured giant, let alone the mother of five small children. Men leave most of the shopping, Christmas and otherwise to their wives. One venture into the horrors of a crowded shopping district lasts a man a long time and the men who criticize women for shopping afternoons, invariably leave the marketing and household buying to their wives. The woman who must stand for five or six miles after a half day's shopping is regarded with neither sympathy nor good nature by the men who have spent the day in quiet offices. They consider that she has wilfully intruded upon his traction service at the very time of the day when he needs it to read his paper in. Shopping is not the diversion and recreation that men's newspapers consider it. Shopping is an exceedingly trying and difficult expedition, which must be planned for and mapped out and self-denied for, beforehand. Editors who write about shopping are mostly men who got their fixed ideas regarding it from Godey's Lady's book or from some other ancient authority. The man in Tuesday's World-Herald who wrote about the selfish women who shop afternoons when they have all the mornings and selfishly occupy space in the six o'clock cars that belong to men, has not observed the modern woman, her accomplishments, her mastery of detail, and the careful economical apportionment of her time, which is not hers to apportion till after luncheon time. One day at home in the morning with the house and meals to administer and the children to clean, dispatch to school and welcome home again with an afternoon of shopping would convince an ordinary man that shoppers were not dilettantes looking about for amusement.

Corn Tassels.

The third edition of Mr. William Reed Dunroy's "Corn Tassels," a collection of Nebraska poems has just been issued. Many of the favorites which have been quoted and quoted again are reprinted, though among the number I miss the familiar stanzas about Nebraska, where each one ends—"In Nebraska." The book is bound in white and lettered in gold and is a very welcome reminder of the corn, the skies, the sun and the prairies of Nebraska.

Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

The Death of Hon. George W. Wilson, United States Commissioner of Internal Revenue has excited interest in his successor. Friends of Mr. Houtz, collector for this state are urging his appointment as commissioner. Mr. Houtz has administered the affairs of his district which includes Nebraska and the two Dakotas with ability and integrity. He selected his assistants with the same discrimination and regard for efficiency that a private employer uses when selecting his employees. The private employer knows that stupid,

uninspired hired men mean a daily loss of business. Mr. Houtz's fine administration is largely due to his conscientious adherence to the rules of business selection he adopted when a successful merchant. There are no political pets or favorites in his office and the employes are inspired by the character and principles of the head. Out of nine examinations conducted by a federal agent seven have been marked number one.

Mr. Houtz himself is not a candidate for the office. His appointment however, would be considered a tribute to the record Nebraska has but just made.

Grand Opera.

Melba in Lucia, sung with full chorus was a great treat to Nebraska people. It was not a paying venture. Grand opera is a serious undertaking, even for a large city and the financial result in a city the size of Lincoln was a foregone conclusion. The afternoon performance of Faust was played to a small audience very much to the disappointment of the local management, which seems to rise cheerfully above the inevitable, with large plans for the next time.

DRINK DEEP OR TASTE NOT.

According to the Bazar, one of the brightest women of New York literary circles moans aloud to her friends because her husband, who never was anything but un-literary, has at last gone mad over a little novel reading, thus proving the latter to be, like learning, a dangerous thing. It seems that it has for years been the boast of this man that he had never read a novel in his life. His literary wife made sensible little excuses for him, as well she might, for his financial successes made her own social position possible. He never talked books, but, no more did she talk stocks. She had respect for his world of stocks, and the knowledge that he had none for her world of books she overlooked with rare feminine good-will, tolerance and diplomacy.

She was very ill not long ago, and during one of his nightly vigils, after he had exhausted the newspaper, while he was watching the clock to carry out the physician's orders, he inadvertently picked up a book, and opening it, began to read. He sat up all night reading. The book contained one of those simple little romances which delight the heart of sweet sixteen, and was called "Darkness and Daylight," written by Mary J. Holmes, but it opened up a new world to the stock-bound metal organism of that man. So now whenever his wife is entertaining the literary lights or lions of the hour, he waits for the moment when some one mentions a book, and then he at once demands with the assurance of a litterateur, "But did you ever 'Darkness and Daylight,' by Mary J. Holmes?" adding in tones louder and more convincing, "Now, I tell you there's a book worth reading. I tell you it's great. Greatest book ever written!"

It's no use for her to argue the case with him. Certainly no use to decry the book. Hasn't he read the book himself. Therefore he knows. It's no use for her to try to hush him up, or to pretend she doesn't hear. Everybody hears. She has tact, and she knows better than to contradict a practical, successful business man. But she gets a nervous chill, and thinks longingly of that dear past before he ever read a book.

Angelica—Why do you say Maud is in love with Jack?

Patricia—She is flirting so dreadfully with his brother.