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OBSERVATIONS.

The Toadyism of Flunkydrom.

Last week a citizen of Lincoln was appointed by President McKinley collector of internal revenue, succeeding another citizen of this city who for the past four years has fulfilled the duties of the office with a rare fidelity and ability, which have been repeatedly commended by his federal superiors. The new appointee has never been credited with a remarkable degree of political sagacity, much less with success in his efforts in political matters. A few years ago he was a candidate for the position of clerk of the district court, but his efforts in that direction resulted only in disappointment. Two years ago he was recognized as one of the managers of the senatorial candidacy of Mr. D. E. Thompson which in its termination presented a most lamentable proposition to defeat the regularly nominated selection of the party. Last winter he again appeared as the principal manager of the senatorial candidacy of Mr. Thompson and failed again. It is probable, however, that he did the best he could, and for that he was entitled to reward at the hands of the defeated candidate and in accordance with an agreement with the two senators from Nebraska the appointment has been made. Immediately upon the news of the appointment being made public The News indulged in a paroxysm of toadyism which would receive the highest encomium in the kingdom of flunkydrom. Expressions like these, "As an organizer of political movements he has few superiors in Nebraska." "He is one of the shrewdest and best politicians in the state," are due simply to the fact that the man of whom they were written has received an

appointment. If these expressions are true now they were true before the appointment, but they were not expressed until after when it is supposed the appointee has power or influence. Thus is the independence of the press manifested.

Suicide.

When a man kills himself, or tries to, he lacks even the average endowment of sense, which, we all know, is not distributed in excessive quantities to man. Occasionally an individual is afflicted with an incurable and very painful disease. Life, under such circumstances, loses significance. Yet there have been people whose days of agony have been conquered by a great spirit. Stevenson supported himself and two other people; he gave the world a new series of novels; his letters, written while he lay propped up in bed, are a new example of gentleness, love and charity. If he had not been indomitable his genius would have counted for nothing. Pain would have conquered him and he might have taken poison like the two miserable suicides, one of whom killed herself, and the other of whom tried to kill himself, last week, in this city in a hotel which is acquiring an undesirable reputation. The woman is dead and is therefore beyond criticism. She was a silly woman whom vanity and drugs had already destroyed. The man was in the habit of threatening suicide when there were friends near enough to prevent him. He had attained more than ordinary success as a salesman, and he still possessed a fine physique, though he has lost the principal element of success, the respect of his fellowmen. The slow growth of common sense in such people is very remarkable. Most of the boys in the public schools possess more discretion than the man Brink who induced a woman to take poison under the impression that he had taken it. Yet until he demonstrated inferiority he was intrusted with important affairs.

The schemes of the socialists promise fascinating results, but the success of all of them depends upon the industry and discretion of the men and women who accept and agree to develop the system. The incompetent and the lazy, who are now pupils in the school of life, are already in sufficient numbers to defeat any scheme in which they must be depended upon to bear a part. Under the present system the world ignores them, except for casual charity. They do not obstruct progress, although the procession has to go around them occasionally. In a scheme where every one must bear his part or stop all the rest, many more would have to suffer for the guilty than under the present system. The rules of commerce in contemporary operation are natural, not Christian. In nature, rotting useless matter is cast aside and reabsorbed into the fibre of something useful. A man who demonstrates his indis-

cretion is dishonorably discharged by society and recovers his rank only by grace and intercession extraordinary. Commercial routine is slowly responding to the teachings of Christ. Business is business and has nothing to do with philanthropy, or pity. But in the last one-hundred years, even commerce has responded to the influence of Christianity. Kindness and forbearance is increasing. And because of this latest development of the principles of love, there is a second chance for men who have voluntarily demonstrated their incapacity to conduct their own affairs. Brink, the young man whose imbecile conduct has been so thoroughly advertised, was drunk when he committed the crime. Temperance reformers have accomplished such a reorganization of society that it is now almost as reprehensible to get drunk as it is to kill oneself. So that Brink's condition is not a palliation but an exaggeration of his offense. But because he is not the only one who has sinned, because other men and women have numerous un lucid moments too, because of the infusion of Christianity into the world's business, the world will forgive him and someone will give him a job.

Some individuals at the age of thirty or even at forty have less sense than the average youth of fifteen. Brink's case may be a case of retarded development. If he can be induced to stay alive until he has reached the age of seventy, it may be that in the meantime he can still find some opportunity of usefulness. Although he has grown some six feet above the ground, mentally he is an infant, who with the childish idea that his friends would regret his loss and pity his sorrows, in a maudlin state took an insufficient dose of poison. The attention his adventures have excited, is quite likely to induce other deficients to take an under-dose. The only difficulty is in graduating the dose to a size that will frighten one's friends into nervous prostration, and still not place one's self beyond the possibility of resuscitation.

Suicide is the most foolish and cowardly of crimes. A man sometimes justifies it to himself by convincing himself that his sorrows are too heavy to bear, although he knows his death will complicate the situation for the survivors whom his crime or indiscretions have already compromised. The man who kills himself or tries to, is an egotist. Of course he fails to comprehend the immensity of the universe, he does not even realize the world and his relations to a part of it. The suicide is essentially subjective. He translates the world into himself, and is to himself the centre of the system. To take one's place in the great procession, to know that the long line stretches back into antiquity, that Homer's feet and Shakspeare's trod our dusty way of life, and that the dim van leads into the future, the course of which, if we are

brave and discreet, we can influence, is sufficient for the wise man. Should every man be controlled by the thought of the long procession from the past into the future and his own insignificant, but potentially momentous, part in it, how rapidly that procession would move onward and upward? The suicides who selfishly fall out, the murderers who pick out a man here and there from the lines, all the men and women who prey upon their fellow-men or who assault themselves, have neither looked backward nor forward at the significant procession.

From the despondent's own point of view, and selfishly considered, suicide is the silliest expedient. In the first place he does not know what he is getting into. Then a man generally kills himself for one of two reasons: love or money. If he is a thief, why should he kill himself? Afterwards he is but a dead thief who can never be reformed. If he is an honest man through whom others have lost large sums, he will set himself strenuously to assist his creditors to save as much as possible out of the wreck he has made of their fortunes. If he is in love and his sweetheart prefers another, let him travel or occupy himself with exhausting labor for a year and before he realizes it, and in spite of the love-stories that deny it, other roses will smell as sweet, and all the other fish in the sea will begin to flash brilliant scales into his sometime disgusted eyes. Time is the one infallible cure for everything. It heals lacerated hearts as effectively as broken heads, and no man can say when his wound ceased to smart, but only that, where-as a year ago he was an anatomical wreck, now the valves of his heart are in perfect order and his ball and socket joints work without friction. To kill one's-self is a denial, an irrevocable heresy, an unpardonable assault on life and a postponement of the triumph of goodness and of universal sanity.

Omaha-Lincoln Amenities.

A few people in Omaha know a few people in Lincoln, and occasionally they visit each other; but commercial, political and journalistic rivalry has influenced some of the prominent people in Omaha to conclude that the merchants of Lincoln are horned and hooped. Likewise residents of Lincoln seem to believe that in Omaha men and women grow unusually malicious and spiteful. Really they have passions and prejudices like our own. Omaha merchants, like ours, are endeavoring to sell goods at a profit, to live within their incomes, to educate their children, to give a little to church and charity, and to gather up as much sweetness and light as possible in their pilgrimage. The Ak-Sar-Ben association and the Commercial club of Omaha are trying to make of the city a busier place and to attract men of means and brains away