

bearing on her distinguished husband's career.

Nicolay further states that Lincoln was the last man to consult a medium, and if such a person volunteered advice to him, unless it accorded with his judgment there was little fear of his following it. Attempts to bolster up any cause by trying to make it appear that great men now deceased, favored or supported it only weakens the cause itself in the minds of reflecting people. If a religious institution, a philosophical theory or a political party has no better argument to offer than that some prominent person now departed was its advocate or disciple it rests upon a very shaky foundation. Living issues should have living reasons and living demands for their acceptance by the living public.

ALTITUDINOUS ARCHITECTURE.

CHICAGO, it is well known, is famous for its tall buildings. At present a heated discussion is going on in that city, as to the propriety of checking sky-scraping architecture. Real estate men naturally lead in the discussion, but all classes take part in the controversy.

The Real Estate board is now considering the proposition of limiting the height of buildings to twice the width of the street, and in no case to exceed 160 feet. It is endeavoring to obtain from the Council a city ordinance to this effect. There are various reasons given for this movement. One authority says that if the same amount of capital which is expended on high buildings were spread over a series of blocks, values would be more equalized and tax receipts increased.

Another objection comes from the Fire Department. Marshal Sweny says that 120 feet is the limit that he can control. Beyond that he is powerless. But these sixteen and eighteen story buildings are fireproof, it is said. Even so, they are always stored with combustible material, and inhabited by numbers of persons. In case of fire, the Marshal thinks that the loss of life and property would be immense, and as far as his department was concerned he could do nothing beyond the 120 feet limit.

There are a number of other objections raised in the way of concentrating business within a restricted area, congesting roadways, crowding sidewalks, and darkening streets. If the craze of erecting twenty-story buildings keeps on without check the streets will become impassable in certain quarters. Already it is computed that 7500 people per hour pass one corner at State and Adams streets, while a few

blocks away where there are no tall buildings, only 2500 per hour pass the corner of Adams and La Salle.

But the anti-highbuilding people have not things all their own way. There is a strong faction in favor of "knife-edge" building, as the tall tenement is now called. They claim that in security, safety and sanitary arrangements a twenty-story building is much superior to an eight-story one of ten years ago. Besides they claim that it advertises Chicago, and gives it a foremost place among the cities of the world in architectural enterprise.

COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS' REPORT

THE report of the Commissioner of Pensions for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1891, is just published. It shows that there were on the roll at that date 676,160 pensioners, being 138,216 more than on June 30, 1890.

During this last fiscal year payments to the amount of \$81,391,538 were made on 131,160 original claims. The aggregate annual value of the 676,160 pensioners on the roll June 30, 1891, was \$89,247,200. The total amount of money disbursed on account of pensions, expenses, etc., during the fiscal year was \$118,548,959, as compared with \$106,439,890 disbursed during the preceding fiscal year.

There were on June 30, 1891, twenty widows and three daughters of soldiers of the Revolution on the roll. In 1870 there were 727 widows and daughters on the roll, so that in a few years these Revolution landmarks will be entirely obliterated.

Of the war of 1812, 284 survivors were on the roll, and 7590 widows of soldiers of that war. Survivors of the Mexican war numbered 16,379, and the widows of Mexican war soldiers 6976.

There were 413,597 army invalid pensioners, and 108,537 army widows, minor children, etc., on the pension roll, June 30, 1891. The navy invalid pensioners numbered 5,449, and widows, minor children, etc., numbered 2,568.

There are about 1,208,707 soldiers of the Union now living, 520,158 of whom are on the pension rolls. It is estimated that 1,004,658 soldiers were killed in battle or died during or since the war. This leaves 688,549 survivors of the war who are not pensioned and 879,908 deceased soldiers not represented at all on the pension rolls. During the last fiscal year 13,229 pensioners died.

Governor Toole of Montana is said to be the handsomest man in the State. His wife is daughter of General W. S. Rosecrans.

ONLY A POSTAGE STAMP.

GENERAL HAZEN, assistant postmaster, has written a very interesting history of postage stamps in the United States. Congress first authorized their use in 1847. Those first issued were five and ten cent stamps. The five contained portraits of Franklin, the first postmaster general, and the tens of Washington the first President. These continued in use until 1851, when the three cent rate of letter postage was adopted. Then a new series of eleven different denominations came into use. These were one, two, three, five, ten, twelve, twenty-four, thirty and ninety cent stamps. In addition, there were two carrier stamps of one cent each. These continued in use until 1861. In that year a new series was issued. In 1869 the next issue of stamps took place, followed by another in 1870, which prevailed until 1890.

The new stamps range in denomination from one to ninety cents. But there is one form of stamp which bears a sixty dollar mark, the highest issued, and used by newspapers in paying postage bills. For the same purpose there is also a \$1.92 stamp, and one of \$3.00, and various other denominations ranging from that up to \$48.00.

From 1847 to 1851 only 4,000,000 stamps were sold. In 1852 54,000,000 letters were sent with American stamps through the mails. Last year it is estimated that three billion pieces of mail went through American post-offices.

Postal cards were first issued in May, 1878. In 1874 90,000,000 postal cards were used. In 1890 386,000,000 were used, and for 1891 it is estimated that 400,000,000 cards will be used.

The government gets postal cards made for 35 cents a thousand. Ordinary postage stamps cost about seven cents a thousand, all made by private firms. Stamped envelopes were first issued in 1853. There are at present seven different sizes in use. Stamped newspaper wrappers were first issued in 1861. During last year 451,000,000 of wrappers and stamped envelopes were sold. Besides, there was \$37,000,000 worth of postage stamps sold. It is estimated that in the United States \$52,000,000 is spent every year for postage. Americans are the greatest letter writing people of modern times. There are about fifty billion pieces of mail-matter posted yearly throughout the whole world, of these three billion go through the post-offices of the United States. Our postal system is said to excel any in the world, in its details for both public and private accommodation.