



# BUSINESS CIRCLES

The business situation is, at present, anything but encouraging. The hot dry spell has been relieved in some sections of the state by local showers, but in others, extremely dry weather prevails. During the last week the most discouraging reports as to the condition of affairs in the country were circulated. The newspaper reports were to the effect that the corn crop had been totally destroyed; as usual, later reports modified these wild rumors to a considerable extent. In the far western counties of Nebraska, we see enacted each successive year, a farce which generally terminates in the report of a total failure of the crops in Nebraska. Early in the season the papers are crowded with splendid reports of the enormous crops which will probably be harvested as soon as the season advances, the prospects grow more favorable until some time in August or late in July, the inevitable drouth makes its appearance, supplemented by hot winds, and the corn crop in western Nebraska is a total failure. This is repeated year in and year out, and once in every five years proves an exception to the general rule. The eastern half of this state, however, has a climate most favorable to the cultivation of the corn crop. A temporary spell of dry winds may occasionally do damage to the growing cereal, but at no time within the history of the state is there a record of a total failure of the crops in eastern Nebraska. Cuming county, and other sections that might be named, have never suffered even a partial crop failure in their entire history. This year we have experienced a period of unusually unfavorable weather during the last few weeks, but a north and south line drawn through the state within 150 miles from the river marks the boundary of what might be called the dry section. Everything this side of that line being in fairly good condition. Corn has suffered some all over as well as in Nebraska and Iowa, but the immense acreage which was planted this year will largely counteract the effect of an injury that may have ensued from the dry weather. Even should a partial failure be the result an average crop can reasonably be expected. Reports, unfavorable as they have been, have had a marked effect on business and will make the same unusually dull during the rest of the summer.

\* \* \*

The tariff bill seems no nearer a settlement than ever.

\* \* \*

A strike was started at South Omaha by the beef butchers early in the week but it is not expected that it will assume serious proportions. The butchers made a demand for an increase in wages, larger than ever before paid at this point. In addition to this, they state that they will refuse to return to work until the differences with the butchers in Chicago, Kansas City and other points have been settled. In view of the fact that the managers of the houses at South Omaha are not running the business of Chicago and Kansas City packers it is doubtful how soon such settlement will be reached and it is entirely probable that the men who struck will remain minus a job each unless they decide to go to work very soon.

\* \* \*

Omaha and Lincoln houses are receiving a large number of orders these days. At the first blush, this might seem encouraging, but the facts in the case are, that the orders are so small and unsatisfactory, that there is little comparative profit in the business. During the early part of the season orders showed more inclination of liberality on the part of purchasers, brought about, no doubt, by the exceedingly favorable condition of the crops. Warm weather and the drouth, however, have gradually dispelled the hopes of country merchants.

\* \* \*

Speaking of the labor troubles and the general depression which

has prevailed for some time, a leading business man gave voice to an opinion which has long been mine: "I believe," said he, "that this country is gradually coming to the same level with Europe, and that it is only a question of time before European conditions will prevail here." There is considerable justice in this remark. This country has gradually become more closely settled; its population has been on the increase at an almost incredible rate for years. As long as it was a new country and building up, there were many opportunities for accumulating wealth; labor was well paid and everything was in a flourishing condition. It stands to reason that a man drawing the income from the products of 1000 acres of well cultivated land, is in a better financial condition than the man drawing from 100 acres. This has been the relative condition of this country as compared to Europe; a comparatively small population on a large area of land here, and an enormous population on a small section of territory there. By the gradual settlement of the country, increased population, the prices of labor by competition will grow less, the prices of goods will grow less, or by means of competition, labor will receive less pay, the business man make less profit, the capitalist have fewer opportunities and make less interest on his money, and it will cost each in his particular sphere, less to live.

\* \* \*

This condition does not prevail now, and will probably not prevail for years to come, but come it must. The agitation on the part of labor, and stubborn resistance of capital will only hasten the time when each will receive less for what it has to give; and the power of each will be limited as it should be.

\* \* \*

A careful review of the business situation at this time presents a rather gloomy prospect for the next few months. Congress seems to be in a hopeless wrangle over the tariff question. Reports from the east indicate unsteady fluctuations in dutiable goods. Manufacturers and importers seem to be in a state of complete uncertainty, and it is no exaggeration to say that all lines, directly and indirectly affected by the tariff, are in a state of complete demoralization. The gold reserve has reached an alarmingly small figure; the unfavorable condition of the weather in the western states threatens the crops, and reports from all trade centers indicate a falling off of business. Not so much the present dullness, which is natural at this season of the year, as the unfavorable prospects, are having their effect in unsettling affairs. I cannot help saying at this time, that there is good cause for apprehension. At this time merchants should prepare to meet all contingencies, with confidence in the resources of the country. ALBERT ALDRIANO.

"Do you know," said Mr. Hallett, when questioned by the COURIER man concerning his diamond trade, "that though the fact may be surprising, our diamond trade keeps up wonderfully well during the dull summer season? People will buy diamonds if the times are hard and money is scarce."

"The diamond must certainly be a wonderful gem," remarked the reporter, "has it an interesting history?" Mr. Hallett then showed us a book on diamonds from which we glean the following:

"'Here be diamonds' appears in large letters on a mission map of southern Africa published in 1750, but no attempts at diamond mining were made for more than a hundred years.

In 1867 a dutch farmer by the name of Schaik Von Nickerick of Hope Town District, of Cape Colony, seeing some children playing with a pretty pebble, was struck with its lustre and weight. He offered to purchase it from the mother of the children, but the idea was laughed at by the good woman who gave it to him, as it was considered of no value. This stone was sent to Dr. G. W. Atherstone, an excellent mineralogist of Grahamstown, who, after examining it for hardness, specific gravity, polarized light etc., pronounced it a genuine diamond of 21 carats weight. The diamond was sent to the Paris exposition of 1867, and was afterwards sold to Sir P. E. Woodenhouse for £500."

When wanting anything in the diamond line you may rest assured Mr. Hallett can suit you. He is making a specialty of diamonds, has the largest and most carefully selected stock in the city so that it will pay you to see him before buying.

Mr. and Mrs. Ringwalt and Miss P. C. Hall, of Omaha, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Funke and T. E. Baughman left Wednesday for Crete where they spent a couple of weeks on the Chautauqua assembly grounds. They will be joined later by Mrs. Shears, Miss Leila Shears and Miss Gertrude Chambers.