

should exist between the carrier and the producer, especially when we consider that the producers are Nebraska farmers, while the carrier is an aggregation of eastern people known in Nebraska as capitalists. There are thousands of these eastern people of moderate means who have invested in Nebraska railroads expecting to earn only interest on their investment; but to the Nebraska farmer, these thousands of stockholders are unknown; are unidentified with the new state, and, in the aggregate, take the form in the farmer's mind of an individual called the capitalists. In these later years there has grown up throughout the country, a general hostility toward corporate wealth. This hostility has manifested itself in each state against such forms of corporate wealth as is most conspicuous and with which the people come most directly in contact. In Pennsylvania this opposition takes form against the iron king and the coal industry; in New England against the manufacturer; in Colorado against the mine owner; while in Nebraska it is directed against the railroad interests, as the only visible sign of corporate power. In a farming community, the railroad, without intending to be so, is, by the very genius of its organism, a natural irritant. In its necessary methods, it has the appearance of arbitrary power. The individual farmer, when he offers product for shipment comes in direct contact with only one railroad at his home town, whereas the carrier has business relations with thousands of farmers in hundreds of towns at the same time. The manager or president of the road, not being able to be at all these different places at once and to meet and converse with his patrons individually, must necessarily meet them only by proxy and conduct his business through local agents whose authority is limited under necessary rules. To the farmer these rules often appear arbitrary and oppressive. When the producer comes in contact with these arbitrary rules, in the making of which he has not been consulted, and which are often enforced by local agents who mistake impudence for executive ability, the natural impulse of the farmer is to go to the legislature and use the lawmaking power of the state for the establishment of such rules as he may deem just. The impression has prevailed among farmers that the rules and rates in force in the transportation business are conceived and established by the management, board of directors, the freight association, or some other invisible and conscienceless arbitrary power. When a man feels that he is being attacked in the dark by an invisible foe, his natural instinct is to strike back regardless of consequences. I believe it is now more generally understood among the people that rules, rates and classifications are not fixed at will by railroad managers, directors or freight associations, but that they grow into form and develop little by little through the evolution of necessity by the higher law of supply and demand, which places charge on each commodity of what it will bear. This is the only law under which bulky and low-priced commodities have commercial existence.

If a carload of Nebraska corn had to pay as much to reach the eastern seaboard as it costs for a car of dry goods to reach Nebraska from the seaboard, or if the charge on each car of corn was the average charge per car for that distance, Nebraska corn would be excluded from the eastern market. When it is more fully realized by Nebraska farmers that their outgoing product is of the bulky and low-priced class and, that without this rule which classifies their commodities and charges them not with reference to the cost of their shipment to eastern markets, but only what they will bear, their business as corn-raisers could not exist, much of the friction caused by rules and rates will disappear. Jefferson said: "The danger of the government lies in the restlessness of the politician. Its safety depends on the contentment of the masses." The listlessness of the Nebraska politician has done much to aggravate jealousy and distrust between the railroads and the people. I do not charge that politicians are naturally mischief-makers; but I have observed that they keep a keen eye on the main chance, and when they operate in two groups, as railroad and anti-railroad politicians, having this complicated question between them, they are able to "work both sides for all there is in it," and create a great deal of mischief without, perhaps, intending to do so.

The railroad politician, operating and perhaps really seeming to himself as a friend to the railroads, is able to secure personal advantages. The anti-railroad politician operating as the farmers' friend, and possibly in his own mind really seeming to be such, has been able in some instances to barter his wares as a politician in the market of public opinion for more than their real value; and I am of the opinion that some of these politicians have enjoyed benefits from

both sides in the controversy at the same time. They catch 'em comin' an goin'. In the meantime I believe it can be truthfully said, that while the disposition of the politician to make the most of himself out of the railroad question is still fresh and vigorous, his ability to create mischief is growing less and less; that the great body of Nebraska farmers are instinctively honest and fair; that the land grant to the corporation is more and more appearing as a justifiable expedient and not a wrong against the farmer class; that the rate question, the most complicated of all commercial problems, is being better understood, is being steadily adjusted in the interest of the food producer; and that the eastern man may safely trust his money in Nebraska securities with the assurance that the law maker of this state will treat it with the same degree of common honesty and fairness that he does his own.

LINCOLN, NEB.

Mr. Johnson's interesting article is reprinted from *The Independent*.

#### HIS CAPITAL JOKE.

"I suppose I should call this a red-letter day," observed Banks with a sigh.

"Why?" asked Rivers.

"My wife is going to give a pink T this evening."

#### AN INFALIBILE INDIGATION.

There was an intense silence around Mrs. Hashem's table while the chicken was being served. It was broken by the girl with fluffy white hair, who whispered to the girl with dark glasses:

"Billy Bliven has paid his board bill at last."

"How do you know?"

"He got a piece of white meat instead of the wing and neck as usual."

#### A NEW GROUND FOR DIVORCE.

Out in San Francisco a sensitive husband is suing his wife for a divorce because she bleaches her hair. In his petition he says: Bleached or artificially colored hair is easily distinguished as such and does not appear natural, nor does it deceive any person, but it is perfectly patent and noticeably conspicuous. It is regarded by the majority of right-thinking persons as an indication of a loose, dissolute and wanton disposition, and is regarded as and commonly held to be a practice never affected by modest, pure and respectable women. The husband claims that he is mortified and humiliated on account of the change in the color of his wife's hair. He adds: "She is a brunette naturally. Her hair is of a chestnut brown color, which, in its normal state, is modest and becoming, and harmonizes with the natural color of her skin and eyes. Since we married she has against my wishes and protests and with intent to vex, annoy, exasperate and shame me, dyed her hair, and changed its shade to a conspicuous and showy straw or canary color. As a consequence of this artificial coloring she has been obliged to paint her face to secure an artificial color complexion in keeping with the artificial color of her hair. The combination has given her a giddy, fast and sporty appearance."

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