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"THE GENTLEMAN FROM NEBRASKA"

The Honorable Elmer J. Burkett and the Unprecedented Honor
of a Third Nomination
Conferred Upon Him by the Republicans of the First District

Last Tuesday evening Congressman E. J. Burkett was, for the third time, nominated for the membership in the American house of representatives. This is an honor never before conferred upon any one in the First district of Nebraska. It is all the more manifest when taken in connection with the fact that the last two nominations have been by acclamation. The unanimity with which Mr. Burkett's re-nomination has been asked for by the people has also been significant. For a year it has been apparent that the great majority of the republicans of the district were for him for a third term and there never has been any serious consideration of any other candidates. In fact, there have been no other candidates.

It may be said that the district was, and has been, practically unanimous for Burkett's re-nomination ever since the last convention. This can be accounted for on two grounds. The first is personal to Mr. Burkett and the second is the advantage of the district. The people have made up their minds that experience is worth something to a man in congress just as it is in any other business or profession and that if Nebraska is ever to attain any great prominence in national affairs it must keep men in congress until they have a right to ask for that recognition. That this feeling was general and is growing throughout the district there is no question and that it helped Mr. Burkett there is no doubt.

But Mr. Burkett has a strong personal following among the people. They like him and have confidence in him. The most partisan democrats speak kindly of him. That he has grown in the estimation and affections of the people, one has but to recall the convention in the latter days of June, 1898, when he was a candidate for the first time. It has been gratifying to those early friends of the young congressman to follow his rapid rise in public esteem.

When in 1898 a few men began talking Burkett for congress some people were inclined to smile, for he was new in the community and young in years. But his friends were legion, the country was almost solid for him, the unexpected happened and Lancaster instructed its delegates to the congressional convention for Burkett. The district convention was thirty days off and there were many candidates from the several counties. Judge Stull was an aspirant from Nemaha county and Oteo brought out the late lamented Senator M. L. Hayward. In addition to these, names were suggested in Cass and Pawnee and possibly others. Judge Hayward concluded to be a candidate for governor in response to the great popular demand from all over the state and others dropped by the wayside until finally when the congressional convention met, Judge Stull of Auburn and Mr. Burkett were

the only candidates left in the race. Mr. Burkett was nominated on the first ballot, receiving 151 votes out of 173 in the convention. He had been in and won out in the longest and sharpest contest ever waged in the state for a congressional nomination. Twice since then he has been re-nominated without a voice being raised against him.

In his speech accepting the first nomination Mr. Burkett said among other things, "Appreciating the honor as I do I shall endeavor to serve you and the whole people of my district to the very best of my ability." That he has kept his promise is testified to by his record and his popularity among all classes. No man has ever been heard to utter a complaint against Mr. Burkett's work as congressman. Many democrats have announced openly and publicly their gratitude to him and their obligations for his service. Within a month several prominent democrats in Lincoln have published in the press their words of praise for him.

Mr. Burkett has performed a very

effective service for the old soldiers. There are about a thousand veterans and their widows who have received pensions through his help and these have carried almost \$100,000 back pay for this one district alone. In Lincoln there are 150 old soldiers whose claims have been allowed through his efforts.

During the three years that Mr. Burkett has been in congress he has almost gridironed his district with rural free delivery routes and as a result of his energy in this direction nearly thirty thousand people have their mail delivered at their door, where formerly they traveled from one to fifteen miles to the postoffice for it. All this has made Mr. Burkett many friends and that, too, among a class of people who will not forget his services. The men thus helped are not the kind who trade and traffic with their political franchise but who recognize ability and reward it with faithful allegiance.

But there are still many other calls upon him. Everybody who has a claim against the government of any sort has needed him; everybody who

is getting a patent or copyright has called upon him for assistance. To all he has been obliging, punctual and courteous. Mr. Burkett's success may be summed up in few words, he has really tried to do something for the district and for the people. At the last session of congress he secured an appropriation of \$250,000 for the improvement of the banks of the Missouri river at Nebraska City, Rulo and Plattsmouth. He has been industrious in bettering the postal facilities, and additional allowances and additional clerical force has rewarded his efforts in many of the postoffices. In short, there is scarcely a man in the district that has not received a favor from Mr. Burkett and these acts of kindness and deeds of service have made him popular. Here in Lincoln he first secured a new sidewalk around the government square and other improvements amounting to about \$15,000, and finally a \$300,000 appropriation for an addition to the postoffice building itself.

A little incident may be related to show how Mr. Burkett is ever on the alert to find something that he can do for his constituency. He saw the letter carriers of this city one chilly, cold day last November perched on the stone coping that borders the steps in front of the postoffice. He asked why they were not in by the fire and found out that the law did not permit of their entering the work rooms except on duty and that they either had to stand up in the public corridor or go out of doors and sit on the stone steps. It didn't take long for him to find a way out and within thirty days he had secured an order from the department at Washington for a swing room or lounging room for the carriers. He had the room fitted up with tables and chairs and individual lockers for every carrier, and now the three score of mail carriers are fast friends of the congressman.

But he has not consumed all his time with material things; he has brought honor and credit to the district by reason of his ability and conscientious work in the halls of congress. That he has the confidence of the strong men of the house is testified to by the fact that Speaker Henderson placed him on the appropriations committee at the beginning of his second term. It may be assumed that he never would have received the appointment if "Uncle Joe" Cannon, of Illinois, and chairman of that great committee, had not looked upon him as likely material. His addresses have attracted attention all over the country. His speech on pensions was published in the National Tribune and sent broad-cast all over the United States.

He is credited with changing more votes with a speech than any one has done in congress in ten years, and by it defeated the ridiculous and extrav-



CONGRESSMAN E. J. BURKETT.
Renominated Unanimously for a Third Term.