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Omaha Where the West is at its Best

NO "BUNK" ABOUT THIS.

A somewhat curdled critic complains that President Coolidge lacks inspiration. The president does no rhetorical gymnastics. Papers issued from his office contain no hifalutun phrases. Plain Americans can read what he writes, and reading understood. This, we submit, is the quality that has most endeared the president to the people. It has tied the bonds closer between his heart and the heart of the nation.

Grover Cleveland was a great president, yet his first term was in a large measure overshadowed by a phrase. He wanted to say that a certain practice had fallen into "harmless disuse." Calvin Coolidge might have used those well known words. Grover Cleveland wrote "innocuous desuetude," furnished a lot of material for jibes, and lost a lot of votes he might have held had he not befuddled the papers he prepared by falling away from the simplicity of a language that permits the use of little words to convey big ideas.

The president's message to congress was plain, clear, and even the democrats have praised in more than moderate terms the lucid language employed. Is the president without vision? Some of the things he said during the campaign make it seem otherwise. Addressing a group of business men on October 23, he said:

"To treat business in our American life as if it were somehow a thing apart would be impossible. It is a part of our national life. We no longer have expressions of an indifferent attitude toward the relation of business to the people. Rather, we hear more and more the word, and more increasingly the sentiment, that 'service has come into the business world.' The merchant and the manufacturer today are seeking to deliver something besides their goods, and they are delivering it with pride. That new something is a sense of service to the community."

The president might have uttered a wordiness of platitudes about duty to humanity. He could have voiced heart-stirring sentiments involving universal brotherhood. Praised peace and scored strife. Shed tears over the plight of the unprosperous and thriftless. But he did not. He just put a high sentiment of every-day life into a few common words, so none can mistake their meaning. His reward is that he is told he has no inspiration.

A man walked the shores of Galilee and taught in simple phrases the grandest of gospels. Doctrinaires and pedants have disputed his sayings to the utter bewilderment and great weariness of the world. Yet Christ's own words are yet a solace to all because they are few and plain. There is no "bunk" in the Sermon on the Mount. Yet we have no doubt the critics at Jerusalem said it lacked inspiration.

STOP THE SLAUGHTER.

During the World War the United States lost 36,816 men killed in action, and the total casualties was 317,387. The whole country grieved over this awful loss.

During the last twelve months 22,000 people have been killed and 678,000 seriously injured in automobile accidents.

During the time American soldiers were in France the average monthly loss of killed in action was 2,230. The average number killed monthly in auto accidents during 1923 was 1,800.

Warning signs, traffic officers and crossing signals seem to make no impress. The slaughter goes on unchecked. Every twenty minutes somebody is killed in an auto accident in the United States. Every hour of the twenty-four 77 people are seriously injured in auto accidents, one every 45 minutes.

Four-fifths or more of these accidents, fatal and otherwise, are preventable. Carelessness, indifference and reckless disregard of the rights of others are responsible for them. Cautions, protests, traffic officers and warning signals have failed.

Prevention is better than attempted cures. The way to stop automobile accidents is to begin with the drivers. Before any man or woman is allowed to drive a car on the public highways they should be made to prove that they are efficient and "safety-minded." Instead of more laws to protect the public, there should be efficient enforcement of present laws. A slap on the wrist will not deter reckless and incompetent drivers. Nominal fines are too often an excuse for boasting on the part of the driver fined. Make automobiling safe by making safe drivers. Make it still safer by preventing any other kind of drivers from sitting behind the steering wheel.

Twenty-two thousand fatalities a year through auto accidents is a disgrace to the United States.

DRAMA AND THE LITTLE THEATER.

A hopeful band of Omahans have definitely embarked on an enterprise to the success of which we give our best wishes. It is the "Little Theater" movement. This will not conceivably assume such proportions as to give cause for apprehension to any who are engaged in the "show business" down town. What it will, or at least, should do is to encourage those who still hold the drama as an art in such esteem as to be unsatisfied with moving pictures and the like.

No need to waste time in lamenting the change

that has come over the situation. Omaha is not alone. Communities all over the land find conditions as regards the theater much the same as here. Many reasons may be cited for this. All of them are good, and the combination is not beatable by ordinary methods. Yet there is hope. When Otto Kahn took part in the dedication of a new "Little Theater" building in New York lately he uttered one thought that is encouraging. When nature sets out to produce anything worth while, she starts at the beginning. The Washington Square Players began in a "handbook theater."

Art is permanent. The drama is one of its most popular manifestations. Proof of this, if needed, is afforded by the moving picture, one of the forms of drama, combining movement and portrayal of scenes in a peculiar way, sometimes exhibiting the highest form of art. Yet the motion picture lacks that which is the very soul of the drama. It does not have the spoken word. The cadences of the human voice give life and meaning that can not be supplied by movements or gestures. Who that saw her can forget Sarah Bernhardt, the last time she played "L'Aiglon" in Omaha? As she stood by her chair, declaiming the wonderful verse set down for the Eaglet, those who heard her forgot that she was so crippled by a twisted leg she could not walk. It was the marvellous beauty of her unsurpassed voice that charmed the multitude into rapture. No animated picture could achieve that effect.

So the Little Theater group of Omaha will start small. It will busy itself with the production of such plays as are within its scope, some to be written, all to be enacted, by its members. Thus will the flame be kept burning clear on the high altar that is dedicated to Art. A day will surely come when the spoken drama will once more be restored to its proper place. When that time comes, those who are promoting the cause, even by the limited resources of the amateur theater, will have their reward in knowing their service was not in vain. Therefore we wish for the Omaha Little Theater success, and bid its promoters be of good heart.

SIMPLE LIFE NOT SO DIFFICULT.

Along with the announcement that the president traveled from Washington to Chicago as a plain citizen would have done, we got many references to Jeffersonian simplicity. Thomas Jefferson, riding to Washington and hitching his nag to the picket fence around the White House was the picture. Very good, so far as it goes.

But Thomas Jefferson traveled in what was then the most popular fashion. He was far more comfortable on horseback than he would have been in a stage coach, or even the most luxurious of private carriages. Not that this should in any way detract from the modesty of the manner of living of the great democrat. Calvin Coolidge, riding in the drawing room of a compartment car on a fast train, traveled in such comfort as Jefferson might have dreamed of, but never experienced. No monarch or nabob of the past, with all his pomp and circumstance, had such ease as did the president on that journey.

The whole affair is suggestive of something besides the very practical turn of the president's mind. It is a visible proof of the progress humanity has made. Of the advantages of being an American citizen. For nowhere on earth is life so cushioned against the shocks of living as it is in the United States. The great ho's on wheels, which really are the modern limited trains, afford only a single feature of the whole picture.

Mr. Coolidge's very practical example is timely. He could not be as simple as Jefferson, if he cared to be. The conditions are not such as will permit. He can be as democratic, and is. Americans revere their president, and love to see him on dress parade. If he travels by special train, it is for their convenience, and not because he is inclined to extravagance. But a short journey of 800 miles on a regular train does not set any emicence in simplicity.

MONEY IN THE FARMER'S POCKET.

No reference to water transportation is complete without some statement as to its effect on farm prices. Since agriculture has developed in the trans-Missouri region to its present stage there has been no real opportunity for proving the point. Always the assertion is supported by theory alone. Now comes a case that proves the point.

The Kansas City Southern railroad asks that a reduction of 2 cents per hundredweight in the rates on wheat and flour from Kansas City to the Gulf be permitted. This is to enable the railroad to compete with the water-borne traffic. Wheat and flour, and similar products are now being carried by water from Kansas City to the Gulf at a rate 3 1/2 cents below the railroad charge.

The clearest possible illustration of the value of water transportation to the farmer is here afforded. Two cents on each hundred pounds of material shipped out of the region that may be served by the Missouri river would be a tremendous return on the cost of making the needed improvements. The Kansas City Southern has proved the case for the river completely.

How true it is that "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." A Fremont wife rebuked by her husband, tipped the officers off to 150 gallons of wine hubby had sequestered in a subterranean recess, and the wine was poured into the gutter. That's about the limit of wifely revenge in these days.

The snowstorm may have stalled a few trains, but just think of the wheat it made to be hauled off by trains next fall. Whatever damage the storm wrought isn't a marker to its benefits to the soil.

The prize winning baby beef at the national stock show will be sent to the Coolidge farm in Vermont. If it keeps up its record it will have to have some alfalfa and corn from Nebraska.

A publishing house advertises a book that will answer every question a child can ask. Which reminds us of the Arkansas man's remark when he saw his first hippopotamus.

Whatever settlement is made in the street railway matter, it must not shift the cost onto the school children and working people who now constitute the bulk of the patrons.

The Englishman who has invented a noiseless airplane is cordially invited to come over and work on the automobiles that pass our chamber window at 6:30 a. m.

The Custer county man who fed his wife mercury tablets has experienced a considerable falling of mental temperature since the authorities nabbed him.

December 25 will be Christmas for you, but it is likely to be only December 25 to others unless you do your share towards filling the Community Chest.

Twenty years ago the suckers were prosecuting Cassie Chadwick. Today their progeny is prosecuting Koretz. It will be somebody else next year.

The discovery of a skeleton in armor in Colorado would have been awarded more attention if it had been a skeleton discovered in a family closet.

"From State and Nation"

Editorials from Other Newspapers—

The Columnist.
From the Nebraska City Press.
We are told by a high brow editor that the newspaper columnist is doomed. He is about to be shoved off into oblivion because he has become lazy, self-satisfied, vain, and stupidly printing what he sees in his contributors.

It may be true about the big time column conductors, this self-sated ego, but it doesn't apply to the country newspaper man. His column is a self-made enterprise—poorly constructed as it is. It takes time to build it, and there are few contributors who offer suggestions of a helpful nature.

The column is not a new institution. It appeared in our earliest publications, although under another name. Old Ben Franklin's humorous allusions to it were the forerunners of the Philadelphia Gazette, the like of which has not been seen in this day.

The column conductor may be lazy—but we won't believe it. We won't believe that any newspaper man who follows his three—and he is forced to follow it—his own lead, will not be bit now and then—he doesn't restrict himself to regular hours of labor, but his dreams are transformed into something more tangible a little later on, and he employs himself for the most part, in useful endeavor.

Restoring Party Discipline.
From the Milwaukee Journal.
Heavy duty rests on President Coolidge in restoring discipline in the republican party. To accomplish this, it may even be said, is in one sense more important than to put through any special piece of legislation.

There can never be a better time than the present for settling whether the United States is to be governed by two great national parties, always criticizing and balancing each other, or by a congeries of jangling "pressure groups," usually local in sympathies and defending some very narrow set of interests.

The republican party has not had a satisfactory discipline since the revolt against "Uncle Joe" Cannon's dictatorship as speaker of the house, early in the Taft administration. Probably the greatest reason for the then insurgency was justifiable. Party discipline should not require slavish submission to a few bosses, or the surrender of individual convictions or of a decent right to personal initiative.

But what began as a mild revolt against unwise leadership soon passed to a feud that almost ruined the party. History has long since allocated the blame for the famous Roosevelt split about fifty-fifty, but nobody has ever claimed that the discipline and cohesion of the republican party was not thereby all but destroyed. It is one of the duties of the president to see that the party that the latter was allowed to survive such an unlovely fracas.

Thanks largely to this schism from 1913 to 1921, Mr. Wilson was permitted to run the republic in peace and in war. It may be fairly claimed that some of the least successful acts of his administration were those which only led to the republican opposition in congress was divided, purposeless and miserably led. Then in 1921 Mr. Harding took the helm. It is no disparagement to say that the president in his effort to avoid dictating to congress he leaned too far backward. The unfortunate record of the 68th congress was largely due to the fact that the directing force was behind it. Legislators do not need bosses, but they always need leaders—men who can sometimes become actively disagreeable if they are not kept in line by a strong leader.

Mr. Coolidge, coming to the presidency with the federal forces nearly all partitioned, and with even cabinet officers of another's choosing, was in no position to tighten the reins of party discipline. Now all is changed. He is president in his own right and owes nothing to a single representative or senator. Many of them were merely looking to Washington for their cue. In addition his successor has rendered his former party an enormous service by taking out of it those elements that had to be directed "republican" only with quotation marks.

"The People's Voice"

Editorials from Readers of The Evening Bee. Readers of The Evening Bee are invited to use this column freely for expression on matters of public interest.

To the Legislature.
Genoa, Neb.—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: An open letter to our next legislature: Gentlemen, the coming session of your honorable body has some very important issues before it. One I mention here is: The commercializing of our highways with freight trucks and passenger buses. This traffic is not only a wrecker of our highways but has reached a point of nuisance and danger to other auto travel. Let me mention the tax problem. Trucks and buses, it is true, pay their pro rata tax and license; so do the railroads. Would it not be just as reasonable to use our taxes to maintain and build roadbeds for railroads to haul freight and passenger on as it is to use our tax money to build, repair and maintain the state's highways for the commercial trucks and passenger buses to use for the same purpose?

Critics of society used to say that more and more the individual in industry would become anonymous. On the contrary now we notice that more and more in all sorts of places of business the individual who is doing perhaps some routine "service" for the public is announced to the public by a neat metal sign as "Mr. Robinson" or "Miss Smith."

Miss Smith is not to be treated as a commodity by the company which employs her and by the public which she serves. However, if she turns out to be the most competent Miss Smith at her level of work an increasing number of companies proceed to hang upon her some sort of public medal, physical or mental.

The Ragan signal tower is not an oddity. It is a true symbol of the trend of the times. To opportunity for all talents we are increasingly giving recognition for all merits and respect for all personalities. The personality of man does not have less and less chance in the United States. His chance is getting better. The basic psychological fact against which radicalism in this country dashes itself in vain.

Labor and the State.
From the Milwaukee Journal.
The American Federation of Labor speaks for the majority of organized labor. It is fair to ask an authority on what labor is thinking. When the annual convention accepts, even without debate, opposition to governmental invasion of industry as a guiding policy, it is fair to assume that labor is not so far through with "crazy, foreign ideas." The board of directors of United States Steel, meeting in Judge Taft's office, could not have better phrased opposition to government ownership or government operation of industry than has labor in this sense: "The industry, in its own way through the difficulties with which it is beset, or face the alternative of state intrusion, which must inevitably lead to bureaucracy and red-tape."

For some time it has been evident that labor has been getting away from the idea that because an industrial unit is big, it is necessarily bad. It is fair to say that labor with motor cars have brought about this change. But labor has learned that there is efficiency in large organization, and that it is not necessary to have fair wages and steady work. Organized labor itself is a great industrial "trust," which complains of what it considers unfair use of anti-trust laws. It is fair to say that the attitude of labor, one may vision a growing harmony in the industrial world, a clearer understanding between the great organizations of capital and labor—with government only an impartial judge to protect the general public, the "party of the third part," from abuses. But this cannot come until business is running to government for special favors.

She Remembered.
Jack was home for his holidays from college. One day he said to his mother, "May I tell you a narrative, mother?" The mother, not being used to hearing such big words, said, "What is a narrative, my boy?" "A narrative," said Jack, "is a narrative that goes to bed, Jack said, 'May I extinguish the light, mother?'"

His mother asked, "What do you mean by saying 'extinguish'?" "Extinguish means put out," said Jack.

A few days later Jack's mother was giving a party at her home, and the little girl, who was a model reader, her voice said, "Jack, take that dog by the narrative and extinguish him."—Australian Christian.

Too Friendly.
"I didn't get the number on it, but it was a chummy roadster that hit you," said a man in the crowd.

SUNNY SIDE UP

Take comfort, nor forget, That sunrise never failed us yet. Celia Hapner

Dear loved, the text for our rambling remarks this Lord's Day morning will be found in Luke 10:25-37. A certain lawyer stood up and tempted Jesus, asking Him, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

"He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou?" "And he answered, saying, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." The failure of men to realize their responsibilities, one to the other, has been the cause of nine-tenths of the world's misery. Because they have failed to realize that their neighbors are not alone the ones who live next door, but all of God's people everywhere, there is suffering that should not exist, tears that should not flow, aching hearts that should be happy, and drooping spirits that should be gay.

Not until each of us, beloved, has done everything within our power to alleviate suffering, to bind up wounds and take the light into dark places, have we measured up to the standard of neighborliness the Master set as a condition precedent to inheriting eternal life. The Priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, but the Samaritan acted the part of the real neighbor.

One trouble with this old world is that it is inhabited by so many near-swellers, and so few real neighbors. The real neighbor is one who does not wait to have his attention called to opportunities to help others; he is constantly on the lookout for opportunities. His heart is always overflowing with sympathy that is best expressed by visible efforts to help and succor.

Of all the parables of the Master, the one about the Good Samaritan is most fraught with truth. It contains the key that will open the door to world happiness and permanent peace. Its application is so easy that it is too apt to be overlooked by men and women searching for the solution of world problems. When all men are neighbors then shall wars forever cease.

Statesmen may argue about world courts, and nations may combine to reduce armaments, but these will be of small avail while men continue to act the part of the Priest and the Levite by passing by on the other side, intent upon their own selfish purposes. Laws and agreements, diplomatic subterfuges and finite statecraft, all will fail until there is born in the hearts of men a full realization that each is the other's neighbor.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." That, and that alone, is the solution of the problems that vex.

In conclusion, let us stand and sing, "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying," and, while singing, let us realize more than ever before that wherever men are perishing, wherever men are dying, there are our neighbors.

Let us stand and sing, and God give us the power to sing with spirit and understanding. WILL M. MAUPIN.

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