

THE EXPRESS SWINDLE

The Express company swindle is so outrageously simple, and simply outrageous, that the wonder is the people have stood for it as long as they have. The owners of the railroads that carry the express are also owners of the express companies. Get that? Then the railroad owners make themselves as express company owners a rate for hauling express that is only a fraction of the rate they charge the individual for hauling freight. Then the express company charges more for hauling express than the railroad company charges for hauling freight, but less than the government charges for hauling by mail—except. Note the exception. The government limit on mailed packages of merchandise is four pounds. The express companies will haul a four pound package for less than the government. But let the package weigh more than four pounds, and up goes the price.

But here's the big swindle: The railroad owners add the small amount they allow themselves for hauling express to the other revenues of the road. This makes it possible to hoist freight rates, for a road must have a certain margin above operating expenses. Then the same men who own both railroads and express companies pocket the difference between what they pay themselves for hauling the express, and what they force the public to pay them for hauling the express. Get that?

What's the answer? The parcels post. Let the government extend its postal service by increasing the weight limit and paying the railroads just as much for hauling the mail as the express companies—made up of the railroad owners—now pay the railroads for hauling express. It costs no more, pound for pound, to haul mail than it costs to haul express. Yet the government pays 800 per cent more to the railroads for hauling mail than the express companies pay for hauling express. Think that over, too.

QUIT THE QUIBBLING

Will Maupin's Weekly has taken great pains to make its position known on the license question. It opposed license in the last campaign, just as its editor has always opposed license, and expects always to oppose it. But a majority of the voters have declared that they want the license system reinstated, and Will Maupin's Weekly is a believer in majority rule. Therefore this newspaper makes bold to say that it detests the acts of those who seek by technicalities and subterfuge to overrule the will of the majority. If some real friend of the temperance cause would firmly but gently take one Poulson by the scruff of the neck and the basement of the pantaloons and heave him over the municipal trash-heap, he would be doing both the cause and the municipality a great service.

What a pity it is that great reform

movements are so often hampered by a lot of dampfools who seek the limelight—and a fat salary? What a pity it is that so many would-be reformers injure their cause by unwise and ill-considered action? Poulson's fool interference may result in delaying the opening of saloons for a little while, but it is also making it more difficult to vote out the licensed saloon in the future. Granted continued life and health this newspaper's editor expects to again oppose license when the proper time comes. Right now he bows to the will of the majority, reserving the right while so bowing to be getting a toe-hold for the next struggle. But, in heaven's name, haven't we had enough bickering and strife and trouble over this excise question without having a blatant, meddlesome, high-salaried, collection-seeking importation from Ohio egging us on to further attempts to cut one another's throats. As a consistent, persistent and insistent opponent of the licensed saloon, Will Maupin's demands that Poulson be suppressed and the will of the majority allowed to rule until such time as that popular will may be legally and in an orderly manner changed.

THE INJUNCTION AGAIN

Do you wonder that the workingmen of the country are losing faith in and lines in Nebraska, and we have profited evident that will, perhaps, explain the mystery to you. There is a strike on among the employes of the Pennsylvania railroad. Strike leaders at Altoona, Pa., made arrangements for a big mass meeting at an amusement park on Sunday, June 4. The railroad managers through their attorneys secured an injunction preventing the park meeting. On that ground did the complaisant judge issue the injunction? On the ground that the park was to be used only for "moral amusements." It is used every Sunday for all kinds of sports and amusements, but this judge declared that for men to congregate and listen to addresses from such men as Raymond Robins, Frank Morrison, Frank Mulholland and Congressman Wilson would be "immoral." We had thought that the injunction in labor cases had about gone the limit when a judge enjoined a Methodist preacher from holding prayer meetings for striking miners, but this Altoona case goes a bit further. And yet some people wonder why the wage earners of the country are losing respect for and faith in our courts.

A QUEER SITUATION

Draw a line north and south through Nebraska so that the cities of York and Norfolk will be just east of it. That line will be about 70 miles west of the Missouri river. Between the line and the river lives every judge of the supreme court of Nebraska. In other words, all six judges of the supreme court come from a strip of territory 70 miles wide with the Missouri river as its eastern boundary.

The 340 miles of Nebraska territory west of that line is not represented on the supreme bench by one of its own citizens. This is as unjust as having both senators from Omaha or Lincoln, all the congressmen from one district, all the state officers from one section, or all of a city's alderman-at-large from one block. The more the voters of the state ponder this situation the more likely they are to retire a couple of the incumbents and elect one from the western section.

INTERURBAN CONSTRUCTION

If there are those who wonder why Nebraska has no interurban electric railroads, the wonder is easily dissipated. We have made vast strides along reform lines in Nebraska, and we have profited thereby. But in our eagerness to curb the rapacity of corporations we have gone just a bit too far in some directions. It is all well enough to put a stop to voting bonuses to prospective railroads. It is all well enough to prevent the watering of stock. But are we not hampering development when we make it impossible for men to construct electric railroads unless they have the actual cash in hand to pay for the work as it progresses? Railroads, electric or steam, pushed into new territory are not expected to be dividend payers from the start. They are usually operated at a loss for several years. Is it not proper, therefore, that the men who invest their capital in these enterprises be allowed something more than a mere 6 or 7 per cent on their money. They take all the risks, go without dividends for several years, do all the worrying and pocket all losses. Will men who can get 6 per cent with absolutely no risk take chances on losing their principal in railroad development when the same 6 per cent is offered?

Nebraska will not secure the development of interurban lines until there is a radical change in our present methods of controlling and regulating the public service corporations. This may be done without yielding an inch of what we have gained during the past decade. It must be done if Nebraska is to keep step with her progressive neighbors. For a time it was only natural that the people should seek to cripple the public service corporations, for it was a very natural feeling of revenge for long years of extortion and corruption. But now that we have taken the second sober thought, and now that commonsense and common fairness actuates us all, let us so amend our laws as to invite men of capital to invest in the construction of electric lines.

THE HAND OF TIME

The other day we picked up an exchange edited by a very dear young friend, and read therein a red-hot roast of something or other, we have forgotten just what. After reading it we laid the paper aside and mused for a spell. Time was when we considered it our bounden