

THE WAGEWORKER.

VOLUME 7

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, FRIDAY, JUNE 3,

NUMBER 11

BILLY MAJOR'S DOPE CARD

THE SAME CONTAINING A FEW UNBIASED OPINIONS ABOUT MATTERS OF MORE OR LESS INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC

Inside of thirty days the voters of Lincoln will be asked to vote on two propositions, one to issue \$100,000 of park bonds, the other to issue \$50,000 of sewer bonds. The park bonds should carry by an overwhelming majority. The sewer bonds should be defeated.

Why should the one carry and the other be defeated? The park bonds should carry because the park system will be a benefit to the whole people. The sewer bonds—proposed for the purpose of building storm sewers—will benefit only a part of the people. I hold that those who get the benefits should pay for them. Why should I, living at Thirty-third and Q streets, be taxed to take the storm waters away from a section of the city distant a mile from my property? The property owner is taxed for the sanitary sewer system, and must then pay for being connected with it. The storm sewer system is paid for by the whole people, and those who get the benefit pay no more than the rest of us. I hold that those benefitted by the storm sewers ought to be the ones to pay for it. That's why I oppose the issuance of the proposed \$50,000 of storm sewer bonds.

The people benefitted by proper drainage of the Salt Creek and Antelope valleys should pay for it, and will. The same principle holds good with the storm sewer system.

The park bonds should be issued. There is not a piece of property in the city that will not be benefitted by an adequate park system. But regardless of property benefits, the bonds should carry because every citizen—men, women and children—will get a moral and physical benefit that can not be measured in dollars and cents.

The action of the base ball management in getting crosswise with the carpenter's union is not surprising. After the fiasco connected with the allied printing trades label the base ball managers had every reason to believe that organized labor was four-flushing, hence there was no reason why the base ball management should concern itself about whether the labor it employs is unfair or unfair. I hope the carpenters will have the "intestines" to go to it, and demonstrate that they think more of standing by their organization than they do of putting up hard-earned money to see base ball games.

No one was surprised when the state railway commission threw County Attorney Tyrrell's case against the Traction Company out of court. The decision was delayed for months, yet the decision itself was known to Traction officials long before it was made public. It's a funny situation. The commission that eighteen months ago threw a fit of horror because the Citizens Company injected \$15,000 worth of water into its stock, now declares that the injection of \$1,500,000 of water into Traction Company stock is all right. The commission decrees that to take such action as the county attorney asks would be wrong, because the Traction Company is up against a fearfully hard proposition. The day the commission so announced the Traction Company was advertising in the east that investment in its stock and bonds was "gilt-edged," and submitted figures to prove it. They were unlike the figures the Traction Company submitted to the commission. The natural query is, which set of figures represent the real facts?

Remember the time the city council sat up until midnight on a Saturday night to pass an ordinance giving a railroad the right to build up Ninth street from S to the alley between O and P streets? And remember who the mayor was who kept himself out of sight and waited until the ordinance was handed him for signature—hiding so that injunction papers could not be served? Remember how the railroad managers had their workmen all ready to begin the work of laying track just as soon as the clock struck the hour of midnight and ushered in Sunday? It was a nicely-laid little scheme to prevent the taxpayers from protecting themselves. Well, the hand that signed the decision of the railway commission in the Traction Company case

is the same hand that signed the ordinance giving a paved city street to the Northwestern Railway Company.

County Attorney Tyrrell was asked a score of times to agree to drop the case in the event that the commission decided against him. Evidently the decision was withheld in the hope that Tyrrell could be prevailed upon to consent to that little scheme. But he refused. Tyrrell says he is going to keep on fighting against the outrage, and intimates that he will ask for a third term as county attorney so he will have an opportunity to continue the fight. If he is a candidate he will have the opposition of the Traction Company interests. Conversely, he ought to have the loyal and active support of the people at large.

It has been a couple of months since a lot of people in Lincoln busied themselves night and day telling us how much they were interested in the good of the workers. They were awfully anxious to provide the workers with clean, decent and wholesome places of resort, and protect him against the iniquitous dens, etc. As I remarked, two months have passed since our good friends were so anxious and tireless, but I haven't seen them in evidence since the result of the referendum vote was announced. To date I haven't heard of a single one of them who backed up his—or her—protestations of interest by contributing a dollar towards the Labor Temple. If friendly hot air would maintain the Temple, we'd be on easy street, but alas, it will not.

There are so many good friends of the workingman who insist upon "doing something" for the worker, but they persistently refuse to assist the worker when he undertakes to do something for himself. The union men of Lincoln have undertaken to provide themselves with a meeting place free from evil surroundings. Why is it that a lot of people who are always telling how much they want to do something for the workers neglect, fail, and refuse to help the workers do this splendid work for themselves? I confess that the more I study this question the more I am puzzled. What the worker needs is a great deal less conversational interest in his welfare and a lot more practical help in his efforts to do something for himself.

I wish that every union man in Lincoln—and every other man, for that matter—might have heard John Z. White's talk on "direct legislation" at the Lindell last Saturday evening. He made it all so simple and so plain that it must have been a dull man indeed who failed to grasp it.

"I move you, Mr. Chairman, that so-and-so, etc."
"I second the motion."
"All in favor say 'aye.'"
And if a majority shall say "aye" the motion prevails. That is direct legislation.

And if the chairman (or the legislature) declares the motion out of order, an appeal is taken from the chair's decision. Isn't it simple?

C. O. Whedon was present at the White meeting, and of course Mr. Whedon was inclined to take the opposite view. As a result of his little talk in practical opposition Mr. Whedon sprung a bear trap that will keep him politically limping for some weeks to come.

There is a farmer near Gretna who is as foolish one way as most farmers are in another way. This Gretna farmer owns a section of fine land near Gretna upon which he has a tenant. He wouldn't let the tenant put in a crop this year because he said the comet was going to knock things galley-west, and it would be labor wasted to put in a crop. Of course he was foolish, but is he any more foolish than the farmer who opposes the theory of the land value tax without ever having studied it? The farm lands of the United States represent about 17 per cent of the total land values of the nations, yet this 17 per cent of value pays 58 per cent of the land tax today. Un-

der the "Henry George theory" this 17 per cent of land value would pay just 17 per cent of the land tax. But I guess, after all, the farmer who opposes the George theory isn't a bit more foolish than the workingman who refuses to join the union of his craft?

I still believe that most of the troubles the Traction Co. is laboring under are troubles of its own making, but candor compels the statement that Lincoln is the only city of its size in the United States that has a six-for-a-quarter far, twelve school tickets for a quarter and universal transfers. The service might easily be improved, but on the whole I guess we're getting about as good as we pay for, measuring things by the price and the service in other cities of Lincoln's class.

The Office Boy's Little Observations

My pay check ain't as big as th' foreman's, but I'm thinkin' I earn more of it.

My chum tells me his boss don't say "goodnight" half as nice as he says "good mornin'."

When I can't stick up f'r th' man that hands me th' envelope I'll be ashamed t' take it any more.

I don't never expect t' git so interested in my work that I'll fergit t' ask f'r th' wages I think I'm earnin'.

After I give my boss eight hours good work I ain't barred from giving him a thought or two when I'm on my own time.

Th' boss kin write pay checks with a smile, but I notice that he offtun looks mighty peaked when he is addin' up th' stubs.

Th' other day a woman in th' street car turned up her nose at me 'cause my face was dirty an' I had my overalls on. That was a couple of hours after th' boss sent me t' her husband t' collect a bill and he told me t' call the first o' th' month.

It didn't take me long to learn that a lot of fellers that kick against the union rule f'r apprentices don't do it because they are anxious f'r boys t' get a chance t' learn trades, but because they want t' have a chance t' get a lot of kids t' do th' work o' full grown men on kid's pay.

BIG BREWER HAS NEW USE FOR CONVICTS.

Adolphus Busch, the St. Louis brewer, while in Kansas City recently, expressed himself greatly in favor of river navigation. He advocated the employment of the state prisoners along the rivers, building walls, improving the banks and such other work that is needed to make the river navigable. This, together with making and keeping in order the highways, should prove ample employment for the convicts without having them leased out to compete with free labor.

HOUSE TO HAVE AND HOUSE TO WANT.

Chicago newspapers report the members of a Sociology Club of the city of hicko as making a study of "just how the city's poor live," by scrutinizing the places where they live. As far as it goes, good. But laboratory work of that kind can hardly be considered as complete without a like study of "just how" the city's rich live. The House of Want cannot be understood unless the House of Have is understood also.—Chicago Public.

NEW YORK ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOSE.

The case of the Electrical Workers' Union against the Electrical Contractors' Association of New York for \$300,000 damages on the charge that the latter broke up the union by their refusal to employ members of the union, was dismissed by Supreme Court Justice Greenbaum, who said that there was nothing to show malicious conspiracy by the employers, necessary to sustain action for damages.

HITTING THE POLITICAL PIPE

A FEW STRAY BITS OF GOSSIP CONCERNING MATTERS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH RUNNING THE CITY, COUNTY AND STATE

Of course an intensely partisan paper like the Omaha Bee can not understand how The Wageworker, an independent paper, can say a good word for a public official who happens to hold opposite political faith from the editor. This is wholly due to the mental limitations of the Omaha Bee's editor and Lincoln correspondent, for which mental limitations The Wageworker is in no wise to blame. It has strived manfully and strenuously to educate the Bee's editor and Lincoln correspondent in ways of liberality of thought and honesty of political action, but seemingly its efforts have been in vain. All of which reminds us of the story of the old colored gentleman who soaked bread in whiskey and fed it to the fish. When the fish had eaten and become duly intoxicated the colored man caught them handily. But the largest fish in the pond evaded capture.

"Why don't you get that big one, uncles?" asked the white man.

"Dat ol' fish am a mullet head, sah," replied the colored man. "It ain't got no brains, sah; an' dat's de reason why it don't fall under de influence."

The moral of which story is in the application thereof.

The scrap between the Anti-Saloon League and the County Option League will be watched with intense interest. One great trouble about achieving real reforms is that the leaders are too often bent upon preventing the accomplishment of the reforms unless it can be brought about according to their own plans and specifications. The real reformer will seize upon any medium, if it be honest and honorable, to secure it. The reformer for revenue only is usually bent upon so carrying on the work—for a consideration—that he will not soon be pried loose from the job by reason of having the reform accomplished. There are a few of us who are compelled to believe that the seemingly big issue in this state is being fogged by eminent reformers who are vastly more interested in the collections than they are in the speedy accomplishment of the reform.

Dr. Aylesworth, in his remarks before the Central Labor Union last week, clearly explained the slowness of some reforms. The proposition to make Denver "dry" was defeated by 15,000 majority. The reasons were numerous. Dr. Aylesworth says that a majority of the church people and a majority of those interested in temperance reform begged the anti-saloon leaders not to inject the issue into that campaign. These people realized that it was necessary to first cripple the "Beast" that Judge Lindsay wrote about so keenly. There were a dozen other issues before the voters. But the anti-saloon league people were bent upon forcing the issue. "If we don't make a showing how can we keep up the collections?" That seems to have been the real impelling motive. So they insisted on forcing the question, with the result that it was overwhelmingly defeated. But, you know, the defeat simply means that these reformers will now have another year or two in which to take up collections. What we seem to need the most right now is some sure method of reforming a lot of our self-constituted reformers.

The Aldrich gubernatorial boom is built on a seemingly queer foundation. Aldrich is being boosted by county optionists, yet Aldrich is the man who served the anti-county optionists in the state senate in 1907, and was instrumental in defeating the proposition. We have heard a lot about the splendid public spirit that actuates Mr. Aldrich, and more of the great service he has rendered the state. But when a man blows hot and cold on the same proposition, merely because a cold breath here may add strength to his campaign, and a warm breath there may disarm opposition, we begin to suspicion that he is not quite the patriot he and his friends paint him.

The name of Bernard McNeny of Red Cloud is mentioned in connection with the democratic nomination for attorney-general. The motion is seconded with enthusiasm. It is only now and then that Nebraska secures for a paltry salary of \$2,000 a year an at-

torney general who can stand up against the big salaried attorneys who represent the corporations. She is fortunate in having such a one now in the person of W. T. Thompson. But Mr. Thompson will not be a candidate for a third term. If a lawyer of McNeny's ability will consent to take the position the people ought to grab him without hesitation. To expect a two-thousand-dollar-a-year lawyer to be able to cope with a score of corporation attorneys who each draw as much per month as the attorney general does in a year, is something of a joke. We only reach our expectations when we pick up such a man by accident—as we have done once or twice. If we can get a man like McNeny by design it will be great good fortune.

The republican organs love to dwell at length upon the fact that Governor Shallenberger responds to as many invitations as possible to appear before his constituents. The governor's presence is demanded day and night, first, because he is the governor, and second, because he is a splendid orator. But the g. o. p. papers that denounce the governor for accepting the invitations and absenting himself from the executive office, say nothing about the absence from office of other state officials. For instance, a short time ago Secretary of State Junkin spent a week on his farm in Gosper county, looking after purely private business. On his return he put in an expense voucher for the trip, and the excuse was that while in Gosper county he spent an hour or two looking up a school land lease. You'll search the republican organs in vain for any mention of this little incident.

Senator Burkett made some statements to the School Superintendents last Monday night that will rise up to plague him before the campaign is over. He asserted that congress is absolutely responsive to the will of the people. Richard L. Metcalf followed Senator Burkett, and in his quiet and unostentatious way "Met" fairly skinned the senator. The man who will stand up before an intelligent audience and declare that congress as at present constituted is responsive to the will of the people is either too simple to be a representative of the people, or believes the people so ignorant that they can be imposed upon with impunity.

Here is a prediction: Lancaster county will be represented the next legislature by not more than one farmer, by three or four lawyers, an insurance agent or two and a couple of corporation henchmen. If this is not correct it will knock a well established precedent all to smash. It was knocked two years ago, and there is small hope of history repeating itself this year. Will some one tell us why a state made up of farmers and wage earners always sends so many ordinary lawyers, cunning corporation tools and broken-down politicians to the legislature, and so few farmers and wage earners? It is a puzzle.

"Party lines are shot all to h—!" was the remark of one of the best known newspaper men of the state while in Lincoln this week. "The man who starts out campaigning with the cry, 'stand by the old party,' is going to meet up with more grief than he can survive. The day of 'yaller dog' politics in Nebraska is gone forever, and I'm glad of it."

This newspaper man is a republican who never held an office, having been content to bear the burden and let the other fellows get the loaves and fishes. He used to opine that every democrat was foreordained to eternal damnation, and every republican predestinated to eternal salvation. He, like many democrats of once similar faith—only vice versa—has learned better. Thank heaven, the time is come in this great state when something more than a party collar is required to secure the votes of the intelligent citizenship of Nebraska.