

CURT COMMENT ON TOPICS OF COMMON INTEREST

The Omaha Examiner is of the opinion that Governor Aldrich's inaugural address did not contain one statesmanlike utterance. The Omaha World-Herald was even more severe in its criticisms of the governor's address. "Demagogic" is the description given by the World-Herald. "Suggests the mountebank," says the Examiner. Of course only those blinded by bitter partisan prejudice, or those who define "personal liberty" as practically unbridled license, will agree with the two newspapers quoted above. On the other hand, only those who believe that the successful candidate of their party can do no wrong will claim that Governor Aldrich's inaugural address was the address of a wise and far-seeing statesman. Among other merits possessed by that address was the merit of brevity. Another merit was its plainness of speech, and its direct allusions to several matters that the people of Nebraska are directly interested in. While there doubtless are many who do not agree with the policies advocated by Governor Aldrich, it is quite certain that they are not undecided as to where Governor Aldrich stands on these policies.

The World-Herald's comments are biased by politics; the Examiner's comments are biased by "booze." Perhaps no one is surprised at the Examiner's fierceness, but the World-Herald could have been fairer without in any degree lessening its fervor as a party organ. Governor Aldrich may be narrow minded to a degree; and he may be actuated in a measure by resentment against some of the interests that so fiercely attacked him during the campaign. But this newspaper, whose editor certainly has no reason for feeling grateful to Governor Aldrich, reads in that inaugural address the desire of a man to render the best possible service to the whole people, not to special interests.

The governor's advice to the legislature not to play politics, and to rush the work of legislation and get through with it before the middle of March, is good, but of course it will not be heeded. The legislature will "play politics," and so will Governor Aldrich before he gets the executive chair fairly warm. He may not intend to now, but has a considerable to learn about executive functions and opportunities.

If the democrats of this state expect to retain the ground lost by the criminal foolishness of the last campaign, they must proceed at once to sit down hard upon the Douglas county delegation and some of that delegation's allies from other counties. Individually some of the Douglas members are pretty good fellows, but as a whole that delegation is not in especially good odor. It doesn't require particularly good eyesight to see corporation spots and splotches wherever brewery stains are not in evidence. The people of this state have demanded the initiative and referendum, which is bitterly opposed by the corporations. The first thing the "combine" did was to make Shoemaker of Douglas chairman of the committee to which this measure would, perforce, be referred—and Shoemaker is radically opposed to the enactment of such a law. Then giving important committee chairmanships to Leidigh of Otoe and Sink of Hall, where corporation bills would be referred, is calculated to arouse the resentment of fair-minded men who, while opposed to corporation baiting, are thoroughly committed to corporation regulation.

The legislature of two years ago made some serious blunders, but on the whole it gave the people splendid service. The legislature is again democratic, but if the present democratic legislature takes a single backward step from progressive lines, or evidences corporation taints in the least degree—then farewell to all hopes of democratic success in the future.

If the committee apportionments in the house, made by the democratic caucus, are evidence of what the "wet" element calls fairness, then the sooner the "drys" cut loose and go it alone the better it will be for the state and for the party.

The revolt against the domination of the Douglas delegation broke loose early. It should have begun sooner, but if it is successful even now all will yet be well. Douglas county often bitterly bewails the fact that it does not stand well throughout the state, but if the good people of Douglas were wise they would soon learn the reason for this bad odor. After the awful dose forced down the throat of democracy last fell by the democracy of Douglas, aided and abetted by elements that know no party when their interests are at stake, the democracy of Douglas exhibits a wonderful "nerve" by even asking for limited recognition at this time.

There are some mighty wise political heads among the republican majority, and they may be trusted to take the fullest advantage of the situation that the democratic majority finds itself in at this time. If the democrats are wise they will take hold of that county option question immediately and get rid of it. The longer it is evaded

the worse off it will be. This newspaper never did warm up to the county option question as a political issue, knowing full well that this legislature would be unable to settle it one way or the other. If a county option law is enacted its opponents will appeal to the referendum, and we will have the old fight over again. If it is defeated the supporters of such a policy will appeal to the initiative and referendum. Because of this fact why not shove the bill to a final vote without losing any time and then prepare to go through the whole struggle again. That's what we are up against.

"But it may be that this legislature will refuse to enact an initiative and referendum law," you say. We cannot conceive of the legislature being guilty of any such folly. Both parties are pledged to it. The democrats have a clear majority in house and senate. If this legislature refuses to enact a satisfactory initiative and referendum law the democratic tickets for the next ten years to come will not poll enough votes to wad a shotgun.

From the Omaha Trade Exhibit, and other Omaha publications, we gather the pleasing information that during the year 1910 Omaha manufacturing institutions turned out products aggregating more than \$200,000,000 in value. Of this amount beer and brewery products amounted to \$4,056,000, or some \$700,000 less than the Omaha output of butter. If one unacquainted with actual conditions in Omaha were compelled to judge by newspaper frenzy and political activity, one would have to render judgment to the effect that the "booze" industry comprised about four-fifths of Omaha's business. At the slightest sign of interference with the brewery industry Omaha throws thirteen kinds of fits. Yet we've never heard a whimper from the newspapers of that city when it was proposed to give the butter industry a wallop by repealing the oleomargarine laws, although the butter industry of Omaha is greater than the beer industry of Omaha by almost a million dollars a year. Even Omaha's soap industry is three-fourths as large as her beer industry, but who ever heard of Omaha getting behind a propoganda to make everybody bathe regularly in order to increase the demand for soap?

Beer and brewery products represents about 2 per cent of Omaha's manufacturing industry. We are of the firm conviction that if Omaha would confine her energies along the lines of "booze" promotion to about that same percentage, she would prosper in a far greater degree. We mention this as one who loves Omaha, who spent a dozen happy years there, who looks upon it as the metropolis of the west, and who believes that her future is greater than the mind of any present-day man can conceive.

As regards the bank guaranty law—in the language of Admiral Schley, "There is glory enough for all." Then why try to single out any individual, or any three or four individuals, to give the glory to? Mr. Bryan sought to secure it in 1894, but Joseph S. Bartley advocated it in the presence of the writer in 1892. Charles O. Whedon has favored it for many years. Judge Albert, who drew the law that has been upheld by the supreme court, deserves praise for his skill in framing the bill, but there were others who helped. The humblest voter who made that law a test before he would vote for a legislative candidate in 1908 is entitled to as much credit as anybody else.

Our knowledge of banking is confined chiefly to standing in an humble position on the outside of the counter and asking for an extension, therefore we are not qualified to pass judgment upon the wisdom of the guaranty law. All we can do is to apply a modicum of logic and common sense to the situation. The man who borrows money from a bank must give security. The man who deposits money in a bank really loans money to the bank. If he must give security when he borrows, why shouldn't he have some security when he lends? This process of reasoning may not appeal to our good friends, Dr. Hall and Beman C. Fox and S. H. Burnham and H. C. Freeman, and doubtless they could knock the props out from under it with ease and grace. Personally this editor is not worrying a bit about the guaranty law. The time may come when he will be glad there is such a law upon the statute books, but just now the law isn't of the slightest personal interest to him. The only interest the editor has in the banking business is what he is called upon to pay every thirty or sixty days.

Since writing the above the "Douglas combine" has received a severe twist and presents a somewhat dilapidated condition. The democrats who want to do something more than merely play into the hands of certain interests got together and hung the Indiana sign on the "combine." The democratic majority should now buckle down to business and give the people at large real service. There are ninety-three counties in Nebraska.

Another especially gratifying evidence of the sound financial condition of this community is found in the quick sale of the "Trinity