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Lincoln Gas and Electric Light Co.

FROM THE CENTER OF THINGS

Lincoln, Nebr., Oct. — (Special Correspondence)—What was once one of the largest starch factories in the country is now desolate and deserted, and the name of Nebraska City is no longer carried to the four quarters of the earth as the seat of the Argo Starch Company. And thereby hangs a tale in which the democratic candidate for president, W. J. Bryan, figures.

Early this spring the starch trust permanently closed the factory. Then it sold the building and machinery to the S. Krug Wrecking Company, of Chicago, and the work of demolition was begun. One section of the main building is already wrecked and work is progressing on the remainder of the huge building.

The Nebraska City Starch Co. was organized in 1891, J. Sterling Morton being responsible for the enterprise. He interested some eastern capital through his sons, Paul and Joy Morton, and Nebraska City and eastern Nebraska rejoiced. Surely Nebraska was surely about to step out of the "agricultural states" classification and enter the list of "manufacturing states." The starch factory was to be the forerunner of cereal mills of every description.

The factory was operated with considerable success for several years and was reported to be prospering in a most satisfactory manner. But the starch trust had its eye on the factory, and the usual plans were set on foot. One fine morning the stockholders who were not connected with the active management of the company were thunderstruck at the news that the indebtedness of the company had mounted up until it was considerably more than half the capital stock. When the information had soaked in they were told they must choose between an assessment amounting to the sum of their stock or selling their stock at 10 cents on the dollar.

Nearly one-half of the stockholders sold their holdings, but a larger number, hoping against hope, paid the assessment and held on. In June, 1894, the stock surrendered at 10 cents on the dollar was transferred to the Argo Starch Co., and five years later the company was turned over to the United States Starch Co. In 1900 the United States Starch Co., which was a subsidiary company of the starch trust, turned over the factory to the starch trust—the National Starch Co.

During these various manipulations to get the Nebraska City starch mills in the hands of the trust, the then attorney general of Nebraska, Constantine J. Smyth, a democrat, was watching and getting the facts well in hand. As soon as the starch fac-

tory was announced as under the control of the starch trust Attorney General Smyth began ouster proceedings under the anti-trust laws of Nebraska.

Then the storm of denunciation broke loose. "What, destroy one of our infant industries!" "Fight the trusts that are not among us all you please, but let our own trust alone."

William J. Bryan, then a candidate for the presidency, made a speech denunciatory of the trust and warned the people of Nebraska City that the future was dark for their favorite industry. But they jeered. Surely the starch trust would not think of closing such a model factory, situated in the very heart of the corn-raising section and with such superior railroad facilities.

The republicans thought they saw an opportunity to make political capital, so they called a public "protest meeting" in Nebraska City. A judge of the district court—a republican—presided. The meeting adopted ringing resolutions denouncing the attorney general and demanding that he withdraw the suit. Shortly after this protest meeting Mr. Bryan and Attorney General Smyth made a date for a meeting in Nebraska City, and promised to deal with the starch trust question "in the shadow of the starch factory." The day of the meeting arrived and Mr. Bryan and Mr. Smyth went to Nebraska City. They were met at the depot by a delegation of indignant citizens who protested the speakers with copies of the protest resolutions. At the same time angry threats of bodily harm were freely hurled at the two distinguished visitors.

Mr. Smyth contented himself with quoting the laws of the state and asserting that no threats of bodily harm would avail to keep him from performing his sworn duty. Mr. Bryan dealt with the trust question in his usual fearless manner. He told the citizens of Nebraska City that their starch factory would be managed in New York by men who were not in sympathy with them and wholly out of touch with their community. He urged them to assist the attorney general in ousting the trust, and to permit the starch factory to be operated by home people. "Just as soon as they can make some other one of their factories pay better dividends they will close this factory," warned Mr. Bryan.

But the republicans of Nebraska City knew better. Had they not received assurances from J. Sterling Morton, who was implacable foe? Surely Mr. Morton would not let the trust close the Nebraska City starch factory.

Mr. Bryan was defeated that year,

Nebraska going republican. Shortly after the election he received a postal card bearing the Nebraska City postmark. It was sarcastic in the extreme. It called attention to the fact that Nebraska City had gone republican, that Nebraska had gone republican, and wound up by stating that "the shadow of the starch trust seems to cover the whole state."

This postal card was signed and sent by William Hayward, now secretary of the republican national committee.

But it seems that the shadow was merely hovering over the starch factory. A few months later the hours were shortened. Then the mill began running five days a week. Then half time—then it closed down for good. For many months its chimneys were smokeless, its wheels motionless. Once it was started up and the people took heart again, but the end soon came. The factory was abandoned for good.

Today William Hayward sits in his office in republican headquarters, but he tries hard to forget that postal card. The republicans of Nebraska City who threatened Mr. Bryan with bodily violence because he dared to warn them of the inevitable, look at the heaps of stone and the wreck of machinery that mark the site of their once big starch factory, and keep up a "devil of a thinking."

C. J. Smyth was defeated for reelection as attorney general, and his republican successor did not push the case against the starch company. But, after all, it was not necessary. Not being engaged in charitable work the starch trust saw no reason why it should keep the Nebraska City factory going when it could make a better profit by closing it down and making starch elsewhere.

So it is that the starch factory at Nebraska City is not throwing shadows on anything these days.

Mr. Bryan spent several days in Lincoln last week, catching up with his correspondence and receiving reports about the progress of the campaign. Just before starting back to Chicago to resume his tour Mr. Bryan spoke at Havelock, a suburb of Lincoln, and the site of the big Burlington shops. A few days before Mr. Taft spoke at Havelock, and the shops were shut down thirty minutes in order that the shopmen might hear the republican candidate. Later the shopmen were notified to either make up the lost time or be docked the thirty minutes.

The Lincoln newspapers and the press associations heralded it forth that Mr. Taft was introduced to the Havelock crowd by "the president of the local boiler-makers' union," and this gave the republican organs another excuse to say that Taft is not being opposed by organized labor. This is a sample of the deceit practiced by their republican committee. Mr. Taft was introduced to the Havelock audience by a man named Holmes, who is a gang foreman in the Havelock shops. Holmes is not a member of any union, and never was.

Every effort was put forth to get a big crowd for Taft at Havelock. The morning was ideal and the meeting had been advertised far and wide. Yet Taft talked to less than 500 people, and not half the shopmen turned out to hear him. Monday night of last week Mr. Bryan spoke at Havelock. It rained all day, and rained at night. The city park, where he spoke, was a sea of mud. The streets were almost impassable. Yet Mr. Bryan spoke to upwards of 3,000 people, and the enthusiasm was intense. A big delegation of union shopmen occupied the speaker's stand, and Mr. Bryan's analysis of the labor planks in the two platforms was greeted with wild enthusiasm.

Beginning Tuesday morning of this week Mr. Bryan made a three days' tour of eastern Nebraska. The trip was made on a special train and Mr. Bryan spoke an average of twenty-five times a day. Everywhere he was greeted by large and enthusiastic audiences.

The republicans of the west have builded great hopes on the western tour of Governor Hughes. While they profess to believe that the tour has strengthened their cause, they really know that because of his evasions and his false witness Governor Hughes has weakened rather than strengthened them. He avoided any reference to the bank guaranty, and refused to refer to his veto of the 2-cent fare law after using several hundred thousand dollars contributed by railroad managers to his campaign fund. Everywhere he was asked to explain it. But he ignored all ques-

tioners. He made a specious attack upon the trust plank of the democratic platform and declared that the 50 per cent clause would ruin the man who tried to manufacture under a patent. He evidently thought that westerners are so ignorant that they do not know that patents are a constitutional right, and paraded the fact that he does not know the difference between an incentive to individual genius and an incentive to corporate greed.

By this time probably every newspaper reader in the country is wise to the Omaha Bee joke. The Omaha Bee is edited by Victor Rosewater, a Nebraska member of the republican national committee, member of the executive committee of that organization and chairman of the bureau of publicity. Recently Mr. Bryan quoted from the republican tariff planks, but in the printed report of his speech the quotation marks were left off. Reading the following the Bee editor took it for granted that it was what Mr. Bryan said:

"In all tariff legislation the true principle of protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with a reasonable profit to American industries."

Then the editor of the Bee proceeded to denounce that principle as "sheer demagoguery" and declared that an attempt to put it into practice would result in endless strife between employer and employe, precipitate panic and do untold injury. The Bee really had hard work expressing its hatred for such a "demagogic utterance." Now that its editor, republican national committeeman from Nebraska, has learned that he was denouncing a republican platform plank the silence that reigns in the Bee office could be cut with a knife.

The Portland Oregonian, another republican organ, made the same fool mistake. So did the Boston Transcript. And Mr. Bryan says he no longer reads books of humor when he wants to laugh. He just reads a republican platform.

SCATTERING FISH IN KANSAS

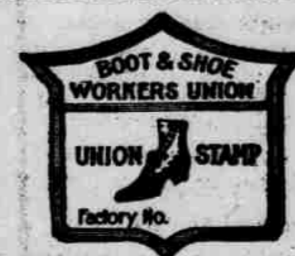
The Game Warden Out With His Train Planting Bass and Crappie.

The annual distribution of fish for Kansas waters from the state fish hatchery at Pratt began Monday. Del Travis, state fish and game warden, started out the fish car, and in the next month all of the young fish at the hatchery will be distributed. Eleven trips have already been arranged, taking in practically every part of the state. The car, loaded with 10,000 fish, started over the Colorado division of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific at McFarland and will distribute fish at every station along the division to Goodland, when the car will return to the hatchery at Pratt for another load. As fast as the trips can be made and new loads put into the car the fish will be distributed as follows: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, from Strong City to Superior, Neb., thence on the Burlington to St. Francis, covering the northwest corner of the state. From Pratt to Kansas City, from Florence to Great Bend via McPherson and Lyons, from Larned to Jetmore, from Harper to Winfield, Moline, Elk City, Independence, Coffeyville and Pittsburg. St. Louis & St. Francis from Kansas City to Fort Scott, Missouri Pacific, Wichita to Fort Scott, from Fort Scott to Leoti, Union Pacific from Topeka to Grainfield.

There are some other trips to be arranged later to get into other sections of the state.

Mr. Travis expects to distribute all of the fish raised at the hatchery this year in the fall months. He estimates the crops at something more than 100,000 bass and crappie. The car has a capacity of 10,000 fish, and all of the long trips it will be loaded to the limit. Not less than fifty fish are given to each applicant and some applicants get as high as 1,000, according to what they desire to do with them and the water conditions.

It is the intention of the game warden to import a large number of the blue quail from New Mexico this fall. These birds are coming into the western part of the state in droves at the present time, but it is Mr. Travis' intention to get a large number of the birds in New Mexico and send them to the eastern part of the state for restocking. These birds have top-knots but are as gamey and as good eating as the brown ones native of Kansas.



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