

# THE MONITOR

A National Weekly Newspaper Devoted to the Interests of Colored Americans.

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ARTICLE XIV. CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

Citizenship Rights Not to be Abridged.

1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

**IS THE TRUTH COMING OUT?**

OWING to the tense feeling in this community immediately following the riot and burning of the court house, and the lynching of William Brown, a colored American, for an alleged assault on a woman, September 28, 1919, The Monitor, as our readers will recall, was very guarded and conservative in its statements. We stated that there was no positive proof of the victim's guilt and that the story of the alleged assault as published in the daily press was of such an unbelievable character as to throw doubt upon its credibility. We said further that the young woman's escort was known to be a pool hall loafer and as such not an altogether dependable witness. We were careful to cast no reflection upon the character or reputation of the woman in the case. Our statements, as we have said, were guarded. We could have said much more but we did not deem it wise or expedient to do so. We felt that time would bring the truth to light. Now come statements by John W. Towle, foreman of the grand jury, which investigated the riot, made publicly before prominent organizations of this city in which he declares that stories of assaults by Negroes upon women were deliberately framed to discredit the police administration of the city and that Brown was innocent. The Monitor is constrained to ask, is the truth at last coming out? We regret exceedingly that among our splendid citizenry, there were not found men in those trying days with moral courage to come out and say publicly what they were saying among themselves and what some of them said to us privately.

DO NOT PLEASE US.

REFERENCE to those regrettable days nearly two years ago moves us to remark that there were certain features in connection with these deplorable events to which we have never been able to become reconciled. We are not bitter, but the fact that the lives of hundreds of law-abiding men, women and children were allowed to be placed in jeopardy by an insane mob evoked, unquestionably evoked, by selfish and sinister motives and by an agency or agencies with an ulterior purpose, has never set well with us and never will. We hope that the whole truth will eventually be brought to light with such clearness that the amity and goodwill which existed between all classes of our citizens and which kindly relationship were seriously disturbed by the propaganda issuing in that tragedy may be restored.

MONITOR SUPPORT.

"Who is the Monitor supporting in this campaign?" is a question which has often been asked recently. There is a well-founded belief that The Monitor wields some influence in this community among its readers and that many because of its known integrity and wide knowledge of men and measures look to this newspaper for guidance. We feel keenly the responsibility placed upon us and the confidence reposed in us. Our answer to this question at this time is this: The Monitor is for candidates.

1. Who have shown a disposition to be fair to our people; or whom we have good reason to believe, will in the event of their election, be fair to our people.

2. Who have proven themselves to be honest, capable and efficient public officials.

A square deal for our people is with us the FIRST CONSIDERATION.

The Monitor wants honest, capable and efficient public officials and the men who have given or will give us a SQUARE DEAL. These are

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# John W. Towle

Speaker of the evening

Come and hear the issues discussed

## Music by K. P. Band

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## "Free" Bridge Facts

The Omaha & Council Bluffs Street Railway Company, operating the present toll bridge across the Missouri River between Omaha and Council Bluffs, addresses, through this medium, a few statements of fact to the voters of Omaha on the proposition of voting bonds for a so-called "free" bridge between the two cities

Talk No. 4--St. Louis "Free" Bridge.

There is much valuable food for sober thought in the experience of the city of St. Louis in the promotion and construction of the "free" bridge across the Mississippi River at St. Louis.

The agitation for this bridge was commenced about fifteen years ago in a manner quite similar to the agitation which is now on for a "free" bridge between Omaha and Council Bluffs.

The principal promoter of the "free" bridge at St. Louis was a man, engaged in the real estate business, by the name of Gerhart. The same arguments were advanced there as are now being circulated here in favor of the "free" bridge proposition. Resolutions of real estate exchanges were procured, and commercial organizations were solicited and in some cases passed resolutions in favor of the "free" bridge idea. An estimate of \$3,500,000 as the cost of the St. Louis bridge was made by an engineer, and after a more or less spirited campaign on the part of the promoters, bonds for \$3,500,000 were voted at a special election held on June 12, 1906.

Opposition to the voting of these bonds was strongly urged by some of the officials of the City of St. Louis and by some of the leading newspapers. The St. Louis Republic on April 5, 1906, stated editorially as follows: "The blunder the City of St. Louis would commit in spending millions to build a so-called free bridge is more apparent today than it was when the agitation for that chimerical bridge idea first began. Mr. Wells (the mayor) sagaciously and forcibly explained in his message the absurdity of the scheme to remove the expense of river transfer by saddling the burden on the municipality."

But the bonds were voted and all of the money expended, only to find that the bridge was far from being completed. Only the main spans had been constructed with the amount estimated for a completed bridge, and the additional sum of \$2,750,000 was asked to complete the structure. AT THREE SUCCESSIVE ELECTIONS THE VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS IN DISGUST VOTED DOWN THE PROPOSITION TO ISSUE THE ADDITIONAL BONDS NE-

CESSARY, AND FOR FIVE OR SIX YEARS THE HALF COMPLETED STRUCTURE STOOD IDLE, A MONUMENT TO THE FOLLY OF FOLLOWING THE ADVICE AND ESTIMATES OF IRRESPONSIBLE PROMOTERS.

In November, 1914, more than eight years after the original bonds were voted, the additional bond issue of \$2,750,000 was authorized to complete this structure, and this vast sum did not suffice to complete it.

Mr. Player, who was Comptroller of the City of St. Louis at the time the agitation for a free bridge was started, has publicly stated that "the municipal bridge was a stupendous blunder from the beginning." In his report made in September, 1916, after commenting on the so-called "free" bridge, he states as follows: "A big debt does not make a big city; the expenditure of public money for the advancement of private interests does not make a great city; the erection of municipal bridges, markets, etc., that cannot meet the cost of operation and maintenance, does not make a great city. Good men in public office and in civic organizations do make a great city."

When the question of voting bonds for the erection of the St. Louis bridge was under discussion, many of the level-headed business men of that city expressed their opposition to the project, but their opposition was drowned by the voices of those who were clamoring for the "free" bridge. Mr. Andrew J. Riley, President of the St. Louis Board of Public Improvements, warned the voters that the bridge would cost double the amount of the estimate. His warning was unheeded, but his prediction has proven to be correct.

If the St. Louis bridge cost over \$7,000,000 when the preliminary estimate was \$3,500,000, how much would the Omaha bridge cost when the preliminary estimate is \$1,400,000?

Mr. Voter take your pencil and figure it out for yourself. The proposed Million Dollar bond issue to be voted on May 3rd is only a starter, unless you are prepared to vote one or two additional bond issues to complete the bridge, then you and all your friends and neighbors should vote "no" on this proposition.

Watch for Further "Free" Bridge Facts

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