

# THE ALLIANCE HERALD

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## THE "AMBULANCE CHASERS" AGAIN

The introduction of a bill in the Nebraska legislature forbidding the charging of contingent fees by lawyers conducting personal damage suits calls attention again to that class of jaekal lawyers known as "ambulance chasers." During the last political campaign, they opposed the endorsement by the voters of the workmen's compensation law, because the adoption of that law meant a loss of remunerative business for them thru the amicable settlement of claims by employees against employers, a good thing for both employe and employer, but a mighty poor thing for the attorney who would otherwise have collected a fat fee for conducting a damage suit.

In speaking of the growth of the practice among a certain class of lawyers who encourage the bringing of suits for damages in order that they can secure a contingent fee, The Lincoln Star says editorially:

It transpired gradually that lawyers were sometimes ready to give a possible client the first hunch that he had been subjected to actionable damage, and to encourage the institution of suits for recovery thereon. During recent years many lawyers have made it a practice to take such suits with the assurance that they would themselves pay the costs of prosecution and take the gambler's chance for their pay. Of late it has become a common thing for the personal damage lawyers, as soon as a judgment has been obtained for a client, to openly file in court a lien upon the lion's share of it as their contingent fee.

During recent years the corporations that employ large numbers of men have had to employ regularly men to compete with the ambulance chasing lawyer. Whenever an employe was killed these men, generally known as claim agents, have had to institute a race with the ambulance chasers to see which could beat the other to the injured person. If the claim agent won, perhaps the injured workman or patron might be induced to settle his damage claim and avoid litigation. But if the ambulance chaser got to the injured person's side first the claim was immediately multiplied and the prospect for tense litigation wonderfully increased.

For after the lawyer got upon the scene a possible settlement always included for him a share practically equal to the amount of damage which might otherwise have been claimed for the injured person.

In every community there are members of the august profession who are easily recognized as experts in the institution and conduct of personal damage suits and who rather enjoy the celebrity that attaches to the service, for it brings them business. How much they contribute to the volume of litigation has never been calculated, but it is common knowledge that they provide a considerable share of the work of the courts. Therefore it seems certain that the enactment of a law forbidding the conduct of cases for contingent fees would tend to diminish the volume of litigation, if some court, out of sympathy for this class of lawyers, does not nullify the law.

## A MAN OF THE PEOPLE

In their lieutenant governor, James Pearson of Moorefield, who was recently elected vice president of the State Dairymen's Association, people of Nebraska have a state officer of whom they may well be proud. He is not much of a politician, according to the standard commonly set up by political machines, but he is strong with the people. He was one of the candidates for state office that The Herald was anxious to see elected last November. Believing him to be a better man for lieutenant governor than the lawyer candidate who ran against him, we gave him our earnest support.

We have been more than satisfied with Mr. Pearson since he assumed the office; we have been delighted with his public utterances and his official conduct so far. His brief message to the Nebraska state senate, delivered upon assuming the position of presiding officer of that body, was a gem. In delivering this message, the lieutenant governor broke a "precedent." Machine politicians may criticize the spirit of independence which he has shown, but the common people are delighted with it.

Speaking of campaigning, Mr. Pearson did not follow the beaten track laid out by other candidates, but he "got there just the same." He did his campaigning principally by correspondence, and showed that he was master of the art of producing results by that method. While a party nominee, he practically ran an independent campaign. While his opponent, who is well known in Nebraska, campaigned from one end of the state to the other, Mr. Pearson remained at home, making a successful canvass by correspondence at an expense of less than one-half that expended by other candidates for state offices.

Keep your eye on James Pearson. He is a quiet, unassuming man, but enterprising, resourceful and successful. He is strong with the people of the agricultural districts, and is well liked by town folks who prefer broad intelligence and integrity to cunning trickery.

## FAIR PLAY FOR SOUTH OMAHA

One of the questions before the Nebraska legislature that is producing a real fight is that of annexing South Omaha and other suburbs of Omaha to the metropolis by legislative enactment, without putting the matter to a vote of the people of those places. Efforts heretofore made to annex South Omaha to Omaha, by popular vote, have failed thru being voted down by the electors of the smaller city.

As a citizen of Nebraska for nearly thirty years, and former resident of Omaha, the editor of The Herald very naturally desires to see that city grow and prosper. We are always for Omaha in anything that is right. We wanted to see Omaha made a reserve city, under the new currency law, instead of Kansas City. We would like to see the Nebraska metropolis become the largest city of the Missouri valley. We favor the annexation of South Omaha, when it can be done in a proper manner; and we hope it will be done before the federal census of 1920. But there is one thing necessary to any scheme for annexation before it can properly be called "proper," and that is the consent of the people of the annexed city, expressed by a majority vote at a popular election.

The Herald is emphatically opposed to gag rule. And, if we know the temper of the people of this great state, they are opposed to it, too. "Let the people rule" is more than a mere party slogan in Nebraska; it is an established principle, endorsed by a majority of the voters of all political parties.

We do not believe that the legislature will pass the forcible annexation bill, but if it does, please note this: Every man who votes for it will be remembered; he will be a speckled bird, and if he ever again comes up for election to office, he will find that his vote for gag rule is repugnant to voters, who as a rule are fair minded.

## PASSING OF THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY

Close political observers believe that the next general election in this country will be more nearly a square-toed contest between republicans and democrats than it has been since the organization of the progressive party. Persons who expect to see the new party exert a decisive influence in national or state politics for a long time, basing their expectations upon the tenacity with which the populist party maintained its organization and held the balance of power in a number of states, fail to make a proper comparison. Their logic is based on wrong premises, hence their conclusions are wrong. The



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WHERE THE SEWING MACHINE IS TO BE GIVEN AWAY

conditions that led to the organization of the people's independent party and the progressive party were entirely different.

Twenty-five years ago both republican and democratic parties were dominated by reactionary or, as they were then termed, monopolistic influences. Both were controlled largely by politicians who did the bidding of special interests. In vain did the Farmers' Alliance and other reform organizations appeal to them for redress. Antimonopolists were not asking for the election to office of any particular man—they had no pet candidate—but they were demanding legislation in the interests of the common people. Deaf ears were turned to their demands by office holders and politicians who controlled the situation. In sheer desperation steps were taken for the organization of an antimonopoly party to fill a badly felt want. As a result a new party was organized and officially designated the people's independent party, afterwards by common consent called the populist party. The organization of this party was the outgrowth of a condition, the culmination of a campaign of education which began on nonpartisan lines. It was not organized to gratify a solitary ambition or avenge an injustice to one man, neither was the tone of its complexion determined by a single personality. It was organized to secure results that could not at that time be obtained thru the dominant parties. Its character was determined by the personnel of the rank and file; securing office was merely an incident to obtaining measures. For these reasons, it could not but be permanent in character; its ultimate dominance in politics could be prevented only by one or both of the other parties making concessions along the lines of its policies.

The launching of the progressive party was recent. It takes but few words to tell why it was organized. A contest was on between the supporters of two leading candidates for the republican presidential nomination. The defeated candidate claimed that unfair means had been used to secure the nomination of his opponent. He bolted, secured the organization of the progressive party and thus the nomination which he failed to get from the republican convention. No matter how justifiable the bolt from the action of the republican convention may have been, it could not be reasonably expected that a party organized under those circumstances and for the reasons that prompted the organization of the progressive party could be permanent.

At the last election the progressive party polled less than half the number of votes given its candidates two years before. The following press dispatch sent out from the capital of Illinois recently is one of many indications that national leaders of the progressive party have given up all hope of it ever becoming dominant:

Springfield, Ill., Jan. 5.—Politicians here for the opening of the Illinois legislature tonight witnessed what they termed the death of the progressive party in Illinois, when Medill McCormick, member of the progressive national committee and a member of the house together with H. S. Hicks of Rockford, the only other progressive in the lower house, entered the republican house caucus and announced their intention of voting with the republicans during the session.

McCormick made a speech before the caucus in which he said he was "glad to get back to the party of my fathers." He was interrupted by cheering and violent handclapping. Nearly every member of the caucus and others construed McCormick's action and statement as the probable end of the progressive party in Illinois, which was considered one of the strongholds of the party. McCormick is vice chairman of the progressive national committee.

## ELECTION OF FEDERAL OFFICIALS

Ex-United States Senator Jonathan Bourne, Jr., of Oregon is advocating the election of not only postmasters, but other federal officers, such as United States marshals, district attorneys, collectors and appraisers of customs, collectors of internal revenue and registers and receivers of land offices. The Herald is not yet sufficiently informed as to Mr. Bourne's plan to pass judgment upon the details of it, but the idea of popular election of federal officers is excellent and has our hearty endorsement. It is in line with the progressive thought of the day. It will, of course, be opposed by the machine politicians of both republican and democratic parties, and will be endorsed by patriotic voters of all parties.

## OLD HICKORY CHIPS

Think of Salem, Mass., unseating its mayor who had served five times, by way of the recall.

"I obey and respect the orders of President Gutierrez," Villa says in a telegram sent from Mexico City, to his Washington agent. "I am his subordinate." Strange how modest General Villa always is, and yet he usually heads the procession.

That excellent howitzer "T. R." seems to be minus an adequate cement foundation these days.—Greenville (Ala.) Advocate. Also been fired so often it needs recasting.

Chicago is trying out a new court. No lawyers. Plaintiffs and defendants state their own cases. Judge decides. Why not?

Texas' new governor, Jim Ferguson, having been a banker, a farmer and a cattle man, ought to appeal to all the larger classes of people in Lone Star state.

Still, it was kicking about taxes that made us Americans.

That woman who lost her savings

through the hole in her stocking ought to know that well regulated banks are kept well darned.

Optimism is the best "ism" philologically and philosophically.

There is one word bigger just now than "war." It is "peace."

Let us be thankful that our own gunmen do not use dum dum bullets.

If Turkey is a failure both in war and in peace, it will have to go into liquidation.

Possibly the women would find it easier to secure an extension of the ballot if they would use more extensively the privileges they have.

If the honest farmer is able to indulge in automobiles on dollar wheat he may go in for Corvets and titled sons-in-law when wheat reaches \$1.50.

Between Billy Sunday and Banker Munday, Philadelphia is in a fair way to become famous.

Oklahoma has just had its fourteenth bank robbery within twelve months. That extensive Oklahoma constitution evidently left something out.

Those new fenders for automobiles make the front of the car look like a safety razor, and indeed they are supposed to save the pedestrian by a close shave.

However, the next generation will have a citizenry trained not only to arms but to camp life and discipline, thanks to the Boy Scouts.

With the supply normal and his appetite the same, it is difficult for the consumer to understand the continual fluctuations in the price of wheat.

It's better to be up and doing than to be down and done.

Lazy people usually work overtime when it comes to giving advice.

The mere polite some women are when they meet, the more they hate each other, when they part.

Since a contingent of 60 Fiji Islanders has joined, the allies will doubtless proceed to eat 'em alive.

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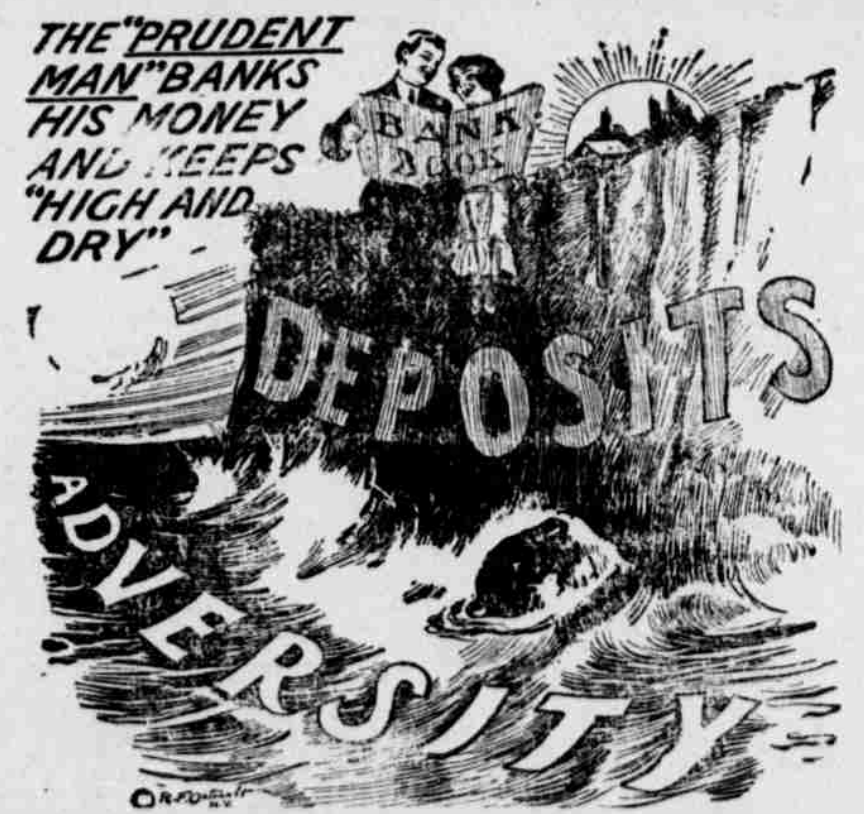
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But the income of every married man is already taxed to the limit.