

The Alliance Herald

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SOBER SECOND THOUGHT

Judge Westover's decision not to call a grand jury session, despite the lengthy petition from citizens of this county asking for one, will be received in various ways in various quarters, but in general the feeling is that the district judge is better able to judge the necessity than the average citizen who signed the petition.

Mr. Westover has had a pretty problem facing him in this petition. It requires courage of conviction for a man elected by popular vote to refuse a request made by any large number of his constituents. In view of the fact that Mr. Westover aspires to the supreme bench it is still more to his credit that he failed to be influenced by popular clamor. However, this is one of the attributes of a just judge, and Mr. Westover's experience has extended over so long a period that he can refuse a request from the voters, when he thinks it should be refused, as easily as he can overrule a motion for a new trial.

In the first flush of public indignation following the McElhaney murder trial, the cry went out for a grand jury. People in general have the wrong idea of these bodies. The belief is that a grand jury is a sovereign remedy for every public ill. This really isn't the case. It has no authority to investigate rumors of law breaking. It may act only upon such evidence as is placed before it. Usually a grand jury will indict upon less evidence than a court needs to convict, and in some instances, due to its method of procedure, the offenders will plead guilty when, if the case came to trial, it would be extremely difficult to secure a conviction.

Judge Westover has been dealing with crime and law breaking for a number of years. He is, therefore, less easily swayed by indignation over any one offense or series of offenses. He is able to see the other side of the argument, and that is, that while a few indictments might be returned, a grand jury session would be nothing more than an aid to good government. Again, the cost is something that should be considered in these days of high taxes. The last grand jury, impaneled something like ten years ago, cost the county \$2,000. A grand jury now would cost at least twice that sum.

County Attorney Basye has, in the past twelve months, prosecuted nearly one hundred state cases. Twenty-five per cent of these were for criminal offenses. The county attorney is willing to prosecute at any time he has secured sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that he can secure a conviction. Every day there is at least one violation of the law. Many of the men who signed the petition for the grand jury know of these violations, and yet not one of these men has volunteered to come forward and testify or give any assistance to the authorities in cleaning up Alliance. A grand jury, in the face of such an attitude, would accomplish but little more than the county attorney. It has a little more authority—it may subpoena witnesses and force them to testify under oath. This the county prosecutor may not do.

There is but one way to clean up a community, and that is to enlist the support of every citizen. This support must be active, not mouth support alone. When the time comes that every citizen who knows of the violation of law will do his duty and take the matter up with the proper authorities, and do everything in his power to help secure a conviction, then, and then only, will the bootleggers and kindred scum begin to realize that other fields are more inviting. Alliance doesn't need a grand jury half so much as it needs an awakened civic conscience.

THE WELFARE ORDINANCE

City Attorney Metz, Councilman Johnson and a committee from the local welfare organization are now engaged in paring down the proposed welfare ordinance, which was submitted to the council following a series of meetings held in Alliance by the Rev. Theodore Hanson, state organizer. The ordinance, as originally introduced, was drawn to cover the activities of a city the size of Chicago, and while in time Alliance will doubtless be large enough to make every one of the provisions applicable, the passage of this ordinance would be almost as feasible as the hunting of wild geese with a twelve-inch mortar.

The Herald has not a single objection to the welfare ordinance as proposed or as it will read when amended. There are a number of good provisions in it, and provided the right persons are in charge of it, will undoubtedly have a great effect. We wonder, however, if some of the feminine supporters of the measure realize just what powers they have been willing to give to the city superintendent of public welfare through the measure they have endorsed. It's a long ordinance, and legal phraseology is notoriously difficult to read.

People, as a rule, are perfectly willing to endorse legislation that does not affect them. All of us are anxious to have other people's children placed under proper rules of conduct, but somehow or other, we dislike to have either ourselves or our offspring subject to moral regulations which others have proposed.

Let us hope that the committee now revising the welfare ordinance will do their work thoroughly. It is possible, of course, to so cut and amend the document as to emasculate it, and deprive it of all force, and this should not be done. But the citizens of Alliance, the mothers of children and the children themselves, may be spared considerable humiliation later on if the measure has been properly edited before it is made a part of the city's law.

BRING ON THE CANDIDATES

The city manager form of government will go into effect in Alliance, unless some of the opposition are able to bring an injunction suit to prevent the city clerk from calling the primary election, which is the first step. The primary election, under the new plan, will be held on March 15. Nominations for councilmen must be filed between February 2 and 12.

In order to nominate a man for councilman, a petition must be filed by him or for him, with the city clerk, con-

taining at least twenty-five names of electors, and not more than fifty. Five councilmen are to be elected, and petitioners are cautioned not to sign more than five nominating petitions. As many candidates will be placed in nomination as there are petitions filed, and at the primary to be receiving the highest vote will be entitled to have their names placed on the ballot for the city election, which will be held the first Tuesday in May.

Tomorrow is the first day on which nominating petitions may be filed. Those who are interested in good government should take the initial step in getting good men into the race. It is hoped that the city manager plan will lighten the duties of councilmen that the best men in the city will consent to be connected with the council. While it is true that any man has a right to make the race, it should be understood that the plan has no chance of success unless public spirited men, of ability, are chosen for the council. No man to whom the salary is the chief inducement should be elected.

Alliance has plenty of good men who should be drafted for service, if they will not consent to make the race. Petitions may be filed for them. The time is at hand—two weeks hence will be too late.

The Herald suggests that every organization in the city which is interested in good government sponsor one or more candidates. The league of women voters, the welfare council, the American legion, the Rotary club, and all the others should be vitally interested in better government for Alliance. This is an opportunity to show that interest in a constructive way. Unless the voters take an actual interest, the city manager plan cannot succeed any better than the old system. We have the plan with us for at least four years—if it does not succeed, every taxpayer in Alliance will be the loser. The selection of good men is an insurance against failure.

A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

An Alliance professional man has received word from a friend in the state senate that it is apparent that the moving picture producers and the newspapers of Nebraska are opposed to the movie censorship bill. Naturally enough, he wants to know why it is that the newspapers should be almost a unit in taking that sort of a stand.

Conceding that the state senator in question is correct in his assumption that a big majority of the newspapers do not favor the move, it is but natural there should be some impelling motive for their opposition. The motive is easily discerned after a slight study of the proposed law. The freedom of the press is threatened by this proposed legislation, and the newspaper men, who know that freedom of writing was gained only after a long and bitter struggle, are the first to recognize encroachments upon their prerogatives.

The proposed law provides for a bureau of inspectors of motion pictures in the state department of public welfare. The child welfare council of the state child welfare bureau has the sole nominating power. This council—the membership of which is not generally known—will place six names before the secretary of the state department of public welfare, from which he is to choose three, not more than two to be of the same sex.

Into the hands of these three persons, chosen in this way, is to be committed the supervision of every moving picture house in Nebraska. They are to examine, or supervise the examination, of all films shown in the state, and are to approve such as are moral and proper, and disapprove such as are sacrilegious, indecent, obscene, immoral, or bad, or such as tend, in the judgment of the board, to debase or corrupt public morals, or tend to incite to the commission of crimes, ever bearing in mind that children attend exhibitions of such films and that they are peculiarly susceptible to such impressions. Under such a classification, the mental and moral standard of children is to be set up as the standard for adults.

It may be questioned as to just where the freedom of the press is involved in all this. The answer is found in another section, which provides a copy of all newspaper advertising must be passed upon by the board and be subject to its examination and approval before it may be printed.

These three inspectors are to be permitted, in the name of public morals, to dictate what shall go into the advertising columns of every newspaper in the state. If they succeed, every other bureau may demand the same right of supervision. From this it is only a slight step to saying what shall be printed in the news columns of a newspaper. With the least abridgement of the freedom of the press will go a right, essential for the protection of the public, that it required centuries to gain.

Freedom of the press is not an especial privilege to newspaper men. It is a constitutional guarantee and applies to every man, woman and child in the nation. The press is the greatest power on earth, and is open to rich and poor, the oppressed. There is no cause so helpless that it may not find a champion. The newspapers are responsible under the law. They do not abuse their privileges, and if they do step across the line, there is a ready remedy in the courts.

It has been argued that if the newspapers do not approve of this feature of the bill, they should have it eliminated, and let the rest of the bill stand. It is but just to conclude that if the bill is drawn up without regard to the constitutional rights of newspapers, it is not intended to protect and preserve the rights of others. Drawn as it was, by salaried reformers and fanatics of one sort and another, the bill should be amended in the way that Senator Lodge proposed to amend the league of nations covenant. "Strike out all below the enacting clause," said the senator, "and write a new league."

House roll No. 113 seeks reform of the moving picture industry at the wrong end. With state censorship, just as with state divorce laws, there is bound to be a silly jumble of requirements. A film that will pass the Pennsylvania board will not be permitted to be shown in Kansas; the picture as passed by Kansas will not be allowed in Nebraska; the Nebraska rules may not suit the dispositions of the guardians of public morals in Iowa. And in Montana, a sane state, the changes proposed by all of these boards will probably be regarded as unnecessary. If there shall be censorship—and there should be, undoubtedly—pressure should be brought to bear upon congress, and have it done thoroughly. Make it nationwide. Then inspectors may camp at the film studios, and the average moving picture house not be worried to death because of old-maidish restrictions imposed by the prudish and the narrow-minded.

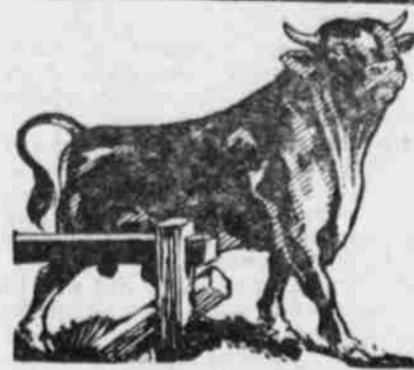
The first community "mixer" given by the chamber of commerce was an eye-opener. More of such affairs are indicated by the tremendous success of the first. Such gatherings will do more to develop a real community spirit than pages of advertising, hundreds of speeches or thousands of wastebaskets full of circular letters. "Mixers," with their friendly atmosphere, belong particularly to the west. One of the regrettable things about living in a growing city is that it is impossible for men and women to know only a few of their neighbors.

RED CROSS IS SEEKING A WHITE MAN 30 YEARS OLD

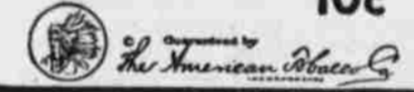
"White, thirty years old" is not the most complete description on earth, but that is all the home service bureau of the Red Cross has received to work upon. Mrs. Elizabeth Coleman of Hurley, Miss., is seeking her son, Oliver Coleman, who, at the last time he wrote her, in February, 1919, was employed in one of the Antioch potash plants. In that last letter her son told her that on the day he was writing, the plant was closing down and that he intended to go to Lakeside. Since then his mother has lost all trace of him, and as she is an old lady, is greatly worried and has appealed to the Red Cross in the hope of finding her son.

The postmasters at Antioch and Lakeside say they have no record of Oliver Coleman ever having been in either of the two towns. It is possible, however, that some of the workmen in the potash plants might recall Mr. Coleman, and if they can furnish any news of him, it will be gratefully received by his mother. Those who can give any information are requested to communicate with Miss Josephine Ganson of the Red Cross home service bureau in this city.

Broadwater News: Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Brown journeyed via railroad to Alliance last week, and Saturday, at that place, Mrs. Brown was operated upon for gall stones, and at the present time is getting along nicely. Mr. Brown expects her home the latter part of next week.



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10c



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20% LESS

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Former Price \$90.00, Now . . . \$70.00

Former Price \$75.00, Now . . . \$59.00

Former Price \$65.00, Now . . . \$50.00

Former Price \$60.00, Now . . . \$47.00

We Have Fifteen Styles to Select From.

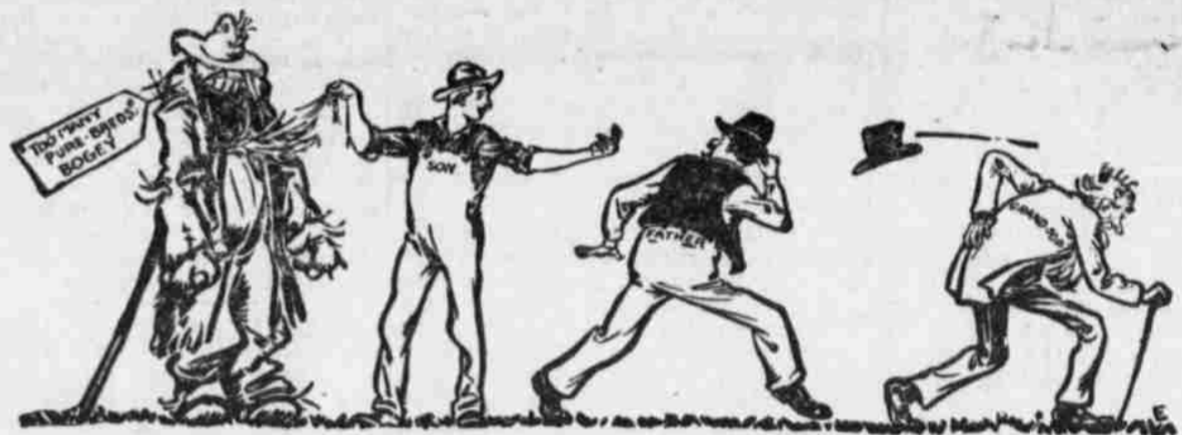
Confidence Begets Confidence

We are FIRST ALWAYS to tell you publicly of the reductions in prices of our lines of merchandise. WHY NOT do your trading at the one store that gives you the immediate benefit of lower prices?

George D. Darling

FURNITURE and HOUSEFURNISHINGS

115-117 West Third Street -- Alliance, Nebraska



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Today the same chance is presented to you. Many persons will still tell you there are too many pure-breds. Don't believe them. It is the same old bogey—the scarecrow with a heart of straw that fooled grandpap and father. LESS THAN TWO PER CENT OF OUR CATTLE ARE PURE-BREDS. These are the facts—the 98% are scrubs or grades!

It is too late for Grandpap; and for father—his chance may be gone; but the road is open to YOU. Join those who have become independent by breeding good cattle. Thousands of men in the United States who went in for pure-breds ten years ago are now independent. Tens of thousands who go in now will become independent during the ensuing decade. Our hope is that you will be one of them. Now is the time to buy, when all prices are low. Get ready to share in future high prices.

For instances showing what pure-breds have done for farmers in average circumstances we refer you to the week-by-week articles in THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN. It combs the country for every sort of news of interest and profit to farmers, and this very ad is due to its desire to be of service. It is really hard to contrive more pleasure and profit than \$1.00 spent for a year's subscription (52 issues) to THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN will bring you. You'll want it eventually—why not order it TODAY?

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C. M. McCARTHY, Secretary, York, Nebraska

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