

### State Undertakes to Purify Boxing and Wrestling Game

How to put crooks and promoters out of the boxing and wrestling game was the subject of a conference last Wednesday afternoon between Secretary H. H. Antles of the department of public welfare and a dozen members of the American legion at the state house, says the State Journal. This task seems to many an impossible one. Members of the legislature debated the question and expressed doubts of the success of H. R. 154, but the bill was sponsored by the American legion of Nebraska and was passed and is now a law. In past years somewhat similar bills were defeated, usually on the ground that they were thought to be for the purpose of creating a paid office for the benefit of some prize fighting promoter or that they would result merely in legalizing of the worst kind of exhibitions and prize fights which are now under ban of the state law.

Mr. Antles and his conferees propose to tackle the job of making boxing and wrestling square games. Because the legion had sponsored the bill, Mr. Antles desires that organization to take some of the responsibility, although he is required by law to enforce the act and make rules and regulations governing matches, bouts and contests between boxers and wrestlers. The men in attendance were John Hopkins, Jack Shannon, J. J. Pat Boyle, John Kilmartin of Omaha, George W. Rawell, Jr., Marcus Potest, Bert R. Anderson, Mason Wheeler and F. B. O'Connell of Lincoln; William L. Crosson of Hastings and J. R. Brady and William Lewitdale of Grand Island.

Mr. Brady is a Spanish-American soldier. The others are members of the American legion.

If there is any way crooks can evade the provisions of the boxing bill, Mr. Antles and his advisers want to know it. It was admitted that crooks can split money in ways not authorized by law and can "fix" matches, but if they are ever caught at it, they will not be able to repeat the trick in Nebraska. The license of the organization under whose auspices the law is found to be violated will lose its license and so will the principals in the match. It is admitted that matches can be pulled off in public, in violation of the law or rather by ignoring the law, but in such a case there could be no admission fee charged, no prize money put up, and there could be no referee and consequently no decision. Such a match would not be much of an exhibition.

The matter of matches where no direct admission fee is charged was also discussed. It was suggested that a gathering might pay for a supper or pay admission fee into a county fair and a match might be staged at such a supper or at the fair.

It is admitted that under the law a principal in a match can pay his manager whatever fee he pleases, but under the law no part of the receipts can go to a promoter who may offer to stage a match. The promoter is supposed to be a dead one under this law. If he gets in on the money it will have to be by violation of the law.

Organizations or clubs that have been in business one year and whose principal business is something besides staging boxing and wrestling bouts can obtain a license. No individual can be licensed to promote matches. If there is a violation of the law the organization's license is revoked and it forfeits a \$1,000 bond which is necessary to obtain a license.

The legion men suggested the ap-

pointment of assistants to Secretary Antles and also a secretary. Mr. Antles will appoint a secretary when the work under the new law appears to justify. He will divide the state into districts and appoint assistants to be called commissioners in each district. These men will serve without pay. The districts will be formed along the various main lines of railroads. How many there shall be has not been decided. The 5 per cent of gate receipts which goes to the state department of public welfare will be used to pay necessary expenses, including salaries and office expenses. Blank forms for reports, licenses and permits are to be drawn up after forms used in other states have been examined. No license will be issued until the office machinery is in working order. Rules are to be adopted after Secretary Antles confers further with members of the legion.

### WHO----

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