

The Alliance Herald

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TRAFFIC RULES

A physician was fined in police court Saturday for violating the city's traffic rules. The offense consisted in turning his car around in the middle of a block on Box Butte avenue. According to the police, the offense was repeated, after warning had once been given. It wasn't such a heinous crime—there is hardly an automobile driver who has not been guilty of the same violation of the rules, not once, but several times, when no one was looking.

The average auto driver takes a good many chances with the law. He turns around in the middle of the block or wherever the fancy seizes him; he opens his cutout; he turns short corners; he stops on the wrong side of the street; he drives faster than the speed regulations permit; he uses glaring headlights and occasionally goes without any lights at all, or with a last year's license. He knows when he is violating the rules, for any man who knows enough to drive a car is sufficiently intelligent to master the few rules of the road.

The average auto driver, as we say, knows when he is violating the law, and is a good enough sport to pay his fine as something that is coming to him, something that he has earned. Automobile drivers have, as a rule, the navy code, which reads in this wise: "You rate anything you can get away with." Just as the sailor cheerfully goes to the brig if caught, chuckling at the many times he has "got away with something" the average autoist pays his fine in something of the same spirit.

Saturday's case was different. In this case the offender was a physician. He paid his fine, and later protested to the police judge. He also issued a statement to the newspapers. In this statement, he explained that he was on a hurry call to the bedside of a child stricken with convulsions. The case was serious, the call urgent, and he had no time to lose. "If the city of Alliance does not make an exception in cases of such an emergency, it is the only city on the face of the earth that does not," says the doctor. "Saving a human life is more to me than obeying a traffic rule, such as I violated, and should similar circumstances arise again, in all probability my conscience will not forbid me to do the same thing over, if a human life is at stake."

Of course, the automobile traffic regulations were adopted because they were needed to save human lives. Not even the railroads, with their big casualty lists, are in it with the automobile, carelessly driven, as an instrument of death. Everyone of these traffic rules has that object. The attitude of the physician opens the way for a most interesting discussion.

There are places and times, without a doubt, when the infraction of the traffic regulations does no damage. The danger is always greater in the larger cities and the busier streets than in the smaller towns and on country roads. The common sense view would be to say that so long as the driver does not infringe on the rights of others, he is justified in taking risks, if he cares to risk the penalty of the law. The violation of a law always carries with it the possibility of punishment.

There is nothing in the statutes which exempts physicians from obeying the laws of the road. It is true that in the larger cities, for a time, the police authorities were more lenient with physicians and permitted them privileges when on hurry calls. Ambulances and fire trucks are regarded as privileged, when life and property are at stake. But ambulances and fire trucks carry loud warning gongs, and the public is warned that conditions are out of the ordinary. We think that investigation will show that even in the larger cities, the privileges to physicians have been curtailed, because of abuse. It got so that a physician never went on the streets unless he was attending to a desperate case.

Is a man ever justified in risking any like save his own, even to save the life of another? Turning around in the middle of the street, without sufficient warning, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred does no damage. The hundredth case may result in loss of several lives. If a doctor has a rush call and wants to reach a patient's bedside in a fearful hurry, he may save time by leaping from the window of his office, but few of them ever feel the call of duty so strongly as to risk their own necks.

As a matter of fact, the simplest way out of the discussion is to insist on absolute conformity to the regulations. If physicians, whenever their judgment dictates, are to be permitted to violate rules of the road, it will be but a short time until other drivers will be violating the regulations with impunity. In the resulting confusion, there is little question but that more lives will be lost than would be saved by the physicians answering science permits them to answer hurry calls with thought of no one but their patient.

CHOOSING A STANDARD

At the recent law enforcement conference held in Alliance, the wail went up from county attorneys that the chief difficulty in enforcing prohibition, aside from the general unwillingness of the innocent bystander to testify, was the attitude of the courts. There is need, the attorneys say, for some system of standards. Thus, a police court justice will decide a man is drunk when he has taken one drink; a county judge might hold that the same man should have to stagger when he walked; and in district court, when the case arrived on appeal, the judge might hold that nothing short of mental and physical incapacity is the true test of being soured.

In this connection, the classification made by Dr. Welch of Knight's Hill, Nottwood, London, might be adopted. The doctor has apparently gone into the subject of intoxication rather more deeply than the average police magistrate, lawyer or judge. Dr. Welch has divided drunks into five classes, which are defined as follows:

1. General contentment of well-being and happiness.
2. Flushing of the cheeks, a bright eye, and hilarity.
3. Inability to exercise the muscles as the brain directs.
4. Drunk and incapable.
5. Coma.

As the lord high executioner of "The Mikado" held, the punishment should fit the crime. No one will deny that the drunk who sings should be given a heavier fine than the drunk who does nothing but smile. If the legislature will set out some such classification, and set the fine in each instance, as well as specify what acts are characteristic of each stage, a great forward step in prohibition enforcement will have been taken.

HOBBLING BY FREIGHT RATES

(Omaha Bee.)

In spite of the reported interest of the interstate commerce commission in the subject of reduced rates on hay, grain and live stock shipments in Nebraska and the middle west in general aid for shippers, if coming at all, can hardly be expected for several months. Hearings on demands for lower freight tariffs have been set for August 15, and it seems hardly probable that the federal board would reach a decision without still further consideration and delay.

It is plain to see that action has been put off longer than it should have been. Long before harvest began preparations should have been made, and among them, the lowering of transportation charges.

What are these rates that are complained of as burdensome? On hay from O'Neill to the Omaha market freight costs are 25 1/2 cents per 100 pounds, or \$6 a ton. When this hay arrives here the farmer sells it for from \$7 to \$17 a ton. When costs of production and cost of hauling to the country station are included, it is evident that it is impossible to market a great deal of hay without loss. The rate on corn from Ord, 205 miles away, is 22 1/2 cents per 100 pounds. This is 12.6 cents per bushel, and with corn selling around 55 cents, it is evident that the railroad receives more in proportion for its services than the farmer.

Other typical rates to Omaha per 100 pounds are: Potatoes from Crawford, 29 cents; wheat from Alden, 29 cents; oats from Erickson, 22 1/2 cents; cattle from Moorcroft, Wyo., 57 1/2 cents; hogs from Ravenna, 41 cents, and sheep from Gillette, Wyo., 61 1/2 cents. The figures represent an increase of 35 per cent over those prevailing a year ago, just before the slump in prices of farm products began. The higher rates were awarded to the railroads on the strength of an increase in wages given their employees. These wages have now been cut, but the rates which were their excuse have not been.

Farmers claim that they would be able to ship more heavily and thus be enabled to liquidate debts if costs of transportation were lower. It is a matter for debate whether or not the market declines would result from larger supplies at the markets, absorbing much of the saving in freight costs. Some gain there would be, however, for the producer of food-stuffs. The middle west must not weaken or procrastinate in its efforts for a readjustment, for the sooner the hobble of high rates is removed, the more quickly will business resume its old vitality.

PROFITS COMING BACK

(Successful Farming.)

It is a law of nature that action is equal to reaction in the opposite direction. For instance, a pendulum always swings almost as far one way as it went in the opposite direction on the preceding swing. A slight tap when it starts back may send it farther than it went on the up stroke.

Business has its ups and downs as does the pendulum. In many respects business expansions and depressions are almost as regular as is the ticking

of the clock. When business reaches the peak of its climb we can always rest assured that there will be a decline at least nearly as far. The world war really served as a vigorous push rather than a light tap on the business pendulum of the world and set it up and up almost to its zenith, in fact, many feared the force of the impact would cause it to dash from the beaten path and crash to destruction. But the upward swing stopped before the break, and for the last year and a half we have been witnessing the backward swing.

Many facts indicate that it is now about time for the business pendulum of the United States to return in the direction of business recovery. And in the revival of business which is sure to occur, we anticipate that farming will be one of the first lines of business to be benefited.

There are several reasons why the farmer now should take an optimistic view of his business situation. The wheat carry-over from this season has been the smallest in years. The latest information indicates that the 1921 crop is no larger than the 1920 crop. Stocks of wheat at terminals and in country elevators are reported to be more than 50 per cent lower than a year ago. The visible supply is the smallest in eighteen years.

The supply of flour in the hands of merchants as well as consumers is very low. There was 20 per cent less flour manufactured during the year ending June 1 than during the preceding year.

Of vital interest to farmers is the fact that there is a decided shortage in livestock. If per capita consumption of meat and meat products were suddenly to return to normal, the demand for meat would be far greater than the supply.

During the first five months of 1921 there were 7,716 business failures in the United States as compared with 2,678 for the corresponding period of 1920. An expert statistician estimates that at present there are about three million persons ordinarily employed in industries in the United States out of employment. It has been demonstrated that the family of a man who has employment consumes three times as much of the things people eat, wear and use, as it does when the head of the family is out of employment. Latest information indicates that the number of unemployed has probably reached the maximum and that unemployment is now on the decline.

One can readily see that as workers in textile mills, shoe factories, automobile factories, furniture factories, etc., are resuming employment, their requirements will be proportionately increased. Certainly this means a greater demand and better prices for all the things which are produced by farmers. Lack of employment cannot be improved until utilization of products is resumed.

Add to all this the determination of the farmers of this country to take a hand in the marketing of their own products, which most assuredly will result in farmers getting better prices of at least getting a larger percentage of the final selling price of their stuff, together with the probable reduction in freight rates, and we have ample reason for feeling optimistic in regard to the situation the farmer will find himself in a few months hence.

There are other favorable signs and we will admit a few clouds on the horizon, but taking it all in all the situation warrants reasonable optimism. Better times for agriculture are coming, and coming soon. The farmers who profit most during the next few years will be those who keep eyes and ears wide open for every bit of information that will help them to judge what is best for them to do in the conduct of their own business.

Buy the things you need to enable you to produce crops and livestock economically. If you can cut the cost of producing a bushel of wheat by 10 cents, that is equivalent to getting 10 cents a bushel more for it.

If you are to have a referendum on the subject of war, by all means let us be consistent and have a referendum on the subject of taxes.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a man to travel the road back to normalcy without discarding some of his "rights."

Judge Westover Chosen to Sit For a Week on Supreme Court Bench

District Judge W. H. Westover of Rushville is among the twelve district judges who have been designated by the Nebraska supreme court to sit with it by turns and hear cases during the

fall months. The judges are selected for a week at a time and none who have sat heretofore are being called for the second time. Judge Westover and Willis G. Sears of Omaha are designated for the week beginning October 17.

William Nieman and family left the first part of the week for a camping trip in the Black Hills. They will visit the Applebergs at their cabin near Mystic, S. Dak.

B. G. BAUMAN, O. D.

 OP-TOM-E-TRIST

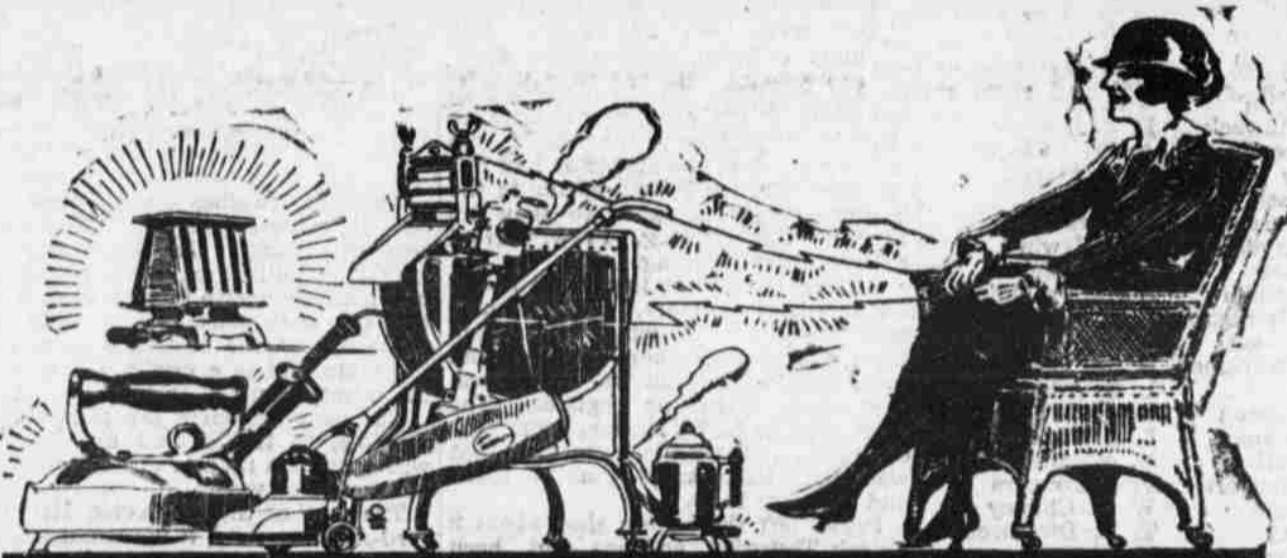
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