

# CURT COMMENT OF THE TIMES

The employer's liability law asked for by the Nebraska State Federation of Labor on behalf of the 150,000 wage earners of the state, is fair, equitable and just, and should be enacted without delay. Admitting that Nebraska's basic wealth is agriculture, and that agriculture should receive first consideration, Will Maupin's Weekly insists that it should not be the only interest considered. The farmer could, of course, get along after a fashion without the markets furnished by the large industrial centers, but because of Nebraska's growing manufacturing interests the farmer is profiting today as never before. With multiplied industries running full blast and an army of well paid mechanics steadily employed, the farmer's markets are enlarged. And the mechanics who, working amidst dangerous machinery, in unsanitary buildings, shut out of communion with nature and removed from the ennobling influences of country life, are making these larger markets, certainly are as much entitled to protection against disease, accident and death as the hogs and cattle of the farmer. The man who runs the machine is entitled to as much kindly consideration as the machine he tends; the man who fashions by the skill of hand and brain the many implements and necessities of modern industry is entitled to fully as much protection as the hog in the farmer's pen or the cow in the farmer's dairy herd.

As employers of labor make allowance for depreciation and breakage of machinery, so should they be compelled to make allowance for depreciation and breakage in the man-machine. We have multiplied laws for the protection of man-made property; little for the man. The proposed employers' liability law merely puts the worker on a par with the dollar; it merely provides for his depreciation or breakage. Today it is cheaper to endanger human life in the mills and factories than it is to provide safeguards for dangerous machinery or apparatus. With such a statute in force as the one asked for, accidents will decrease for the simple reason that it will be far cheaper to prevent accidents than to pay for them. It will compel employers to take quite as much thought of men as of machines.

Senator McCumber of North Dakota is bitterly opposed to the Canadian reciprocity act. He cited the case of a North Dakota farmer who visited New York and pays his expenses in products of the farm. "Cab to hotel, six bushels of oats; tip to driver, fifteen cabbages; breakfast, a quarter-ton of hay; dinner, four bushels of rye." and so on. Quite unique, isn't it? Then the senator served notice that the adoption of the Canadian treaty would lead the farmers to demand a general revision on manufactured products. If this be true, then heaven quickly send the day! Will Maupin's Weekly would like to supplement Senator McCumber's illustration a bit. The paper on which this newspaper is printed is commonly known as "book paper," weighing 60 pounds to the ream of 500 sheet. It takes a full sheet to print one copy. It costs 6 cents a pound and it takes just 330 pounds to print one edition. In other words it costs just \$19.80 a week for the blank paper on which Will Maupin's Weekly is printed—one-third of which is in the shape of a tax levied in the interests of tariff-fed lumber interests and papermakers. Senator McCumber would have this little newspaper taxed \$6 a week, and other newspapers in proportion, mererly to keep upon farm

products a duty that is of no effect whatever so far as the farmer is concerned. The sooner the American farmer gets some of that tariff-protected wool out of his eyes and votes the tariff off the things he must buy, instead of voting it on under the mistaken notion that the tariff on his wheat helps him—the sooner the American farmer sees through that little gold brick game the better off he will be.

We have conveniently forgot the name of the lawmaker who proposes making a state game preserve in the sandhill country. Nebraska needs a game preserve about as much as Hades needs fuel.

Speaking on this question, what do you think of the good sense of spending \$15,000 a year to preserve the suckers and german carp and mud-hens, and not a penny to preserve the life and limb of the thousands of men and women who are toiling in our shops and mills and factories. A state game preserve! Fudge; also heck!

Glory be! Here comes the great Kansas City Star with an editorial that gives evidence that the Star is bitten by the single tax bug. Says the Star: "The Island of Manhattan was bought for \$24 when it first passed into the hands of white men. Today the land of that island is valued at 166 million times the original purchase price—nearly four billion dollars. What gave the land that vast increase of market worth? People. What people? The people who don't own it."

Some of these days we'll quit fooling away time over the little things, thinking we are solving real problems, and we'll get right down to brass tacks. When we do we'll tackle this land question from the right angle. Instead of putting a premium on land idleness and congestion in the cities, we will put the premium on land tenure and desertion of the slums and sweatshops. We will see to it that the men who make the values get what they create. Our present system is doing just the opposite. When a great newspaper like the Kansas City Star begins seeing this question in the right light, there is hope of speedy reform.

Just think of millions living from hand to mouth—if even doing that well—in our large cities, while millions of acres are being daily enhanced in value for the benefit of those who neither toil, suffer nor produce, and the value added, too, by people who never get a tithe of benefit from it. What fools we've been for these many years!

Senator Beveridge performed a distinct service when he punctured the Lorimer plea for sympathy. Lorimer told, with tears in his eyes, of how "Hinky Dink" Kenna befriended him when he was a poor little newsboy. Sure! And the editor of Will Maupin's Weekly owes several square meals and a chance to thaw out frozen extremities to that same "Hinky Dink" Kenna, all at a time when thousands upon thousands of mechanics were out of work, when Chicago was a vast pauper house and the organized charity societies practically helpless in the face of the demnads made upon them. But just the same this editor is not condoning the "Hinky Dink" political methods because of it. "Billy" Lorimer has not come up out of any lower depths than many other, nor has he risen any higher than many others who have come up with clean hands and clean skirts. To say that Lorimer was un-

aware of the methods used to secure his election is to indict him for idiocy, incompetency and moral obliquity—quite enough to deprive him of a seat in the senate of the United States.

The truth is, a lot of senators who don't give a tinker's dam for the farmer are making a big howl about the damage that will be done to agricultural interests by the adoption of Canadian reciprocity because they see in it a blow at the whole iniquity of the protective tariff. A number of states are laboring under the impression that they are being represented in the senate, when the fact is they have merely elected to the senate the pliant and servile tools of protected interests.

Mr. Carnegie says that as soon as universal peace is established through the medium of his big peace fund, the money may be used to bring about the abatement of other evils. So far as observed the "other evils" haven't batted an eyelid over the announcement.

Governor Carroll of Iowa—just how it came about that such as he were elected governor we know not—has vetoed the "Oregon plan" of electing United States senators. His reasons were the same as those advanced by other and abler opponents of the people's rule. The best evidence of the fact that Iowa needs just such a law as the one vetoed by its reactionary governor is that Iowa is one of four states now squandering several thousand dollars a day in senatorial fights. We used to do that over in Nebraska—until we learned better. What Iowa needs now is a governor who thinks more of popular rights than of partisan advantage; more of the public welfare than of the welfare of a political machine. Iowa, with a seven and five-eighths head, is wearing a five and three-eighths governor. Its headpiece doesn't look well.

A man recently visited Topeka, Kansas, and spoke eulogistically of the Republican Progressive League. Whereupon a lot of standpatters got together and resolved at some length in opposition thereto, saying, among other things, the following: "Resolved, that the association sees nothing but hope and promise in its appreciation of present conditions or of prophetic visions." Collier's offers a prize of a dog-earned copy of a textbook on composition to anyone who will tell it what the above means. Will Maupin's Weekly will bounce a brick off the head of the first man who tried to tell it what the sentence means. We've no time to waste listening to men trying to explain a thing like that.

Rumor has it that when the democratic primaries arrive, Senator Bailey will announce his decision to retire to private life. The rumor, we fear, is unfounded. But however that may be, the people of Texas should see to it that he does so retire, whether he desires it or not. Texas needs a senator to represent it, not the "big interests."

Not only should the proposition to increase the salaries of federal judges to \$7,500 a year be defeated, but the federal judiciary as now constituted should be wiped out entirely. Not that we should be entirely without a federal judiciary, but we should at least have one that is in sympathy with the whole people, not the representatives of