

TALKING OF MEN AND THINGS

We commend the action of the Poplar Bluff, Mo., school board to the school boards of other cities. Those hard-headed Missourians have decided to take the matter of dress in hand and fix the styles to be worn by the sweet girl graduates of the Poplar Bluff schools this spring. The board will prescribe design and material, and the daughter of the rich man will not be able to lord it over the daughter of the poor man. That is what we call good sense. There is a fearful lot of snobbery being inculcated into the thinkeries of the school girls of today, and the matter of dress is given more attention than the matter of education. The daughter of the poor man thinks she has to dress as well as the daughter of the rich man, and as a result many a poor mechanic and many a poor worn-out mother are making sacrifices for their girls, merely to make the aforesaid girls snobbish little squirts unfit for either wifehood or motherhood. The average high school girl of today never will be able to get inside of her head half as much as she insists upon piling on the outside of it every morning.

We sensible Nebraskans can afford to sit back in our easy chairs and feel sorry for the people of the four states whose legislatures are fighting and fooling away public money over senatorships. New York, Iowa, Colorado and Montana have been scraping for weeks over a question that Nebraska settled without a ripple in a few hours. Nebraskans merely selected their senator among other officials, and when their legislature met it had only to convene, carry out the will of the people and proceed about its business. In the four states mentioned the legislatures are fiddling away thousands of dollars a day and working all sorts of crooked schemes to elect senators—not to represent the people, but to represent the interests—political or otherwise.

The Kansas legislature has failed and refused to enact into law a single one of the reforms promised before election. The "insyrgent" republicans seem to have won a hollow victory, for the standpatters have managed to prevent any progressive legislation. The initiative and referendum, the recall, the Massachusetts ballot system, a public utilities law and the popular election of senators—all these have either been defeated outright or so loaded down with "jokers" as to make them ineffective. Yet the people by a huge majority declared for all of them. If the people rule, why do they not get what they want?

What a lot of slow pokes our government officials are. And what a bale of red tape they must unwrap before they can do anything worth while. And how seldom they accomplish anything worth while. Now comes some department or other of the federal government and warns us of the danger of eating underdone pork. Why the warning? Very few of us are thus threatened these days when the man who can buy a pound of bacon is a plutocrat, and the man who can buy a pork roast for his Sunday dinner is a dash-blanked millionaire. We do not need any bulletins on the dangers of eating underdone pork. What we need is a series of bulletins telling us how to get any old kind of meat all for skillet-greasing purposes.

The French cabinet has resigned, for reasons that may be good enough, but which we do not care to waste time in investigating. But we do wish the Taft cabinet would follow suit, and there is no need

to investigate very far to disclose the reasons for the wish. The chief reason is Ballinger and the second reason is Hitchcock.

Some of these days the university authorities of another state will come snooping over into Nebraska and yank away from the University of Nebraska a man named George Condra. And after he is gone Nebraskans will begin to realize what a big man he is, and of what splendid worth he was to the state. It usually takes something of this kind to awaken us to the value of the men who are making our university famous. Professor Condra is doing more than any other one man to acquaint Nebraskans with what Nebraska is, and to arouse in them an ambition to conserve and develop those splendid resources. His big brain is as agile as a Jap contortionist, and he can conceive more plans for boosting Nebraska, then carry them out, than any other man. And, too, he has that valuable knack of arousing in other men for the protection of the man who makes it, the same splendid enthusiasm that possesses him. A big and a valuable man is Condra—just how big and how valuable the average Nebraskan will not realize until some other state grabs him away from us.

People who are surprised that President Taft should be using official patronage to intimidate Senator Bourne are the kind of people who would be surprised at almost anything ordinary. No one believes that William Howard Taft is the biggest and broadest president we have ever had—measured by mental, not physical, standards. And if ever we have had a president who did not use official patronage to secure desired ends we have failed to locate him. But we have had presidents who scorned to use patronage to humiliate men in order to wreak petty spite upon them. Mr. Taft, however, seems not to be one of those. A few months ago we were told that Mr. Taft was tired of the presidency and had no desire to succeed himself. Now we have the spectacle of the president using his patronage arbitrarily to foist himself upon the people again. Because Senator Bourne is not a member of the Taft machine he is being subjected to humiliation. However, Jonathan Bourne will be measured properly by the American people, who are much given to putting the mental try-square on its public men instead of judging by avoirdupois.

The other day Theodore Roosevelt attended a big dinner and spoke at length on public questions. A year ago that would have meant 'steen columns under double heads in all the daily papers. Today you have to look for it under a single-line head at the bottom of columns where the little paragraphs are dumped to even up. The "big wind of 1910" has subsided into the imperceptible zephyr of 1911.

If you have attended any of the legislative sessions this winter you must have noted the scarcity of real orators in both house and senate. Plenty of talkers there, to be sure—men who talk and talk and talk. But by orators is meant gentlemen who can not only say something worth while, but who can say it well. You do not have to agree with a man in order to appreciate his ability as an orator. The best speech yet made in the senate was by Jensen, who explained his vote on the county option bill. Jansen did not mean it for a speech, but it was a gem of oratory in that it gripped the attention of the hearers. In the house Prince of Hall is easily the best speaker, taking into consideration language, earnestness and knowl-

edge of the subjects he discusses. But the best speech thus far delivered in the house was that of Hatfield's when he stood up to urge the initiative and referendum bill. Hatfield tried no flights of eloquence, but contented himself with a plain but mastery array of facts and figures in support of his bill. Prince and Hatfield are easily the leaders of the two factions of the democratic side. The republican side has no speaker of more than ordinary ability. But there are scores of members who seem to believe it their duty to orate upon every bill that comes up. This is taking up a lot of valuable time. Glory be, no stenographic report of legislative proceedings is taken and printed at the expense of the taxpayers.

Political jokes sometimes work backwards. A case in point is the working of a political joke down in Oklahoma, in a county that need not be mentioned. The county is republican, and for several years a man of parts living in the north end of the county had been elected supervisor. He gave excellent satisfaction, for he was a good official. Last fall some friends conceived the idea of playing a joke on this official, so they proceeded to put upon the primary ballot the name of a ne'er-do-well as a competitor for the nomination. The good official refused to make any campaign, and by some hook or crook the ne'er-do-well was nominated. The good official promptly espoused the cause of the successful candidate and he was elected. Now the funny republicans of that county are kicking themselves, and the democrats are laughing in their sleeves. There will be no more political jokes perpetrated in that particular county if the people can prevent it. Come to think of it, aren't the people very prone to play political jokes on themselves?

As one who loves Omaha, and knows it like a book; and as one who wishes Omaha well, Will Maupin's Weekly devoutly wishes Omaha would arrange for a series of about 200 funerals. Failing that, Omaha ought to shove a few more men like Will Campbell to the front to speak for her, instead of allowing her spokesmen to be of that class that merely antagonize people elsewhere. The fact of the matter is, Omaha is the most progressive city of its size in the country. No city is equalling her record for commercial and industrial development; no city has a greater future or a past more worthy of pride. The trouble with Omaha is that her best citizens have been so busy making a city on the west bank of the Missouri that they haven't had time for talk. And while they have been busy making a city a lot of fellows who never made anything but a big noise and a big stink have been hollering until the whole state has come to judge Omaha by their noise and their bad smell.

To hear the bloviators mentioned above one would be compelled to judge that Omaha depended wholly for existence upon her boozeries and her breweries, when the fact of the matter is the booze business in Omaha is her minor industry, representing less than two per cent of her total business. Omaha is the greatest butter market in the world, but instead of parading that fact Omaha has been so busy making money that she has let the booze boosters holler until people think that booze, not butter, is the big thing in Omaha. To hear some Omaha tooters too ere would be led to believe that the 8 o'clock closing law has shot Omaha business all to Hades, when the fact is business in Omaha is on the boom, although early