

# TALKING OF MEN AND THINGS

Thoughtful students of economics are not slow to note that the Standard Oil case decision is of more interest to socialists than it is to the disciples of any other school. The socialists are not slow to point out the fact that the decision practically means the death knell of competition and the placing of the means of distribution in the hands of the favored few. "Economic determinism" is the name given the new economic law—or rather an old economic law just coming to be recognized. It is time that the people of this country take cognizance of the fact that they must do one of two things—either discover or invent some method of restoring unrestricted competition or proceed to take over for the use and benefit of all the people those things whose value depend wholly upon the public demand therefor.

Tom Johnson's last words were literally a request that no monument be erected over his remains, but that his burial plot be made into a playground for children, and that they be allowed to run and romp and play not only around but upon his grave. Nothing could give a cleaner insight into the great heart of this friend of all humanity. And little children happily at play around Tom Johnson's grave would be a greater tribute to his memory than the tallest shaft of marble or most imperishable tablet of bronze.

New York City has just dedicated a ten million dollar public library. We can imagine how welcome a sweaty, grimy toiler will be within its tapestried walls and upon its inlaid floors. Also we can imagine what great benefit this magnificent building with its art contents will be to the hopeless women and children in the sweat shops of the East Side, the broken men in the "bread line" and the 20,000 children deprived of school facilities. Ten million dollars would have erected quite a row of model tenements to take the place of the foul, disease-ridden and death-breeding tenements that infest New York, many of them owned by Trinity corporation and pouring their golden flood of blood-stained and tear-stained dollars into the coffers of America's richest church organization. Much as we love the beautiful and greatly as we endorse those things calculated to elevate the public taste for art and literature, we refuse to enthuse over any ten-million dollar public library buildings in the great cities where misery stalks abroad by day and night.

Due note should be made of the fact that the Nebraska supreme court this week soundly slapped one of the most arrogant corporations in America, namely the National Biscuit company. This is the cracker trust which two years ago last February brazenly sought to influence the newspapers of Nebraska against proposed legislation by making advertis-

ing contracts by wire, hoping thus to prevent adverse legislation. To the credit of Nebraska newspapers be it said that the scheme did not pan out at all well. Failing to secure the editorial influence sought, the cracker trust abrogated its contracts. The cracker trust refused to brand the net weight on its packages and fought the case in the courts. The court has now decided that the trust must brand its packages. A few years ago the cracker trust suddenly closed its factories in Nebraska. Later it sought to punish Nebraskans by refusing to sell its goods within the state. As a result of this damphoolishness an independent cracker company was organized in Omaha, and today the Iten Biscuit Co. is showing the National Biscuit Co. what live competition means. Thus far the trust has failed to crush its competitor. There is absolutely no reason why a pound of the cracker trust's product should be consumed in Nebraska, and many reasons why there should not be. Nebraska-made crackers for Nebraska cracker eaters is a mighty sensible slogan.

It has suddenly dawned upon Will Maupin's Weekly that perhaps the Colorado legislature refrained from electing a successor to Senator Hughes through fear of repeating the Guggenheim mistake. We can not find it in our heart to blame any state, least of all Colorado, for not caring to take any chances on having two senators like Guggenheim.

Nebraska soil is soaked from Richardson to Dawes, from Dundy to Cedar. Of course that does not insure a bumper corn crop, but it gives great hopes. And it does insure a bumper yield of oats and wheat and rye, and mountains of alfalfa. With some little knowledge of Nebraska's grain yields in past years we risk our reputation as a statistician on the prophecy that Nebraska's wheat yield in 1911 will pass the fifty million bushel mark. With plenty of moisture in the ground in those sections not irrigated, and with the ditches in the irrigated sections bank full of water, there is every reason to believe that Nebraska is going to set a new record for production this year of our Lord 1911.

Will Representative Norris of the Fifth district finally determine to get into the senatorial fight next year? That question is worrying quite a few political dopesters and aspirants just now. Mr. Norris is quite a levelheaded gentleman and this journal of cheerful comment believes that he will wisely decide to remain in the lower house where his seniority will guarantee him some choice chairmanships in due time, and choice committee positions all the time, rather than enter the senatorial race and take chances. If elected to the senate he would be without influence or committee position for several years. Mr. Norris

seems to have a cinch on a place in congress as representative of the Fifth for many years to come. Why should he drop that hunk of choice meat to grab at a senatorial reflection in the often muddy water of politics?

If Mr. Norris decides to hold on to his place in the lower house it will not mean clear sailing for Senator Brown. He will have opposition, no matter what Mr. Norris does. With Norris out of the race, Silas R. Barton, present auditor of public accounts, may decide to get in, and in that event the senior senator will find the going pretty fast. We are not aware that Barton is a "spellbinder," or that he can uphold the palladium of our liberties in an orotund tone of voice and with gesticulations calculated to charm the birds out of the trees, but when it comes to meeting the voter on the level and talking as man to man, there are almighty few in our ken who can give that same Silas R. Barton any points in the game. Pitted against the democrat who was admittedly the strongest candidate on the democratic ticket last fall, Mr. Barton was high man on the republican ticket after Governor Aldrich. That was a pretty good test of his sprinting ability, and Senator Brown should take due notice.

When the Lincolmites who went on the "Booster" trip presented Secretary Whitten of the Commercial Club with a handsome watch and chain as an evidence of their appreciation of his tireless work, they paid a deserved tribute to that gentleman. It takes genius of a high order to perform such service as Mr. Whitten renders to the Commercial Club, and through it to the city of Lincoln. Mr. Whitten is always on the job, and while he is paid a fair remuneration for his services the fact remains that there are services which can not be paid for by stated wages, but which may, in a measure, be compensated for by just such little evidences of appreciation as the one shown the genial secretary by the "Boosters."

Will Maupin's Weekly notes with great satisfaction the exchange of courtesies between the Commercial Clubs of Lincoln and Omaha. The Lincoln business men have just returned from a "trade expansion" trip that covered the greater part of Nebraska. About the time their train pulled into Lincoln at the end of the trip, Omaha business men started out over practically the same territory on a similar errand. Whereupon the Commercial Club of Lincoln sent a fraternal message to the Omaha bunch, and the Omaha Commercial Club replied in kind. There are a few noisy busybodies who delight in making it appear that there is enmity between the Nebraska metropolis and the capital city. Nothing could be further