

NEBRASKA AS IT SHOULD BE KNOWN

A Paper read before the Nebraska Press Association at Omaha by Will M. Maupin, and republished in order to supply a demand that soon exhausted last week's edition, to say nothing of 2,000 copies in pamphlet form.

We of Nebraska should know, and knowing tell all the world, what Nebraska is and is to be; what Nebraska offers to the homeseeker, the investment seeker and the health seeker; what hidden potentialities for human happiness lie dormant in her fertile soil, and what she is annually contributing to the sum total of the world's created wealth.

In the beginning of this necessarily brief paper I want to say, and say emphatically, that the last session of the Nebraska legislature, which performed many good deeds, neglected the ripest opportunity ever offered a legislature to confer a lasting benefit upon the state. I refer to its failure and neglect to make the initial appropriation for a Bureau of Publicity and Immigration. There was no reasonable ground for opposition to the measure; no reasonable objection in economy. In fact there was no opposition to the bill. But, unfortunately, it did not offer opportunities for log-rolling and trading. It had behind it the solid backing of every enterprising organization in the state, of every wide-awake man who is anxious to see Nebraska take her rightful place among the states of the republic. But because legislation today has become largely a matter of "You tickle me and I'll tickle you;" so largely a matter of trade and barter, this splendid measure calculated to give us a start in the great work of making the truth about Nebraska known to the world, was allowed to die of inanition, of mal-nutrition, of sheer neglect. And in doing so the legislature worked a grave injury to the commonwealth.

States, like corporations and partnership and firms must advertise in these strenuous days or fall to the rear. Constant, persistent, insistent, intelligent advertising is the keynote of success in any business, and there is no greater or more important business than the building of a state.

But there is a condition precedent to intelligent advertising. The constructor of the advertising must know what he is advertising. No man engaged in advertisement building can hope ever to know too much about the business or the goods he is exploiting. It is all well enough for the newspaper men of Nebraska to claim that they are constantly advertising Nebraska, but the plain, unvarnished truth is that they are not doing it as it should be done, and for the very simple reason that they do not know all they should know about Nebraska. I have lived in this state for a quarter of a century—longer by several years than the average Nebraska editor. I have tried in my weak way to advertise Nebraska to the world, and I thought for

years I knew Nebraska pretty thoroughly. Something like six years ago I began studying Nebraska from a different angle. Formerly I had studied it from a car window or in political conventions or by converse with friends in my office. Now, after studying Nebraska for six years as any merchant studies his stock—any successful merchant, I mean—I have just begun to realize that what I knew of Nebraska up until six years ago was as nothing, and that if I keep on acquiring knowledge for the next six or eight years as I have during the past six or eight, at the end of that time my knowledge of this great state may qualify me to emerge from the kindergarten class and enter the first primary. The longest span of human life in this age would not suffice to enable one to graduate from the great school wherein knowledge of Nebraska is imparted.

Merely as a basis upon which to work intelligently while you study, I purpose giving you some concrete facts about our beloved state. I will not waste your time in detailing bald statistics. The average human mind can not think in millions. Statistical tables appeal only to statisticians. Columns of figures frighten and repel the average man. Because of this I undertook, while serving as chief of the statistical bureau of the state, to present the statistics about Nebraska in a more attractive form than the usual table of figures. I hope I may be pardoned if I lay claim to having achieved some measure of success in advertising Nebraska abroad. I am of the opinion that the crop statistics of Nebraska, and all other statistics, received a wider range of publicity under the plan I adopted than they had achieved before. One bulletin of comparative statistics reached a circulation of 70,000 with requests for upwards of 250,000 more. And such great journals as Collier's, Leslie's Weekly, Munsey's Magazine, The American Magazine and the Cosmopolitan, to say nothing of the great daily newspapers, gave free to Nebraska a measure of publicity that could not have been purchased with money.

Now, here are some facts about Nebraska, tersely told, that will serve as the basis for many a good advertisement of Nebraska:

Nebraska was admitted to the union in March, 1867, and is therefore forty-four years old—six years less than half a century. All this progress, all this wonderful development, has been wrought in less than fifty years. Civilization's history records nothing like it.

Seventy-seven thousand square miles of territory, 415 miles east and west and 205 miles north and south. Forty-nine million acres, eighteen million acres cul-

tivated. Upon these eighteen million cultivated acres Nebraska in 1910 raised upwards of \$400,000,000 worth of grains and grasses. Of the thirty million uncultivated acres more than one-half are just as good for corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, alfalfa, potatoes, broom corn, etc., as the eighteen million cultivated acres, and one-half of the remaining acreage will in time, under intelligent cultivation and proper knowledge of the conditions to be met, be added to the wealth producing area. It took Nebraskans more than a quarter of a century to learn that they could not adapt Nebraska soil to the Nebraska man. Then came the most wonderful discovery of the age—the discovery that by adapting the man to the soil, Nebraska could be made the greatest agricultural wealth producer in the world. Since that discovery every year has seen hundreds of thousands of acres of soil, heretofore considered worthless, brought into cultivation and yielding returns that are so astonishing that it is hard to make people believe the truth. There is room in Nebraska for a half million more tillers of the soil who will till intelligently. Landseer, when asked what he mixed his paints with, replied, "With brains!" And there is no better fertilizer than brains.

Nebraska is the third largest corn producing state, and the youngest of the three, raising more corn to the acre than any other state.

Nebraska is the fourth largest wheat producing state, and the youngest of the three, raising more wheat to the acre than any other state.

Nebraska is the fourth largest producer of oats, and the youngest of the four, only one state excelling her in production per acre.

Nebraska is the third largest producer of sugar beets.

Nebraska manufactures more butter per capita than any other state, and her dairy industry is in its infancy.

Nor is Nebraska alone an agricultural and live stock state. Twenty-five years ago we shipped in practically every manufactured article we consumed. Last year our total manufactured products were approximately worth \$250,000,000, or almost one-half as much as our total of agricultural products and live stock. Startling as it may sound, there is no state making such rapid strides in manufacturing lines as Nebraska. There is a reason. A dollar invested in Nebraska manufacturing establishments brings a greater return than a dollar invested in any other state.

But, as I said early in this paper, the human mind cannot think in terms of millions. If I say that in 1910 Nebraska produced 36,000,000 pounds of butter we merely smile and say, "that's some but-