

Stand Up
for
Nebraska!

This Newspaper Boosts
All the Time

WILL MAUPIN'S WEEKLY

Patronize
Home
Industries!

Goods Made in Nebraska
For Nebraskans

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CURRENT COMMENT

Now that the famous man hunt is over and the excitement cooled down, it is possible to take a calm view of the whole regrettable circumstance. It is almighty easy for those sitting in comfortable offices by the side of upholstered desks and lolling in easy chairs to criticize the methods used by the pursuers of the desperadoes. So, also, is it easy for those who have never studied penology or criminology to sit around and criticize the acts of men to whose care are committed more than 500 men and women convicted of crime.

The editor of Will Maupin's Weekly knows a few things about the Nebraska penitentiary. He has addressed the inmates time and again, and rather prides himself upon having made friends of many. And he opines that if he had to sit week after week and listen to the maudlin drivel and rot that well meaning people inflict upon the convicts, he would become desperate himself and perhaps be guilty of violation of some of the rules. The fact of the matter is, a very large majority of the prisoners of the penitentiary differ little from the average run of humanity. They are not criminals from intent, but too often the victims of environment and guilty of mistakes discovered. The state of Nebraska is guilty of a heinous crime every time it puts a young "first offender" into a cell at the state penitentiary. It adds to the crime when it makes him the cellmate of a hardened criminal. It is guilty of a crime when it employs men of no experience, no education and no refinement to act as keepers and guards.

The "political spoils" system in vogue in Nebraska is responsible for the conditions that exist at the prison—and the people who have submitted to that pernicious system are primarily responsible for the crimes recently committed there. Traced back to its prime cause, the death of Roy Blunt was due to the failure of Nebraskans to realize their duty to themselves and to their state.

What Nebraska should have is a warden of experience, and who shall have an absolutely free hand in the employment of help. The first suggestion that political pull be exercised

should be frowned down. Brave Jim Delahunty was a sacrifice to political spoilsmen. Well meaning but misguided people who waste a lot of sympathy on convicted criminals and give none at all to honest men struggling against adverse circumstances are responsible in large measure for the unrest at the prison.

Governor Aldrich should take hold down there with a firm hand. A lot of meddlers should be fired out. Rigid discipline should be put into effect. Promiscuous visiting, and all that sort of thing should be stopped. And whoever is made warden should be given to understand that it is up to him to "make good" regardless of political effect.

Sheriff Hyers is entitled to unbounded credit for his zeal and activity in apprehending the escaped criminals. Almost before he had fairly warmed the sheriff's chair he was called upon to undertake the most desperate and exciting thief chase ever undertaken in Nebraska. He directed the whole thing from start to finish, and when he arrived back at the prison with two dead convicts and a third one in irons, he proved that no mistake had been made in electing him. That in the excitement of the chase and the reaction following its close Sheriff Hyers should have said or done things that do not appear well upon sober reflection, is not to be wondered at. It will be noted, however, that the criticisms of Sheriff Hyers come from men who did not participate in the chase and who were never within sound of the firing.

That Roy Blunt's life should have been sacrificed in the capturing of the criminals is most regrettable. The state owes more to the brave young wife of Roy Blunt than it owes to any other one person. Few, be they men or women, would have had the coolness displayed by this young wife, and fewer still would have had her iron courage. We are not prepared to say that the aggregated rewards offered for the capture should go to her, but we are prepared to say that Nebraska owes her a great deal. And the first thing the legislature should do is to appropriate a round sum for her relief. Five thousand dollars would not be too much. And in the

meantime generous citizens should respond promptly to the relief fund now being raised.

The result of the South Dakota primaries was no surprise. Men who are not blinded by prejudice, but who study conditions from an unbiased viewpoint realize that the Roosevelt boom has fallen woefully flat. It is also very plain to such that Mr. Taft's candidacy is arousing no enthusiasm save among the "pie-eaters." LaFollette, the man who has made the fight for progressive reforms within the ranks of the republican party, is the man that progressive republicans are looking to.

Mayor Armstrong's message recommending the erection of a new city jail has the right ring to it. Also, it uses plain, understandable English. His recommendations deserve to be acted upon without loss of time. His statement that Lincoln's city jail is a disgrace is putting it mild. That such an institution should have been tolerated in a city of Lincoln's pretensions is an indictment of our sincerity.

The election to decide whether Lincoln shall adopt the commission system will be held early in April. Will Maupin's Weekly favors the commission system—but not such a system as has been proposed by a few well-meaning but impractical gentlemen. The simpler the system. Five commissioners, each the head of a department and directly responsible for the management of that department. Only the most ordinary restrictions as to filing for nominations, and then a preferential primary. The ten men receiving the most votes at the primary to be the candidates for the five places, and no political designation upon the ballot. That is the outline of the commission plan this paper advocates.

COME ON, MR. MOHLER.

Again we hear rumors that the Union Pacific is scheming to get an up-town depot or force the Burlington into allowing it to enter the Burlington station. We hope General Manager Mohler will put through the plan. We are hoping to live to see the day when Lincoln will be on a really main line of the Overland route from Kansas City to the north and west. But we'll not feel encouraged until the Union Pacific gets its depot and yards up out of Frogtown.

MEN AND MATTERS

Let's have done with all this rot about the state reserving to itself the water power sites and developing them. The state can not do it. In the first place it has no authority to vote bonds, and there is no other way of financing the project. In the second place the people of central and western Nebraska are not going to vote bonds upon themselves to develop the eastern section of the state. In the third place it would be criminal folly for the state to undertake such a gigantic enterprise under the spoils system now in vogue.

The state ought to grant a right to responsible men, then throw proper restrictions about the enterprise. The state should have a revenue, should have the right to regulate and control, and should have the right to take over the whole thing at the end of a stated period of time. In that way the state can protect itself and its people, and in that way only can we hope ever to see our water power developed.

Mr. Babcock, the man who has dreamed about this power business for eighteen years, is the man who should have first call. Year after year, in spite of discouragements that would have daunted the average man, Mr. Babcock has plugged away. Now that success seems near at hand it is unfair for a lot of men to jump in and try to wrest from him the fruits of all his years' of effort. Some of these days there will be an immense water power plant in eastern Nebraska, and upon the cornerstone of the power building should be engraved the name of Babcock.

Pounded on one side by the politicians, and upon the other side by the reformers, Governor Aldrich has been living the strenuous life for the last week or ten days. Those who blame Governor Aldrich for the developments at the state prison are unjust. He is no more to blame than his predecessors, and they are not half so much to blame as the people themselves.

Whether Henry Richmond is a "lucky dog" or not remains to be seen. He is the only man who filed for the democratic nomination for auditor, hence will have no opposition at the primaries. But it may be that the

lucky men will be those who failed of a nomination.

One good democrat of our acquaintance said he would have supported the editor of this paper for railway commissioner had he not given over the first page of a recent issue to a story relative to Franklin C. Hamer, republican candidate for the nomination for state treasurer. We are sorry—not that we told the people about Mr. Hamer, but that we should have a friend so narrow-minded. Whether the editor of this paper is nominated for railway commissioner is of mighty small importance compared with some other things.

George Hall, who seeks the democratic nomination for state treasurer, is a brother of Thomas Hall, republican, who is now a member of the state railway commission.

Twenty-five or thirty years from now a lot of folks will be sitting around and telling tall stories about the winter of 1911-12, when it began snowing in November and snowed every day until the last of March, and there were seven feet of snow on the level. But, just the same, it has been a remarkable winter.

We've been in Nebraska some twenty-eight years, and we can not recollect that there was ever a short crop following a winter when we had lots of snow. If that rule holds good this year, and in due proportions, the farmers will have to rent extra ground to stack their wheat on after it is cut, and there'll be about three feet of shucked corn all over the blooming old state.

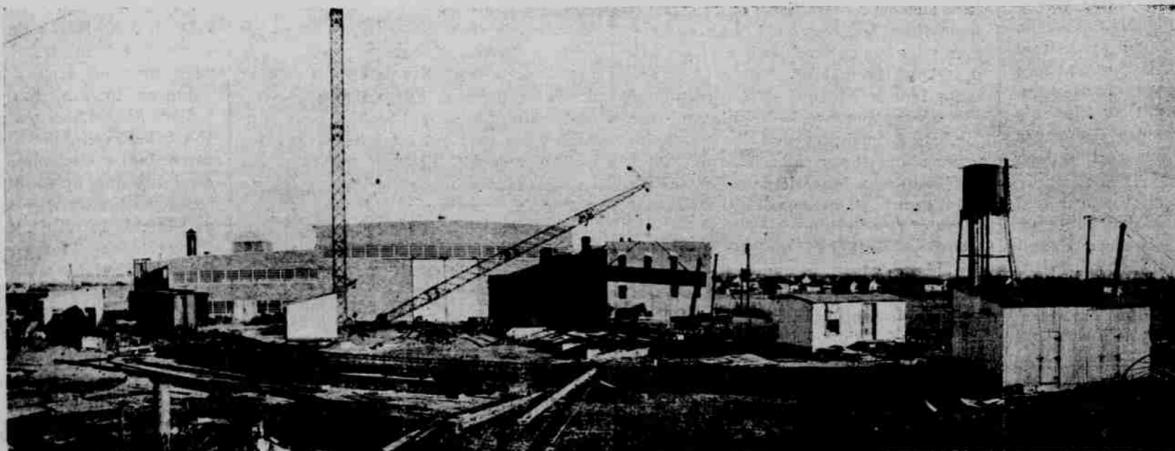
Last Tuesday we heard a man complaining that Senator Hitchcock wanted to "hog the whole thing" by being one of the delegates-at-large to the Baltimore convention. "Hitchcock is a senator," said the gentleman, "and that ought to satisfy him." All of which reminds us that Mr. Bryan was elected delegate-at-large to the Chicago convention while he was yet a member of congress, and the only democrat Nebraska had in the national law-making body. Some men are prone to be forgetful.

Mr. Bryan paid a generous tribute—and a deserved one—to the old pops when he said they were the original leaders of the present day reform movement. Every time a lot of "insurgent republicans" or "progressive democrats" stand up to boast about their reform work, a lot of those long-whiskered old pops have grounds for suit for plagiarism.

The trouble at the state prison calls attention to the necessity of adopting the constitutional amendment providing for a board of control of the state institutions. Such a board would go a long way to taking the state institutions out of politics, and relieve the governor of a lot of duties that never should have been imposed upon him.

The first sentence in last week's issue of this newspaper said: "Forty-five years ago Andrew Jackson affixed

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Westover Iron Works, Lincoln, Mfgs. of Builders' Iron and Steel and General Foundry Work