

CURRENT COMMENT

On March 11, nearly one month ago, Convict Prince murdered Deputy Warden Davis at the state prison. Since that date four other men have been killed inside the prison walls, and three men killed outside, two of them fugitive convicts and one an innocent young farmer held by the fugitives as a hostage. Will Maupin's Weekly is not bloodthirsty. It is opposed to capital punishment. But it does insist that the law's delays are responsible in very large measure for the snuffing out of seven lives since the murder of Deputy Warden Davis. Nearly a month has elapsed since Prince's monstrous crime, and as yet that murderer remains untried and unsentenced. Had he been a British convict in a British prison, his trial and his execution would have taken place ere this. And he would have had a fair trial, too.

Murderer Prince ought to have had a fair and impartial trial ere this. There is not the least excuse for all this delay. On the other hand, seven men killed since Prince's crime is an unanswerable argument against these interminable delays. What excuse can there be for all this delay in the Prince case? Scores of men saw him commit the murder of a public official. It was a cowardly, premeditated murder.

Why is it that the people of this country have so long tolerated these interminable—yes, criminal—delays in the operation of justice? In the city of Chicago more murders are committed each year than in all of Great Britain. Why? Because less than one in twenty of Chicago's murderers pays the penalty, while in Great Britain less than one in twenty escapes. That's the answer. There are three times as many murders per million of population in the United States as in the countries of Great Britain, Germany, France, Sweden and Norway. Why? Because in those countries punishment is swift and sure; in this country punishment is slow when inflicted at all.

In Great Britain the arrest, trial and punishment, if guilty, is a matter of mere days, and no one dares assert that the prisoner is not accorded a free and impartial trial. In the United States it is a matter of years—if ever. And the law's interminable delays are responsible for this disgraceful and dangerous condition of affairs in this republic. It is time for a change.

Will Maupin's Weekly has been, and still is, an advocate of the commission form of government for municipalities. But it has heard of one argument against it that causes it to waver. It is asserted, and with seemingly good ground, that the chief advocates of the commission plan are gentlemen who will, if that plan is adopted, seek to secure from the next legislature an amendment providing for an unsalaried commission. If there is the least danger of that sort of thing happening, then this newspaper will oppose the adoption of the commission plan with all of its power. We are not yet willing to submit to a government of grandmothers, no matter how well meaning they may be.

Emma Goldman has appeared in Lincoln, and there was nothing in her remarks to warrant anybody in believing that the police of the big eastern cities acted properly in preventing her from talking from the public platform. And we happen to know that Emma Goldman's Lincoln speeches were a repetition in the main of the addresses she has been making for years. The police, in raiding the halls where Miss Goldman is advertised to speak and preventing people from assembling to hear her, are making anarchists a blamed sight faster than Emma Goldman's arguments ever have or ever will make them.

County Assessor Miller has instructed the precinct assessors as to their duties in making the real estate assessments this year. Now, for the first

time in four years, real estate is to be appraised for purposes of assessment, and people who are interested enough to study the facts and watch the results will discover an unanswerable argument against our present system of taxation. They will have it very firmly impressed upon their minds, if they have been enterprising and thrifty, that they are to be fined for their thrift and enterprise, while speculators and the unenterprising are to be rewarded. Every farmer who has improved his farm will be fined, while the speculator who has done nothing will be rewarded by a failure to tax him in proportion as his property has been increased in value by community effort.

Disclaiming any desire whatever to be personal, Will Maupin's Weekly offers the Rogers tract on the south side of O street, between Thirty-first and Thirty-third street, as a glaring example of the inequalities of taxation. The city has built up on three sides of it. As farm land it is worth perhaps \$150 an acre. The owner would not take \$10,000 an acre for it, although he has never added a dollar to its value. Who did? The people of Lincoln—the workers, if you please—who have saved their money, built their modest homes and made this a thriving, prosperous community. They have added not less than \$9,850 an acre to the value of every acre in that Rogers tract. And while they have been adding this value to the Rogers tract they have been fined every year for doing it, fined for saving and building homes and making this a city.

If Lincoln taxed the Rogers tract in proportion to its value for use and occupancy as it does the lot and humble cottage of the thrifty worker, the thrifty worker's taxes would be very materially reduced—and Mr. Rogers' taxes would be materially increased. And if the Rogers tract were taxed as it should be taxed, a whole lot of its speculative value would disappear and it would go on the market with a rush, thus enabling men who are making Lincoln to secure building sites a whole lot cheaper than now. Every house built in East Lincoln adds to the value of the Rogers tract—but the city, the men who make that value get none of it. On the contrary, they are fined for improving the city and adding to the value of another man's holdings.

Talk about watered stocks! They are not nearly so great a burden upon the people as the speculative values in land. If the city of Lincoln could, as it should have the right to do, tax the community made value out of real estate, it would not need to tax improvements, and it would soon have enough money to purchase every public utility. And until it has exhausted the community made values for the purpose of paying community expenses, it has no moral right to tax the product of individual effort. Of course it has the legal right, but that is because we have so long been content to submit to the most archaic, unfair and idiotic system of taxation ever devised.

There are many points of similarity between Mr. Aldrich's proposed "reserve association" and the United States bank of Nick Biddle's time. But there are also some differences—and they are differences in favor of Mr. Aldrich's plan. Nick Biddle's bank for twenty years had the privilege of holding treasury reserves on deposit without interest. But in the bank charter there was a clause enabling the secretary of the treasury to discontinue using the bank for government deposits upon reporting his reasons to congress. Mr. Aldrich cunningly provided against that sort of thing. His plan gives the "reserve association" the privilege of holding treasury balances on deposit without interest for a period of fifty years—but the secretary of the treasury has no power to discontinue making those deposits. Mr.

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Aldrich saw to it that to congress is reserved the right to discontinue depositing treasury balances by altering or amending the law—and even then congress can only amend or alter to take effect at the end of decennial periods. Better think it over.

The democrats and republicans of Milwaukee have fused for the purpose of defeating Mayor Seidel, a socialist, for re-election. We hope that Seidel will lick his opponent, William J. Carey, to a frazzle. It is a combination of grafters, strong-arm men, boodlers and political nincompoops to defeat an administration that has been clean, notoriously free from graft and scandal and immensely beneficial to Milwaukee. By a corrupt bargain the democrats endorsed Cary's nomination, and the republicans endorsed a lot of democratic nominations for minor offices. We hope to see that corrupt combination knocked into more kinds of a cocked hat than Woodrow Wilson wished for Mr. Bryan.

This newspaper is not an organ of socialism, any more than it is an organ of democracy or republicanism. But it is an organ of common, ordinary decency and political fairness, and for that reason it is anxious for the re-election of Mayor Seidel and the whole socialist ticket in Milwaukee.

Now why all this fuss and feathers among democrats in Nebraska? True, the Wilson advocates in the meeting at Lincoln on March 19 did try to hand Champ Clark a package, and did come within an ace of declaring Clark's candidacy to be a menace; and equally true that the Harmon advocates are throwing fits over Mr. Bryan's declaration that he will not be a delegate if Harmon is endorsed. What of it? There is almighty little chance that either Harmon or Wilson will be the choice of Nebraska democrats. Champ Clark's boom is growing at a magnificent rate. If you don't believe it, just go outside of Lincoln—which is not a fair testing ground, or Omaha, which is even worse—and tackle the first hundred democrats you meet and ask them their first choice. It's better than an even bet that a majority of them will say "Champ Clark," and a ten to one shot that those who do not say Clark is their first choice will say that he is their second choice. Why not all compromise and make it unanimous for the democrat whose record is as clean as a hound's tooth, and for whose democracy there is never a need to apologize?

And why all this hullabaloo in republican ranks about how their candidates for delegates-at-large and district delegates be designated? Given an opportunity to choose between Taft, LaFollette and Roosevelt, why not vote your choice with the understanding that the delegates are to stand by the choice of the majority? Under that sort of an understanding, Roosevelt isn't in the running in Nebraska any more than he was in North Dakota, and it's a three to two shot that LaFollette would win.

And with two such upstanding, four-square progressives as Champ Clark and Bob LaFollette contending for election, wouldn't we have a fiery campaign? And wouldn't the whole people be winners, no matter which candidate lost?

The editor of Will Maupin's Weekly, who knows a few things about Nebraska, has prepared a "chalk talk lecture" on "Nebraska and Her Resources; Her History and Her Possibilities." In this lecture Mr. Maupin uses a blackboard to show statistics by interesting comparisons, thus making them more forceful than mere figures. It is a lecture that will be interesting and instructive to all Nebraskans, and will be especially valuable to school children. Commercial clubs, too, would find it profitable to have this lecture delivered under their auspices. Mr. Maupin's terms for this lecture are so easy that there is no reason why it should not be delivered in every town in Nebraska big enough to turn out an audience of fair size. For terms and dates address Will M. Maupin, Room 436 Bankers Life Building, Lincoln.

Senator Robert Taylor of Tennessee is dead. We might easily afford to lose a few senators, but we can ill afford to lose cheerful, sunny, optimistic, helpful men like "Fiddling Bob." He may have been a statesman, but we prefer to think of him as a plain, homespun man whose heart beat in full sympathy with the heartbeats of the common people. There are those who said he "fiddled his way" into the governorship and into the senate. Perhaps; but we know he fiddled and sang his way into the hearts of his fellows, and that he occupied a place therein seldom occupied by public men. And, after all, isn't that better than to have merely become a great politician? When "Bob" Taylor's light went out many a home circle was dimmed, many a man once hopeless felt the loss of a personal friend, and

little children wept because one who loved them had passed away.

AN EXPANDING BUSINESS.

Comparatively few people in Lincoln realize the immensity of the business that has been built up in their midst by the Enterprise Planing Mill Co. at 2418-2436 N street. This institution is already ranking with the largest of its kind in the west, and it is broadening its field to such an extent that its fame is considerably more than state wide. There is nothing in the line of mill work and interior finish that this concern does not manufacture, and all of it is of a superior order. It has made a record for designing and manufacturing bank, store and office fixtures, and what it is accomplishing in these lines is to be seen right here at home. The Enterprise Co. designed and executed the mill work in the splendid new residence recently erected by Judge Allen W. Field. It also manufactured and put in the fixtures in the Gas company's new offices and in the Folsom cafe. Nothing handsomer has ever been executed by any similar concern for installation in Lincoln. It is by using only the best of material, employing workmen of the highest skill and artists of note to make designs that the Enterprise Co. is achieving a reputation for its product. It is giving steady employment to a large number of men and is rapidly coming to be one of Lincoln's largest manufacturing plants. The officers of the company are: H. A. Stephens, president; W. T. Kingery, vice president; N. H. Bedell, secretary-treasurer.



The Hoosier

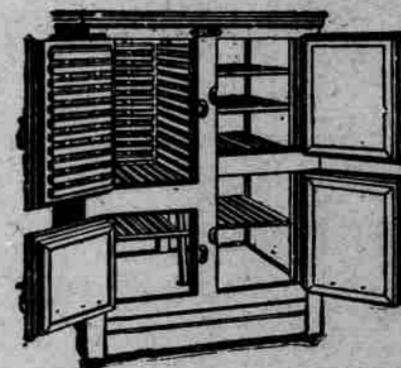
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