

## CURRENT COMMENT

The annual convention of the Nebraska Federation of Commercial Clubs, Hastings on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week was a meeting of representative business men who are doing real things in the development of the commercial life of Nebraska. The best piece of work the convention did was to start a movement calculated to invite capital to invest in Nebraska by assuring it a fair return—or opportunity to make fair return—on the investment. These keen, alert business men have come to see that capital for the development of water power, interurban projects, etc., can not be induced to come to Nebraska so long as the return thereon is limited to the return on a farm mortgage loan. The next best thing done was to get behind the movement to advertise Nebraska systematically and thoroughly.

The reports of the local clubs at the commercial club convention were all interesting, and they rejoiced the hearts of those of us who have been praying for an awakening of Nebraskans to a realization of the wonderful possibilities that lie before them. Good roads, cleaner cities, squarer business, co-operation instead of scrapping—these and many other good things are the results of the good work of the commercial club movement.

The election of Victor Wilson of Stromsburg to be president for the ensuing year guarantees a continuation of President Bushnell's policy of "push." Mr. Wilson is a young man who has fallen into the habit of doing things worth while. He will give to the federation the tireless efforts of a man who loves Nebraska, knows her business conditions and yearns to develop her every resource. The election of R. D. MacFadden of Hastings to be secretary-treasurer was an inspiration. "Mac" will be there with the bells on all the time.

The difference between the Hastings as the editor of Will Maupin's Weekly first saw it more than a quarter of a century ago, and the Hastings of today, it something wonderful. Today Hastings is one of the handsomest, busiest and most promising cities in the west. Her citizens are building for the future. A magnificent park and boulevard system is being established. New industries are being secured and old ones backed up by patronage. A magnificent new hotel is being erected. Hastings manufactures more cigars than any other city in the state. She makes and sells twenty million brick every year. She has a splendid wholesale trade, a big iron and steel foundry, colleges galore, handsome school buildings, magnificent churches and beautiful homes. Above all and behind all this is a set of business men who are co-operating to make Hastings a city worth while. And they are succeeding. This newspaper is expecting great things of Hastings during the next few years.

Commenting upon Mayor Dahlman's victory in Omaha the Lincoln Journal again falls into the same old grievous error, and gives another exhibition of an old spirit of unfairness and jealousy that Will Maupin's Weekly had hoped was buried forever. Speaking of Mayor Dahlman the Journal says: "His half democratic, half anarchistic views of personal liberty happen to appeal to Omaha's greatest commercial interest, the liquor business."

A moment's investigation, too often neglected by our esteemed contemporary at Ninth and P streets, would have revealed the cruel falsity of such a statement. The liquor business is not Omaha's greatest commercial interest. We have often asserted that Omaha was partly to blame for having such an impression prevailing by allowing a few pestiferous men to do most of her talking. But the liquor business of Omaha represents a negligible portion of the vast commercial business of that splendid metropolis. It is not one per cent of the total manufactured output of Omaha, and represents less than one-half of one per cent of the wholesale transactions of that city. Being a great metropolis and a city constantly full of transients, Omaha is not and can not be made a "Sunday school" town. But her people are keeping it as clean morally as the average American municipality, if not cleaner, and her business men are making it a magnificent market. We prefer Lincoln to Omaha for reasons that are entirely satisfactory to us, but we sincerely wish that we could trade off some of the smug hypocrisy of a certain Lincoln element for some of the Omaha spirit of push and co-operation for the development of Lincoln's business. We wish we could trade off some of the "holier-than-thou" spirit too often manifested in Lincoln for some of the splendid civic spirit Omaha manifests every now and then. And doubtless Omaha would like to swap some of her elements of citizenship for some of the fair-minded, square dealing and enterprising element of Lincoln that is, thank goodness, coming to the front and helping to make Lincoln a real city instead of an overgrown village filled with people only anxious to be let alone and to let alone what they consider to be well enough.

Will Maupin's Weekly can see no reason for jealousy between the two cities. Rivalry there will always be. But in the name of common-sense let's make it a good natured rivalry, rejoicing in each other's successes and helping to make good each other's failures. Let's have done with rock throwing and mudslinging, and try for a while the throwing of bouquets. What will prosper Omaha will prosper Lincoln, and vice versa; what profits them both will profit Nebraska, and what profits Nebraska will profit both of the big cities. We have entirely too much in common to be wasting time scrapping.

It is so seldom that Nebraska plays second fiddle in anything worth while that we have no hesitancy now in pointing out the occasion. For years we boasted that Nebraska led all the states in the lowness of her percentage of illiteracy. No longer is that true. Iowa, long in second place has stepped to the front and now leads Nebraska by a fraction that is so small as to require the aid of a microscope to discern. We'll have to remain in second place in this regard for the next ten years. And if we do not succeed in regaining first place, you may be sure we will never go below second place.

The forty-fourth annual convention of the Nebraska State Medical Association in Lincoln this week attracted to the city nearly three hundred physicians and surgeons. And a mighty fine looking body of men it was, too. They discussed topics of vastly more importance than the mere healing of the sick—they discussed

ways and means of preventing sickness. Funny lot of business men, the physicians. They make their livelihood alleviating the ills of mankind, then put in a lot of their time trying to devise methods of preventing people from needing the services of physicians. That's carrying the altruistic idea to the limit. Once in a while we hear of a lawyer who discourages litigation, but when we do we set him down as an old fogey. The physician who is not trying to eradicate disease by destroying the cause is not considered worthy of association with his fellows. We love the members of the medical profession, and when we need one of them we need him mighty badly. But we want him to be one of those big-hearted, big-brained gentlemen who would rather prevent disease than to cure it. Here's hoping the physicians of Nebraska will visit us often, socially.

As an example of the "fool strike" we hold that the strike of the web pressmen of Chicago is it. It was unauthorized by the international officers of the Union, was not backed up by any adequate cause, lacked the influence of approval by the chief members of the allied printing trades, and was called without warrant in the face of certain defeat. We happen to know a bit about trades unionism, and we have no hesitancy in saying that one of its greatest curses is its tendency to let irresponsible men acquire authority. We think vastly more of the union of pressmen than we do of the sordid union of Chicago newspaper publishers, but under the circumstances our sympathies are with the employers.

The Omaha Ad Club recently pulled off a "beefsteak dinner" and a vaudeville stunt, to which a number of Omaha business men were invited. Among the hired entertainers was a fellow who conceived the idea that these reputable business men wanted to hear nasty, filthy stories. So he started. Ere long he was interrupted by catcalls and clicking of "frogs" and hammering of spoons on glass. He was finally shut off without being bodily fired. And the next day the Omaha Ad Club apologized to every guest for the insult offered to them by this so-called entertainer. Hereafter such fellows should be fired before they get well started. We are tired of the entertainer at a banquet of gentlemen who thinks that filth is an attraction and obscenity something to be desired.

### THE "HARVESTER TRUST."

Following is the statement of Cyrus H. McCormick, president of International Harvester Company: The International Harvester case differs radically in its facts from all the so-called "trust" cases heretofore decided under the Sherman Law. The International Harvester Company was organized in 1902 for the purpose of securing economy in the manufacture and sale of harvesting machinery, and of increasing the foreign trade. It had no water in its capitalization, and it has earned only a reasonable return on its capital—less than 7 per cent per annum on the average. The prices of its machines are now substantially the same as in 1902, notwithstanding an increase of 15 per cent in raw material prices and 30 per cent in wages. The company has caused a large saving to American farmers in the cost of agricultural implements fourfold in nine years; its foreign sales in 1911 were over \$42,000,000. It has not sold cheaper abroad than at home. Its treatment of its customers, its employees, its agents and its competitors has been in accord with the highest standard of ethics and honorable business methods. To the farmer it has given better service and better machines; to the agents and dealers a less hazardous and fluctuating business; and to its employees it has given higher wages, improved and sanitary working conditions, insurance against sickness, accident and old age, and a share of the profits.

The charges of misconduct found in the bill have been met and disproved by the company in other cases; and they will again fail, because they are untrue. The Supreme Court of Missouri, in a suit in which these charges were fully gone into, said:

"On the whole, the evidence shows that the International Harvester Company has not used its power to oppress or injure the farmers who are its customers."

And again:

"The price of harvesting machines has not increased in proportion to the increased cost of construction or the increased merit of the machines, and Respondent has brought other farm implements into trade."

"The evidence also shows that the machines manufactured by the International Harvester Company have been greatly improved in quality and the item of repair material has been reduced in price and placed within closer reach of the farmer."

The organizers of this company acted under the advice of able counsel, and in the sincere belief that they were not violating the law. If under later decisions it should be held that the law was violated, it could only be through the creation of a power to oppress which has never been exercised.

More than six years ago the company asked for its investigation by the United States government, and opened all its books and records for inspection, and furnished all information requested. No suggestion of any change in its business methods has been made to it by the government at any time. Recently a full and frank discussion of the whole situation has been had between the representatives of the government and the company, in an honest desire upon both sides to avoid litigation. Some plan may yet be found which will obviate the necessity of any protracted litigation by satisfying the claims made under the Sherman act without seriously impairing the economic advantages and benefits secured by the organization of this company. No form of reorganization, however, was suggested by the government which seemed practically possible.

The government has been careful to avoid embarrassment to the foreign business from the litigation; the bill makes no attack upon, and seeks no change in, the export business of the company. The filing of the bill will in no way interfere with the company's carrying on its business the same as heretofore.

### SPORTING DOPE.

Beginning with next week, Will Maupin's Weekly is going to run a "Bug Department," confined strictly to baseball matters and written by the grandfather of all baseball fanatics. The victim of acute baseballitis, who is going to write that dope, played some ball, knows a thing or two about the game, and can get more fun out of a diamond contest than anybody. You'll like the "Sporting Dope" in Will Maupin's Weekly because it will be different.

## MEN AND MATTERS

Of course we must have the utmost respect for courts. And if we dare to criticize them, or speak disrespectfully of judges, we are anarchists and traitors, or worse. Appointment or election to the bench clothes a man with something that demands respect; it endows him with superior qualities that mere men can not possess; it encloses them in a sanctity that must not be disturbed. Witness Judge Archibald, one of the members of the new commerce court of the United States. The commerce court sits in judgment upon railroad rates, and is a sort of intermediary between the railroads and shippers and the interstate commerce commission. Who is Judge Archibald? O, he is the sanctimonious and immune gentleman who paid the Erie railroad \$3,000 for its slack coal, then turned around and sold the contract to a third party for \$30,000 without ever handling anything but a pen. Of course such a gentleman is wholly competent to render justice in all controversies between the people and the railroads. To think otherwise is to be guilty of contempt.

We are just a bit interested in knowing what the railroads of the state will do when the state board of assessment meets to fix the assessment of the roads. The railroads are demanding of the state railway commission that their physical valuation be made higher, as it is upon the physical valuation on that freight rates will be based. But it is upon the findings of the state board of assessment that the taxes must be paid. We haven't yet figured out how the railroad representatives will handle the situation, but we are satisfied that they are well able to play the game of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde—or something similar—in mighty fine style.

If it be true that the Methodist board of bishops has removed the ban against certain forms of amusements, then we congratulate the Methodist board of bishops. The old style religion may have made Christians, all right, but it also made hypocrites and moral dyspeptics. Our Puritan forefathers forbade bearbaiting "on Sunday," not because it was cruelty to the bears but because it gave pleasure to the men. A lot of religion is built upon that same sort of foundation. For years on end the bishops have been holding on to the law against card playing, theatre going and dancing, and for an equal number of years these amusements have been going on, too often under cover and therefore provocative of evil results. Some of these days an enlightened church will quit overlooking a good thing, then it will seize for its own a lot of the weapons that Satan now uses so advantageously. And the first weapon this enlightened church will seize will be the theatre.

A short time ago the calamity howlers were working overtime telling us that the wheat crop was shot all to pieces. Will Maupin's Weekly has been denying the calamity wails all the time—because it happens to know a few things about Nebraska and about present conditions. Now come men who have been all over the state and tell us that wheat prospects were never better, and that with increased acreage and yield we are going to harvest the biggest wheat crop in the state's history. And the farm implement men are telling stories that offer further proof that what we say is true. They are going to sell more threshing machinery this year than in any year previous. Wonderful state is Nebraska. And it should be the joy of every Nebraskan to boost for her at every opportunity.

Warren Worth Bailey, editor of the Johnstown, Pa., Democrat, has been nominated for congress by the democrats of the Nineteenth Pennsylvania district. Not because Mr. Bailey is a democrat, but because he is one of the thoughtful, progressive and militant reformers of the country, he ought to receive the vote of every progressive. A pioneer in the single tax reform, a pioneer in the work of direct legislation, and always a militant member of every real reform element that fights special privilege and seeks the common good, Warren Worth Bailey has made a name and a place for himself in American history. The Johnstown Democrat is today one of the strongest newspapers editorially in America, ranking with the Springfield Republican in virility and freedom from control. A rousing majority for Mr. Bailey would be the best proof of the wisdom and earnestness for reform of the voters of the Nineteenth Pennsylvania district.

"I have been hit below the belt," declared President Taft at Portsmouth, Ohio. If he was the lander of the blow was slugging away at a big mark.

### THEIR SILVER ANNIVERSARY.

On Saturday, April 27, occurred the twenty-fifth anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Kennedy of Omaha, and it was properly celebrated. A host of friends gathered at the Kennedy home and enjoyed its always boundless hospitality. Most of them were printers and their families, and those who were not were either ex-printers or immediate relatives. Blessed with three splendid children, two beautiful daughters and a stalwart son, the home life of the Kennedys is ideal. The staunch friendships they have formed were evidenced by the many handsome presents they received and hearty congratulations extended. The editor of Will Maupin's Weekly and his wife rejoice in having had the privilege of being present on this occasion. Here's to the Kennedys! And here's hoping we'll be present at the celebration of the next quarter century anniversary!

### GAS MEN ARE COMING.

No, not the politicians—the men who make fuel and illuminating gas and deal in gas appliances. On May 22-24 the Iowa District Gas Association will meet in Lincoln, and upwards of 200 men engaged in the gas business will be here. This is the largest convention of gas men west of the Mississippi river and one of the largest in the United States. A large amount of business is always transacted at these conventions, but the social side is not overlooked. The local gas men have framed up a program of entertainment that will make the visitors sit up and take notice. There will be banquets and theater parties and picnics and sporting events galore when the delegates are not buckling down to business. This is one of the important conventions of the year and the local gas men had to do some tall hustling to land it. That it will be well taken care of is a foregone conclusion.