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State Historical Society

BASE BALL
BOOSTER DAY
JULY 16
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WILL MAUPIN'S WEEKLY

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MAKE LINCOLN BETTER

Next week will appear letters from several prominent business men of Lincoln, answering the following question propounded to them by Will Maupin's Weekly:

"HOW MAY WE MAKE LINCOLN A BETTER CITY IN WHICH TO LIVE AND DO BUSINESS?"

Similar answers will appear in future issues. All of these will prove interesting reading, and out of the discussion may come some tangible plans upon which we may build for future greatness along social and business lines.

Will Maupin's Weekly has a few ideas of its own on this very important question, and it has no hesitancy in expressing them. First it would say that Lincoln is a mighty good city in which to live and do business—has always been, and always will be. That, however, doth not obviate the fact that it may be made much better. But there are some things that ought to be corrected; some things that should be settled quickly and pushed aside to make way for really constructive work. We make bold to mention a few of them:

Something ought to be done to settle this annoying gas question—a trouble that is preventing the people from getting dollar gas, preventing the company from making needed improvements, and keeping things in a constant turmoil. Surely there must be a common ground for agreement between the company and its patrons, and this common ground should be sought without the interference of ambitious politicians of the ward variety.

The constant strife between the people and the Traction Co. should cease. There must be, somewhere, a common ground upon which all may agree. Individual preferences and personal spites should not be allowed to interfere with a settlement of the vexed traction problem. The people are not getting the service they have a right to expect. This much we know. The traction Co. says it is not making enough to warrant extensions and betterments. That is a matter which, if true, is easily demonstrated. But there is something wrong here, and the development of Lincoln is being retarded, business is interfered with and the people are being discommoded.

We have been talking about parks and boulevards long enough—it is time to invest some real money and do some real work to the end that Lincoln have an adequate park and boulevard system.

Will Maupin's Weekly is as much interested in "the city beautiful" as anybody. But it realizes that a "city beautiful" is of more importance to a majority. While talking about beautifying the city, let us not lose sight of the fact that a majority of Lincoln's citizens are confronted by the problem of existence, and we are needing new industries, new avenues of employment, in order that our people may have a bit more time to cultivate the artistic and compelled to spend less time in struggling to keep the wolf from the door. Some of these days we may have a city administration that will do something more than scarp over the "four-foot line" question.

With all due respect to the opinion of others, Will Maupin's Weekly is of the opinion that Lincoln could get along for a time without the advice of men who hold that unless their particular views on sociology are complied with the city is going to hell in a handbasket. There are some thousands of men in Lincoln who find it difficult enough to earn a livelihood by working six days a week without losing a day or an hour. That is the fault of our industrial system. That such men should be deprived of practically every opportunity to recreation and amusement upon the only day upon which they are freed from the everlasting struggle for existence, merely to conform to the peculiar beliefs of men and women who are able to do as they please—to deprive these workers of recreation upon their liberty day is a crime against humanity. This newspaper would oppose a "wide open town" with all its might. But it insists that until workers are given an opportunity to enjoy some of the recreations of life upon a week day without loss of wage, the preacher and the pewholders have no moral right to deny these men the opportunity for recreation and amusement upon Sunday. Nor have they the right to designate just what these workers may or may not do upon the first day of the week.

Lincoln is not lacking in public spirit. On the contrary, public spirit is markedly strong. The trouble is that there seems to be no fixed and definite plan whereby this public spirit may find expression in concrete accomplishment. We are split up into factions. We are allowing the gas problem, the traction problem, the four-foot line foolishness and other things to divide our forces and sap our energies. We ought to get together, settle these vexed questions amicably, and then formulate a general plan of promotion and work for it with unanimity and spirit.

Lincoln ought to have a Union depot!

The city is entitled to that much consideration from the railroads. If they will not "come across" voluntarily they ought to be made to "come across." Lincoln has five railroads entering the city—and four depots. There should be one central depot. None is adequate at the present time, and they are scattered around promiscuously. One of the greatest benefits that could come to Lincoln would be the securing of a union depot conveniently located and adequate to meet the needs of the people. We have had plenty of talk about it; it is now time to do something that will secure results.

We can make Lincoln a better city in which to live and do business by eliminating personal prejudices; by putting an end to jealousies, by co-operating with the forces that we are depending upon to develop the residence sections and increase business opportunities, by increasing the avenues of employment, by getting together on a common ground, rebuking those who seek personal gain at the expense of public enterprise.

Already this is a mighty good city in which to live and do business, but if we get together we can make it better.



WOODROW WILSON

AN OPEN LETTER TO GEORGE H. ROGERS.

George H. Rogers, Lincoln, Nebr.—Dear Sir: You are the owner of a valuable tract of land lying south of O street and between Thirtieth and Thirty-third street. Just how valuable I have no means of knowing, but I would undertake to give you thirty or forty thousand dollars for a clear title to it. I haven't got that many cents, but I believe I could finance such a deal. But no matter how valuable it is, I feel able to prove that the value was not created by you, but by the community, by the people who have builded Lincoln. In view of this fact, do you not owe the community something?

A lot of our boys and young men are using this tract for a base ball ground, and on their behalf I want to thank you for the privilege you have granted them. I live less than two blocks from your tract, and I take pleasure often in watching the ball games there. It's a mighty fine lot of boys and young men who gather there. They get noisy sometimes, but that is all right. They never indulge in profanity or "tough" language. Indeed, I saw a young fellow fired out of game one day because he persisted in swearing despite the protests of his team mates. My only regret is that I have grown a little too old and too obese to join the young fellows in their sport. But I get my share loafing around on the edges, watching them. I'm for the boys and young men who play the national game on your tract, because they are a fine, upstanding, stalwart lot of good fellows.

Now, Mr. Rogers, wouldn't it be a mighty fine thing for those boys if you would go a bit further and spend a few dollars—just a few—in making their ball grounds a bit more convenient? If you will just take twenty or twenty-five dollars and build a back-stop and a couple of long benches out there, and then say to the boys: "With my compliments and best wishes, young men: play the game square, keep your mouths clean and your hearts light!" If you'd do that, Mr. Rogers, you would have every one of them on your staff, declaring that "Mr. Rogers is all to the good because he's our friend." These young fellows are the future citizens of Lincoln, Mr. Rogers. Every day some one of them drops out of the ranks of the players and enters the ranks of the workers, and every worker in Lincoln daily adds to the value of that property of yours. It would be a mighty profitable investment for you to make this investment of a few dollars for the benefit of those boys, because they are going to add many dollars to your property's value. You are not using it now. You can well afford to let the boys use it. And you can well afford to make it even more available for their use. I am not speaking for the boys alone. I am speaking for the community, and you.

Come out there some fine evening with me, and we'll watch the game together. It will do you a lot of good. The spectacle of clean-limbed, clean-mouthed young fellows engaged in healthful sport is always helpful. Just invest a few dollars under the above directions, Mr. Rogers, and I'll guarantee you more genuine profit than you ever made on an investment of equal size. It will be a money profit, too, in addition to another kind of profit that is far better than money.

What say you, Mr. Rogers?

Thanking you for your consideration of this matter, and hoping to hear a favorable reply, I am, very truly yours,

WILL M. MAUPIN.

Ever notice that those who strenuously object to "one man dictating to a party" are the same fellows who are always trying to put one over on the people?

MEN AND MATTERS

Whether or not you agree with Bryan; whether you coincide with his views on this or that; whether you stand for what he stands or oppose the things he stands for, you've got to admit that he is today the biggest single force in America—and that means that he is the biggest single force in the world. Bryan is big, not so much because he has a splendid brain, not so much because he is a deep thinker and a student, not so much because he is an orator without equal—it is because men know, whether they admit it or not, that he is honest, incorruptible and always ready to fight for what he thinks is right regardless of its effect upon himself. Because of this belief in his moral character men instinctively follow him. And because of it he made the Baltimore convention stand true to democracy as Bryan defines it and prevented it from being turned over to special privilege, lock, stock and barrel.

The charge that Bryan was secretly scheming to nominate himself was exploded early in the game. And because he was not a candidate he could fight in the open; because of that he did not need to make alliances and plot under cover. Bryan played his cards face up on the table—and he won. And when he won progressive democracy won its greatest victory.

Woodrow Wilson was not our choice. This newspaper was for Champ Clark, and it regrets that circumstances prevented his nomination. Those circumstances may not be due to any fault of Mr. Clark's, but clearly his campaign managers played bad. He is a splendid, upstanding, progressive democrat. It is too bad that his managers thought it wise to engage in political plotting such as the people have put under ban, and which ban should have been apparent to men like Governor Stone and Governor Francis.

Woodrow Wilson is a splendid example of the scholar in politics. He made good as governor of New Jersey—much to our surprise. The Woodrow Wilson of today is a far different man from the Woodrow Wilson who sat in the library of the president of Princeton. He is in line with the progressive thought of the day. He has the courage of his convictions. He owes his nomination to no selfish or predatory interest. He is not the beneficiary of any "steam rollers" or delegates bound by the ties of partisan spoils. No one believes that he is in any wise the choice of the interests inimical to the people. His campaign for the nomination has been dignified, not full of bluff and bluster and bar room phraseology. His ego is not abnormally developed. His campaign will be the campaign of a scholar, a gentleman and a student of public affairs.

Out of the bitterness and the strife of the Baltimore convention emerges a united party. The men who claim to be democrats and will oppose Wilson on the plea that he is "Bryan's man" were never anything more than democrats in name—democrats who used the cloak of democracy to work their nefarious schemes. The lines of this campaign are pretty sharply drawn. It is up to the people to decide whether they want to rule, or whether they want a continuance of the arbitrary rule of the predatory interests.

Wilson or Taft? That is the question. Roosevelt is not in the running. If he is more concerned about the triumph of progressive principles than he is in personal aggrandizement, we will hear no more of the Roosevelt presidential candidacy.

Just because John H. Morehead has not deemed it necessary to throw his hat into the ring, fume and fret and bluster and pose, a lot of people try to prove thereby that he is not a progressive. Mr. Morehead does not have to do that in order to prove to those who know him that he is heartily in line with the progressive thought of the day. He was battling for progressive principles years before a lot of the present day agitators had learned the definition of the word. Sixteen years ago he was out fighting behind Bryan for the things that Bryan advocated. He has never faltered in his support of those progressive ideas. Ere Aldrich was known outside of his baliwick Morehead was a factor in the progressive movement. He has for thirty years stood for the very things that are now triumphing not only in his own party, but in all parties. The charge against Morehead—that he is tied up with the "big interests"—will deceive only those who dearly love to be deceived.

Lincoln people ought to show more appreciation of Capital Beach. Few cities have a more convenient or beautiful pleasure resort. Manager Buckstaff has had a hard grind bringing the Beach to its present condition. He could have profited immediately by allowing the standard to be lowered, but he set his ideals high and has stuck to them. As a result, the Beach is catering to the best citizenship; it is a good place for the wives and children to spend the day, to be met there in the evening by the family bread-winner. Capital Beach is a big asset in the business of building up the civic spirit of Lincoln.

The democratic national platform is as long as the Decalogue and as interesting as a patent office report. It covers subjects large and small as the waters cover the sea. The sight of it in cold print is enough to frighten the average voter to death. Some of these days some wise politician will invent a platform that is short and concise, that will not undertake to tell everybody about everything, but will merely outline. We advise future resolutions committees to employ a first-class city editor to "cut the liver" out of future platforms and get them boiled down.