

George W. Berge

For Attorney General

The person who holds the position of attorney general of Nebraska during the next few years will have an opportunity to give special service to the public. If the constitutional amendment prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor is adopted at the November election, the enforcement of that law will fall largely to the attorney general of the state. It is of vital importance that the attorney general to be elected this fall should be a man who is not only in favor of the adoption of the dry constitutional amendment, but one who has the ability and courage to enforce the law impartially. George W. Berge, who has filed as a candidate for the democratic nomination of attorney general, has these qualifications. He has been opposing the special interest's domination in Nebraska politics for a number of years. There is no equivocation in Mr. Berge's statement as to his position on the paramount state issue this year in Nebraska. Mr. Berge favors the dry constitutional amendment and gives assurance in his own words that the people's wishes will be strictly observed in law enforcement. He has issued the following statement to the public as to his position:

"The great and important issue in this campaign, when stripped of all fuss and confusion, is to dissolve the unholy alliance between politicians and favor-seeking special interests. The influence of corporate and other special interests in government is possible only through office holders and politicians. During the years I have lived in Nebraska I know that the people have many times been given sugar-coated and decoy candidates over whom the eclipse of corporate influence constantly cast its shadows. The result has been that our legislators and those charged with the enforcement of law have spent their time trying to chloroform the people with burlesque legislation and sham law enforcement so that the pain of the people would not seem so great while the surgeons for the special interests were extracting from them all kinds of plunder.

"There is a difference between the candidate and office holder who battles in good faith for something he knows the people want and something he believes to be right, and the candidate who is simply running for office and doing anything and everything, even betraying the people, to win the office. It is discouraging sometimes to hear people talk of the vote-getting qualities of this or that candidate, forgetting the fact that too many candidates flirt openly with the people and make them believe that they are their true representatives, while at the same time and in secret they make their bargains with favor-seeking interests. This is the time above all times in the history of the state when the people should make careful scrutiny and determine what candidates stand four-square on the issues involved in the campaign.

"During the last fifteen years we have made good progress in driving malign influences out of politics. Twelve years ago the democrats and populists honored me with the nomination for governor. In that campaign I battled to wrest the control of the state government from the railroads and restore it to the people. I said that the railroads through the instrumentality of the free pass procured the government away from the people. I branded the railroad pass as a bribe and battled to arouse the people on this question, and although I was defeated, the legislature a few years after sounded the death knell of the free railroad pass in Nebraska. Ever since that time the wholesome sentiment of the people has more and more curbed bad influences working in politics. And while the battle has been on and while we openly fought against the evil influences of certain corporations in politics we have been constantly attacked from ambush by the liquor interests in the state. No one knows this better than I do. Every time I have been a candidate I have been blacklisted by this influence. The same has been true with every other candidate who stood openly and above board on all public questions and who refused

to make any bargain in secret and thus betray the interests of the people. The time has come, as in the course of events it was bound to come, when this debauching influence must be driven from our politics.

"I had no desire to become a candidate for attorney general. For a number of years I have cherished the ambition to become governor and to serve the people in that capacity. On several occasions I would have been nominated and elected except only for this very influence. In 1906 the nomination was stolen from me through this influence. For twenty years I have helped battle for real democracy and I have always battled open and above board. There is not that person living in the state who will say that I ever made a secret political bargain. What I did I did and said from the housetops. From all over the state I have been importuned to become a candidate for the office of attorney general because the belief is cherished that I could do more in that office than I could as governor. I have deferred to their wishes in the matter. I shall vote for the prohibitory amendment, and if the people of the state will elect me to this office I will promise them an era of law enforcement and bring about a more wholesome respect for the law.

"I yield to no man in the state in my loyalty and devotion to democratic principles and to Woodrow Wilson, our great leader, and I cherish with confidence the hope of seeing him re-nominated and re-elected to the presidency.

"GEORGE W. BERGE."

"THE SWEETEST NOTE OF ALL"

"To the minds of the many, a meadow lark is a meadow lark, and those who have been raised in Nebraska are likely to be familiar with but one of several sub-species—the so-called Western Meadow Lark. This beautiful songster was discovered near the present site of Omaha way back in the forties by Audubon himself, who was then tramping all over the country on foot, making his wonderful paintings and observations of American wild bird life.

Audubon was charmed with the delicious carol of this creature of the meadows, and spoke of it many times in his writings. Most bird lovers and skilled ornithologists agree that the note of the western meadow lark is the sweetest and purest of all.

"Musicians have been able to record his songs upon paper and many amateurs are able to whistle a fair imitation. Authorities disagree on just what the western meadow lark says from his fence post or from behind his clump of grass. A Nebraska farmer, whose potato crop had been saved from the beetles by the larks, told Dr. Solon R. Towne, president of the Audubon society, that to him the western meadow lark says nothing but:

"Whoop la! Potato bug!"

"Another well known song of this delightful bird appears to be:

"My, what a lovely creature!"

"And still another:

"Singing about as usual!"

"There is a story of the streets that tells of a bemused party who heard some folks talking about the western meadow lark.

"Oh, yes!" interrupted the dizzy person, "That's the bird that says: Better go take the Keeley cure!"

"But no matter what he says, his song is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. These larks appeared in the outskirts of Omaha about two weeks ago and are rapidly increasing in numbers.

"If you take your Sunday stroll through the country-side today you will doubtless hear the carol that startled Audubon so many years ago, for the songs of the California and eastern meadow larks can not compare in tone and sweetness with those of the western variety that belong to us of the plains, and to us alone."

The above editorial, which appeared in the Omaha World-Herald recently, is not only the sweetest note it has struck for many months, but is in such striking contrast with its "thick and thin" support of the liquor interests that The Commoner gladly reproduces it.

NEBRASKANS — TELEPHONE ALL YOUR NEIGHBORS AND SEE THAT THEY VOTE AT THE PRIMARY, APRIL 18.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF BREAK WITH GERMANY

The many Americans who have been demanding for months that diplomatic relations with Germany be suspended at once are reminded by the Springfield Republican that the consequences of that action must almost certainly be war. A long continued struggle would result in the following possible consequences, which the people should squarely face before the government becomes irrevocably committed to this course:

(1) The shifting of the burden of financing the war against the central powers of Europe to the back of the American taxpayer.

(2) Bedeviling of American politics for a generation at least, because of the large number of people in the United States who sympathize with Germany.

(3) The formation, in bitter hostility to the government, of secret organizations which would far exceed in their capacity for mischief the "copperheads" of the American civil war.

(4) Chronic riots in New York, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Chicago and St. Louis, where pro-Teuton sympathy was strongest and most aggressive.

(5) The blowing up of the Panama canal locks.

(6) The blowing up or burning of the national capitol building and various state capitols.

(7) Raids of the most recently built German cruiser submarines across the ocean to attack shipping at the harbors of Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

(8) American boys—your boy—being sent to die in the trenches of France and Flanders so that the map of Europe might be drawn to suit London, Paris, Rome and Petrograd.—Nebraska State Journal.

WAR A DUEL OF NATIONS

The duel, as practiced by individuals, was outlawed by public sentiment years ago because it was not only murder but because common sense dictated that a question of personal honor could not be definitely and absolutely settled by killing somebody else or being killed yourself. War is simply the duel as practiced by nations. When men say that the nation must go to war to defend its honor they are dealing in the same subtleties that were employed to defend the duel before the bar of public sentiment. If this nation's honor is affronted and stained by the killing of an American or Americans, who have knowingly and deliberately boarded the vessels of belligerent nations that they were perfectly aware would traverse the war zone, to the extent of going to war over it, will it be made white as snow again by sacrificing the lives of hundreds of thousands of our citizens? The notion that blood wipes out honor's stain is a relic of paganism and of barbarism. People do not hold it in their relations with one another; why should the nation, made up of individuals, do it?

PROTECTING AMERICAN INDUSTRIES

Manufacturers are warning the congressmen that after the war in Europe stops there will be a vast amount of goods now stored there which will be dumped onto the markets of America, and that it is necessary that a tariff wall be put up right away so high that none can get in. Otherwise, we are told, American industry will again be prostrated. Peace in Europe will also be followed by a tremendous influx of laboring men who will compete with American labor. As the manufacturers desire the high tariff only in order to protect American labor—we quote from republican orators—it is a little odd that while they are demanding higher tariffs to keep out foreign made goods they are not also demanding legislation that will keep out foreign born labor. We trust that at this juncture in the debate nobody will rise to point out that the greater number of workers from abroad the less will be the wages the manufacturers here will have to pay because undoubtedly none of the manufacturers has thought of this. You see if they have to pay a lower labor cost they won't need so high a tariff, since all just tariffs—we quote from republican authority—represents the difference in labor costs here and abroad.

Show This Issue of The Commoner to Your Neighbors