

THE WAGLEWORKER



VOL. 6

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, SEPTEMBER 18, 1909

8 PAGES

O. 24

Interesting Comment

Concerning Prohibition

TIME FOR PLAIN TALK.

Edgar Howard in Columbus Telegram.

Nebraska is face to face with a prohibition campaign right now. There is no use waiting for the fight until next year. It is here now.

In an address delivered in his home town a few days ago ex-Governor Sheldon announced that he had burned all bridges behind him, and was now an out-and-out prohibitionist.

This announcement means one thing certain—namely, that Governor Sheldon will be a candidate for the republican nomination for governor next year, and it means that he will be the republican nominee on a prohibition platform. There is no mistaking it. Circumstances have made Governor Sheldon the most popular republican in Nebraska. He is in dead earnest. He is in the campaign right now.

Confronted by such a situation, what is the duty of the democratic party in the state? As the Telegram views the situation the duty is plain. The party should begin at this moment to plan to present to the people next year a candidate and a platform pledging allegiance to the present Nebraska liquor laws. The party should speak plainly to the people, leaving nothing to be guessed at as to the course it will pursue. It should nominate for a governor a man who is known to be a lover of the law—one who is opposed all the time to prohibition, and in favor all the time of the present liquor laws and their strict enforcement.

There is no other way to defeat prohibition in Nebraska. It will come as certain as the year 1911 shall dawn, unless steps be taken now to stop it. The personal ambitions of men must not be permitted to stand in the way of the welfare of Nebraska. The welfare of the state demands a rigid enforcement of present liquor laws, and the certain defeat of statutory prohibition.

If the republicans will nominate Governor Sheldon on a prohibition platform—and that's what they will do—it will be no child's play to defeat him. And if he shall be elected he will carry a republican-prohibition legislature with him.

Governor Sheldon and the prohibition program can be defeated if the democrats of the state shall display horse sense in nominating their candidates. Democrats dare not enter the contest with a gubernatorial candidate who advocates a "personal liberty" which splits in the face of the law. The democratic candidate for governor must be opposed to prohibition, but he must be in favor of existing law. The people of the state will defeat the prohibition program if the democratic party will give them a fair chance, but we warn the democratic leaders that the fighting democratic workers in Nebraska will never stand behind a democratic candidate for governor who advocates the repeal of the daylight saloon law. They cannot be induced to support a democratic candidate for governor who encourages the open and flagrant violation of our present liquor laws regarding the sale of liquor on Sunday. The daylight saloon law and the Sunday liquor laws have come to stay, and a democratic candidate who is known to be opposed to those laws will never know that he is in the running against ex-Governor Sheldon.

Nebraska is not a prohibition state, but it can be made a prohibition state in a hurry if the democrats shall be so foolish next year as to nominate for governor a candidate who openly announces himself as opposed to the existing liquor laws. This seems to be the program of the interests in Omaha, and the so-called "Personal Rights League," but we warn them that the militant democracy out in the state will not stand for the program. We sound the warning now, so that the bosses shall not be in a position to say that they did not hear it in time to avoid making a fatal mistake.

MUST CHANGE LEADERSHIP.

F. A. Kennedy in Omaha Western Laborer.

The Western Laborer believes every man has the right to drink what he pleases. It also believes every man

has the right to think what he pleases.

On the ground that we have the right to think what we please we want to say a few words of warning to the business interests of Omaha on the seriously threatening advent of prohibition in Nebraska. That the danger of prohibition is serious is based on our observations and on the judgment of men who have their hand on the public pulse of the whole state. The prohibition agitators are splendidly organized. They have clever, experienced leaders and generals. They have been making swift strides toward the goal of their ambition for three years. They are full of confidence, and they have reason to be. They confidently believe they will put a prohibition amendment through the next legislature, and today it looks very much like they will be successful. They are unopposed by any organized effort on the part of the anti-prohibition voters of the state. They are pressing their propaganda work to the front and making converts by the thousands.

On the other hand, what are the anti-prohibitionists doing? Comparatively nothing. The Omaha and South Omaha brewers are scrapping among themselves over the sale of a few extra kegs of beer and seem to lose sight of the fact that the issue in Nebraska today is not how many kegs of beer they can sell, but whether or not any beer at all will be sold.

Prohibition will not be beaten by a barroom session wherein a representative of a brewery calls the boys up to take a drink while he knocks on Lincoln, damns Elmer Thomas and sends the preachers to perdition. The gang will agree with him so long as he buys. The same gang would agree with Elmer Thomas if he laid down coin on the bar and made a speech against the saloon.

Prohibition will not be beaten by a campaign made in confidence by Robert O. Fink.

Prohibition will not be beaten with a monthly paper called The State that bears no name at the head of its editorial columns.

Prohibition will never be beaten while the state and town is plastered with Stanford White-Evelyn Thaw pictures of evil suggestion flaunted in the faces of the daughters and mothers of Nebraska. These dirty, suggestive creations are supposed to increase the sale of beer, but as a matter of fact that only increase the ranks of the prohibition party.

Prohibition will never be beaten by the Nebraska brewers' association on the expenditure of a Canadian quarter.

Prohibition threatens Nebraska and it will take a general, and a clever general to save the state. The business men of the state must take hold of this question and organize on business lines. They must select the very best man in the state to command the fight and his word must be law. The brewers of Nebraska must learn to give money and take orders. They must learn that they are a nine-spot in the campaign against prohibition, and not the whole deck.

We suggest that the business interests of Omaha wake up to the seriousness of the prohibition wave and put Gurdon W. Wattles, Robert Cowell or Thomas Byrne at the head of the anti-prohibition movement. Then let the general direct the army. There must be a campaign of education made in the country papers of Nebraska. The anti-prohibitionists can present good, sensible, honest business reasons why prohibition should be defeated and these reasons must be prepared and put before the people of the state through the country newspapers.

The change in the sentiment of union men in this state on the liquor question has been very great. Twenty years ago the union men were all anti-prohibitionists. Today they are not. There is indifference among the Omaha union men on the question and out in the state a large per cent of the members are actually favorable to prohibition.

For instance, take the sentiment that came out of the June convention of the Nebraska State Federation of Labor.

The Bee's report of the state federation proceedings says:

"P. J. Ford of Omaha moved to strike from the constitution a clause

endorsing the strict enforcement of the laws of the state. The debate instantly turned on the regulation of the liquor traffic, and I. P. Copenhagen of Omaha led the fight for the clause. Mr. Copenhagen assured the delegates he believed in personal liberties, but he wanted it distinctly understood the saloon was no longer the poor man's club. He believed the saloons were entitled to protection under the law, but he denied anyone the right to violate the law. The motion by Delegate Ford was lost by a vote of 50 to 10."

The vote shows a surprising sentiment against the saloon and it shows the direction the union men of the state are going.

The secretary of the state federation informs us that unions out in the state are affiliating with the state body to a much larger extent than are the unions of Omaha. He says the leather workers, railway clerks, street car men, stereotypers and electrotypers, horseshoers, machinists and barbers are the only Omaha unions that have sent dues to the state federation and become officially connected with it. Why has not the brewery workers' union, and all the other unions closely allied with that business, become members of the state body? Do they imagine that a resolution adopted by the Omaha Central Labor union will beat prohibition, or is it because they are indifferent and don't care whether prohibition carries or not?

There is still time to organize Nebraska and beat prohibition, but it will take brains and money to make the campaign. The fight must be in the open and on the square. The people of Nebraska must be shown by facts, figures, cartoons and arguments that prohibition will injure the state. The gum shoe tactics and the offensive bill board pictures must be abandoned and the state press must be used to educate the people to beat prohibition. About 10 per cent of the people of Nebraska are prohibitionists and about 10 per cent are directly interested in the saloon business. The big crowd between those two will decide the question and they are gettable.

WHAT WILL HE DO WITH IT?

If Not for Booze and Cigarettes How Can He Spend It All?

In Monday morning's State Journal appeared the following "want ad:"

WANTED—Printer; all-round man; for country office; single man preferred; no booze or cigarettes; \$7 per week, board and room. Record, Diller, Neb.

It is manifestly unfair to offer an "all-round printer" that much money and then make it practically impossible to spend it. What on earth could an "all-round" mechanic do with so much money, anyhow? After paying for his laundry all he could do would be to store the rest away in a barrel in the cellar, and it wouldn't take long to exhaust the available supply of barrels. And why prefer a single man when there is a such a glorious opportunity to acquire a whole family and add it to the census of the city?

If we had a little time to spare we would loiter on the road to Diller and watch the procession of "all-round printers" hiking in the direction of that city for the purpose of annexing that job.

LABOR TEMPLE COMMITTEE.

Will Resume Meetings, Beginning Monday Evening Next Week.

The directors of the Lincoln Labor Temple Building Association have been resting on their oars for several months, but are now determined to get together and do a little business. Secretary Ibringer has mailed out notices of a meeting to be held at the labor commissioner's office next Monday evening. There have been many

things operating against a campaign along Labor Temple lines, but several members of the directorate feel now would be a good time to resume. With that end in view the meeting of next Monday evening has been called. All members of the board are asked to be on hand promptly at 8 o'clock, and a session of an hour will be held.

To those who may be inclined to be critical of the directorate it may be said that even if no progress has been made, nothing has been lost. The association has a thousand dollars in hand, and pledges for almost as much more that can easily be collected. A lot of the criticism comes from men who have never contributed anything but criticism to the project, and some of it from men who have bought a single share of stock at a dollar a share and had ten dollars worth of sport "kicking" on the way things have been handled. The men who have the most money invested in Labor Temple stock are not saying a word.

Any stockholder is privileged to attend the meetings of the board of directors, and are cordially invited to do so.

STREET RAILWAY MEN.

Hold Special Meeting and Head Off a Neat Little Scheme.

The Street Railway Men held a special meeting Wednesday evening to take cognizance of what appeared to be a neat little scheme to create dissensions in the ranks. The employees of the old Traction Co. were being told that the employees of the old White Line were framing up a scheme and the old White Line employees were being told on the quiet that the old Traction men were forming a little inside combine.

It didn't take long to settle that little matter when the men got together and compared notes, and the effort to create internal trouble died a bornin'.

It is said that some of the Traction Co. officials are blaming Ben Hilliard for the organization of the employees. Hilliard was superintendent of the "White Line" and resigned when the consolidation took place. There are surface indications that some of the present "brass collars" are frightened lest they be pried loose from fat jobs in order to make place for Hilliard, hence their efforts to create trouble. The Traction Co. management can take it from The Wageworker that Mr. Hilliard had nothing to do with the formation of "Division No. 522." Emmett T. Flood and Louis V. Guye, the former a general secretary of the American Federation of Labor and the latter a state organizer of the same body, assisted by local unionists, are responsible for the organization—in part. The real responsibility rests upon the Traction Co. management. At Wednesday evening's meeting the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That any rumors emanating from any source in regard to Ben Hilliard having any part in the organization of the A. A. of S. and E. Ry. E. local No. 522 are entirely without foundation and that he has not now and never had any connection with the organization, either in aiding, abetting or advising the formation of the same.

"J. E. UMPHRES, President.

"C. E. DAMEWOOD, Sec'y."

Ben Commons, general organizer of the Amalgamated Association, is in Lincoln and will remain a few days. While here he will hold sessions with President McDonald and General Manager Humpe.

JOB'S COMFORTERS.

Floyd McKinney of the Western Newspaper Union chapel is laid up with a couple of boils, and will probably be absent from duty for several days.

LIABILITY LAW IS UPHELD

The employer's liability law, enacted by the legislature of 1907, has been declared constitutional by the United States circuit court of appeals. The law makes railroad corporations liable for injuries sustained by employees even though the injuries were the result of the acts of a fellow servant. The law, however, applies only to the train service.

Ozro Castle, an employe of the Missouri Pacific at Auburn, lost a foot and averred that the accident was due to no carelessness of his

own, but to the failure of a fellow employe to properly inspect a car appliance. The lower court awarded damages and the corporation appeals to the United States court, attacking the constitutionality of the law. While the law is upheld the case is remanded for a new trial on the ground of error in the lower court.

It is some satisfaction, however, to know that the liability law has been held good. The law is not as broad as it should be, being limited to the train service, but it is a start in the right direction.

Some Comment About

Matters in Lincoln

Did the fact that Lincoln is a "dry town" tend to lessen the attendance at the state fair? The answer to this question will depend upon the point of view. Those opposed to a "dry town" will assert that it did. Those who favor a "dry town" will point to the fact that despite three horribly rainy days the total attendance of the week was only about 10,000 short of last year, which was a record breaker both as to weather and attendance. And so the discussion will rage—the anti-drys contending that despite the bad weather the attendance would have been much larger if visitors had been assured of plenty of opportunities to quench their thirst, and the anti-wets insisting that a lot of people came because they were assured they would not be annoyed by drunks and undue exhibitions. But all of us will agree that it was the biggest and best state fair ever pulled off in Nebraska—or anywhere else.

Lincoln is pitifully lacking in public comfort stations. A few months ago a society presented a handsome fountain to the city, and for weeks there was an exhibition of opposition to having it placed where it would be of service. That a city the size of Lincoln, with its pretensions of civic pride and enterprise, should have found it necessary to set a lot of unsanitary barrels and tin cans around the street corners to supply drinking water, is a burning disgrace. The city owns its own water works system, and it ought to have a dozen or more watering troughs and drinking fountains distributed around the central part of the city. And as for public comfort stations—well, as long as the city is lacking in this respect no one should enter serious protest if public decency is offended with great regularity.

"Until the Christian people of this community assist in securing a half-holiday for the toilers, they have no right to seriously object to Sunday amusements."

So said Miss Mary McDowell from the pulpit of the First Baptist church the Sunday morning before Labor Day. And The Wageworker is violating no confidence when it informs the good church people of this city that they are going up against a good game in the very near future. Unless they get busy and provide the half-holiday, or cease their opposition to Sunday base ball, there may be some retaliation at the polls when next Lincoln is called upon to vote on the question of saloon or no saloon. A lot of workmen who never frequent saloons, and who would vote against license under ordinary conditions, may make up their minds to make Lincoln "wet" next spring as a sort of rebuke to those who refuse to give the workers a chance to see ball games without losing a half-day's wages. As for this humble little labor paper, it cannot see the difference between witnessing a ball game on Sunday and hitching up the family horse and taking a Sunday afternoon ride before going to church.

The editor of The Wageworker has been around the country some in his time, and he is willing to confess that when it comes to decorating for big occasions Lincoln is in the never-was class. Fair week saw a few flags flung out, but otherwise there was nothing in the way of an attempt at decorating. Say what you will about Omaha, that burg has us skinned to a frazzle along these lines. If you want to see something fine in the way of decorating go up there and see what they've done to make things look good to the Eagles. Or get up there during the Ak-Sar-Ben festivities. We'll venture the assertion that the Paxton hotel, or the city hall, will have more decorations than Lincoln had the entire length of O street last week.

Last Saturday the street commissioner's department attempted something in the way of dragging the unpaved streets. A couple of very light drags were run along North Thirty-third street, and by taking a close look after they had gone by one might have been able to see that a drag had been run along there. But as for doing any good it would have been just as well to dress the street down with a feather duster.

But it cost the city about \$8 a day for the two teams and two men engaged in the work. And we often wonder why the streets are not cleaner and in better shape.

If the Lincoln Traction Co. had performed its part as well as the motor-men and conductors performed theirs during fair week, there would have been little room for complaint about the transportation service. But the Traction Co. signally failed to perform its part. A trailer left the rails at the fair grounds, and instead of throwing it over into the ditch the management kept a score of cars and 1,500 people waiting for an hour and a half while the wrecking crew was being hurried together and sent to the scene. Half the cars were taken from regular runs to accommodate the fair traffic, leaving 30,000 citizens to get along as best they could. Isn't it about time President McDonald and his board of directors hurry back from their summer vacations? If not to listen to the grievances of the employees, to at least give an imitation of an attempt to give the city something better than a jerk-water system of street railway? By squeezing some of the water out of its stock the company might be able to run a few boats to the fair grounds next year, leaving enough cars at hand to do the ordinary work in the city proper.

The Star very properly enters protest against the "grouch" who is always looking for something to complain against in the matter of public entertainment. Are the restaurant men of Lincoln a set of thieves and hold-ups? An outsider would judge so by reading one of Lincoln's daily papers during the week or ten days preceding the fair. And are the people who rent rooms a set of grafters looking for a chance to bilk their guests? It would seem so from the frantic fulminations of that same paper. Who expects to go to a big fair or exposition and live as cheaply as ordinary? Who expects to get into a huge crowd and not be called upon to pay extra prices? People who expect that sort of thing ought to remain at home, or else bring their grub with them and sleep standing up on the corners.

Don't it beat all how important it makes men to pin a tin star upon their manly bosoms and give them a little brief authority? A lot of "specials" in the city and at the fair grounds last week were huge lokes.

St. Joseph has just voted to adopt the commission plan of government. But your attention is directed to the fact that the charter St. Joseph accepted was submitted to a vote of the people for acceptance or rejection. Lincoln ought to be upon the commission basis—and would be today had an attempt been made to force a charter upon the people without giving them an opportunity to vote for or against it. Let's have a vote next spring upon the commission plan, and then let the people have a chance to vote upon any charter that may be prepared.

Merely as a suggestion to Messrs. Stoner & Despain: Why not have Sunday ball games at the Epworth Assembly? That is, sell the tickets the day before and refuse to accept money at the gate on Sunday. Then pay the players double salaries for playing Saturday or Monday and let them play for the fun of it on Sunday. That would be going the Epworth assembly attractions one better, for we haven't been informed that any of the eminent lecturers refused to accept pay when they worked on Sunday. Think it over!

School is again in session, and a thousand or more children are cooped up in a high school building that is not only an architectural disgrace but a veritable fire trap. Every time you hear a citizen boasting about our splendid school system just walk him around to the corner of Fourteenth and N streets and ask him to take a look. Gosh!

The Rock Island will not elevate its tracks through the city because of the expense. Of course human life is not expensive. Under our present industrial system human life is the cheapest thing on the market.