

CURT COMMENT ON TOPICS OF COMMON INTEREST

The deaths of Arch Hoxsey and Moisant, the aviators, both on the same day, calls renewed attention to the progress of aviation. True the air machines have not yet been perfected, nor is it even approaching the commercial stage, but progress has been marked during the last two years. Those who are predicting that navigation of the air will never be accomplished are either the original skeptics concerning the telephone, the phonograph, the wireless and the X-ray, or the lineal descendants of such. The day is not far distant when navigation of the air will be as commonplace as navigation of the oceans.

The attitude of the wage earners of Lincoln towards the proposed city charter was fairly well evidenced last Sunday by the resolutions adopted by Lincoln Typographical Union. That organization went on record unanimously as being opposed to the proposed one-man power policy, coupled with the retention of a cumbersome councilmanic body. The printers demand either a commission form of government or a retention of the present form. That proposed charter bill will receive short shrift when it comes before the taxpayers of the city.

Police Commissioner Wappich of Omaha bemoans the fact that a lot of money is being lost to Omaha because the city isn't run on the wide-open basis. Perhaps a lot of contention in Omaha could be avoided by appointing to the fire and police board men who would enforce existing laws, regardless of their personal opinions concerning the goodness or badness thereof.

How long has it been since Nebraska has had a full-bearded governor? If memory serves rightly Governor Furnas was the last executive who wore a full beard, although Governor Crouse came mighty near it. Governor Savage wore a bunch of whiskers on his chin. Governors Sheldon and Shallenberger were minus hirsute adornment, and Governor Aldrich also is content to go without. Governor Boyd's mustache was his particular pride.

The "sob squad" found mighty small comfort in the executive chambers during Governor Shallenberger's term. He did not waste much time listening to sobbing appeals for executive clemency. Being a thorough man of business he made the hearing of applications for pardons a purely business affair, unbiased by personal appeals. As a result there have been no pardon scandals connected with the Shallenberger administration.

The Shallenberger administration has been above reproach in every way. There has been no breath of scandal connected with the management of any state institution; the deficiency claims will be far smaller than usual; the departments under the immediate supervision of the governor have been well conducted, and the retiring governor sees the state in far better condition than it was when he assumed the reins.

The Industrial Review issued by the State Journal on January 1 was not only a credit to that newspaper, but it made a remarkably good showing for the Capital City. The year 1910 was one of the best in Lincoln's history, and the Journal's review covered the facts in a most interesting and convincing manner.

What we would like to see is some method adopted whereby these big "January Clearing Sales" could be hung up until some time when we had the money to take advantage of them. But how'n thunder is a man with a big family to provide for at Christmas time going to have any money left over to go shopping with the first week in January?

"Be and the same is hereby repealed" should be the chief slogan of the legislature. Already we are suffering from an over supply of "Be it enacted."

Two years ago John Porsan of Chicago was working on a scaffold in a brewery. The scaffold fell, precipitating Porsan into a vat of beer, the beer being nine feet deep. Porsan was drowned. The other day his widow secured judgment for damages in the sum of \$8,000. The more you read this paragraph, the more you'll wonder.

What will probably be the last dancing party in the executive mansion for two years was held there Tuesday evening of this week, the occasion being a military ball and reception tendered by Governor and Mrs. Shallenberger to the governor's staff. The evening was delightfully spent by those permitted to be present.

During Mrs. Shallenberger's reign over the executive mansion she has achieved marked success as a hostess and the mansion has

been the scene of many pleasant and brilliant social functions. Time was when the executive mansion was looked upon as a private residence, but it is now admittedly more than that: As the "first lady of the state" Mrs. Shallenberger threw open the mansion on every possible occasion, and by her graciousness and wit she made herself deservedly popular. Mrs. Shallenberger, with equal grace and social diplomacy, increased the warmth of the mansion. Those who have been privileged to be guests at the mansion during its occupancy by Governor and Mrs. Shallenberger will always hold pleasant recollections of a gracious host and a charming hostess.

It has been variously suggested that the ball room in the mansion during Governor Aldrich's occupancy thereof be used for drying the washing, for a chapel, for a store room, etc. Governor and Mrs. Aldrich have their own peculiar views concerning social matters, which views are entitled to respect. Mrs. Aldrich will doubtless prove a gracious hostess, and those of us who have been permitted to enjoy the hospitality of the executive mansion can wish for her no greater honor than that of presiding over its social functions with the charming grace and skill shown by Mrs. Sheldon and Mrs. Shallenberger.

Governor Shallenberger and family will return immediately to Alma, where they will be warmly welcomed by the citizenship. We venture the prediction here and now that at the first opportunity afforded to the people of Nebraska they will call the ex-governor back to official life. With a record as a chief executive that has no equal in the state's history, with the knowledge borne by the people that he was prevented from holding a second term by an alliance between the most vicious elements of the state, and knowing his splendid ability and his unswerving honor—knowing all these things the intelligent citizenship of this state will seize the first opportunity to again secure the services of Ashton C. Shallenberger, and next time to an office of even greater dignity, though of no greater importance, than the governorship.

The proposed abortion, alleged to be a city charter, has been most effectually squelched. The squelching process was presided over and managed by Charles W. Bryan, for which service he is entitled to the thanks of the voters of Lincoln, and especially the wage earners. Mr. Bryan has the right idea. The legislature should enact a law permitting every municipality to frame its own charter, subject only to constitutional limitations. What do the people of Omaha know about the wishes and desires of the people of Lincoln in the matter of municipal government, and vice versa? Under present conditions it would seem that each city is intent on forcing the other to accept something it does not want.

Lincoln wants a commission form of government, and those who sought to "stall it off" by framing up the ridiculous proposition that has just been squelched can not prevent it. There will be a bill drawn and presented providing a charter for Lincoln that will mean a real commission system. It will not be drawn by the representatives of corporations on the one side, nor by dreamers on the other. It will be drawn by men who favor the commission plan, and whose object and aim is to give Lincoln what it wants in the best possible shape. There will be no fol-de-rol of joint committees; it will be drawn by hard-headed men who know what they want, know what the people want, and know how to draft a charter.

In his valedictory message Governor Shallenberger recommended an increased appropriation for the department of labor. The recommendation should be concurred in. It may not be generally known, but the manufactured products of Nebraska in 1910 amount to practically 70 per cent as much as the total agricultural production. It should be remembered, too, that the number of people earning a living upon farms in Nebraska is not as large as the number of people earning a living apart from the farms. Nebraska is growing as a manufacturing state. It has upwards of 30,000 people working in mills, shops and factories, many of them women. These people are entitled to as much protection as the hogs and cattle of the state. There are other thousands working in stores and offices, and these, too, are entitled to protection. We have laws providing for the protection of cattle from infection, but no laws providing for the safeguarding of machinery or the protection of workers in our mills and factories. We spend thousands in holding chicken shows and cattle shows and bee shows and all sort of thing—all necessary and serving excellent purposes—but not a cent is allowed whereby men and women who work for wage get together to discuss plans for their own social and financial betterment.

We believe in farmers' institutes. They are a grand thing. But while the state is paying for holding farmers' institutes why not also pay for "wage earners' institutes," and give the men and women who work for wage a chance to learn how they may better their condi-