

A SHORT SKETCH

OF Hon. Geo. H. Hastings, Republican Nominee for Attorney General.

Crete, Vidette. Geo. H. Hastings, the republican candidate for attorney general was born on a farm, where his father and mother still reside near Merango, McHenry county, Illinois, on the 26th day of August 1849. Not consequent is 41 years old. His early years were spent upon the farm where he learned all the details of a farmer's occupation. He received a liberal education and in the fall of 1869 came to Lincoln, Neb., then a new village. The only means of conveyance to and from that place then being by stage. Here he found Seth Robinson, an old Illinoisan who at that time was attorney general of Nebraska, and at once went into his office as a student. He completed his study of the law which he commenced some time before coming west and in December, 1870, was admitted to the bar at Lincoln. He remained with Mr. Robinson and in his office until July, 1871, when he went to Pleasant Hill, Saline county, Neb., which has just been made the county seat of that county, formed a partnership with E. E. McGintie under the firm name of Hastings & McGintie and began the practice of law, and strange as it may seem that copartnership under the same name still exists. In 1877 the county seat of Saline county was removed from Pleasant Hill to Wilbur, and Mr. Hastings went to Crete, and Mr. McGintie to Wilbur and since then, while the firm has two offices, one in each town, the firm has remained as when first formed nineteen years ago. In the fall of 1873 Mr. Hastings was elected county judge of Saline county, which office he filled until January, 1875, when he resigned in order to take his seat in the house of representatives, to which office he had been elected in the fall of 1874. In the presidential campaign of 1878 he received the unsought nomination of presidential elector, almost unanimously, and at the election received more votes than any other elector upon the ticket, and for this reason he was chosen as messenger to carry the vote of Nebraska for Harrison and Morton to Washington, which he did. He has been the city attorney for the city of Crete almost since he has resided there in 1877, and he still fills that position. He is also serving his second term as county attorney of Saline county, to which position he was elected in 1883 by a practically unanimous vote of his county. He has the absolute confidence of every man with whom he is acquainted and his word, on any matter, is as good as a bond. He is six feet and a trifle over tall, straight and broad shouldered, weighs 190 pounds, dark complexion, dark hair, eyes and mustache. An easy, fluent speaker, good debater and rattling stumpster. In the second congressional district, where he is best known, he will command a large vote from the democratic and independent parties as well as a solid and enthusiastic support from the republicans.

Hastings is a splendid type of the broad-minded manly man. As a lawyer his ability and his integrity stand unchallenged. With a clientage extending all over the second congressional district, composed of all classes of people, he has the confidence of those who seek his services, the respect of the court and the good will and warm, personal friendship of the bar. He has none of that secretive cunning, that underhanded foxiness so much attributed to lawyers by those who are inclined to distrust the profession. His methods are open and fair, and his professional career will bear the daylight. It would be impossible for George Hastings to be the tool of any political ring or any corporation. His character and personal makeup are directly antagonistic to such an attitude, while he has none of that arrogance that make men tyrannical. When in power, he has a certain personal independence and manly bearing that make him a leader rather than a follower. He is popular with farmers, laborers and working men wherever known, being kind in his manner and generous to a fault. He will be elected attorney general, and a Nebraskaan will ever have cause to apologize for any act of George H. Hastings.

Augustus R. Humphrey, Republican, Nominee for Commissioner of Public Lands and Buildings. Augustus R. Humphrey, commonly called "Gus" by all who know him, is a native of Indiana, and thirty-two years of age. In early life he removed with his parents from Indiana to Davis county, Iowa, and assisted in opening up a farm in that then western country. Mr. H. remained on the farm up to the year 1882, but during the last six years of farm life he spent the fall and winter in teaching and going to school. In '81 he finished the course of study at the S. I. N. at Bloomfield, Iowa, and in 1882 graduated from the law department of the state university of Iowa. In 1883 he taught school in One county, Nebraska, and in 1884 entered the practice of law.

He has the entire confidence of the whole community in which he resides, and is regarded as a successful practitioner and business man. Commencing life as he did on the farm, and following it until recent years, he is in a position to know the wants and needs of the laboring classes. Always a great student and a close observer, he has that other qualification necessary to make a good commissioner for a great state, viz: The inclination to carry into effect what he believes to be just and equitable and right between man and man and between the people and the corporations. In Custer county, where he is widely and generally known, he will receive the hearty support of both the democratic and independent party, while not a republican will scratch the commissioner because Gus is there. His interests and sympathies have been with the laboring classes, and whatever he could do at any time to assist the weak as against the stronger, has been done with a hearty good will.

THE RATE QUESTION.

An All Absorbing Topic to the People of Nebraska.

What it Costs to Parallel a Road Should be the Basis for Fixing Freight Rates.

Progress Has Been Made.

Speech of Judge O. P. Mason delivered at Broken Bow, Custer county. I will address myself briefly first to the railroad rate question, that is transportation. Second, the finance question as it concerns the laboring classes of the people. Let me say at the opening that while all things are rapidly sinking into that mysterious night of death that must inevitably envelop the whole human family, there yet remain certain considerations which survive the ravages of time. These are the united efforts of communities, political, moral and social, for the betterment of the conditions of the human family; and it is well in this republic where facilities for free government and the hope of the people depend upon the intelligence of the masses that these great political questions should be calmly considered with judgment, with discretion, with wisdom, and so ordered that our children may reap, where they have not sown, gather where they have not strewn, and enter into our toils preserved and maintained by the fabric of free institutions, intelligently and morally guided.

At the outset of this transportation question, let me address myself and appeal to the intelligence of the farmer class, of the laboring class, and all classes, and let me eliminate all pretext and fraud of the single movement—the cry that goes up from every demagogue in the land, from every socialist in the land, from every man who lays his sacrilegious hand on the fabric of human progress to pull it down. And preceding that question, let me say this to you: You are householders; you have families. In those families you have a class of help. Now, did one of you ever have a man or woman in your family who was simply a fault finder, finding fault with everything, but doing nothing to remedy the evils of which they complained, and did you not feel like kicking them out of the back door? [Laughter.]

Now, does this alliance party do anything but find fault? Do they offer any remedy? Are they simply fault finders in the family, offering no remedy? Let me meet one question: I have heard it suggested by candid men, by honest men. I have heard it on the street today, they say your railroad stocks are watered. For instance, take the Union Pacific, it is in debt one hundred thousand dollars per mile. Now the farmers say: "That effects me." Stop a moment my friend. Does it matter how much they owe or what they have watered their stock? On what should rates be based? On the number of dollars it would take to parallel the road or roads today, and that alone, is what they ought to be permitted by the interstate commerce commission and by the state commission, on that alone should they be permitted to earn four or five per cent interest. If that rule is applied, does it make any difference to you what they value their road at—whether it is one hundred millions or one million? When you have got the number of dollars that it would take to parallel the road, if it is twenty-five thousand dollars a mile or twenty thousand dollars a mile; that is the basis upon which rates should be made.

One other suggestion. Let me appeal to any one of these fault finders and appeal to you, and say, is not that so? If it is not, hold up your hands, do not go around to your neighbors lying about it hereafter. [Laughter and applause.] In the discussion before the state board of transportation, when Mr. Kimball said we would state a mile, some gentleman of that state board of transportation said what difference does it make to you that is not the question. It is your money, your dollars will it take to parallel your road? If it is \$25,000 or \$20,000, that is the basis on which the railroad should pay you. Now, taking that into account, does not that end the controversy and is not this watered stock, or inflated business, all temporary? It matters not if I have a farm in Nebraska that is worth, say, half a million dollars, and a man wants to buy it and gets it at a rent on the farm, say, \$4,000, is he hurt if in my opinion I swell out like a hissing air balloon, it is worth four millions? It is with the railroad question.

Let me address one other question. I desire your attention to plainly and wearily pilgrim. The farmers have been struggling against ruinously low prices for their product for several years past and against high freight rates and are a long distance from the market. Your present law, establishing the state board of transportation, so far as the regulation of local rates is concerned, is all that could be desired; and it is simply a question of its efficient administration. The commission or board should be elected by the people instead of dividing up responsibility, as at the present time there is a growing sentiment in this country, unfavorable to the accumulation of enormous fortunes in single hands, and as a reverse of this, is a disposition on the part of those who are possessed of enormous fortunes, or who are in the way to acquire them, to strengthen themselves against the feeling, hostile to them. This cannot be done in any way so effectively as by multiplying the holders of enormous fortunes, and enlisting the zeal of their followers and combining against the people. By their influence in the press, in the national and state legislatures, in the courts, in official life, in political parties, and in primary conventions, in solid ramifications, in literature, in the pulpit, in social life, we see developed a body of opinions which comes to be a part of the state and national life, and the sentiment which aims to dislodge it is reprobated and denounced as communism or revolution, to be suppressed and crushed.

The source of this spirit is not in the walks of commerce as they have been known, mercantile banking, manufacturing, but in that relation which a class bears to a republic wherein the public has no alternative but to accept the offices of this class in such spirit and such manner as it chooses to render them, unchecked by competition which governs ordinary commercial relations, and so amenable only to public sentiment, which is now groping its way to find out how to assert itself effectively. Now, gentlemen, where does that public opinion, which is seeking to assert itself, eventually find its most efficient co-workers? You are to decide. You have heard what Mr. Dodge said about the republican party—its legislation in that direction. I might pause here and read to you many pages as to what they have done. But it is for you to decide at the polls. It is for you to decide whether your neighboring fields and say whether you find an efficient agent to accomplish these results in the republican party; finding its great supporters in Grant, in Abraham Lincoln, in Seward, in Coghling and the great writers of the present age; or do you find that efficient agent in such demagogues as Van Wyck, Kem and the balance of these men?

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Railroad transportation, telegraph and telephone transportation in connection with the enormous landed interests, which go with the former, are the chief objects toward which reform legislation is now directed. My faith in the future of this country is unshaken and knows no limit. God has watched over and guarded and guided its counsels in peace and in war and overruled all for good. He was with the nation at Monmouth, Saratoga and Yorktown, at Wilmington, Lookout Mountain, and Appomattox. He was with the counsels of the nation in its financial struggle after the war and through the dark days of 1873. And when we look back all has been overruled for good. Legislation on the subject of railroad rates has made progress and in the interest of the people and not to the injury of the railroad. Progress has been made. That the movement against railroads should come, was inevitable. When first granges were formed, the purpose of the organization was to render the farmer's home attractive; and secondly making farming attractive; as a means to this end, they sought to diminish the expenses and one of the most important elements was the cost of getting goods to the market. It was thus that they became interested as an organization in the question of transportation and of railroad control. Their utterances on this matter were moderate. It was gradually they became instruments of popular agitation. The first tangible result was reached in Illinois. The constitutional convention of 1870 made an important declaration concerning the state control of rates, on the basis of which, a law was passed in 1871, establishing a system of maxima. The law was pronounced unconstitutional by Judge Lawrence. The result was, he immediately failed of a re-election on that ground, alone. The defeat of Judge Lawrence showed the true significance of the farmer's movement. They engaged in securing what they felt to be their rights, and they were not willing that any constitutional barrier should be erected to defeat their will. They had reached the point where they were dangerously near revolution, when they did not pass the point. The Illinois law of 1873 avoided the issue, raised by Judge Lawrence against that law, in 1871. Instead of directly fixing a maxima, it provided that rates must be reasonable, and further provided for a commission to fix reasonable rates. Similar laws were passed by Iowa and Minnesota almost immediately afterwards. The legislature of Wisconsin went even further, fixing by the so-called Potter law, the rates on different classes of roads at a figure which proved unremunerative. The railroads made a vain attempt to control these regulations in the courts. They were defeated again and again, and finally, in 1877, the supreme court of the United States sustained the constitutionality of the Potter law. But a more powerful force than constitutional, or statutory law, or the decision of the courts was working against this system of regulation of fixing rates by statute. This was the power of the laws of trade and commerce. The laws of trade and commerce could not be violated with impunity. The effect of the law was not sharply felt in Wisconsin. The law fixing a maximum rate and reducing railroad rates to the basis which competitive points enjoyed left nothing to pay fixed charges. In the second year of its operation no Wisconsin railroad paid a dividend, and only four paid interest on their railroad bonds. Railroad construction in the state ceased and the facilities on existing roads could not be kept up. Foreign capital refused to invest in Wisconsin and such as could withdraw their capital from the state. The development of the state was sharply checked. The very men who most favored the law found themselves heavy losers. These points were plain to every one. They formed the gist and theme of the governor's message at the beginning of 1878. The very men who passed the law in 1874 hurriedly repealed it after two years' trial. We should at this time heed the lesson taught by this experience. An legislation which seriously affects railroad profits, reduces them below cost and fixed charges, will check the increase of railroad facilities. Such increase of facilities is essential to the development of any growing American community. If such a community passes laws hostile to the railroad interests, it soon feels the evil effects. The Potter law of Wisconsin is an instance on this point. This lesson should admonish us at this time. The great reduction in rates caused a reduction of profits. This stopped the growth and construction of railroads. The growth of the state was thereby brought to a standstill. The very interests which were most clamorous for the law in 1874, were most urgent for its repeal in 1876.

The spring flies up with a force proportionate to that which has pressed it down. The pendulum which is drawn far in one direction swings as far in the other. The joyous madness of intoxication in the evening is followed by the languor and nausea on the morning, and so it is in politics. It is the sure law that every excess shall generate its opposite. The man or political party does not deserve the name of statesman who strikes or legislates without calculating the effects of the rebound. It is too often that such calculation is infinitely beyond the authors of popular agitation. Be sure if you go to extremes, to the crippling of the railroad interests of the state by reducing rates

below actual cost of transportation and fixed charges, the reaction will be sure to come. It will strike hardest the agricultural and industrial interests of the state. It will create a reign of terror, capital will leave the state and will cease to come here. The history of Wisconsin from 1874 to 1876 will be repeated. On the other hand, a rate too high or an extortionate rate brings the same calamity upon the agricultural and industrial classes. In the medium, safety and prosperity lies. All our through freight is subject to a long haul. In other words we are at the end of a long haul, and nine tenths of our tonnage is carried over this long haul. The problem is comparatively new in the United States. It is old in Europe and the result of European experience has been to give up trying to prohibit pools and discrimination, at the same time. The question presented to the state board of transportation in Nebraska is, how can the law be most effectively applied or administered to benefit the public without detriment or injury to the railroad interests of the state. This can be best accomplished in my judgment by using the power over local rates to crowd down through rates to the lowest point practicable. The great virtue of the law is not in the use of the power it confers, but in the potential power to exercise the authority, if necessary. I have been willing to pay a comparative high local rate in Nebraska, if thereby we could secure low through, interstate rates, and for the following reasons: First—We pay about ten dollars a through or interstate to every one dollar in local rates. A cut, therefore, of one per cent per hundred pounds on the through or interstate rates is equal in benefit to the people of the state to a cut of ten cents on the hundred pounds on the local; and I ought to add in this connection that the through or interstate tonnage is largely more than ten times as great as the local tariff. It was for these reasons that I was willing to compromise with the railroads and accept a cut off, from three to five cents, per hundred, on through rates or interstate rates and reduce local rates to the B. & M. local tariff. The B. & M. have always had the lowest local tariff in the state; and three years ago when it was my duty to deal with these matters, the B. & M. local tariff was fully twenty-five per cent lower than any road in the state, and the locals on all roads in the state were reduced, by the voluntary actions of the railroads, from three to five cents per hundred pounds. The people of the state under this arrangement saved from one and a half million to two and a half million dollars annually in amount paid on freight, and it was further stipulated at that time with the roads, interested, that they would use their influence and power to crowd down through or interstate rates, and upon their doing so, locals would not be seriously disturbed. This arrangement, so far as I am advised, has been fairly well carried out by both railroads and the State Board of Transportation. I illustrate the situation of Nebraska as compared with the shipments to other states. The figures are for the distance of five hundred, five hundred and fifty, six hundred, six hundred and fifty, seven hundred, seven hundred and fifty, and eight hundred miles from the basing point of making rates, and the points are supposed to be equal distances from Chicago. Let me say in this connection that we run about five hundred miles from Chicago and we strike Nebraska. So in this table I start at the five hundred mile point. Then I take three points; one in Dakota, one in Kansas, one in Nebraska, and give the rates to the points: Onasika, Wisconsin, that is for five hundred miles—I will skip and come down to six hundred miles, Lonsdale, Minnesota; Fairmont, Nebraska and Council Grove, Kansas. The distance of each of these points is six hundred miles from Chicago. I will only give the figures in a few instances. First class from Chicago to Fairmont is \$1.05; Lonsdale, the same distance, \$1.22; and to Council Grove, Kansas, \$1.19. Now in first class—I do not suppose many of the audience understand this classification. But in a general way, first class freight includes drugs and all bulky wares such as baskets; it includes fruit breakable articles that are likely to break. But in the fourth class is where the farmer is interested. It is there his sugar is shipped, his coffee, his tea, his groceries, his flour and his hardware and nearly everything comes in the fourth class. I say that by way of explanation. And they give you a rate six hundred miles on four points, Lonsdale, Minnesota, \$1.57; Fairmont, Nebraska, \$3; Council Grove, Kansas, \$5.

Now, you observe from the above figures, Nebraska enjoys a cheaper rate for the same distance than that given to Kansas, Minnesota or Dakota because the volume of traffic is much greater in Nebraska, than in sparsely settled Dakota; but the volume of traffic in Kansas and Minnesota, and the population to the miles of railroad compare favorably with Nebraska. Now, I do not say that there is no cause for complaint at the present time, but I do desire to say before I close that the board of transportation has saved the state at least two and a half million dollars every year. A greater saving is possible under the exigencies, it may be true, but it is possible you may go as far as they went in Wisconsin and the reaction will come, fatally crippling the progress of the state, and crippling your hands by crowding down prices. And, let me say further, that while you hear these men complain of some state officers, Mr. Benton, for instance, I can say this for him; he has a great many legal questions come before him, the registration of bonds, and a great many others, and so far in his past official life for two years he has never made a mistake. They have gone to the supreme court in some ten cases, the attorney general against him, and in every instance his decision has been maintained. He is a young man, but he has efficiently discharged his duties. The reason I name him especially is because they seem to be making an especial fight on him—that is, the granger element as I hear it—but no more efficient officer has ever occupied a place in the state.

Now, in conclusion, the hopes of this state in my judgment are in the republican party. Turn to the state of your condition compared with that of Kansas, which is endowed just as richly with a school fund as your state, and which has her six hundred thousand more people than yours, her school fund amounts to the sum of Nebraska, three millions;

your school fund amounts to the sum of Nebraska, three millions; and more than forty millions in lands. Whose hand has the children that rich inheritance of the whole hand, except the hand of the republican party? You never have had a defalcation among the republican officers of the state. Show me the place where the democrats have had the power, either in city, county or state, that they do not have two defalcations a year. Now, I say this not to traduce or abuse anybody, but to call upon you, by the memory of the past, by the memory of memory of the past, by the memory of a Garfield, by the memory of a Grant, by the memory of a Lincoln, by the memory of the hosts of dead that fell upon the battlefield, to stand by these divested blessings, that have been transmitted through the agency of the republican party. And not only stand by them, but go into the field and work for them, now, when the grand old party is assailed by those who have been and ought now to be her friends, and her with them, hand to hand, upon the morrow next, you wrest victory for the state and the national ticket. [Applause.]

First Congressional District Republican Platform. We, the republicans of the First congressional district of Nebraska, in convention assembled at Plattsmouth this 23rd day of September, 1890, do adopt the following as our platform: 1. We reaffirm our adherence to the principles so clearly and strongly enunciated in the republican national platform of 1888, and in the resolutions adopted at the republican state convention recently held at Lincoln, Nebraska. 2. We cordially endorse the administration of President Harrison and congratulate the country upon the wise and able manner in which he has discharged the duties of his high office. 3. We approve of such methods and rules as are now existing, or which may hereafter be adopted by the United States or houses of representatives, as will permit the transaction of the legislative business of the nation. While we favor a full and fair presentation and consideration of the views of a minority, we are opposed to the methods and tactics whereby obstructionists seek to prevent the transaction of public business. A majority must be permitted to legislate for it alone is responsible to the country. 4. On all economic questions we favor independence of action by Western representatives in the interest of the great and growing Northwest. We cordially approve and endorse the course of our representative in congress, the Hon. William J. Connell, and cordially commend him to the voters of the First congressional district of Nebraska as worthy of their support. We especially commend him to independent voters as well as to all republicans in the district, for his independent advocacy of free and uniform coinage of silver, and for his able and successful efforts in securing the passage of the "eight hour" bill and other measures in the interest of workmen, laborers and mechanics. 5. We most heartily approve the action of the republicans of the present congress in passing so many measures in the interests of the agricultural and laboring classes; prohibiting trusts; providing for meat inspection; endowing agricultural colleges; preventing the fraudulent branding of farm products; providing for the purchase of 4,500,000 ounces of silver each month, thereby greatly increasing the supply of the circulating medium; declaring that eight hours shall constitute a day's work for all laborers, workmen and mechanics employed by the government or government contractors; and providing for the protection of free labor against contract labor and alien contract labor. 6. We condemn the democratic doctrine of free trade, under the operation of which thousands now engaged in manufacturing, mining, and like industries must be driven from their present occupation and compelled to indulge in agricultural pursuits, thereby unduly increasing our farm products and destroying a remunerative market therefor. 7. We believe that a home market with millions of consumers engaged in the various industries is the best market for the world and for any perishable articles the only available market. 8. We favor the most radical reduction of the tariff possible consistent with the protection of American industries and free American labor; such reduction to be made as far as possible on the necessities of life and articles in common use. At the same time we favor such a tariff upon the imported products of low-priced foreign labor, fairly and justly distributed as will protect the interests of American wage workers without adding to their burdens. 9. We most heartily endorse the system of reciprocity in trade, proposed by the Hon. James G. Blaine, as a fitting supplement to the republican theory of protection. 10. We approve the action of the present republican congress in restoring to the public domain over eight million acres of land heretofore granted to railroads. We are opposed to the granting of any part of the public domain to corporations. 11. We favor such wise national legislation in the regulation of commerce between states as will prevent extortion by common carriers and secure for the producer the transportation of his products to all markets at a reasonable and equal rate, and favor the legislation in favor of any class, interest or section. 12. We declare our approval of the just and consistent republican policy of allowing generous pensions to dependent and disabled union soldiers, and as against all democratic promises and pretensions. We proudly recall the fact that all important pension legislation has been placed on the statute books by republicans. We favor the enactment of such additional pension legislation as will fulfill every pledge made by a loyal people to the defenders and preservers of our country. 13. We cordially endorse the bill introduced in congress by Hon. W. J. Connell for the location of a United States branch mint within the limits of the state of Nebraska. Since there is a general demand for more coinage and the present capacity of the mints is known to be too limited, and as we are in favor of extending foreign trade through reciprocity between this and other countries, and Omaha furnishes one fourth of the silver required by the United States treasury department, we would respectfully ask congress to pass the Connell bill in order to provide for the necessary demand for gold and silver coinage.