

JOHN N. BALDWIN SUCCESSFUL ATTORNEY AND ORATOR

Son of Council Bluffs Who Rose to National Fame Through Native Ability and Who Achieved Great Success in His Chosen Field of Corporation Law and State Politics

JOHN N. BALDWIN was not spoiled by having well-to-do parents, but in spite of what is generally recognized as a handicap to rising young men, he has succeeded in forging to the front rank in his profession, and today is recognized as one of the most able men of the American bar. As head of the legal department of the Union Pacific railroad, having been appointed as general solicitor of that road in January, 1906, when W. R. Kelly resigned, Mr. Baldwin has been a most busy man during the last few years. Legislatures in the various states through which the Union Pacific railroad passes enacted numerous laws for the regulation of the railroads which affected every department of a railroad, and the head of every department had to work under new conditions. These men have not made a new move for two years without first asking the advice of the legal departments of the road, so it can easily be seen what a busy life the general solicitor of the Union Pacific led since the last legislatures were in session.

John N. Baldwin is a most interesting and agreeable personality. Nature endowed him with qualifications for mingling with his fellow men. He is a big, wholesome, jolly fellow, a finished scholar, an eloquent lawyer and a polished gentleman. Fifty years ago he was born in Council Bluffs, Ia. His father was Caleb Baldwin, one of the ablest lawyers in Iowa and a man of national reputation. John N. entered the law department of the State university of Iowa when quite young and graduated with high honors before he had attained his majority. As soon as the required number of years had rolled around he was admitted to the bar and immediately began the practice of his profession in Council Bluffs.

Not long afterward he was one of the leading lawyers of the city and was attorney for the leading corporations located or doing business there. By his extensive reading and continuous study, as well as by his natural endowment, he came to be recognized as one of the best speakers of the bar. As such he was called upon to nominate Senator Allison as a candidate for the presidency in 1896, and did so in a memorable speech. He has also been called upon to speak on various other important occasions.

Chosen for His Eloquence

Four years ago, when E. H. Harriman wanted an eloquent man to deliver an address on behalf of the Union Pacific system at the meeting of the International Railway congress held in Washington, D. C., he chose John N. Baldwin. Leaders of the operating and construction departments from all parts of the globe were present on this occasion.

Until two years ago, when he moved with his family to Omaha to occupy the beautiful home of the late J. M. Woolworth, Mr. Baldwin had always lived in Council Bluffs. He was married in 1878 to Miss Lily G. Holcomb of Cedar Rapids. They have two children, a daughter, Miss Genevieve Baldwin, a graduate of Vassar, who is now engaged in artistic book binding, and a son, John N. Baldwin, Jr., a graduate of St. Paul's school at Concord, N. H., and who is now attending Harstrom's school at Norwalk, Conn.

Although he never held public office and never aspired in that direction, Mr. Baldwin found time to take an active interest in politics, both national and state. He was always a strong republican and was always identified with what was known as the Gear faction in Iowa politics, having taken an active part both times when Senator Gear was elected. Incidentally, Mr. Baldwin is what is termed almost exclusively a corporation lawyer. The firm of Wright & Baldwin was the attorneys in Council Bluffs for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad and also the Burlington, as well as for the franchised public utility corporations, including the gas and electric light company, the water company and the street railway company.

Twenty-nine years ago Mr. Baldwin entered the employ of the Union Pacific as its local attorney at Council Bluffs and remained with that company continuously ever since. His territory and jurisdiction gradually expanded until in 1888 he was made general attorney of that road for Nebraska and Iowa and in conjunction with Judge W. R. Kelly, then general solicitor, had joint supervision of the work of the legal department for the entire system, covering seven states.

As an orator Mr. Baldwin has achieved a national reputation. He first attracted outside attention through his speech as temporary chairman of the Iowa state republican convention in 1894. In 1896 he presented the name of Senator Allison at the republican national convention at St. Louis and in 1900 he was nominated as elector-at-large on the Iowa ticket and stumped Iowa and other western states for McKinley in 1896 and 1900.

Notable Oratorical Success

Five years ago, in February, Mr. Baldwin won two notable oratorical successes which added to his national reputation. At the invitation of the Iowa State Bar association and the State university he delivered the Marshall day address on the 100th anniversary of the installation of John Marshall as chief justice of the United States supreme court. Judge John F. Dillon, who also delivered a similar address before the New York State Bar association at Albany, pronounced Mr. Baldwin's address as one of the ablest of the sixty delivered on that day in the United States.

On the 12th day of the same month he was the principal speaker at the annual banquet of the Republican club of the Borough of Manhattan, held at the Waldorf-Astoria. Speaking of that occasion, the New York Press said: "Mr. Baldwin differs from the conventional post-prandial speakers in his defiance of set rules and creation of new art. His vocabulary is little less than amazing in its diversity and originality. He employs no tricks of gesticulation. Virility is in his every period, and while the beginning of his speech did not indicate the strength that was to become manifest as he went on, his peroration was so perfect that the women in the boxes who had come to listen with languid interest were aroused to extraordinary enthusiasm as the 'Roscoe Conkling of the West' bowed and sat down."

It was in a crowd at Washington on the following day that Senator Doolittle took this little shot at the orator of the evening: "John, you got away with us fellows from Iowa in your little speech last night in three particulars. First, you were complimented by the New York Sun; second, Senator Dewey also spoke highly of it, and third, it was printed in full on the front page of the New York Tribune. This seems so strange, because that space has hitherto been devoted to valuable matter." So great a hit did Mr. Baldwin make on that memorable occasion that demands were made for his services from all over the country. The New York papers printed his speech in full, with his photograph, while simply giving passing notice to Senator Dewey and other notables on the program.

Mr. Baldwin was the leading attorney for the plaintiff in the famous suit of James Doyle against James F. Burns, the trial of which consumed more than a month in the federal court at Council Bluffs, and succeeded in securing a verdict of \$450,000, which is said to be the largest verdict ever returned in a damage suit in the United States. Mining property in Colorado of the value of over \$1,000,000 was involved, and it was a historic case. Counsel on the other side were Senator Patterson, ex-Governor Thomas and Congressman Smith.

John N. Baldwin is a big man, not so tall, but big in other ways. His face is massive, alert and clean-shaven and surmounted by a mass of wavy, brown hair, which sets off his high forehead. He has a powerful, deep and splendid voice, thoroughly modulated and entirely under control. While not necessarily a believer that clothes help a man many times and that they are made to be worn, so he is always well dressed.

On the 9th of November, 1906, he was the principal speaker at the thirty-sixth reunion of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, held at Council Bluffs, his subject being, "General Grenville M. Dodge." This address made such an impression and was such an



JOHN N. BALDWIN.

admirable one that it was ordered reread at the reunion of that society in 1907.

Some of the passages of that tribute to General Dodge are beautiful word pictures. Here is one: "In this time of great national eminence, with happiness regnant in 20,000,000 American homes, with our astral emblem honored and respected throughout the world, with the seat of peace of both hemispheres by the Potomac, with a nation distinguished for its commerce, its wealth and its enlightenment, it is meet that we should pause in our onward flight to acknowledge with full hearts our love, our reverence, our boundless gratitude and obligation to and for our preserver and benefactor—the union soldier."

In speaking of General Dodge's work in the construction of the Union Pacific railroad, he said: "President Lincoln, fully appreciating the genius and indomitable will of General Dodge, immediately after the war called him to the task of construction of the Union Pacific railroad. He turned his face, recently bathed in the smoke of musketry, toward the wilderness, the Rockies and the great American desert, and he surveyed and supervised the construction of that road, then a military necessity, now one of the great railway systems

which move the commerce of the world. He had no maps or charts to afford him information of the topography of the country. The territory traversed was designated in text books as a wilderness dedicated by nature to be the eternal habitation of the savage and the buffalo.

General Dodge's Achievement

"To emphasize the achievement of General Dodge in building the Union Pacific, I speak authoritatively, officially and with a full knowledge of the facts, when I say that the present management of the Union Pacific, for the express purpose of shortening the line between Omaha and Ogden and bettering it, if it were possible, had surveys and revisions made and expended millions of dollars in eliminating gradients, curvatures and tunneling mountains, with no limit as to time or means, with full knowledge of the topography of the country, with all modern appliances, with the services of a corps of the ablest engineers, yet it only succeeded in reducing the distance less than forty miles. And this reduction in mileage was due largely, in fact, almost entirely to changes in gradients and curvatures which were

rendered impossible to General Dodge by reason of lack of funds."

Mr. Baldwin then paid this tribute to General Dodge: "To General Dodge these were years tenacious with stress and strain, heavy with unremitting toil, thrilling in danger, but still he pushed ever forward and onward with the confidence of a conqueror. He was a man of judgment and common sense, who spared nothing and wanted everything; a man who believed in action and knew the value of every moment of time. And above all, my friends, actuated by the impulse to better his country, himself and his descendants, he toiled with those who overcame this wilderness and converted this 'Great American Desert' into a 'Garden of Benefits.'"

His address ended with this beautiful sentiment: "And to you, remaining members of the Army of the Tennessee, now in the twilight of life, I offer the sentiment which pervaded the soul of the Cumaean Sibyl when she presented her books to Tarquinus Priscus, 'As you grow fewer in numbers you become dearer to our hearts.'"

Tribute to the West

In his speech on "West of the Missouri River," delivered before the International Railway congress, Mr. Baldwin paid this tribute to the railroads and the men who built them in the west: "The greatest single factor or agency in the development of this country and the accomplishment of these results was the construction and operation of railroads. The builders of these railroads were men who employed their genius to find reason and glory in matter. Through these years, tense with their stress and strain, heavy with their unremitting toil, thrilling in their danger, they pushed forward and permitted nothing to check them until they touched the shores of the Pacific. They were men who believed in an age of utility and usefulness and who could not only construct railroads, but build cities, dismember mountains, yoke electricity and steam and direct them both as tireless and obedient servants." In closing he said: "Let us search unweariedly for the truth and in so doing we should be willing, if necessary, to walk alone the stone-strewn path of right, rather than march with triumphant hosts along the broad highway of error."

Friends of Mr. Baldwin like to tell of his most notable case which was tried many years ago. An Iowa firm was suing the Milwaukee railroad, which Mr. Baldwin represented, for \$95,000 for a fire loss from a spark from a locomotive. The case wore on until the final issue seemed to be a question of veracity between Mr. Baldwin's chief witness, who was an engineer, and several witnesses for the other side, some of whom wore G. A. R. buttons. The case was ready for the arguments and the plaintiff's attorney, Colonel Charles E. Clark, a noted Iowa lawyer, who also wore an army badge, worked on the sympathies of the jurors, many of whom also wore the army emblem. When he had finished telling the story of the battle of Antietam most of the jurors were in tears and Mr. Baldwin said himself he could see the finish of the case. Night came and the court adjourned until morning, when Mr. Baldwin would close the case.

Gloom Vanishes in Victory

As Mr. Baldwin was sitting, enshrouded in gloom, around the hotel that evening, all hope gone, the engineer came along and asked Mr. Baldwin what he thought of the chances. Mr. Baldwin replied that he thought all those soldier buttons would be too much for his case and that he had about given up hope. The engineer casually remarked that he was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, but never wore his button. Mr. Baldwin began to question the engineer, and he told this story: Many years before he had come to this country, a lad of 16, carrying a Bible his mother had given him. Not finding work, he enlisted in the union army, and at the battle of Antietam was wounded. A rebel soldier was also wounded and the two lay together. Thinking the Yankee was dead, the southerner took the Bible from the knapsack of the northerner and left the field. Years afterward the southerner ran across that Bible and he thought that the relatives of the supposedly dead soldier might be alive and that they would like the keepsake. He advertised in several papers for the relatives of the man whose name he found in the Bible. The engineer saw that advertisement and answered it, getting back his Bible.

"Why did you not tell me this before?" cried Mr. Baldwin, all enthusiasm, for he now saw an opening and the light ahead. He instructed the engineer to be sure to be on hand at the trial in the morning and to wear his G. A. R. emblem. He left the engineer and started to retire, when he met his associate counsel, who asked him where he was going. When told he was about to retire the other asked him why he did not sit up and study out some answer to make to the noted lawyer's argument. As he lay in bed that night Mr. Baldwin thought out what he would say to the jury on the morrow. Those who have heard John N. Baldwin will know how he could tell the story of that engineer to the jury. He in turn brought tears to the eyes of the jurors, and when the verdict was returned for the railroad company those present well knew that it was the oratorical powers of Mr. Baldwin in telling that story of the engineer to the jury which had won the case. He had told another story of the battle of Antietam.

"Trade Excursions" Among Omaha's Big Factories

COMMERCIAL TRAVELETTES are to be a new feature of the business and industrial life of Omaha which promise to cultivate personal acquaintance of business men as well as more than a superficial knowledge of the "other fellow's business."

To know how Omaha was able to report that the manufactured products of the city were valued at \$22,000,000 and the wholesaling business amounted to \$8,045,000 during the year of 1907 the Commercial club has devised a novel means in the local "trade excursions," the first of which was given during the last week.

The figures look "awful" big when they are reported by the newspapers and spread over the advertising matter of the Commercial club and other organizations each year. They are almost too big to believe, but inquiry as to the output of some of the factories and the business of some of the wholesale houses verifies them annually in a general way. The first visit of 300 business-men to one of the large dry goods houses, a clothing factory and a plumbing supply house was a strong argument in favor of the figures presented January 1, when it was reported that the wholesale dry goods houses of the city sold \$2,575,000 worth of goods; the clothing factories made \$300,000 worth of "ready to wear" goods and the wholesale plumbing business of the city amounted to more than \$1,500,000 during the year of 1907.

Now the Commercial club proposes to show as many of its members as will go on the excursions where every dollar's worth of business is done without looking at the private profit sheets and detailed statements furnished the directors and heads of the many wholesale houses and factories. "Am I my brother's keeper," has been answered in the affirmative by E. A. Hinrichs, chairman of the entertainment committee of the club, who will have the excursions in charge. The business men propose to familiarize themselves with their "brother's" business to the extent that they will see and know what other business men are doing in the city of Omaha. The idea of the local trade excursion did not originate with the Omaha Commercial club as did the first trade excursion into the territory surrounding the great grain market. For a number of years the business men of Buffalo have been visiting the factories and warehouses in the city, and taking special trains and running out to

the busy suburbs and manufacturing towns near the city and from which the mercantile houses of Buffalo draw a large part of their supplies. The Buffalo idea spread. It did not need to meet with the favor of other cities before the Omahans tried it, and about as soon as an Omaha business man brought the news of the novel excursions of the city on the lakes, Commissioner Guild of the Omaha club interested the entertainment committee and Mr. Hinrichs knew a good thing when he heard about it.

The plan is to take an excursion every two weeks or at least once each month, and see every industry in Omaha and South Omaha, and hope to see an industry or two at "Ralston" before the trips are concluded. Then it is hoped others will come fast enough to keep the club busy going over the new industries.

As soon as the intention of the Commercial club was announced a score of invitations poured in to the commissioner. Here are some of the invitations already extended and which will be accepted in the most convenient form necessary for the excursionists to reach the places of business: Northwestern freight depot and terminals, Fairmont Creamery company plant, ice cream factory and buttermilk cellars. Plant of the American Smelting and Refining company, which refined \$47,400,000 worth of metals in Omaha last year. Union Pacific Railroad company's shops, where \$2,000,000 was expended last year in labor and materials for cars and locomotives. Breweries (to be accepted in July and August). Some of the other industries which the

business men will investigate consist in a factory where \$250,000 worth of whips are made each year; where mission and antique furniture comes from; the bag factory which makes \$1,600,000 worth of sacks and horse blankets, which are distributed almost from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strands; the humane horse cellars, which are so good that the government is buying them for the mules on irrigation work; the candy shops, which make \$1,200,000 worth of confectionery annually and are alleged to make \$2,000,000 worth of work for the dentists; the planing mills and furniture houses, which make \$100,000 worth of window sash and office furniture annually, and the new flouring mills, which produce the material for Omaha-made mamma bread.

Besides the factories, the wholesale houses will be visited. They include every possible line, from groceries to billiard tables and from agricultural implements to Merry Widow millinery. It is a good-natured but studious crowd of business men which makes the excursions, and the largest warehouses and factories are inspected thoroughly in hours. By showing 100 visitors through an establishment at once those who are honored with the visit save much time, as the large number goes through everything in less time than would be required to show one lone individual the ins and outs of the business house or factory. Employees are disturbed but once for the entire party, and usually not disturbed at all.

Besides the advantage gained by wholesale grocers, seeing how calico is stored and shipped, manufacturers of glass windows, learning how structural iron is made and handled and consumers learning something about where butter comes from, the plan will doubtless create a closer co-operation of the business men of Omaha, who are just approaching the



TRADE EXCURSIONISTS AT THE UNITED STATES SUPPLY COMPANY'S BUILDING.

(Continued on Page Four)