

## Nebraska's Busy Editors Will Meet in Omaha This Week



**S**EVERAL hundred Nebraska editors will make history in Omaha this week; in the doing of which, of course, they will be working at their ordinary trade. They are, individually and collectively, as busy and competent a bunch of everyday history-makers as the country affords.

Even some of the old prophets among the news gatherers and enlightened opinion molders of Nebraska have forgotten just when a Nebraska Editorial association was first formed. At present the official title is Nebraska Press association, and, as will be noted in the presentments of beaming faces scattered over this page, it can truly be said, in this particular case, "Handsome is that handsome does." The good editor is always doing the handsome thing for his town and for his subscribers—aye, even by his enemies, when life's fitful fever ceases.

Just to show that the editors of Nebraska in the earlier day, like their brethren of the modern time, were not very careful about preserving the history of their personal doings, M. A. Brown of the Kearney Hub writes:

"I have no knowledge of the date of organization of the State Press association, nor who its officers were." And yet Mr. Brown, while not a very old man, began in the business when quite young, and all men who knew him would naturally expect he could give day and date for anything and everything connected with the association. He is a bell wether of the flock, verily, and confesses that he has been attending the meetings of the editors since Centennial year. He remembers that the republican state convention was being held in Fremont in '74 and that Ross Hammond was not collector of customs at that time, although a bright and ambitious boy somewhere. "He must have been," says Brown, "for it takes a bright boy—a scintillator, in fact—to develop the man that can successfully run a high-class newspaper and correctly feel the pulse of politics at the same time."

Orators and Poets Encouraged.

Since the beginning "orations" have been features at the press meetings, and the late Fred Nye, once of the Fremont Tribune, was poet laureate for several years. A fat and mazy person named Blaxy, with a "de degree of 'Doc,'" holds the job now. He can't

sing for sour apples, but he composes like an ancient printer man who had accumulated all sorts of suday inspiration. The orations above mentioned are not very popular at the meetings nowadays. They used to be devoted, almost invariably, to "The Profession of Journalism," and were legitimately related to the effulgent oratory then thrilling the hearts of the American nation. Nowadays, the fellow that makes the hardest hit at these meetings is the mathematical prestidigitator who can show how a blank sheet of paper in the job room can be most handily earned into a live account on the books. Politics is strictly taboo, de trop and offensively perfligous at an editorial meeting, perhaps for the very good reason that it is the daily diet, in large part, of the editorial stomachs all the year round. It palls, oppresses and is anathema marasatha when the scribblers are out to give their hosts a good time in some particular city or town. Then they cast aside their dignity, lose their daily air of being tired of the wicked, unredemable world, and what they can't think of in the

way of jovial jinks is not to be grasped by human mind. Editors of the old days were professors of prose and poetry, indiscriminately, and many of the early presidents, like the late E. M. Correll of Hebron, used to read poems at the meetings. Ed Howe, the sage of the Atchison (Kan.) Globe, now raising prize potatoes in solemn seclusion, was once a member of the Nebraska Press association, when he ran a Globe at Falls City. It is related to his credit that he was always modest and sweet-tempered while a resident of Nebraska, before the gleeful idiosyncrasies of Kansas drove him to moralizing and money-making. He has been back to visit occasionally and he gets a glad hand when he comes, all intermediary relapses being promptly forgiven.

Billiard Spoiled One Convention.

It required a billiard and a small attendance to drive the Nebraska editors to printing their proceedings. This boost-your-own-business move began in

1888, when the meeting was held in Lincoln. A billiard which has taken its place alongside the big wind of Ireland raged mightily, and so many of the newspaper people failed to show up, the proceedings were printed to give them a second-hand treat. The custom has been continued ever since, but there is no "leave to print" privilege attached to membership. In defiance of the billiard a banquet was served in Lincoln for the attendants at the meeting that is still talked of by those who partook. The famous Patrick Egan was chairman of the reception committee, and B. B. Herbert, president of the national association, then of Minnesota, made an address. This year a Kansas man, with the appropriate name of Ploughie, is president of the National Editorial association, and he will make an address at the meeting next Tuesday morning.

Association Put "On Wheels."

The following year it was difficult to hold a meeting, so few showed up at the appointed time and

place. Then up rose the aforesaid M. A. Brown and said if the editors would meet in Kearney the next year and bring their wives, sisters, mothers and sweethearts they would be taken care of right, with everything free. In every detail Kearney made good. Then the determination was made to put the association "on wheels" and meet in a different city every year. Beatrice, Fremont and Columbus, among other towns, were entertained and edited by the editors, with successful conventions, and in 1894 the decision was reached to meet in Lincoln only in the "off" years, when the legislature was not in session to bring grief to the hearts of the writers.

York was blessed with the gathering in 1895, and Mr. Brown put the legend of the "Fourth Estate" into poetry at that session. In 1899 the pressmen came to Omaha for their annual session, and they came again in 1901 and in 1907. This year, at the high tide of their influence and membership, they have again chosen the metropolis, and, as will be seen a little later on, they are to be given a chance to show just how fast they can go.

It was the editors of the state who gave a decided boost to progressive legislation, at the Kearney meeting, in 1905. They declared for the direct primary, abolition of the free pass and a few other reforms that have since been made into law.

Officers and Committee Chairmen.

A. B. Wood of the Gering Courier, a former Omaha printer, is the present president of the association. Senator John M. Tanner is vice president; C. C. Johns of Grand Island, secretary-treasurer, and Annie Vio Gates of Blair, corresponding secretary.

The executive committee is made up of N. J. Ladd of the Wahoo Democrat, Ross Hammond of the Fremont Tribune, E. R. Purcell of the Broken Bow Chief, A. W. Ladd of the Albion News and E. W. McCullough of The Bee. C. W. Pool of the Tecumseh Journal-Tribune is chairman of the Memorial committee; Arthur C. Thomas of the Benson Times, chairman of the advertising committee, and H. G. Taylor of the Central City Nonpareil, chairman of the printing prize list committee.

Program of the Sessions.

Meetings during the three-day session here are to be held at the Masonic temple, at the Stock Exchange (Continued on Page Three.)

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



W. L. LADD - Wahoo    ROSS L. HAMMOND, Fremont    E. W. McCULLOUGH, Omaha    A. W. LADD, Albion    E. R. PURCELL, Broken Bow