

DENIES RIGHT TO REGULATE PRICES

Stock Yards Company Says It Loses Hundred Thousand Dollars a Year on Hay Sold at Yards.

Before Federal Judges Woodrough, Smith and Wade, attorneys for the Union Stock Yards company and the Nebraska State Railway commission Saturday argued the suit of L. B. Smith asking an injunction against the railway commission to prevent it from dictating the prices to be charged by the stock yards company for hay and other feed.

The plaintiff is a stockholder in the stock yards company and he is seeking to show that the law passed by the state legislature in 1907 giving the commission power to regulate stock yards is unconstitutional and discriminatory and that the rates now in effect for feed are confiscatory. These rates were filed by the stock yards company in 1911 at the request of the commission. The charge for hay is \$1 per hundred pounds.

Losses Money On Hay.

At the present time the stock yards company is paying \$18.50 to \$20.50 for hay and an additional \$2.01 to \$4.83 per ton for buying and serving the hay in the pens at the yards. Affidavits were read showing that about 2,000 tons of hay a month are fed at the Omaha stock yards and that the loss to the company under the present high prices of hay amounts to nearly \$100,000 a year.

The attorney for the state railway commission declared that the commission is ready and anxious to grant the stock yards company permission to increase the price of hay served in the stock yards, but that the stock yards company has made no application for permission to raise the price.

Denies Authority.

The stock yards company, on the other hand, is seeking to prove that the commission has no power to give or withhold permission to increase the price of hay or other feed sold at the yards. The only reason the company does not go ahead and increase the price in spite of the commission is the heavy penalty named in the law, ranging from \$10,000 fine to a prison sentence for each offense.

Former Attorney General Thompson, for the stock yards company, declared the railway commission's authority stops when the cattle are removed from the cars into the pens of the stock yards company, and that it has no power to dictate prices to be charged for feed.

Winstrom Baby Dies; Swallowed Peanut Shell

Eva G. Crandall, 2-year-old daughter of R. Crandall of Winstrom, Neb., died Friday at a local hospital from swallowing the shell of a peanut, over which she choked slowly to death. She swallowed it at Winstrom, Neb., and was immediately rushed to Omaha for a surgical operation, but died before it could be accomplished. The body will be forwarded to Winstrom for burial.

The Farmer, Food Production, Food Prices and War Profits

In your issue of September 7, Charles T. Neal, national food administration agent for Nebraska, comes out in a long tirade against the farmers who do not see fit to sell their wheat at the present time at prices fixed by the government. He characterizes the farmer not only as a "slacker," but an "alien enemy," seeking to aid Germany in its "war on the United States," etc., and etc. Why this sudden bust of pent up patriotism? The farmers are practically the only class of manual labor in the United States that have neither gone on a strike to force an advance in wages, and not only in wages, but change in working conditions. Why, then, is the farmer a criminal for doing just what not only the packing house employes, but the employees of protected industries, from the lumber mills of the northwest to the cotton mills and woolen mills of New England have done and are doing?

In a parallel column is a fervent appeal by the State Council of Defense, for the farmers, as a patriotic duty, to part with their wheat for less than the prices justified by the world's market. What has Mr. Neal then to say about the strikers at the stock yards, led by a member of this same Nebraska State Council of Defense? They are asking for an increase in pay for their labor, and stopping the food industries which are so very much needed by our army and our allies. No one has thought of calling them "alien enemies" or "slackers." What appeal has the Nebraska State Council of Defense made to these men, led by a member of this selfsame council of defense?

On the very day Mr. Neal was displaying his righteous wrath Mr. Hoover was before the National Live Stock conference seriously criticizing, if not condemning, the whole price fixing of foodstuffs, saying: "Everywhere in Europe price fixing (that is, naming of maximum prices) has failed. We have the fixing of wheat prices thrust upon us," etc. Had some Nebraska farmer with a foreign accent made the same remarks that Mr. Hoover made I suppose Mr. Neal would have asked for his arrest.

The newspapers and magazines for months have been filled with arguments to show that high prices of farm products must continue for years after the war. Mr. Hoover says what every intelligent, thinking man knows that this is not the case. He says: "If the war were to end suddenly, or if the submarines would be overcome, great stores of wheat would be released in Argentina, Australia and India, and the bottom would drop out of the market in this country. These three nations will soon have on hand enough wheat to feed the world, but shipping cannot now be had to transport it." In face of these facts, why should our farmers be expected to enthusiastically change their mode of farming and rush into unavoidable loss?

Mr. Neal is further quoted as saying "every bushel of seed put into the ground this fall, if followed by a normal season, means twenty to forty bushels added to our next season's supply." Nothing could be more absurd. It takes one and a half bushels of wheat seed to sow an acre; therefore, according to Mr. Neal's statement, the normal yield of wheat in Nebraska is from thirty to sixty bushels to the acre. The wheat yield

in Nebraska never averages over fifteen bushels an acre, and throughout the country it is seldom runs above twelve, more frequently below ten, bushels to the acre.

It is admitted by all, that the most serious problem today confronting ourselves and our allies is that of neither men nor munitions, but foodstuffs. The question is no longer what these foodstuffs shall cost, but shall we be able to produce them? Had restriction been put upon the prices and profits to manufacturers of war munitions in this country and in England, the war would have terminated unsuccessfully before this time. Of course, in those localities where wheat, during the last twenty years, has been a profitable crop, it will be sown and the acreage increased, but the possible increase of acreage in those localities is not equal to the enormously increased demand. If wheat to meet this demand is secured it will be because millions of farmers who have heretofore found wheat raising unprofitable in their localities will plant wheat in lieu of other crops heretofore grown. This they will not do unless there is a very great inducement offered, and this must be greater than \$2 per bushel for wheat. Farmers have found that the killing out of their wheat last winter was a blessing in disguise. One acre of corn planted to replace this is bringing 100 per cent more than a wheat crop would have brought at government prices.

It is claimed that wheat can be profitably produced at \$2 per bushel. It might also be said that munitions might be manufactured profitably at 75 per cent of the prices received by our munition factories during the last two years, but had the prices been restricted to 25 per cent the output of these factories would have been reduced 50 per cent.

On my farms I am paying \$2 a day for common labor, hired by the year. Neither on my Illinois nor Nebraska farms will wheat raising at \$2 per bushel one year with another be profitable at present prices of labor. But whether or not it is profitable is not the question. So long as other crops or labor in other directions is more profitable the wheat will not be raised.

Mechanics in the villages, in vicinities of my farms, third-class carpenters, plumbers and others are demanding \$4 a day for eight hours' work. Munition manufacturers and others are offering still better wages. As a result the farms were well stripped of labor, even before the draft law went into effect. I should have had five men on my farms to where I have three, but it is utterly impossible to get them now. Two out of three of my farm help have been drafted. Every farmer's son who enlisted in the army is worth two men than can be hired to take his place, even if they were obtainable.

The drought, which was so destructive to the corn and pastures of half of Iowa and more than half of Illinois, enables the same help to accomplish 50 per cent more in the harvest fields in this year than they would have been able to accomplish had the weather conditions been normal, which would have suspended their work from one to three days every week during the month of August. But for this millions of bushels of grain would have, for want of labor,

"MASSAGE, SIR? HAIR TONIC? SHAMPOO? HAIR SINGE?"—He may be a good barber, but he isn't a real barber; he is just helping out a brother soldier at training camp



A "ONCE OVER" IN CAMP

they have during the last three years. Labor of all classes, with the exception of the farmers, have never received such large remuneration. The profit during the three years of this war thus far accruing to the farmer has not offset his increased living and operating expenses.

The present high prices of farm products have practically all come about within the last six or eight months—after the bulk of farm products were marketed. For example, the average price of live-hogs in South Omaha during the entire two years prior to the breaking out of the war—that is, 1913 and 1914—was \$8.06 a hundred; for the year 1915, \$6.88 per hundred, or \$1.19 per hundred less than during the previous two years.

Jap Photographer Decides He'll Not Wear Uniform Again

"Never again!" swore Shaji Osato, well known Japanese photographer, as he discarded a suit of khaki and leather puttees and buried them in the back yard. "Never again will I don a khaki suit."

Osato has just returned from Chicago, from whence he set out on an automobile tour through Illinois with a friend. He wore a khaki suit and riding puttees which he always wears in Omaha when horesback riding or out on other outings.

The men had put up for the night in the little town of La Salle, Ill., and the next morning went out for breakfast. As they were leaving the hotel, the village marshal accosted them.

"What are you doing in that uniform of the United States army?" he inquired. "Don't you know it's against the law for you to wear it?"

Osato protested it was not a uniform, merely his touring clothes, but the official refused to credit him.

"Come along with me!" he commanded and led the Omaha man to the La Salle county jail.

"The Japanese consul at Chicago is my personal friend; Senator Hitchcock of Nebraska knows who I am," protested Osato, but nothing availed.

Osato spent all day Saturday and Sunday in jail, while the village authorities wired to Chicago for federal officers to come out and get their prisoner.

When the United States official arrived, he cast one glance at the supposed offender—and ordered his release!

"That's not the United States army uniform," he exclaimed in disgust.

Osato has one consoling remembrance of his enforced incarceration. "They didn't object to my smoking while I was in jail," he said.

In other words, had the same prices been paid for live hogs in South Omaha during 1915 as had been paid for them two years previous the farmers selling these hogs would have received approximately \$8,000,000 more than they did for hogs during that year.

The average price of live hogs in South Omaha for the month of August, 1914, was \$8.64. The war was declared during that month. Immediately the prices of live hogs began to drop and continued to drop until in December, 1915, the average price was \$6.33, or \$2.31 a hundred less than that paid for them during the month of August, 1914. The average price of \$8.64 was not again reached until March, 1916, nearly a year and a half later.

In view of the above facts it is clear that nothing can be gained by wasting time in abusing the farmers. I have just finished a drive of over 600 miles through the best farming portions of Illinois and Iowa. This trip was made for the sole purpose of studying farm conditions. As a result I am firmly of the opinion that unless the government immediately advances the price of wheat and makes some provision for farm labor the acreage of 1918 will be decidedly less than that of 1917.

To no city in the country is this situation so serious as to Omaha, which more than any other city depends upon agricultural and stock raising interests for its permanent

prosperity. No city ever had a better foundation for growth than the farming area tributary to Omaha if properly encouraged and developed. Hence every business man in our city should be vitally interested in this matter, not only as a patriotic duty, but for the good of Omaha and the state of Nebraska.

WILLIAM STULL,
Omaha, September 11.

Netherlands Minister to United States is Recalled

Washington, Sept. 14.—The Netherlands minister to the United States, Chevalier W. L. F. C. Van Rappard, has been recalled by his government and today he called upon Secretary Lansing to announce the fact and to ask if Mr. Van Ruyen, who has been named to succeed him, will be acceptable to the United States.

Chevalier Van Rappard, who has been minister here for four years, will be transferred to a European post, possibly to a diplomatic position in his own country. He said the matter of his transfer had been first broached last February, but no decision was reached until recently.

The new minister, Mr. Van Ruyen, was formerly secretary of legation here and has had much experience in diplomacy. He married Miss Winthrop of Boston.

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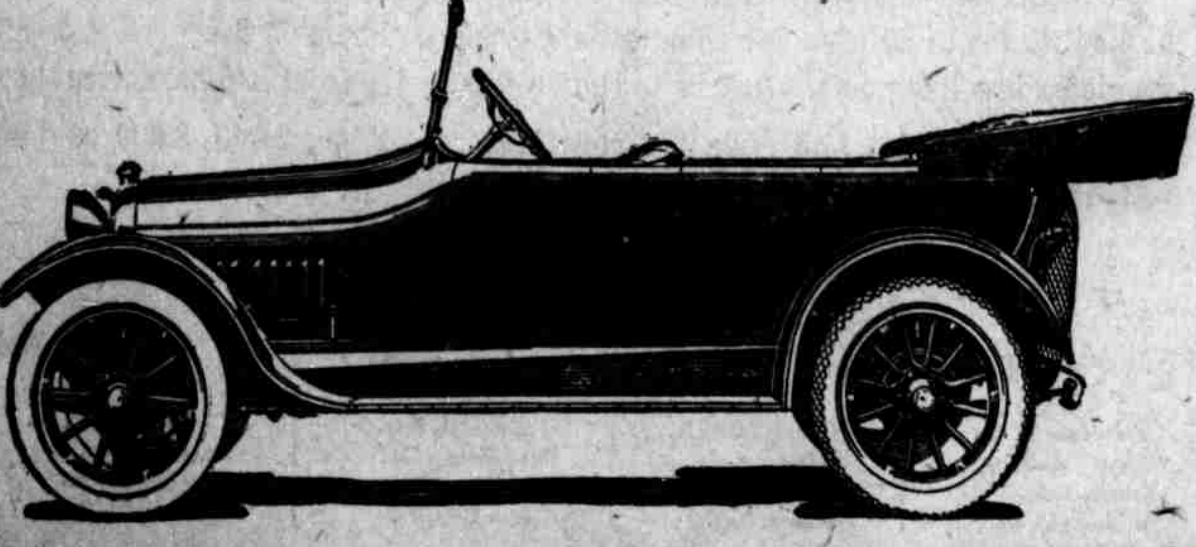


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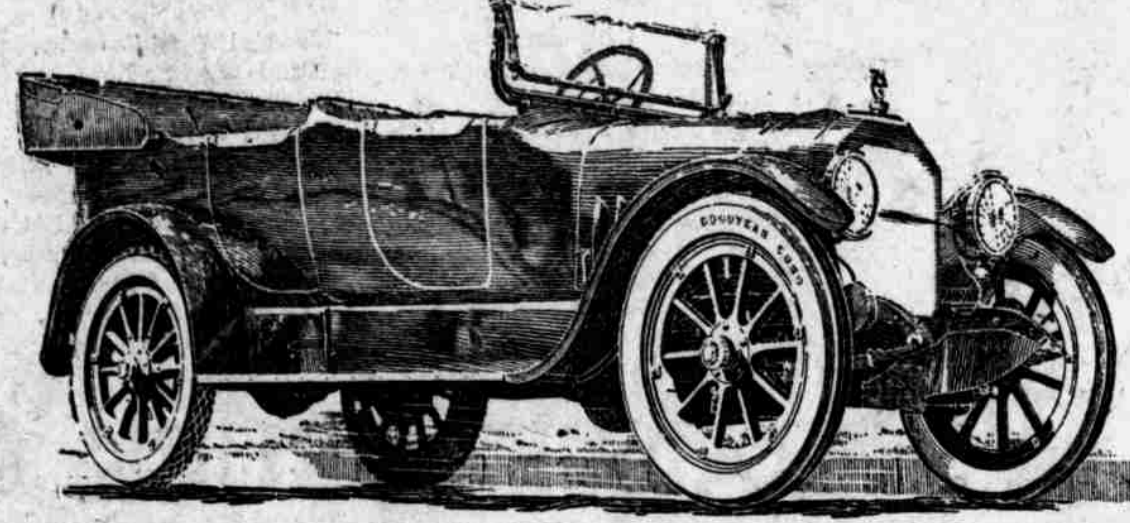


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