

ADVOCATE AND NEWS.

OFFICIAL STATE PAPER.

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NEGLECT OF LABOR'S INTEREST.

What should be one of the most important departments of the State government is in practically the same insignificant position that it held at the time of its creation, nearly thirteen years ago. The State Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics was established in 1887, and the duty of the bureau was stated in the act to be "to collect, assort, systematize and present in annual reports to the Governor, to be by him biennially transmitted to the Legislature, statistical details relating to all departments of labor and industrial pursuits in the State, especially in their relation to the commercial, industrial, social, educational and sanitary condition of the laboring classes, and to the permanent prosperity of the productive industries of the State." Since that time there has been no change in the law; the Commissioner's duties are the same, except that present conditions have greatly enlarged their scope; he receives the same meager salary, and it is still paid quarterly, although the Commissioner is not usually a man who steps into the office from a position that has given him the salary of a bank president; he is still required to visit and inspect the principal factories, workshops and mines in the State, although that work in itself is more than enough to keep two men busy all the time. The law originally provided that the Commissioner should have an office with the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture. He now has an office in the south wing of the State house, but that is the only additional notice that has been taken of his work.

The work of the labor bureau is really of vast importance. It is sociological in its nature and its results are intended to be of immeasurable benefit to the people. The labor bureau has been a factor in advancing the welfare of the laboring classes ever since its inception, and it is high time that it should be rescued from the ignominy of being obliged to pose as a beggar for assistance necessary to carry out its work. Labor Commissioner Johnson is constantly hampered because he is supposed to do first-class work with fifth-class facilities. The total amount of money which the State expends yearly through the Labor Commissioner, salaries and everything else, is a small amount over \$3,000, and on that sum he is expected to do \$10,000 worth of work. The Labor Commissioner is not overwhelmed with favors from corporations—his railroad transportation is paid for in cash, but that does not in any way lessen the importance of the work he is doing. His department comes nearer to the people than any other, and he is closer in touch with their real condition and more in sympathy with their needs.

The increased interest in sociology is arousing increased interest in bureaus of this nature. This is instanced in the almost daily inquiries received by Commissioner Johnson for the reports of the Kansas bureau. Other States are enlarging the work and equipment of their labor bureaus. Kansas, of all States, should not be behind in this matter.

The Labor Commissioner should have a better and more commodious office, a larger salary, paid monthly, more assistance and more funds with which to carry on the work. He should not be stinted. The workingmen of the State should agitate this matter. Their most direct representative at the capitol does not occupy the position that the importance of his office demands, and they

have it in their power, if they will, to see that a change is made.

YOUR ASSISTANCE WANTED.

The editor of the Advocate and News intends that each number of the paper shall be an improvement over the preceding issue. He is desirous of eliminating any features which do not enhance the value of the paper to its readers and of adding any new ones which will aid in making the Advocate and News the leading Kansas weekly and the leading reform paper of the country.

A newspaper may be classified among what are known as "public utilities;" it is something more than a mere money-maker for its owner, and its readers who depend upon it for news and, to some extent, for guidance as to action to be taken in public matters are entitled to some voice in controlling the character of the matter which is placed before them weekly. Therefore the editor of this paper solicits advice which will aid him in improving the tone and influence of the publication. This is not a new idea. It has been carried out before by many papers, but it has generally ended with the simple request, and the reader has had no recompense for his trouble. This is hardly fair to him, and to make the matter equitable the Advocate and News makes the following proposition:

To any person who will answer the following questions, looking at them from his own standpoint, adding any additional opinions that he sees fit and sending his answer to this paper, the Advocate and News will give a paid-up subscription for two months from the date of his answer. This is a fair offer. The paper is certainly worth something to you, and your opinion of the way in which the paper can be improved will be of value to the editor. The answers are not for publication, and should the editor desire to publish any of the opinions received the consent of the writer will first be obtained.

All that is asked on your part is your honest opinion in reply to the following questions:

1. What is it that makes the best newspaper? That is, what is it that makes the best paper stand out above all others?

2. How can the Advocate and News be made more valuable to you? What improvements can be added in the way of new features, and what is there that can be advantageously discarded?

3. The Advocate and News desires not only to appeal to the "producers," as the farmer and wage-earner are sometimes called, but it wishes earnestly and vigorously to champion their interests. What suggestions can you make as to the policy of the paper along this line?

4. What do you think of the size of the paper, general appearance, pictures, headings, departments, etc.?

It should be borne in mind that the Advocate and News reaches persons of widely varying ideas on some subjects, and that they are scattered all over the country; that it may be impossible for the paper to incorporate certain methods into its plan of publication, owing to local and other conditions, and that what is wanted is your own opinion of what will make the Advocate and News a better paper than it is at present.

This proposition is good for old subscribers as well as for new readers. Any person who is already on the list will receive an extension of his subscription for two months upon compliance with the above request.

Some newspaper talk has been made because the Larned Tiller and Toller has declared for a renomination of Governor Leedy. Why should there be any special significance attached to this fact? When the people of Kansas fully understand the work of the present administration the State officers will receive second terms, and present appearances indicate that there will be little opposition in so far as the renominations are concerned.

During the coming week the teachers of Kansas will own Topeka. The annual meeting of the Kansas State Teachers' Association is an event in the State's record of the year. The trainers of future statesmen and influential citizens will gain a great deal from this year's meeting. The prominent educators who will make addresses are among the most capable in the country, and the program is of unusual excellence.

A reference was inadvertently made in last week's Advocate and News to "Private Secretary" Fleharty, which should have read Executive Clerk. This correction is made in justice to Private Secretary Little.



CHAPTER I.

THE PARTY ON SPECIAL NO. 218.

Any one who hopes to find in what is here written a work of literature had better lay it aside unread. At Yale I should have got the sack in rhetoric and English composition, let alone other studies, had it not been for the fact that I played half back on the team and so the professors marked me away up above where I ought to have ranked. That was 12 years ago, but my life since I received my parchment has hardly been of a kind to improve me in either style or grammar. It is true that one woman tells me I write well and my directors never find fault with my compositions, but I know that she likes my letters because, whatever else they may say to her, they always say in some form, "I love you," while my board approves my annual reports because thus far I have been able to end each with "I recommend the declaration of a dividend of — per cent from the earnings of the current year." I should therefore prefer to reserve my writings for such friendly critics if it did not seem necessary to make public a plain statement concerning an affair over which there appears to be much confusion. I have heard in the last five years not less than 20 renderings of what is commonly called "the great K. and A. train robbery," some so twisted and distorted that but for the intermediate versions I should never have recognized them as attempts to narrate the series of events in which I played a somewhat prominent part.

I have read or been told that, unassisted, the pseudo hero captured a dozen desperadoes; that he was one of the road agents himself; that he was saved from lynching only by the timely arrival of cavalry; that the action of the United States government in rescuing him from the civil authorities was a most high handed interference with state rights; that he received his reward from a grateful railroad by being promoted; that a lovely woman as recompense for his villainy—but, bother; it's my business to tell what really occurred and not what the world chooses to invent. And if any man thinks he would have done otherwise in my position I can only say that he is a better or a worse man than Dick Gordon.

Primarily, it was football which shaped my end. Owing to my skill in the game, I took a postgraduate at the Sheffield Scientific school, that the team might have my services for an extra two years. That led to my knowing a little about mechanical engineering, and when I left the "quad" for good I went into the Alton railroad shops. It wasn't long before I was foreman of a section; next I became a division superintendent, and after I had stuck to that for a time I was appointed superintendent of the Kansas and Arizona railroad, a line extending from Trinidad in Kansas to the Needles in Arizona, tapping the Missouri Western system at the first place and the Great Southern at the other. With both lines we had important traffic agreements, as well as the closest relations, which sometimes were a little difficult, as the two roads were anything but friendly. And we had directors of each on the K. and A. board, in which they fought like cats. Indeed it could only be a question of time when one would oust the other and then absorb my road. My headquarters were at Albuquerque, in New Mexico, and it was there, in October, 1890, that I received the communication which was the beginning of all that followed.

This initial factor was a letter from the president of the Missouri Western, telling me that their first vice president, Mr. Cullen (who was also a director of my road), was coming out to attend the

annual election of the K. and A., which under our charter had to be held in Ash Forks, A. T. A second paragraph told me that Mr. Cullen's family accompanied him, and that they all wished to visit the Grand canyon of the Colorado on their way. Finally the president wrote that the party traveled in his own private car and asked me to make myself generally useful to them. Having become quite hardened to just such demands, at the proper date I ordered my superintendent's car on to No. 2, and the next morning it was dropped off at Trinidad.

The moment No. 3 arrived I climbed into the president's special, that was the last car on the train, and introduced myself to Mr. Cullen, whom, though an official of my road, I had never met. He seemed surprised at my presence, but greeted me very pleasantly as soon as I explained that the Missouri Western office had asked me to do what I could for him and that I was there for that purpose. His party were about to sit down to breakfast, and he asked me to join them. So we passed into the dining room at the forward end of the car, where I was introduced to "My son," "Lord Ralles," and "Captain Ackland." The son was a junior copy of his father, tall and fine looking; but, in place of the frank and easy manner of his sire, he was so very English that most people would have sworn falsely as to his native land. Lord Ralles was a little, well built chap, not half so English as Albert Cullen, quick in manner and thought, being in this the opposite of his brother, Captain Ackland, who was heavy enough to rock ballast a oadbed. Both brothers gave me the impression of being gentlemen, and were decidedly good looking.

After the introductions Mr. Cullen said we would not wait, and his remark called my attention to the fact that there was one more place at the table than there were people assembled. I had barely noted this when my host said, "Here's the truant," and, turning, I faced a lady who had just entered. Mr. Cullen said, "Madge, let me introduce Mr. Gordon to you." My bow was made to a girl of about 20, with light brown hair, the bluest of eyes, a fresh skin and a fine figure, dressed so natively as to be to me, after my four years of western life, a sight for tired eyes. She greeted me pleasantly, made a neat little apology for having kept us waiting, and then we all sat down.

It was a very jolly breakfast table, Mr. Cullen and his son being capital talkers and Lord Ralles a good third, while Miss Cullen was quick and clever enough to match the three. Before the meal was over I came to the conclusion that Lord Ralles was in love with Miss Cullen, for he kept making low asides to her, and from the fact that she allowed them, and indeed responded, I drew the conclusion that he was a lucky beggar, feeling, I confess, a little pang that a title was going to win such a nice American girl.

One of the first subjects spoken of was train robbery, and Miss Cullen, like most easterners, seemed to take a great interest in it and had any quantity of questions to ask me.

"I've left all my jewelry behind, except my watch," she said, "and that I hide every night. So I really hope we'll be held up, it would be such an adventure."

"There isn't any chance of it, Miss Cullen," I told her, "and if we were, you probably wouldn't even know that it was happening, but would sleep right through it."

"Wouldn't they try to get our money and our watches?" she demanded.

I told her no and explained that the