

STIRBUSINESSMEN

Franklin MacVeagh and Judge Wade Before Local Merchants.

COOPERATION AN ESSENTIAL

To Progress of a City — Destined To Be Great Industrial Center of Country.

The only pity is that every business man of the city did not hear the wise counselling of a merchant prince and a former national lawmaker as to what must be done to bring forward a community commercially and socially given last evening at the Rock Island Club.

It was the seventh annual banquet of the Rock Island Retail Merchants' association and the speakers were Franklin MacVeagh, head of the wholesale grocery house of that name in Chicago, and Judge Martin J. Wade, of Iowa City, who served as a member

trimming process effectually had been applied. The best that could be expected, since there never would be a backward step, was that these movements would go forward under such control as would make them less harmful.

Society Expression of Cooperation.

The new science of sociology was an effort to introduce the new idea of cooperation into society and business. The brotherhood of man was the foundation of all religions; the inspiration of all education; the motive of all learning. Society was the perfect expression of cooperation. It had its beginning in the family. There cooperation was born and nursed. Society has organized and found expression in government. No civilization was possible on any other basis. Chicago had learned the lesson that it was not big enough to thrive without cooperation. No city was big or important enough to do so. If the business people were going to cut each other's throats six days in the week they were handicapping the prosperity of the community. It was essential that a city learn what to cooperate on. It was a new role for the business man. He must study his way as he went along. First the spirit must be there. The seed must be sown if it is not already. Once it began to



M. J. WADE, IOWA CITY, IOWA.

of congress from the Second Iowa district, having been defeated for election last fall by a narrow margin. There were 135 guests. The banquet was served at 7 o'clock in the new dining room, but it was not possible to seat all there and there was an overflow meeting in the lounge room.

Mr. MacVeagh spoke on "Cooperation." He preached consideration of his subject by a reference to the natural resources of the community comprising the tri-cities. He was amazed at the possibilities here. The people living in the locality doubtless did not

grow it would keep on growing bigger and with increasing benefit to the community and the people until the end of time. The objective was the common cause underlying the individual interests. The citizen could not afford to neglect it. For instance, the railroads. One man would say that there were four railroads entering the city and that the merchant no longer had to bother his head about excessive rates. Competition would insure reasonable charges.

Chicago's Railroad Experience.

Mr. MacVeagh said Chicago had 34 roads, and only recently had awakened to the fact that they had been operating as one against the common enemy, the shipper. A community could not go forward with each business man pulling in a direction that he thought was the right one and was keeping it all to himself. There was the obstructionist to be reckoned with, the one who would betray an agreement, but there was a means of handling him. Mr. MacVeagh said that he must be gripped at the start and held firmly as long as he remained in the city. One man could destroy the prospects of a whole community. He believed that the merchants were rapidly learning that there was something beside rivalry in business. There must continue to be rivalry and competition, and there always should be, but it was mellowed by the spirit of cooperation that inspired broadness, sympathy, happiness and good citizenship.

Sees Great Industrial Center.

Judge Wade had not prepared a speech. He had not been two days consecutively in his office in Iowa City



FRANKLIN MACVEAGH, Chicago.

appreciate what they had. Apparently the community was yet in its swaddling clothes. He said the people of the Mississippi valley possibly as much or more than the people of Chicago contributed toward the upbuilding of the city by the lake.

New Movement in Business.

He said cooperation was a new movement or notion in business. It was developed through various sources, and the dinner table was one of the most prolific of these. Wars had been averted at the dinner table, not business wars, but conflicts between nations. The Rock Island merchants in holding their annual banquets were on the right course. There had been a disinclination to cooperate for nearly one hundred years. It was strange that the business people were coming to it at this late day. But it was better late than never. Once it came it would remain. Unrestrained and unassisted competition was a practical impossibility. There was a necessary protest against this impossible competition, although Mr. MacVeagh did not wish to be understood as sympathizing with these gigantic combinations of wealth. The universal movement was for a rational cooperation in business. Labor had organized because it could not stand the whole effect of competition; employers had done likewise. While all these combinations were still in a crude state, they were the best that could be had until the



G. H. KINGSBURY, President of the Rock Island Retail Merchants' Association, and also President of the Illinois State Merchants' Association.

since the first of the year. He said that he would talk to the merchants as neighbors. He was interested in the

tri-cities, for his home was not so far from them. He confidently believed that here inside of 50 years—when the Mississippi river received needed attention from the government—would spring up the greatest industrial center in the United States. The nucleus was here. All that was needed was native push and harmony—a getting together of the men who comprise the citizenship. Cities did not grow. That was a mistaken theory. They were made. They would never be any bigger or better than the people who comprised them made them. Judge Wade said he would avoid politics, although, possibly through force of habit, he felt more at home in that sphere than in any other. He believed that the question uppermost in the commercial world at this day was that of transportation. Investigations had produced facts positively that were startling. For instance it had been found that a car of freight could be shipped from the city of New York to Meriden, Miss., \$25 cheaper than it could be shipped from the city of Chicago, although the latter point was not half the distance away from the eastern metropolis is.

Quarter Century of Discrimination.

This discrimination against the west in favor of the east had been in effect for 25 years, and it would continue until the people of this great Mississippi valley rose up and entered a protest that could not be ignored by the government. New York, Boston and Philadelphia were supplying the territory of the south and southwest when it should be supplied from Chicago, St. Louis and the Mississippi valley. There was a law that applied to these discriminations. They were in violation of the interstate commerce law, but it was not enforced. He could not say who was to blame. He advocated more politics among the business people, not during the heat of the campaign when each became a partisan, but after the excitement of an election had died away. Then they should get together and discuss those questions that affected their community. A city, if it would progress, must have a square deal with the other centers of the nation. Judge Wade

blamed the business people of a city for countenancing the continuation of this condition. There was nothing accomplished by erratic movement. There must be calm and considerate action. The situation should be understood before it was tackled. Know you were right, and then blaze away and do not lay down until your mission has been realized. He said naturally when things went wrong the congressman was blamed. He knew this to be so from his own experience.

Voice of People Counted.

A congressman could do little without the influence of the people of his district and state behind him. Congress did not heed a congressman much. It was the voice of the people that bestirred congress to action, and had been known to waken the senate from its slumbers. Judge Wade advised the merchants to study the transportation question. They would not have to look up the details. Employ

an expert to do this. Then study his report and see if your community was getting a square shake in the matter of rates with other cities of the country. Let the states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin band together and make a demand on the federal government for the righting of a wrong that could be shown to be a wrong and congress would have to listen.

Merchants Fossilized.

Nothing would be accomplished by sitting on the sugar barrel whittling and cursing the unfriendliness of the congressman. Judge Wade did not hesitate to say that the merchants in some of these western cities were dead and fossilized, letting other cities come right under their noses and steal away their opportunities. He urged an awakening of the progress that had been permitted to grow latent, the study of those questions that affect the whole community, a looking up of the laws. If the railroads were not treating the city justly go after them through the interstate commerce commission. Demand an even chance with the other cities and you would get it, but nothing would come without fighting. Judge Wade interspersed his remarks with a number of delightful stories.

A pleasant feature of the evening were the readings of E. J. Stackhouse, of Davenport, who gave "Lascars," "That Old Sweetheart of Mine," and a scene from Richard II. W. B. McIntyre was toastmaster. A telegram was read from George E. Green, secretary of the State Retail Merchants' association, regretting his inability to be present. In conclusion G. H. Kingsbury, who is president of the local association and of the state organization, thanked the speakers, and asked the members to weigh the advice they had been given. He announced that the Rock Island association would have its next meeting Monday evening and he urged a full attendance of the members. The guests sang the first verse of "My Country 'Tis of Thee" standing before they dispersed. Music during the evening was furnished by the Bleuer-Hemenway orchestra.

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