

sult to an already injured stomach.”

Link himself never uses aspirin. “My money,” he asserts, “is on an older and more firmly established remedy — good Bourbon.” Yet for four months during the course of the experimentation, to satisfy his personal curiosity as to the effect of aspirin on human blood, he acted as his own guinea pig. He took aspirin tablets week after week, and tests of his blood made by a laboratory assistant revealed that only four to six five-grain tablets were necessary to make his blood clot more slowly.

He raised the dose to eight, to ten, and then to twelve tablets, dispersed in a glass of milk and taken within fifteen minutes of each other. “Ten hours after I had taken twelve tablets the assistant who tested my blood thought I was going to hemorrhage,

clotting took so long,” Dr. Link says.

Then came the day when he took a dozen tablets and no change in clotting time was detected. He had taken two milligrams of Vitamin K, an infinitesimal amount, along with the aspirin. This small amount of Vitamin K — one two-thousandth the amount of the aspirin — was enough to nullify the drug’s action on clotting time.

In a recent editorial the *Journal of the American Medical Association* commented on Link’s work and said that present evidence “indicates that aspirin and the salicylates are among the least toxic of active pharmacopeial preparations”; nevertheless, “this status . . . should not be interpreted as an excuse for failure to recognize hazards connected with their abuse.”

It is obvious from Link’s work that aspirin should be used with discretion.

Politics

THE BUS-BOY STATESMAN

BY FRED HARMS

WHEN Nebraska Democrats woke up to their morning papers the day after their April primary elections, they were startled by a picture of a man in overalls standing before a geometric design chalked on a blackboard. He was George W. Olsen, an absolute political unknown, who had piled up 344 votes more than his

party-sponsored opponent to become the Democratic nominee for Governor.

For George Olsen, who has never made a campaign speech nor buttonholed a voter, his victory in the primaries was the happy climax of thirty-four unsuccessful years of seeking public office. For the Democratic regulars of the state, Olsen’s nomination meant a red face. They had underestimated the appeal of his Scandinavian name to Nebraska voters

FRED HARMS, formerly news editor of the Nebraska State Journal in Lincoln, is the pilot of a B-26 named The Lady Linda. The lady is his young daughter.

and failed to put up a spirited campaign for the candidate they had drafted, Patrick Heaton, able young lawyer and county attorney at Sidney.

Nebraska has since been getting better acquainted with George Walter Olsen. A sometime farmer, trucker and odd jobs man, Olsen at sixty-two is employed as bus-boy in the cafeteria of the Martin bomber plant near Omaha. His only other claim to distinction is a private "formula" he evolved ten years ago for "squaring the circle."

Whenever the newspapers need a bit of color to brighten their front pages, they just get Olsen on the wire, prod him with questions, and the whole state guffaws the next day at the homespun answers of the bus-boy statesman. When the smart boys asked Olsen what his platform was now that he had been nominated, he answered immediately: "My platform is: 1. Keep Nebraska in the Union; 2. Get public opinion back to where it was before Pearl Harbor; 3. Buy more war bonds."

When the laughter had subsided, the Democratic state central committee decided the time had come to save face and approached Nominee Olsen much like a wary parent, lollipop in hand, tracking down a problem child. Mr. Olsen was proud of his job in a war factory, they pointed out. Wouldn't it be nice if he would just withdraw from the gubernatorial race and concentrate on buying those war bonds? But the party regulars had again underestimated their man.

"Your name isn't Olsen," he told them. "If you want somebody to resign, why, just go ahead and resign yourselves."

The Democratic voters of Nebraska liked that. Hundreds of them wrote to Olsen asking him not to resign. "We wanted you for our candidate," wrote one supporter. "A withdrawal now would be a breach of faith. Don't yield to a selfish few and break up the Democratic party in Nebraska."

Others took up the cudgels for Olsen in the letter columns of the state newspapers, condemning the suggestion for withdrawal as undemocratic. Charles W. Bryan, former Governor and titular head of the party in Nebraska, was moved to observe publicly that "no one has any authority or political right to question a man's right to be on the ballot after he has been nominated by the public at a primary." Pat Heaton, Olsen's opponent, disavowed any connection with the proposal.

Apparently unable to decide whether to help Olsen at the polls next November, the party regulars have at least agreed to tread softly in his direction. As one newspaper put it, in an editorial:

The Democrats will be wise to stop this quasi-ridicule of their candidate. Ridicule sometimes acts as a boomerang. After all, you cannot quarrel with Olsen's plank of buying more war bonds; you can even sympathize with his desire to "keep Nebraska in the Union," the way this state is going isolationist these days; above all, you can't condemn a man for wearing galluses and blue-denim breeches.

Olsen is a small but sturdy fellow and likable as they come. In Plattsmouth, Nebraska, where he shares a room with another bomber plant worker, almost everyone on the street calls him "Oley" or "Governor" even though they usually vote against him two to one.

He first went out for office seriously in 1912, seeking the job of road commissioner after a daughter had been killed when his buggy upset on a washed-out road. Every election year since then he has run for something, most often governor or United States senator. He was elected once as town constable of Plattsmouth, but never bothered to qualify. A widower now, he has four grown children.

In addition to running for office Olsen makes it a point to keep the President informed of all matters pertaining to Nebraska and offers his advice whenever the President appears to be getting into trouble in national or world affairs. He has been writing President Roosevelt every two weeks since the beginning of the New Deal and has letters from presidential secretaries and early members of the brain trust — including Donald Richberg and the late Marvin McIntyre — to prove it.

The Supreme Court case which invalidated NRA was one of the first national issues to attract his attention. "The NRA would be here today if the President had followed my advice," Olsen declares. "I wrote the President he could win that case if he would just prove that chicken was hatched and

raised here in Nebraska and brought state's rights into the proceedings."

More recently he wrote the President about the Boxer Rebellion and our failure to back up the "Open Door" policy in China. "The fellows here in Plattsmouth just laughed and said the President wouldn't even get that letter. But I told them just to sit tight a couple of weeks. Sure enough, it wasn't long after that till the President started clearing out the Burma road."

Although Olsen will talk eagerly on any subject under the sun, he is most grateful if interviewers profess an interest in his formula for squaring the circle. He evolved his theory with the aid of a ten cent compass and a ruler when he was "laid up" with a broken leg back in 1933. He still uses the same compass. Olsen says the idea just "struck all at once." For a decade he has promoted it with unrelenting vigor against the counter-claims of error from a dozen college mathematics departments, mathematics societies and periodicals.

He kept after the Bureau of Standards to adopt his formula until the Bureau pleaded too much business and said it couldn't answer any more letters. An appeal sent to President Roosevelt received a courteous but noncommittal reply.

The problem of squaring the circle — known as the rectification or quadrature of the circle as a Euclidean construction — has engaged attention for 2000 years, but since Lindemann

of Königsberg definitely proved its impossibility in 1882, it no longer attracts serious study from mathematicians. But that doesn't stop Olsen. He has announced a \$100 reward to anyone who can *really* prove him wrong, and quite understandably the publicity which followed his nomination has increased his "Square the Circle" mail several thousand per cent.

Olsen's was strictly a one-man campaign for office when he started it, and he intends to finish the same way. He is a man of no visible political ambitions. He just likes to run for office, and after thirty-four years it has be-

come more or less habit with him. Without exception he has given his new, fair-weather friends the brushoff and has never answered a letter from his volunteer campaign strategists.

"The Lord has got a lot to do with these things," Olsen says in explanation. "Not that I go to church overmuch, but they don't just happen. If the Lord wants me to win, I'll win."

Meanwhile he intends to go right on slinging dishes for the Martin cafeteria and buying that \$25 war bond every other week. And if there is anybody left who can't see just how he squares that circle, well, he'll be glad to show them — after hours.



Money

Even the blind can see money.

— CHINESE PROVERB

If you have no money, be polite.

— DANISH PROVERB

A man without money is like a wolf without teeth.

— FRENCH PROVERB

When money speaks the truth is silent.

— RUSSIAN PROVERB

OUR FAILURE IN PUERTO RICO

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

IF you visit Puerto Rico today you will find that the "continental" Americans in business there are blazing with indignation about what they call the socialization of the island under Governor Rexford Tugwell and Luis Muñoz-Marin.

Muñoz-Marin is the leader of the controlling popular party that for its slogan has the words, "Bread, Land and Liberty."

He and Governor Tugwell clash with big business on what they consider the outrageous exploitation of the island. They say that the Puerto Ricans are full-fledged American citizens and have been ever since United States citizenship was extended to them by the Jones act, approved March 2, 1917. They are determined that every effort shall be made to raise the standard of living of the islands to something which will begin to approximate that of American workers elsewhere. For this reason the first word in the popular party's slogan is — Bread.

Muñoz-Marin is so dangerously radical as to say that his objective is to give every Puerto Rican family —

not individual but family — an annual income of \$500 a year. To do this means breaking the stranglehold of big business upon the life of the island. Today the sugar cane worker gets \$277 a year (and that is far superior to the wage of tobacco laborer, which is \$181 a year.) The four great sugar companies, however, pay huge dividends. The sugar barons do not live in Puerto Rico. The stock is largely owned in the United States and Spain, and the profits are disbursed abroad, with very little of them going to those who live in Puerto Rico. Hence these two governmental leaders want to stabilize the Puerto Ricans as Americans by ending the terrible conditions of distress, misery, unemployment and actual near-starvation of great numbers of the Puerto Rican people.

The demand for "Bread" is founded on indisputable fact. This exquisitely beautiful island is an economic hell-hole. In Luis Muñoz-Marin there is a Puerto Rican leader with the oratorical power to inflame these ignorant people almost wholly inexperienced in self-government, and to lead them,

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, *eminent liberal journalist, was for many years editor and publisher of the Nation. His many books include Fighting Years, Memoirs of a Liberal Editor, and most recently, The Disappearing Daily.*