

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

Published every morning. E. ROBEWATER, Editor.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION. Daily Bee (without Sunday), One Year, \$6.00.

OFFICES. Omaha: The Bee Building, 27th and N. Omaha.

REMITTANCES. Remit by draft, express or postal order.

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION. State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss. George B. Trachuck, secretary of The Bee Publishing Company.

Table with 2 columns: Date and Circulation figures. Rows include 12/27/99, 12/28/99, 12/29/99, etc.

Total 845,885. Less unpaid and returned copies, 10,593. Net total sales, 835,292.

Remember that the auditorium stock subscription books are still open and that there is always room for a few more names.

Small favors satisfy some people, while others are never contented. Mrs. Nation is able to extract satisfaction from the fact that the eggs which were thrown at her were strictly fresh.

Personal safety should prompt all persons by the name of Crowe to carry with them when they leave home a certificate that they are not the particular Crowe wanted \$13,000 worth in Omaha.

Those who are curious to know just how much the late queen of England was worth are doomed to disappointment, for the will is not to be made public. It is really too bad to thus disappoint the curious.

King Edward of England will not undergo his official coronation for a year. When the ceremony takes place it is sure to be a marvel of regal splendor unequalled by any previous events of the same character.

The auditorium fund is growing steadily, but there are several Omaha citizens who could stimulate it wonderfully if they would, and they are not men who have pauperized themselves donating to previous enterprises, either.

The State Labor bureau is not likely to put forth any more statistics intended to prove that farming in Nebraska does not pay. The new commissioner will not find it necessary to distort the truth for political effect.

Omaha is ready to welcome all the new jobbing houses that can be persuaded to locate here. There is business enough in Omaha's tributary territory to keep twice the number of commercial institutions busy that are now here.

Fitzhugh Lee may be able to extract some satisfaction from the prospect of squelching the Indians who seriously wounded him almost half a century ago. The experience is worth the while, if only to illustrate the mutations of a soldier's life.

The plea set up in a local police court trial that election to the city council is conclusive evidence of a man's good standing in the community will doubtless receive the hearty endorsement of every man who can point to a councilmanic career.

It seems strange, but is none the less true, that most of the bills introduced into the legislature at Lincoln with holdup earmarks bear the names of popocratic members as their sponsors. Accidents will happen in the best regulated households.

A Hamburg syndicate proposes to monopolize the meat business of the West India, drawing its supply from South America. This is said to be only an incident to supplying, ultimately, the German trade. In grassed cattle the syndicate may accomplish its purpose, but when it comes to the best grades of beef and pork product the world must come to the land of corn.

Senator Olson's bill prescribing among the qualifications for the position of county judge that the incumbent must be a duly admitted and regularly practicing attorney-at-law is likely to be regarded as an insult by some of the men who have served in that capacity in this and other counties. Why should any one expect a county judge to be a lawyer?

The proper authorities should make a memorandum, while these election cases are on, of the precincts in which gross misconduct have been returned, because these miscounts indicate either neglect or inefficiency on the part of the officers. It is easy enough to refer back to the names of the election officials for information purposes when these same men apply for reappointment on future election boards.

DELAY ON THE TREATY.

The British Foreign office will of course give no consideration to the Hay-Pauncefote treaty until after the funeral of the late queen. It has not for several weeks been giving attention to any but the most vital matters and none others will be considered before the funeral of Victoria, which will be February 2. It is possible that no action will be taken on the treaty pending the meeting of Parliament in the middle of February, in order to enable the cabinet to confer with its adherents in that body. This is not necessary, but may be deemed expedient. The advent of a new ruler will probably have no effect on the question, though there is no reason why in so important a matter he should not be consulted.

Meantime our Department of State has deemed it necessary to deny the reports that it had received information warranting the belief that the British government has decided to accept the amendments to the treaty. It is officially announced that the department has received no communication from any quarter which would lead it to believe as reported and the department officials regard the circulation of such stories as calculated to prejudice the negotiations between the two governments respecting the isthmian canal.

Under the circumstances the only proper course for our government is to wait until the British government is ready to act. This is what was meant by the decision of the senate republican caucus some days ago in regard to taking up the Nicaragua canal bill and there is stronger reason now than existed when this decision was made for not pressing this matter. It is presumed this will be admitted even by Senator Morgan and those with him who have been urging the immediate passage of the canal bill.

CONGRESSIONAL RE-DISTRICTING.

It is settled that Nebraska is to retain the same representation in congress as at present, but it does not follow that it should retain its present congressional districts without change. With six congressmen allotted to it, the ratio for each under the census population of 1900, giving Nebraska 1,068,500, would be 178,000. While the population of the state has increased immaterially in the last census period, the growth has been uneven in the different congressional districts, so that nearly all of them show a surplus or deficit of population as compared with the mathematical ratio which they should approximate. The figures compiled from the census returns are:

Table with 4 columns: District, Population, Surplus, Deficit. Rows include First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth.

Apart from political considerations which cannot be kept entirely out of the question, the difference of more than 50,000 in population between the highest and the lowest is manifestly too great. No arbitrary gerrymandering is called for, yet it must not be forgotten that the control of re-districting was one of the issues on which a republican legislative majority was returned by the people in the recent election and that the republicans are not expected to give their own party the worst of it in the makeup of the districts. Had the election gone the other way and made the fusionists the dominant power, we may be certain they would not let the opportunity slip to take every legitimate advantage derivable in the exercise of their duty to enact a congressional district law in conformity to the new census.

WOULD HELP POSTAL SERVICE.

Postmaster General Smith said in a recent interview that the success of the shipping bill would be of advantage to our national postal system, with particular reference to the needs of the international postal service. He remarked that foreign governments are far more liberal than ours in making their postal service contributory to the upbuilding of a merchant marine. There is a marked contrast, for example, between the grants of the British government and those of our own. For the last fiscal year our receipts from the ocean mail service were \$3,467,139 and the total cost of that service, including subsidies to the amount of \$1,026,395 and the ordinary payments for ocean carriage, was \$2,014,538, showing an actual profit in this service of \$1,452,601.

The British ocean mail service, on the other hand, according to the last available report of the British postmaster general, costs the government a considerable amount in excess of the receipts from the service. The British mail subsidies are far greater than ours. Mr. Smith referred to the statement of a prominent official in the British service who said that the government paid 75 cents per pound for conveying letters to America in a British ship and only 41 cents per pound for sending them in equally good ships of the American line. That government also dispatches by British lines unless letters are especially directed to go on the American line. The United States does not discriminate, but dispatches mail in the quickest way.

The British subsidy is effective, said the postmaster general, and ours would be if it were large enough. By way of illustrating its inadequacy he cited the fact that when the Postoffice department first advertised for contracts under the postal subsidy act of 1891 it did not get a single bid for fast ships. The establishment of the American line was the result of a subsequent act. In 1891, when the postal subsidy act was passed, we carried 12 1/2 per cent of our imports and exports. Our foreign trade has greatly increased, but last year we carried only 9 per cent, showing our measures had not been strong and vigorous enough.

The hearing of this question upon the international postal service of the country, in the matter of facilitating that service is manifestly important, while the example of other governments in this matter is certainly worthy of serious consideration. The British policy unquestionably has contributed to the upbuilding of the merchant marine of that country and therefore to the benefit of its commercial interests. Is it unreasonable to suppose that like results would follow the adoption of such a policy by the United States?

THE VENEZUELAN DIFFICULTY.

Another war ship has been ordered by the Navy department to Venezuela, from which it is to be inferred that the government has received information showing the difficulty in that republic has become more grave and that the danger to American interests there has increased.

While recent press advices have been somewhat meager, there is undoubtedly a rather serious situation in Venezuela. It is not, however, so far as appears, such a state of affairs as calls for interposition on the part of the United States, unless the Venezuelan government should prove unable or unwilling to protect American interests. Our government should certainly take no part in a contest of rival asphalt companies and it is safe to assume that it will not do so. The settlement of that controversy must be left to the courts and government of Venezuela which our government is bound to assume are perfectly competent to deal with it.

There is probably a good deal of truth in the statement, made by former Senator Hiscock of New York to the State department, that the whole trouble in Venezuela was deliberately cooked up by the asphalt trust in an effort to enbroil that country with the United States and there is reason to think that the American minister to Venezuela has not shown the best of judgment in dealing with the trouble. At all events, the United States government should avoid doing anything that might lead to a rupture of friendly relations with Venezuela.

GUARD THE FRANCHISE.

If Douglas county were asked to give a deed conveying any part of its real estate holdings to some private individual, in order that the latter might in turn dispose of it to his own advantage, there would be instant and decided objection. Yet there is now before the Board of County Commissioners a proposition to dispose of a valuable franchise on just such terms.

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The Board of Equalization would not be happy if it did not have the usual number of applications to pass on for reduced tax assessments. It is safe to say that there is not a taxpayer in the city that is not convinced that he has much more than his share of the tax burdens of the city.

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This feeling has led to the prohibition of a proposed battle between heavyweights in San Francisco. The pugilists are slowly but surely killing the goose that laid golden eggs for them. The same fate befell scolding contests, which at one time were high in favor and attracted international attention. When there are even suspicious that a sport is "crooked," the public has no further use for it.

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The steel rail manufacturers have very wisely decided not to advance the price to \$28 a ton on February 1, as was their announced intention a fortnight ago. Either that announcement was a stimulus to lagging orders at the old price or else the members of the pool, in the face of increasing and threatened competition, did not deem it prudent to hold up the railroad companies for their past record in such matters, they are not to be credited with any large measure of virtue for this act of self-restraint; they would doubtless have ordered the \$2 advance had they dared.

That the steel makers are taken as an indication that they are at last coming to their senses, if they would now set the price of rails at \$23 or lower that would furnish the only proof now lacking that they are rational, fair, far-sighted men of business.

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OTHER LANDS THAN OURS.

The Madrid Gazette of recent date contains a statement which, it is said, cannot fail to give satisfaction to all persons who have financial or commercial relations with Spain. It is the report of the revenue returns between January 1 and December 1, 1900, which amount to \$30,850,565 pesetas (about \$130,000,000), a sum which exceeds the collections for the same period of 1899 by \$6,181,022 pesetas. It is thus computed that the total revenue for the entire year will yield nearly 1,000,000,000 pesetas.

Commercial and financial circles on the continent consider that these figures are worthy of attention, as they have been a considerable increase over the income of 1899 and do away with the apprehension felt during the Barcelona troubles last summer. But more particularly is the report deemed of importance because of the notable excess of the revenue over the budget estimate, which was placed at only \$2,000,000 pesetas, while the expenditure estimate was placed by the minister of finance at \$3,000,000 pesetas. Calculating directly upon the revenue returns between January 1 and December 1, 1900, it is believed that the total returns for the whole year, while they may not reach 1,000,000,000 pesetas, cannot fall below \$67,000,000 pesetas, which would show a surplus for last year of 23,000,000 pesetas.

There has been a renewal of the troubles with the Russian students, especially at Kiev, where the excitement culminated, after three days of disturbances, in the closing of the university by the police on the afternoon of December 29. On the evening of the same day a sortie of Cossacks and a detachment of infantry arrived on the scene. It is said that about half of the students attending the university were arrested. Full and authentic details are wanting, but it is known that 450 of the students who have been expelled are to be sent into the army as private soldiers in conformity with the new law of May, 1899. Two or three of them will be sent to do service at Port Arthur. A disturbance has also occurred at the university in St. Petersburg, and two students have been expelled on account of the right of entering any other establishment of higher education, while twenty-eight have been excluded and prohibited from ever re-entering the same university and fourteen have been sentenced to confinement in the local prison for a term of six months.

The same city more than seventy university students have just been tried before a justice of the peace on the charge, made by the police, of creating a disturbance in one of the theaters of the capital during the performance of a dramatic comedy "Confraternidad," in which the Jews are represented as religious fanatics and dangerous citizens. Various minor punishments were inflicted, but all the accused have appealed to a higher court.

The correspondent of the London Times in Vienna, a well-informed man, not generally given to sensationalism, says that there is widespread conviction in diplomatic circles that an outbreak in Macedonia cannot be delayed for more than a year. It does not much matter how long it is delayed, whether the Bulgarian authorities encourage the Macedonian committees or not, for the mischief has been done, and the agitation has passed beyond their control. Nor is it believed that the diplomatic efforts of Austria and Russia will succeed in suppressing insurrectionists, who are not disturbed by the formidable Turkish forces on the spot, while it is by no means certain that Russia would consent to use force in case of an uprising. There is a prevalent opinion that the Sultan seeks to take advantage of the disturbed condition of Macedonia for purposes of his own. It is alleged that he wishes to prevent any change in the existing order in Crete by exciting the apprehension in Athens and eliciting that they attempt to modify it, while at the same time he wishes to see the Hellenic population in Macedonia. A letter in the Roumanian, one of the chief papers of Bucharest, alludes to the growth and influence of the Pan-Hellenic League, and quotes the words of the Ionian islands. It declares that nothing else is spoken of in Athens, but the approaching departure of the foreign contingents from Crete and the dispatch of Greek troops for the maintenance of order in the island, which practically would amount to union.

The Belgian Postal department is about to institute a system by which it will undertake to settle differences between debtors and creditors, which are now being adjusted by the interchange of numerous requests for payment, and by the expense of establishing a sort of public clearing house under state control, which, while for a time it may be only availed of by merchants of acknowledged standing, is capable of expanding so as to include all moneyed transactions, such as bank deposits, landlord and tenant and between the government