

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

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Signs of economic war are observed hovering over Europe. Most people, however, refuse to believe in signs.

Wonder if the \$18,000 cash surplus in the permanent school fund still remains in the vault in the state treasury?

Did the Omaha school board call for a grand jury in order to have the South Omaha school board hauled over the coals?

Just now it is all the rage to kick the heathen Chinese. It does not take much courage to hit a fellow who has no friends.

The first step in tax reduction is to expand the assessment roll by including the property that has heretofore evaded taxation.

Omaha's holiday trade has been retarded by unseasonable weather, but it should now make up delays on the home stretch.

Every patriotic citizen of Nebraska who admired President McKinley should contribute his mite to the McKinley memorial fund.

If the Buffalo exposition promoters succeed in prevailing on congress to make good their deficit out of the national treasury, they will achieve the record for smooth work of persuasion.

The threatened split in the National Live Stock association between the cattlemen and sheepmen has been declared off and the sheep herder reposes serenely in the lap of the cowpuncher.

Statistics of the internal revenue show that the output of whisky and distilled spirits is increasing. The idea that hard times drives people to drink is apt to be shattered by this exhibit.

Wanted—A political osteopath who can straighten the skeletons of crooked politicians who are seeking the aid of Governor Savage to project themselves again into public life through the new Fire and Police commission.

Governor Van Sant is having more fun out of the railway community of interest consolidation plans than the railroad magnates themselves. Without this punching bag the Minnesota governor might have dried up for lack of official exercise.

The latest supreme court decisions in the insular cases turn on the question whether certain imports are dutiable, but in substance they constitute a writ of mandamus on congress to pass some sort of legislative measure to provide civil government for the Philippines.

The pope will not be represented by the usual delegate to the coronation of King Edward. His holiness says he has had no information as to the occasion of a new sovereign to the British throne. Someone must be keeping the daily papers away from the pope.

The Platte power canal project is still lingering in the dim and distant future, but that should not prevent Omaha business men from giving substantial encouragement for the establishment of mills and factories that will provide steady employment for wage workers.

That Nebraska has outgrown certain features of its state constitution is admitted by everybody, but the do-nothing obstructionists, like the Spaniards, say manna whenever a remedy is proposed. In the interval the progress of the state is retarded as by a strait-jacket and the burden of taxation unlightened.

The Woman's club of Vienna has fallen into financial difficulties apparently because it devoted its energies more to educating its members up to the beauties of whist and 5 o'clock teas than to the sacredness of the obligation to pay club dues promptly. The Vienna women should import a club woman or two from America to show them how to do the thing properly.

NEBRASKA SAFELY REPUBLICAN!

The decisive majority by which Judge Sedgwick was elected to the supreme bench has been interpreted by the republican press as proof positive that Nebraska is safely republican and may be counted on to elect the republican state ticket in 1902 by an equally decisive majority. This view is combated by the official state organ of populism in a carefully compiled exhibit of the comparative vote cast for candidates at the head of the respective republican and fusion state tickets in every election since 1895. The vote polled by republicans is as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Year, Republican votes. 1896-McCull, governor 94,723; 1897-Post, judge 89,099; 1898-Hayward, governor 168,828; 1899-Reese, judge 94,213; 1900-Dietrich, governor 112,879; 1901-Sedgwick, judge 98,993

The fusion vote stands: 1896-Holcomb, governor 116,415; 1897-Sullivan, judge 168,828; 1898-Poynter, governor 96,761; 1899-Holcomb, judge 110,329; 1900-Poynter, governor 119,019; 1901-Hollenbeck, judge 86,331

The deductions made from these figures are that the average fusion vote for the last six years is 103,336, while the average republican vote is only 97,390, indicating a fusion majority of 6,946.

While any calculation based on averages for any considerable number of years is misleading, careful study of the figures justifies the conclusion that upon a full vote the margin between the republicans and the democrats and populists combined in fusion is still very narrow. Comparing the aggregate republican vote cast for Judge Sedgwick with that cast two years before for Judge Reese, we find a gain of 4,785, while the vote cast for Hollenbeck as compared with that for Judge Holcomb shows a loss of 22,985. Two years ago the total vote cast for the republican and fusion candidates for supreme judge was 203,533, while this year the total vote cast for the republican and fusion candidates was 185,327, or 18,206 less than in 1899.

Substantial republican gains were doubtless made in the last two elections, it is manifest that the chief factor in the large shrinkage in Judge Hollenbeck's vote was the stay-at-home populists and democrats. Taking the vote cast for governor last year and the vote cast for supreme judge this year as the basis, the stay-at-home vote of 1901 aggregated 47,800, of which less than one-third was republican and fully two-thirds represented the elements in opposition.

Looking the facts squarely in the face, Nebraska republicans should realize that the outcome of the next year's campaign will depend upon the ability of the party to inspire the confidence of the voters and the character of the candidates presented to the people. With continued prosperity and honest compliance with party pledges Nebraska can be made safely republican.

A FLOOD OF PENSION BILLS.

Already about 1,000 pension bills have been introduced in congress, which if not an unprecedented number at the opening of a session at least shows that the demand for the government's bounty in the form of pensions is far from being exhausted. It is stated that some of these bills, if they became law, would add about \$100,000,000 a year to the pension expenditures, while if by any possibility they could all become law, it would take all of the revenues of the government to meet the expenditures called for in the bills.

One measure directs the secretary of the interior to place on the pension roll the names of all officers, soldiers, sailors and marines now surviving who were taken prisoners of war by the confederates and provides that such men are to be given a bonus of \$2 for every day of their confinement in confederate prisons, with a 12 month pension, which is to be in addition to any pension they are now receiving. Other bills grant pensions to every man who enlisted in the civil war, either as a soldier or a sailor, no matter whether pauper or millionaire. "In fact," says the Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Press, "every conceivable excuse by which a name could be gotten on the pension list is made use of in bills already introduced." In addition, there are bills to extend the pension laws so as to include the life saving service and various other branches of the government not now included in any pension laws.

Of course most of these measures will not become law. Many of them have been introduced as a sop to constituents who might be benefited by such legislation. Doubtless the new congressmen have been most active in this respect. But it is to be expected that enough of them will become law to increase materially the pension account, which for the last fiscal year amounted to over \$142,000,000, with a large number of claims pending at the close of the year. The last congress passed 1,361 special pension acts and from the start already made in introducing bills of this kind it seems safe to assume that the present congress will at least maintain the record for pension legislation.

NOT A SECTIONAL MATTER.

The Boston Transcript, referring to the president's proposition that the general government should concern itself in the enterprise of arid land reclamation, remarks that the idea is one that ought to appeal to the patriotism and public spirit of all American citizens. "It is not a sectional matter," says the Transcript, "provided we consider it broadly, for while the states and territories in which these unproductive lands are located would acquire new dignity and importance from the proposed wholesale schemes of reclamation, the rest of the country would be correspondingly benefited." Our Boston contemporary urges that having expanded outwardly we cannot rationally overlook the opportunity to expand inwardly, or "rather relieve that immense vacuum and realize the great potentialities suggested by this vast but now waste territory," by peaceful means and at a money cost less than

we have freely authorized for results not so conspicuous or beneficial even with the best we may hope or expect from them."

This is the broad and sound view to take of the question and such papers as the Transcript—intelligent, conservative and influential—can do no better service to the country than in showing to the people of the east the true character, importance and significance of the proposed reclamation of the arid and semiarid regions and pointing out the value to the entire country of carrying out this great enterprise. The prevalent notion in the east, judging from the past position of the representatives of that section in congress on the subject, that only the west would be benefited by opening up to settlement the arid lands, is utterly narrow and erroneous. Not only would thousands of eastern people settle in these lands, but the increased agricultural production would benefit all the people of the east as well as the people of other sections. In the great addition that would be made to the productive power and therefore to the wealth of the nation every part of the country would share.

Cannot Shift Responsibilities.

Grand Island Independent (rep.): The friends of Treasurer Stuefer are trying to put all the blame on the county officials in placing the state treasurer in a bad light if it is not just. Neither do we wish to help defend him for wrong-doing. The history of his transactions stand about as follows: He was given opportunities to buy county bonds bearing good rates of interest, but did not bid upon them. Private parties, in whom the state had confidence before his official career, did buy the bonds and then sold to the state (Stuefer) and made several thousand dollars by the deal. Now, these points are not open to controversy. The reader can pass upon the matter in his own way. He should remember money by the routine process and if the treasurer is innocent of intentional wrong-doing he is somewhat careless in looking after the best interests of the funds entrusted to him. That is all.

Not Explicit Enough.

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Tilden Citizen (rep.): The state treasurer's annual report is more complete than any other similar account previously made public by a Nebraska state treasurer and shows in detail the disposition of all the state funds. This is satisfactory enough, but it does not in any manner clear up the suspicion resting on Mr. Stuefer in the matter of the Burt and Cumming county bond deals. He smugly remarks in his report: "I desire to state that there is nothing covered up or hidden in this office and that I am perfectly willing to submit every transaction to the most thorough examination by the most searching scrutiny by the proper authority." Exactly so. Mr. Stuefer's accounts are no doubt accurately kept, and so far as the direct transactions of the treasurer are concerned his administration of the affairs of his office appears very creditable. No one expects otherwise. But there still stands a direct charge against him of having manipulated the school fund to the advantage of other than the people of Nebraska. This has nothing whatever to do with his report, and the taxpayers of the state are entitled to an explanation of the same. It is explicit, and, briefly stated, is as follows: Bonds were purchased by an outsider who paid for the same with the treasurer's checks on state deposits. The outsider then ostensibly sold the bonds to the treasurer, but the large freight charges, which are in the value of several thousand dollars, The explanation due from Mr. Stuefer should show why, since the bonds were originally bought with money belonging to the permanent school fund, all the interest

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Sidney Republican: The case made by The Omaha Bee against State Treasurer Stuefer is a very strong one. The state school fund has suffered a loss by "speculative manipulation," and Mr. Stuefer, who is accredited with more than ordinary ability to the permanent school fund, has placed him in a worse light. The attitude of the republican state convention, with relation to state funds, was made very clear, and Stuefer should resign.

Does Not Affect Bond Deal.

Kearney Hub: State Treasurer Stuefer counted the money in his possession belonging to the permanent school fund in December 2, in the presence of the governor, attorney general and secretary of state. The amount was \$18,179.20. All other money belonging to the fund has been invested in interest-bearing bonds. The balance in current funds amounts to \$35,325.22. In place of the interest coupons, which are in depository banks and the treasurer showed his certificates for the amount, The showing was perfectly satisfactory, but it will of course be understood that it has nothing to do with the other matters that

A MANIFEST MISCONCEPTION.

The Central Labor union has extended a vote of thanks to Mr. W. S. Poppleton for successfully carrying to the supreme court his injunction to prevent the mayor and council from entering into an agreement with the water works company for a modification of its contract with the city, under which the company had agreed to reduce its fire hydrant rentals and furnish free water for all public buildings and parks. In consideration of the waiver on the part of the city to exercise its right to purchase the works in 1901 for the sum fixed by a board of arbitration.

This action was taken by the Central Labor union on the presumption that the compact entered into between the mayor and council and the water company would effectively block municipal ownership of the water works. As a matter of fact the injunction procured by Mr. Poppleton has in no way expedited municipal ownership of the water works. Although the contention of Mr. Poppleton has been that the city had a right to acquire the works by purchase, under the arbitration clause of the water works ordinance, in the year 1901, no steps have been taken in that direction, and Mr. Poppleton himself, if we are correctly informed, does not favor such acquisition under the arbitration clause, because the city would be bound to abide by the appraisement made by two of the three arbitrators, even if that appraisement should be double or treble the actual value of the water works plant.

The provisions of the water works ordinance are that the city shall appoint one of the appraisers, the water works company the second and these two shall choose a third, and the valuation fixed by a majority of the three shall be absolutely binding on all parties. Should the water works company be able to persuade the third member of this arbitration board that the estimated value put upon their property by their representative on the arbitration board was about right the city might be compelled to pay for the works several millions more than the amount for which they could be duplicated.

The injunction in no way affected the right of the city to acquire the works by condemnation process by the exercise of the right of eminent domain, and the only drawback to such a process is that the city would have to pay the estimated value of the unexpired contract in case the works are taken over before the expiration of the term, which Mr. Poppleton claims to be in 1906 and the company claims will be in 1908.

The taxpayers of Omaha, therefore, have not been benefited in the least by the decision of the supreme court sustaining Mr. Poppleton's position. On the contrary, the injunction has proved a costly luxury, inasmuch as it has enabled the company to exact fire hydrant rental at \$80 and \$90 a year per hydrant for the remaining period of their contract, when they had offered to reduce that rental by one-third and in addition would have been willing to forego the collection of all water rental for city buildings and parks.

At the most conservative estimate these reductions would have already saved the city more than \$100,000 without in the least interfering with the city's right to acquire the water works plant or retarding in any way the experiment of municipal ownership.

According to the monthly report of County Treasurer Elasseur the surplus of county funds deposited in the various banks approximates \$110,000, but the taxpayers of Douglas county are not receiving a penny of interest on this deposit, while the funds in the custody of the city treasurer are drawing 2 per cent interest for the benefit of the city taxpayers. Why cannot the county commissioners take some steps that will give the county the benefit of interest

Republican State Press Discusses Bond Deals

Investigate Immediately.

Imperial Republican: Treasurer Stuefer's statements to the people have been very unsatisfactory to the republican press of the state. Let the governor and other members of the Board of Educational Lands and Funds see that an immediate investigation is held and the matter straightened up. The party demands it and the people in general demand it.

Convicts Himself.

Rushville Recorder: If the interview of Treasurer Stuefer, as given in the World-Herald last Friday, is correct, either he is such a simpleton as to be unfit for the office or else he does not realize the gravity of his actions. An investigation is the only way to settle this matter, and remove from discussion the present until the cold hard facts of the case are placed in the hands of the people.

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And as a matter of fact it is not probable that the bottom facts will ever be known.

Stuefer Should Be Elected to Ask.

Hartington Herald (rep.): Governor Savage seems inclined to shift the responsibility of starting an investigation of the state treasurer's bond deals upon other shoulders than his own. This is unfortunate, to say the least. The fact is it is plain that the "nigger" in the woodpile somewhere and the "nigger" should be located. We very much dislike to believe Mr. Stuefer guilty of manipulation of the trust funds to his own advantage, but it would seem that if he were entirely blameless he would under the circumstances be the first one to ask for an investigation.

Points Beyond Controversy.

Wayne Republican: The facts in the case are at hand, and every reader of this paper is permitted to judge of matters for himself. We have no desire to assist in placing the state treasurer in a bad light if it is not just. Neither do we wish to help defend him for wrong-doing. The history of his transactions stand about as follows: He was given opportunities to buy county bonds bearing good rates of interest, but did not bid upon them. Private parties, in whom the state had confidence before his official career, did buy the bonds and then sold to the state (Stuefer) and made several thousand dollars by the deal. Now, these points are not open to controversy. The reader can pass upon the matter in his own way. He should remember money by the routine process and if the treasurer is innocent of intentional wrong-doing he is somewhat careless in looking after the best interests of the funds entrusted to him. That is all.

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arising from these bonds should not have gone into the same fund, rather than into the pocket of an individual. This is a grossly interested in the X-ray as a means of diagnosis. He hasn't had a great deal of experience with the mysterious light, however. A patient came to him the other day complaining of a severe pain on the right side of the abdomen. Dr. B.—trotted him over to a professional friend who takes X-ray pictures, skiagraphs, as they are technically called. The friend was out, so Dr. B.—undertook to operate the machine himself. The patient started to divest himself of his clothes, but the surgeon stopped him, explaining that clothing doesn't even cast shadows on a skiagraph, so the man was photographed as he stood. The result showed a circular spot in the region where the pain was felt. "Foreign substance in the intestine," said the surgeon. "You must be operated on at once." The patient demurred, and while the surgeon was explaining the necessity, in came his friend, the doctor who owns the X-ray apparatus. He looked at the skiagraph and then at the patient.

"H'm," he grunted. "Been eating anything unusual lately?" "No," said the patient. "Didn't happen to swallow your car fare, perhaps?" The man denied it. "That spot looks to me strangely like a nickel. Let's see your pocket. He examined the lower right pocket, and a nickel of foreign origin fell out. The patient explained that it was a luck piece. "The luck is that I found it in time," said the X-ray expert.

The patient departed badly scared and cured himself with a dose at the drugstore. He had nothing worse than indigestion.

Should Offer Conclusive Proof.

Stanton Pickett (rep.): It is stated by individuals who have been favored with an "introduction" to Treasurer Stuefer's books that his records are all straight, are properly kept and disprove every charge against him in connection with bond deals from which he is alleged to have profited unlawfully. Such may be true. We would like to believe it is. If it is so we would like to know it by such a statement made public by the treasurer as will silence his accusers, or at least brand them as falsifiers, or to put it more mildly, as being mistaken. If Treasurer Stuefer is innocent, if he has done no wrong, if he has not profited in an illegal manner or knowingly permitted others to do so at the expense of the state, he owes it to himself, to his friends and to the republican party to make the best and strongest defense possible. Should he be able to do this, the satisfaction of his party in its own minds that he is innocent of the charges made against him 99 per cent of the republicans in Nebraska would rejoice, not more, perhaps not so much, because of the high esteem in which they have previously held Mr. Stuefer, as because of the relief which it would bring to the party which is responsible for his election. If Treasurer Stuefer is innocent he should do more than assume the roll of injured innocence. The people are not all from Missouri, but they have a right to demand that he be shown.

Snooks of Trickery.

Pierce Call (rep.): The Call was greatly surprised last week at the disclosures published by The Bee relative to bond deals in Burt, Cumming and other counties by State Treasurer Stuefer, and still more surprised that Mr. Stuefer has let nearly two weeks go by without any explicit statement explaining the matter. He has not stopped the deal. As it stands now the deal looks like a crookedness and trickery, and the republicans of Nebraska cannot and will not stand or tolerate any such actions on the part of its officials. The Call in weeks past has sincerely defended Treasurer Stuefer's administration, but the most searching scrutiny by the proper authority. Exactly so. Mr. Stuefer's accounts are no doubt accurately kept, and so far as the direct transactions of the treasurer are concerned his administration of the affairs of his office appears very creditable. No one expects otherwise. But there still stands a direct charge against him of having manipulated the school fund to the advantage of other than the people of Nebraska. This has nothing whatever to do with his report, and the taxpayers of the state are entitled to an explanation of the same. It is explicit, and, briefly stated, is as follows: Bonds were purchased by an outsider who paid for the same with the treasurer's checks on state deposits. The outsider then ostensibly sold the bonds to the treasurer, but the large freight charges, which are in the value of several thousand dollars, The explanation due from Mr. Stuefer should show why, since the bonds were originally bought with money belonging to the permanent school fund, all the interest

ROUND ABOUT NEW YORK.

Hipples on the Current of Life in the Metropolis.

Printers' ink played a conspicuous part in the New York municipal campaign. With-out counting the newspapers, which were practically unanimous for the winning ticket, the Citizens' union printed and distributed 2,314,000 pieces of campaign literature, at a cost of one-half a cent apiece; 275,000 low buttons, 90,000 Low lithographs and pasted up 135,000 posters, besides handing around 115,000 pamphlets antagonistic to Police Commissioner Devery. Advertising in street cars cost \$2,000 and a