

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING.

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Implement dealers in convention in Omaha are cordially invited to make themselves fully at home.

The problem of aerial navigation never had as good prospects of solution as are brought to it by the year 1902.

Our visiting editorial friends from Manitoba may yet get a chance to wear those fur overcoats before they return home.

Omaha's vital statistics for 1901 show a slight deficit in the number of recorded births. Omaha will have to offer a few prizes to do better next year.

Police Judge Gordon wants it distinctly understood that he is not a quitter—at least, not so long as there remains the slightest chance to connect with the salary.

If it is not extremely careful when it gets into its investigation into discriminating rates the Interstate Commerce commission may run the risk of finding what it is looking for.

Six men are to be legally hanged on one day next month in North Carolina. The authorities of that state are evidently making an effort to bring the legal execution record up to the lynchings figures.

It is noted that several demagogic papers in Iowa have recently suspended publication. Preaching democracy in Iowa is about as encouraging and remunerative as practicing law in a Quaker settlement.

For the first time in many years the school board has been organized by the members of the board rather than by the paid employes of the board. The change certainly cannot be detrimental to the taxpayers and school patrons.

When it is proposed to make ex-President Cleveland one of the representatives of this country at the coronation of King Edward we should remember that the coronation takes place in June, which is just when the fish bite best.

While the troops are being withdrawn from Cuba it might not be out of order to impress the military authorities with the fact that a few more regiments can be comfortably taken care of at the various posts in the Department of the Missouri.

The Chinese emperor is back in Peking. If he misses one of the little ornaments and curios which formerly adorned his palace he should remember that the disappearance of such things is not uncommon when others have occupied the house during the summer vacation.

The appearance of Tom L. Johnson and William Jennings Bryan as simultaneous performers upon a public platform in Cleveland ought to enthrall the admirers of the millionaire mayor who would like to see a man with a barrel succeed to the position of democratic heir apparent.

At the close of the fiscal year nearly every city fund has a slight balance to its credit. Contrast this with the deficit in the school fund. The school board, we must remember, has had a great Napoleon of finance at the head of its finance committee during the past twelve months.

Mayor Low's inaugural message to the Board of Aldermen was short and to the point, simply asking its co-operation in giving the city an administration entirely free from favoritism and official corruption. The best part of it is that no one doubts that Mayor Low means just what he says.

WAS THE DEMAND UNREASONABLE?

In its Sunday issue, the Lincoln Journal says: W. G. Sears of Tekamah, speaker of the house of representatives, though not very successful in making United States senators, has now undertaken the job of making state officers.

Incidentally, the Journal makes the assertion that all the state officers, after giving full consideration to the points raised by Speaker Sears, have decided to stand by Mr. Stuefer.

In the polluted atmosphere of the state house the demand of Speaker Sears for decisive action on the part of the governor to safeguard the treasury and put a stop to speculation in public funds may appear strange and peculiar.

To the people of Nebraska who are intensely sensitive about speculation and speculation by custodians of the state's money, the course pursued by Speaker Sears will appear eminently proper.

To the people, it is wholly immaterial whether Mr. Sears succeeded in electing his preferred candidates for United States senator, nor does it matter whether he is acting on his own motion or upon the advice of others.

As a matter of fact, Speaker Sears, prompted solely in the interest of the taxpayers of his own county and the state at large, took it upon himself to right the wrong perpetrated through the connivance of Treasurer Stuefer.

In company with ex-Senator Nesbit and ex-County Treasurer Piper of Burt county, he made a personal call on State Treasurer Stuefer in the middle of November and formally demanded restitution of the amount absorbed by the middleman who purchased the Burt county bonds with checks drawn by Treasurer Stuefer on deposits of school money in two Omaha banks.

Failing to secure any satisfaction from the treasurer, Speaker Sears laid the matter before the governor, and at his request filed a written complaint, coupled with a demand for a thorough investigation, which, if found to sustain his charges of crooked work, should be followed by a request for the resignation, and in case of his refusal to resign the convening of the legislature for such redress and such safeguards as that body could provide.

If this action on the part of the speaker meets with the disapproval of the state officers, they show very little appreciation of the gravity of the offense charged and of the responsibility that rests upon the executive for the proper conduct of the various departments of state government.

If the state officers imagine that the tide of public sentiment can be stemmed by ignoring and seeking to cover up the shady bond deals of the treasurer, they mistake the temper of an exasperated people.

The attempt to make out that the action of Speaker Sears was instigated by the editor of The Bee will not shield Mr. Stuefer or anybody in the state house who can see nothing wrong in his bond deals. As a matter of fact, the editor of The Bee knew nothing of this matter until the Burt county committee, headed by Mr. Sears, on its way to Lincoln, called on him to ask his advice.

Strange and peculiar as it may seem to the Lincoln Journal, the views then expressed by him were precisely the same as those subsequently voiced by Senator Dietrich, although the senator at the time was not aware of what others had advised.

Whether Governor Savage and his close advisers will persist in a refusal to respond to the demand of Speaker Sears, we are not in position to guess. But if the other state officers keep their ears to the ground they will soon discover that any effort to cover up or condone any questionable official act will shake public confidence, so essential to success.

A GOOD START. The reorganized Board of Education has made a good beginning. It has taken the first step toward retrenchment by a vigorous application of the pruning knife. The proposed reductions in salaries may not be based on scientific principles, and may in some respects have to be revised, but it affords gratifying proof to the taxpayers that the new board is determined to give them relief wherever it may be possible.

The public schools of Omaha have become topheavy and altogether too expensive. In this respect they do not materially differ from the public schools of several other cities that could be named. In an address on public school education, delivered at Philadelphia last week, Prof. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia university, is quoted as saying: "One of the great problems is the operation of an efficient school system, when no one knows just what such a system should cost in comparison with other municipal needs, and the most difficult question of all is to get a competent body of responsible citizens on school boards."

Judged by its first session, the new board cannot fail to commend itself to the great majority of the people whom it represents. It is to be deplored that the minority, and especially the newly-elected members, should have arrayed themselves against retrenchment. It is amazing that Mr. Funkhouser, who, as chairman of the finance committee of the old board, was in position to inaugurate greater economy in the expenditures of the public schools, should have opposed the proposition for general retrenchment under the plea that the plan which Member Robert Smith submitted on behalf of the minority would effect a saving of from \$50,000 to \$75,000 annually.

The question naturally presents itself: Why was it that Mr. Funkhouser and his associates in the last board did not make any effort to bring about this saving of \$50,000 to \$75,000? In this connection it is very singular that only a few weeks ago Mr. Funkhouser and his associates denounced The Bee and its editor for asserting that a saving of from \$50,000 to \$75,000 a year could be effected in the management of the public schools without impairing their efficiency.

Unfortunately, the proposed retrenchment cannot be put in operation before the end of June, inasmuch as the positions filled and salaries established by the last board are in the nature of contracts which bind the new board until the expiration of the school year.

FAVORING A DIFFICULT SITUATION. The Interstate Commerce commission will begin a searching inquiry at Chicago today as to whether railway combinations have affected railway rates or railway service. It is announced that this inquiry has been instituted at the instance of President Roosevelt, with a view to formulating recommendations to be embodied in a special message to congress recommending such amendments to the Interstate Commerce law as will suggest themselves by the facts elicited in the testimony taken by the commission.

The commissioners are represented as expressing the belief that the community of interest railroads and the railway corporations controlled by the Northern Securities company are subject to prosecution under the anti-trust laws. The commissioners refuse to concur with the attorney general in the opinion that the supreme court, in a recent decision, has knocked out the anti-trust Sherman law. On the contrary, they construe the decision in the Missouri joint traffic cases as declaring that this class of combinations are directly in conflict with existing statutes. While not sanguine of success in breaking down the Northern Securities company combination, the commissioners believe they will be able to demonstrate by the testimony they will adduce, that there is ample ground for the institution of proceedings against that combine and also that the scope and power of the Interstate Commerce commission should be enlarged, as recommended by President Roosevelt in his annual message.

Whatever may be the purpose of the commission, it may as well be assumed at the outset that the purpose of the railroad managers will be to avoid the making of any disclosures that will subject them to attack either by the courts or by congress. Whether the commission locates its pumping station at Chicago or at New York, it will be impossible to pump out of tanks that are full to the brim and running over with water. The traffic managers and freight agents who have been manipulating the rates over the transcontinental lines are not likely to unobscure themselves concerning cut rates and rebates, even under threat of penalties that include imprisonment as well as heavy fines. It is well known that under the existing statutes the commission is powerless to enforce its orders and at best can only remand violators of the law to the tender mercies of the federal courts.

When the Interstate Commerce commission was created, fifteen years ago, it was apparent to everybody conversant with the act that its usefulness as a regulator of railroads and as a tribunal for redressing the wrongs of the shippers was curtailed for want of judicial power, which, under the federal constitution, could not be vested jointly in an executive body as it has been by Parliament in the British Board of Trade.

At best, therefore, the Interstate commission is simply a board of supervision, without control, with the incidental function of a bureau of railroad statistics.

With the best of intentions and backing the commission will, we fear, be unable to get any satisfactory results out of its impending special inquiry into the operations of railroad combinations organized on the community of interest plan.

It is doubtful also whether congress will be able to materially enlarge the efficiency of the Interstate Commerce commission, even if the railway magnates who are interested in preventing such a grant of power should withdraw all opposition.

WHERE IS JOSIAH? The citizens of Denver have organized a vigilance committee to protect themselves against highwaymen, thugs and vagabonds, who have, for many months, been prowling about the streets of that city and carrying on their depredations in defiance of law and the police. Residents of the Colorado capital sought relief from this state of affairs some weeks ago by calling a grand jury, but the grand jury has adjourned without going into the matter. The murder of a little boy and attack upon his sister on New Year's night stirred up public indignation to such a pitch that it was decided to organize a vigilance patrol which should stop every man on the streets at night and subject him to inquiry as to his intentions and arrest every man who could not give a satisfactory account of himself. With the exception of the Pat Crowe incident, Omaha has never had such a state of affairs since the '90s, and the question naturally asked is: Where is Josiah Flynt, the professional tramp reformer, who painted Omaha in tar and represented it as the worst governed and most lawless city in America?

The proposed reduction of the salary of the superintendent of public schools from \$9,000 to \$8,200 will not meet the

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demand for the regeneration of the public schools from the top down. The objection to the retention of Mr. Pearce is not so much because he receives \$9,000, but because he is not earning \$9,000 and is unable to earn it. What the city wants is a \$9,000 man in a \$9,000 place, and not a \$1,200 man in a \$9,000 place. It would be preferable to pay \$4,000 a year or even more for an educator of the first magnitude who would devote his entire time and talents to the public schools and could be trusted to reorganize the system on modern lines, based on experience in other large cities, and who would religiously abstain from meddling in any other business or dabbling in politics.

The inspector general of the Iowa National Guard is evidently hankering for a little actual warfare. He has filed a report in which he takes strong ground against admitting women to the annual encampment, on the ground that the feminine charms are too much of a distraction from military duties.

The inspector general had better entrench himself and prepare for a siege. If the sweethearts of the soldier boys are not to see them parade and go through the maneuvers of mimic warfare, of what practical use is it to be a soldier?

Chicago packing house representatives all had sudden calls to attend to important business interests elsewhere when they were wanted to testify before the Interstate Commerce commission on the subject of manipulation of packing house rates. It is very plain that each of the packers depends more upon being able to secure as good rates as any one else than upon securing stable and equitable rates for all shippers.

Trade statistics present some curious conditions. Hides are now 49.4 per cent higher than they were fourteen years ago, but leather is only 4.3 per cent higher, and, stranger still, shoes are actually 8.3 per cent cheaper. These discrepancies represent the great revolution in processes of manufacture and tell the story of the supremacy of American manufactured products in other lands.

It is reported that railroad men will get even with the lines which have decided not to issue passes to employes of other roads by routing business wherever possible to lines favorable to granting transportation as of old. The average railroad man has several tricks up his sleeve which even the magnates who ride on special cars cannot afford to ignore.

An alleged expert, who has been studying the question, asserts that American workmen are overtaken in spite of this announcement, the American people will continue to wish the American workman three square meals a day and trust to his intelligence to keep the country in the front rank of the industrial world.

Several people whose names were used by Governor Savage as buttresses for his pardon of Bartley profess as much astonishment at seeing them in the list of petitioners as they were at the action of the governor. But Mr. Bartley's smooth lawyers will not be phased by a little thing like the unauthorized use of a man's name.

The Grumbler's Harvest. The man who likes to grumble is really the only man who gets any comfort out of misfortunes.

No Occasion for Haste. Prof. Loeb's discovery that death is merely a microbe will scarcely justify all of the undertakers in going out of business at once.

Congressional Space Fillers. Those editors who complain of the biographical redundancy of the Congressional Directory evidently overlook the fact that the gentlemen could have done more space had they so desired. There is no limit on that sort of thing.

Getting Ready for Business. With a brand new President's approved patriotism, Cuba should turn a fresh tobacco leaf in her history of texture and fragrance unrivaled. Her new budding prosperity should not end in smoke, like her principal crop, and will not if we can help her out in any way.

American Mounts for Boers. Great Britain buys large numbers of horses in the United States for use against the Boers, and the only reason our Boer sympathizers abide it is because they know a good many of the horses eventually fall into the hands of the Boers and thus prolong their resistance. Here we see the sense of humor performing an international service that facts and argument would be powerless to effect.

Trouble Ahead for Combines. It is evident that the year 1902 is going to be a year of trial, tribulation and weeding out for many of the syndicates, combinations and spread-eagle corporate enterprises of the past two years. It has been easy enough for promoters to visit New Jersey and get authority for all sorts of predatory financial undertakings, but it is one thing to float stocks and bonds and quite another thing to find cash for promised interest and dividends. The distress that follows upon default for insolvent or deceived investors is saddening, but also salutary.

Bogus Interviews. Philadelphia Press. Governor Shaw of Iowa on reaching Washington Friday night was of course beset by newspaper reporters who sought his views on various political questions. To all inquiries he replied: "I have nothing to say on those questions. Some interviews have been sent out from Des Moines and Chicago purporting to come from me and giving my views; they were wholly unauthorized. I have said nothing on those subjects and will say nothing." There is altogether too much of this bogus interview business and Governor Shaw and his wife also appear to have been more or less victims of that kind of creditable work on the part of a certain class of newspaper.

Freight Rate Injustice

It is a curious fact that the topic which will occupy the attention of congress when it reassembles this week—an isthmian canal—is one which will affect the country a generation hence rather than that important affair of today. It will take ten or more years to complete it, yet its priority in congress would seem to make it the leading question before the country. There is reason to believe that many people think otherwise, and that if they were to name the topic which congress should first consider it would not be the isthmian canal.

For instance, there are many intelligent people and a large number of commercial organizations that believe it is more important that the Interstate Commerce commission should have authority to enforce its decisions in regard to the inequalities in rates and the injustice to many shippers for favoritism to others. All that the commission can do now is to give publicity, which is not effective. Either that body should be a tribunal with authority to enforce its decisions or it should be abolished.

The commission finds that discriminations against localities and persons exist. Some of them are very unjust, not only to individuals, but to whole communities. The commission, for instance, found that a shipment of railroad companies were carrying grain to Minneapolis at rates which discriminate against Milwaukee to the extent of 1 to 5 cents per 100 pounds. Such discrimination deprives Milwaukee of the privilege or right to equal competition in the grain trade. The commission has no power to enforce its finding, but the railroads do the discrimination in two, so that the injustice to that city is only half as marked as it was. If the commission had power to enforce its findings the rates would have been so adjusted that both cities could be treated fairly. All of the railroad companies except two agreed to an equitable schedule, but the two companies prevented an act of justice because they were

more interested in Minneapolis than in Milwaukee business.

Another case is cited by a writer in the North American Review which is of more importance than that already cited. One-fourth of the cheese made in the United States is turned out by the 1,700 cheese manufacturers in Wisconsin. It was discovered that the freight rates on cheese from points in Wisconsin were a third more than from points in the dairy region of New York. The exact figures being 40 cents per 100 pounds from points 210 and 220 miles distant in Wisconsin from Chicago and 30 cents per 100 pounds from points 350 to 380 miles distant in New York from Chicago. It is not necessary to explain that this is most unjust discrimination against a great industry in one state, and one for which there should be a remedy if the Interstate Commerce commission is to be of any use. The same writer, Mr. Bacon, president of the League of National Associations, considering the subject of transportation, says that by the classification of articles of freight for all the railroads east of the Mississippi river which went into effect January 1, 1900, many articles were classified at a higher rate, such as necessary articles of life as sugar, coffee, soap and starch, at a rate of 20 per cent higher than before. He asserts that many articles shipped in less quantities than a carload are raised from 33 to 80 per cent over carload rates.

These alleged cases of injustice, if they exist as charged, are of greater importance to the people who live and labor and buy and sell today than is the construction of a canal which may benefit a portion of the American people who shall occupy the country years hence. The surprise of people generally is that congress does not prove that such unjust conditions do not exist or provide remedies if the charges are sustained.

CAUSES OF OUR PROSPERITY. Record of the Past Year and the Future Outlook. Baltimore American.

In reviewing a year's progress for the year, Bradstreet's calls attention to the fact that 1901 has been a great record-breaker among five successful years of expansion, in spite of certain drawbacks, which might have been expected to exert a seriously retarding effect. Among these were the panic in Europe, the strike in May, the great strike in July, some large failures, the slump in the price of copper and especially the shortage in the corn, cotton and oil crops. In the face of these depressing factors business has been done in such an amount that the old world has become alarmed at American progress.

To what has been due this great advance in the face of the obstacles just mentioned? The explanation can be found, in a large measure, in the American himself and his method of doing business. The worthy spirit of our people is such that they are able to do business quicker and more effectively than other people, and they are not afraid to try experiments in foreign fields while capitalists of other countries are figuring on the cost of making new investments and the chance of success. Business in general better organized in this country than elsewhere. Connected with the question of organization are, of course, labor-saving machines, admirably adapted to the purposes in view, and high wages, which means efficient labor, and the mutual interest of capital and labor, when business in all its aspects is considered, have in each other.

The natural resources of the country, of course, count for a great deal, but this factor would not in itself explain present conditions. It is the application of the best labor and the requisite amount of capital in developing natural resources that determine industrial supremacy in this age. It has been said, for instance, that in England the question in a factory is: How long will the old machine run before it is replaced, whereas, in America, the inquiry is: Will the new machine do more and better work than the old? And if it will it is adopted at once. The American idea is to use the best that is available and to discard that, no matter what it may have cost, when something more efficient is produced. In following this plan the educational effect upon the workman is very great, and soon reaches a point where the lazy, incapable operative must give place to one who is better. The result is that the best methods of production and the best machines, it is evident that the nations that have not these as their own factors must be distanced in competition in the long run. The balance of trade in our favor at the close of the last fiscal year was \$600,000,000. With nothing more serious to disturb business than what has happened this year, it is fair to argue that it will be much greater by June 30, 1902.

PERSONAL NOTES. Mayor Low of New York refuses to perform the marriage ceremony, saying that to do so would take up time which might be spent to much greater advantage.

Mr. John G. Milburn of Buffalo, at whose house President McKinley died, will be tendered the presidency of the New York State Bar association at its meeting in Albany, January 21.

Marsden J. Perry of Providence, R. I., the business partner of Senator Aldrich, is to have in his library the best collection of Shakespeareans in America. It has cost him over \$50,000.

Jacob Cantor, the new borough president of New York, declares that among his first acts will be to give a thorough scrubbing and cleaning out of the public buildings, including the school houses.

Henry R. Wells of Preston, Minn., has presented to the Minnesota State Historical society a melodeon owned by John Brown, the hero of Harper's Ferry, and two pictures, one of them a likeness of John Brown.

Many persons in London stayed up all night New Year's eve and many others got up unusually early next morning in order to be at the postoffice in time to secure the new postage stamps bearing a portrait of King Edward.

Thomas A. Walker, a wealthy Hardin county (Iowa) planter, landed in New York City in 1838 with but 24 cents, and still possesses the identical 24 cents, which he will retain as a valuable heirloom for his children's children.

Thomas Estrada Palma, the first president-elect of Cuba, is the descendant of a distinguished Castilian family. He has been called the "Franklin of Cuba." Palma at one time conducted a school for boys at Central Valley, Orange county, N. Y.

M. Hamard, the French sculptor, has just completed, at Paris, the model of a statue of Marshal Rochambeau, to be presented to the state of Lafayette. It will be ready to send to the United States next April.

Scenes and Incidents Observed Around the National Capital.

At the coming-out party at the White House last Friday evening the first lady of the land displayed clever diplomacy and turned the tables on the fortunate gallants of Washington. Most of the dancing parties of the capital are favored with an abundance of women, resulting in a conspicuous array of well-dressed and well-to-do young women. Mrs. Roosevelt decided that male guests on that occasion should do duty as wall flowers, and carried out her plan by inviting 300 young men and 150 women. It was therefore the young men who played the part of wall flowers and waited the whim of the fortunate young women, who all had partners. Sometimes the young women divided dances into a dozen turns in order to help out the men, who found the tables for once turned upon them. 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