

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

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It is time for something to be doing again in the far eastern seat of war. If these strikes continue Chicago may find it advisable to change its motto of "I will" to "I can't."

With a mine adrift near the Marshall Islands some noncombatant may harvest one of the fruits of war.

The local base ball season is auspiciously opened, but there will be more goose eggs than home runs before it is closed.

St. Joseph merchants are making a trade trip through Nebraska, but they will have to hustle to break into Omaha's territory.

The failure of the president to bag a grizzly bear does not seem to have changed his opinion on the subject of freight rates.

After all, American packers must admit that the practice of Berlin meat markets puts a "horse" on the packing industry in this country.

As a matter of diversion, the Lincoln Board of Education will grapple with the Standard Oil octopus, but the conflict will not be sanguinary.

Now that a massacre of Jews has been reported from Russia all doubt is removed that the Easter holidays are being fully observed by the orthodox.

With twenty-four lives lost in the opening tornado in Kansas the people of that state may be pardoned for wishing for the return of the hard coal days.

Having been assured that the Equitable is secure, policy holders may turn their undivided attention to trying to ascertain who is to receive the surplus.

The Bee cheerfully concedes to its enterprising contemporary the exclusive privilege of being in constant and confidential communication with Pat Crowe.

The Germans of Omaha have a right to feel proud over their Schiller celebration. The great poet would himself feel proud could he only be here to join in the festivities.

The street railway company draws the line at contribution for free band music in Hanascon park, in competition with paid band music at Lake Manawa, Cut-off lake and Krug park.

Great Britain may be satisfied with the denials of France, but Japan will probably insist upon being the one to decide when the contingent terms of the alliance have been fulfilled.

Nebraska should by this time be a little tired of having its March weather in May. It does not give ample opportunity to develop an appreciation of the beautiful June to follow.

Nebraska club women are missing an opportunity to secure public attention. So far they have failed to protest against the acceptance of the gift of Grover Cleveland to Hastings college.

Those who believe in municipal ownership of public utilities will welcome Andrew Carnegie to their ranks, but must wonder why he had to go to England to proclaim his conversion.

That church labor conference in Boston might have tried its hand in the Chicago struggle if it had decided upon a course of action, but it is to be commended for its aims if not for its achievements.

Competition for the republican nomination for congress for the First Nebraska district is becoming keener every day. It is noticeable, however, that there is no danger of overcrowding in a rush to get the democratic nomination to contest for the place.

NO CHANGE OF POSITION. Those who profess to be apprehensive that President Roosevelt has changed or may change his position in regard to regulation of railroad rates by the government will find in his speech at Denver assurance that there is no ground for their professed fear. That utterance very clearly and distinctly shows that the president adheres to the views expressed in his last annual message to congress.

In that carefully prepared statement of the views of the chief executive it was said: "While I am of the opinion that at present it would be undesirable, if it were not impracticable, finally to clothe the commission with general authority to fix railroad rates, I do believe that, as a fair recourse to shippers, the commission should be vested with the power, where a given rate has been challenged and after full hearing found to be unreasonable, to decide, subject to judicial review, what shall be a reasonable rate to take its place, the ruling of the commission to take effect immediately and to obtain unless and until it is reversed by the court of review." The president went on to say that the government must not in increasing degree supervise and regulate the workings of the railways engaged in interstate commerce and concluded his reference to this subject as follows: "In my judgment the most important legislative act now needed as regards the regulation of corporations is this act to confer on the Interstate Commerce commission the power to revise rates and regulations, the revised rate to take effect and to stay in effect unless and until the court of review reverses it."

The speech of Mr. Roosevelt at Denver is in entire accord with the views expressed in his message. He reiterated the opinion that the commission should be given the power to regulate rates and that the rates prescribed by it should go into effect practically at once. He endorsed unqualifiedly the views of Attorney General Moody in his letter to Senator Elkins, heretofore referred to, urging the right of congress to confer upon an executive body power to regulate railroad rates, as repeatedly affirmed in decisions of the supreme court of the United States.

The attempt has been made to show that the president had modified the position taken in his message of last December. The Denver speech is a complete answer to every intimation or insinuation of this kind. It conveys renewed assurance to the people that their chief executive stands firmly by the position he announced so plainly and explicitly in his last annual message and that he can be depended upon to exert all the influence of the administration to secure the legislation which he believes to be necessary to remedy abuses and to protect the public against unlawful and unjust discriminations. It is said to be already practically assured that the senate committee on interstate commerce will not frame a bill giving to a federal commission any kind of rate-fixing power. Nobody has expected that committee to frame such a measure. It has pretty clearly shown in what direction its sympathies are. But that committee will not determine the character of the legislation to be enacted and its unmistakable partiality for the railroad side of the question must materially impair its influence both in congress and with the public.

JUSTIFIABLE RESENTMENT. There seems to be no doubt that the Japanese government is fully justified in showing resentment at the prolonged presence of the Russian squadron in French waters. Granting that the French government, as it claims, has made all proper efforts to prevent a breach of neutrality, yet it is evident that the representatives of that government in Indo-China have not performed their duty and for this Japan rightfully holds the French government responsible. Had there been a strict and vigilant enforcement of the law of neutrality the Russians could not have lingered for several weeks in French waters, as they have done, enabling them to coal and provision their warships, not for the purpose of reaching the nearest Russian port, but to prepare for battle with the Japanese fleet.

The fact appears to be, according to the commander of the French naval force in the Indo-China waters, that when Rojstvensky was ordered to leave French waters he took his own time to comply and was very leniently dealt with. That has evidently been the common practice—perhaps a natural result of the Franco-Russian alliance, but none the less a disregard of neutrality and a grave wrong to Japan. It is stated that the French government directed that the divisions of the Russian fleet should not be allowed to make a juncture in French waters, but probably no attention was paid to this. It is not to be apprehended that Japan's warrantable resentment will have any serious outcome, but it is to be regretted that France has been placed in so indefensible a position.

SERVICE ON THE ISTHMUS. It appears that there is a good deal of discontent among employees of the government on the Isthmus of Panama and that resignations have become frequent. It seems that the dissatisfaction is due in part to the small salaries paid and in a measure to the lack of means of entertainment, while doubtless the general conditions of life there are well calculated to cause discontent among Americans who have gone there. It is anything but an exhilarating climate and it is quite conceivable that there is little at present which is conducive to cheerfulness and contentment.

The commission will endeavor to improve conditions and to render life on the isthmus more endurable. It will pay better salaries to those who are now getting small compensation. It will promote social development and will encourage means for popular entertainment. It will provide for the organization of clubs and supply accommodations for them. Creditable service on

the isthmus will be rewarded by transfer to the civil service in this country. All this is obviously necessary in order to secure capable Americans for service in that anything but inviting region. Men cannot be expected to go there for compensation little above that they can obtain in this country. They must be so well paid that they will be enabled to accumulate something, for no one will go there with the idea of making a permanent residence. Doubtless in time the isthmus will become a place where life will not be entirely devoid of comforts and pleasure, but at present existence there must be exceedingly dreary and unsatisfactory.

MAKING PROGRESS. That the movement for tax reform in Nebraska is making substantial progress is shown by the action of the state board calling for returns from railroads operating over leased lines in this state, with a view to including those roads in the next grand assessment roll. Attorney General Brown's opinion makes it clear enough that railroads operating in this state, although owning no right-of-way or trackage, are still subject to taxation ratable to the valuation of that part of their property and business in this state. The only wonder is that railroads carrying on traffic in Nebraska and sending their cars within our jurisdiction should at any time have escaped entirely without paying taxes.

The theory that railroads operating leased lines are not taxable in Nebraska because they own no fixed property within the state limits is absolutely without foundation. This is conclusively demonstrated by carrying the theory to a logical conclusion.

Under that idea a newly incorporated railroad company might lease the lines of one of the existing taxable roads and continue to operate them just as they are now operated, with the result that thereafter taxes would be paid only on the right-of-way, trackage and other immovable property, while the rolling stock and franchise would escape taxation altogether. Or, again, the railroads now paying taxes in Nebraska might organize an operating company, retaining all of the right-of-way and trackage under lease and in the same manner evade the larger part of their legitimate tax burdens. If this scheme were expanded so that one operating company leased all the railroad lines in Nebraska, the state would be left with nothing to tax except the bare values of the immovable property, while the valuable franchises and rolling stock would be at once wiped off the assessment roll.

A private citizen who leases real estate and erects improvements thereon is taxed upon the value of the improvements, and there is no more reason why the railroad corporation conducting a profitable business on leased track should not be taxed in the same manner. It should be as much to the interest of the roads that have been regularly assessed that the leasehold lines be likewise returned; otherwise, the roads owning no trackage within the state, and thereby escaping taxation, would be in better position and enjoy greater privileges than those who have invested their capital in constructing Nebraska lines and paid taxes on them, even though inadequately.

Now that the attorney general has paved the way for the taxation of the franchises of the railroads that have acquired the right-of-way over the Union Pacific terminals and trackage between Council Bluffs and South Omaha, it will be incumbent on the State Board of Equalization to ascertain the value of these franchises and assess the roads accordingly. In order to arrive at a rational conclusion regarding the value we would suggest that the board consult the allegations of the Chicago Great Western railroad when it applied for a writ of mandamus against the Union Pacific in Judge Munger's court to compel the Union Pacific to grant it equal privileges of use of its terminals and track-er facilities with the Rock Island, the Milwaukee & St. Paul and other railroads that had acquired those privileges by leasehold.

Park Commissioner Lininger is eminently correct in his position that it is not the place of the board to use park funds to pay for the paving of city streets, thus relieving one set of property owners of tax burdens which another set are compelled to bear. Under our scheme of street improvements the abutting property owners are expected to pay for the paving, and the obligation should be no different whether the thoroughfare is called a street or labeled a boulevard.

The ordinance ordering all telephone wires to be placed underground in South Omaha has been reported favorably and will be passed without dissent by the South Omaha council. We violate no confidence to reveal publicly that the conduit ordinance is not repugnant to the telephone company.

When it comes to enterprise commend us to our boastful contemporary, which prints copiously of the remarks of Senator Tom Patterson at Denver, "singing a paean to water," and suppresses the speech of President Roosevelt reiterating and reinforcing his position on railroad rate regulation.

There's the Rub. Washington Post. The attorney general declares that congress has power to fix railroad rates. This removes every obstacle except the discovery of the power that will induce congress to exercise its powers.

News that is News. New York Tribune. After four years and a half of wandering and evasion of justice, Pat Crowe has concluded that the wages of wrongdoing are not satisfactory and has given himself up to the authorities of Omaha. Hope Springs Eternal. Minneapolis Journal. Pittsburg and Allegheny City will vote upon a project to unite the union to take place in 1907. When Minneapolis and

St. Paul unite, in twenty or 30 years, you will see something that will make Kansas City, Omaha and Denver look like a bunch of wooden suburbs.

Remonstrances of the Tailor. Somebody says snooping around and discovered that one of the men who loudly protested against the acceptance of Mr. Rockefeller's money, on the ground that it was tainted, owns a building which is used partly for saloon purposes. How spiteful some people are.

The Meters Will Make Good. Boston Globe. It is reported that it cost the Consolidated Gas company of New York \$500,000 to defeat in the state senate a bill to reduce the price of gas from \$1 to 90 cents; but it is understood that the company has made an arrangement with the meters to make good the loss so the stockholders won't suffer.

Notable Change of Time. Philadelphia Record. Now the managers of the transcontinental railroads insist that they are not able to carry freights so as to injuriously compete with rail traffic. If this be correct, the past arrangement between the railroads and the Pacific Mail Steamship company for the maintenance of exorbitant freight rates on goods carried between Atlantic and Pacific ports was a more outrageous compact than the public had been led to suppose. It was a combination to rob by the extortion of unjust rates under the plea of necessity that did not exist.

Overdoing the Job. Springfield Republican. The senate committee's hearings upon the railroad question have now been distinguished by many arguments against government control of rates, in almost all cases coming from railroad men themselves. This last week a professor from the University of Chicago appeared, and he, too, objected strongly to governmental supervision in any form. He proved a pretty strong witness until he began to speak of stockwatering as a blessing to the country. Then he overdid it. Prof. Meyer is a very learned man, but he might as well ignore the blessings of stockwatering.

IT IS NOT OUR STYLE. "The Simple Life" Not Needed in America. George P. Brett in The World of Today.

The conditions of life in America have been too long in the making. Our days begin in the kindergarten with play and song and legend, instead of honest toil and real achievement, and our later life is given up too much to senseless amusements and sensational pleasures, with the result that our moral fiber has become flaccid and our public conduct has gone to sleep. Our honesty and manliness in public life no longer shock and horrify us as they should, and the public press treats of the scandalous matters above referred to merely from the standpoint of sensationalism. We are in the habit of saying that such things can be and have come to believe that honesty is not even the best policy, in defiance of the early teachings of our copy books.

It has been truly said that what is everybody's business is the business of no one, and hence it is the duty of every citizen of a republic, where everyone is of equal importance and influence in the eye of the law, to take an interest in the affairs of the community. This danger is an increasing one in these days of enormous aggregations of population, when the voice of the individual is less and his weight because of the crowded conditions of our modern city life. The tendency is for each of us to go his own way, attending strictly to his own affairs, burdensome enough usually for the strength of the man engaged in active business life. I intend to urge my protest against the message which Charles Wagner and Mr. Hilly bring and to urge that it be disregarded in favor of an attitude of mind much more needed at this time, which is a spirit of criticism and doubt as to the infallible goodness of existing conditions and a discontent in view of these many evils, which is the first step toward their cure.

COMMERCIAL GRAFT. Wisconsin Experiments with a Novel Line of Reform. Chicago Inter Ocean.

If you have any idea of doing business in Wisconsin personally, or of sending a representative to Wisconsin to transact business for you, or of employing somebody in Wisconsin to act as your business agent, it would be well for you to secure a copy of the Stout anti-graft bill passed by the legislature of that state and signed by the governor on Tuesday.

This new law is now in operation. It is pronounced one of the most far-reaching measures for the suppression of corruption ever enacted. It provides that whoever corruptly gives or offers any agent, servant or employe any gift or gratuity whatever with the intention to influence his actions in relation to his duties, business, or any agent, servant or employe who accepts such a gift, shall be liable to a fine of \$10 to \$150, or to such fine with imprisonment for one year.

The measure is intended to strike at an evil which has been growing steadily in this country in recent years and which takes every form, from the bribery of a \$10 a week clerk to the bribery of a \$100,000 a year railway official; from influencing the purchase of a small bill of merchandise dishonestly to influencing the granting of million dollar contracts.

It is a purely nonpartisan, nonpolitical enactment. It has to do with commercial rather than with political graft, although it may be applied, of course, to the letting of public contracts. The impression prevails in Wisconsin that its strict enforcement will result in the abolition of "kick" porters, bootblacks, waiters, etc., but whatever the enforcement of the letter of the law may accomplish in this direction, in spirit it is intended to bring down other and bigger game.

In many cases of business bribes to employes have of late years taken the place of discounts to employes. Purchasing agents have fallen into the practice of considering the fee offered them for closing a trade rather than the profits which the trade would bring to the man who pays the bill. The salesman in many cases can offer the most tempting bribe to the agent has come to be more successful than the salesman who has nothing to offer except a good margin of profit for the principal.

Minor Scenes and Incidents Sketched on the Spot. Your Uncle Samuel is a hard customer to deal with. His path of duty and destiny is followed faithfully, awaiting neither to the right nor to the left at the behest of rivals. Yet your uncle is not as brave as he looks. Appreciating the maxim, "Custom makes cowards of us all," he has struck his colors and surrendered to the tip. An order is being drafted by the Navy department regarding the expenses of naval officers, for the purpose of curbing extravagance. The order places certain limits on the cost of transportation. Pullman cars and the like, and continues:

Hotel bills of commissioned officers not to exceed \$1 a day. Single meals, \$1 each, up to 10 cents. Tips on trains, 50 cents a day. Tips will not be allowed on parlor car except on journey of five hours or longer. Tips in hotels, 50 cents a day, but not to exceed \$2 a week at one hotel.

An elaborate and particularized scale of tips is framed for ocean travel and travel in foreign lands. Recognizing the greater expense of the former, the committee has permitted to expend \$150 a week on tips in foreign hotels, \$150 a day on an ocean steamer during six days or less, and \$1 a day for a fifteen-day trip or longer.

It is told of Secretary Taft that it is his wish that the clerks in his department have a good record for paying their debts, but he has not reached the point where he has issued the ukase, "pay your debts or get out." Not long ago an unfortunate clerk who had rounded up in the clothes of the Shylock who let money at 33 cents per year, was called on by the blood money man, and failing to get a payment, he sought the secretary.

"How much money did this clerk borrow of you?" asked the secretary, after listening to the Shylock's tale of woe of stamped envelopes by the fractional profits when the stamp clerks in 26,000 postoffices have retained for their own use.

Third Assistant Postmaster General Madden, who invented the stamp books, stirred the department from Maine to California by means of instructing stamp clerks to hereafter account for the fractional amounts received when stamped envelopes and wrappers are sold in uneven quantities. Before the order came out the clerk accounted only for the face value of the stamped paper in his possession and the odd pennies which he picked up from uneven sales he retained for his own use.

When you buy a single 1-cent wrapper or a single 2-cent stamped envelope the clerk charges you 2 or 3 cents, as the case may be. The wrapper costs him possibly 12-100 of a cent and the envelope about 212-100 of a cent, so that his profit in the first case is 36-100 of a cent, and in the second 88-100 of a cent. Of course, the profits are not proportionate in larger sales, and all the clerks on each sale divide the difference between the fractional amount.

Some one with a turn for calculations figures that in Chicago alone the profit from fractional sales is about \$500 a month, and that about \$50,000 a year additional income from the whole country, or enough money to pay the salary of the president.

While the order bears heavily on the regular stamp clerks who have to submit because the stamped paper is not theirs, and belongs to the government from the time it is received until the time it is sold. But the men who keep substations are in a different category, and they are in ill humor over the proposed decision made in a request from the New York postmaster that their substation clerks who buy their supplies outright must turn in the fractional profits at the end of each quarter.

The absence of the president, of cabinet members, and of congressmen from Washington is compensated socially by the presence of two persons, Mr. and Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish. They have descended upon Washington, and their presence is the whole story. The fact became patent last week, as Mr. Fish is just now more in the limelight as president of the international railroad congress than anybody else.

Mr. and Mrs. Fish took a six weeks' lease of one of the largest houses in town at \$2,000 a week, and prepared to entertain all Washington in New York and Newport style.

CHURCH ADVERTISING. Absurdity of So-Called "Unprofessional" Practices Shown Up. The Rev. Dr. Torrey of London, lately sent the following reply to an English advertising periodical, which had asked for his opinion whether churches ought to advertise:

"It is as legitimate for churches to advertise to draw people to hear the word of God, in order that they may get blessing as it is for shops to advertise in order that they may draw people to buy goods. Of course, a minister of the gospel should avoid anything like a parade of himself in his advertising, but the churches have something good to tell, and they ought to let people know it. I am not ashamed of the gospel. I want everybody to hear it. It has been my joy to see thousands of wide-awake business men all around the world brought to Christ through the gospel, and I have received countless letters from them thanking me for what they have received. I am glad that we have advertised."

Commenting thereon, the Albany Press says: "Not long ago, it was considered as 'unprofessional' for ministers as for doctors or lawyers to advertise, unless, of course, in the form of indirect free advertising of the news columns, always eagerly availed of. Why any such code of ethics should ever have been promulgated, is a mystery. No valid reason can be conceived why a lawyer should not advertise the fact that he is in practice, and ready for business; or a doctor, that his advice is at the service of patients, or a minister, that he has a message to deliver to lost souls seeking salvation."

PERSONAL NOTES. Harry J. Heter and his bride have started in a buggy from Peabody, Kan., and will travel in that fashion to Denver as a wedding trip. Prof. Ernest Haeckel, in a recent lecture in Berlin, stated that, in his opinion, it is absolutely certain that man is descended from apes.

James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern railway, has provided money for the building of a handsome chapel in Orange, N. J., for the Sisters of St. Elizabeth's convent.

Mayor Wells of St. Louis received this week the Grand Cross of the Double Dragon, conferred on him by the Chinese emperor and forwarded through the Chinese legation at Washington.

Frank Bosworth Brandegee, who has been elected in Connecticut to succeed the late O. H. Platt in the United States senate, can trace his ancestry back to the Mayflower. He is a Yale graduate of the class of 1888 and was quite an athlete while at college, rowing in the crew.

In Boston the other day a young lawyer who spends most of his time trying to seem busy and prosperous went out for a while, leaving on his door a card neatly marked: "Will be back in an hour." On his return he found that some envious rival had inserted in the window a note which read: "The car of Russia, it is said, has \$2,000,000 invested in English securities, and it is also declared that he would in an extreme crisis fly and live in England, as other troubled monarchs have done before him. Then he has a second string to his bow in the \$300,000 invested in American rail, iron and coal."

Starr J. Murphy for six years has been charity manager for John D. Rockefeller, drawing a handsome salary for work done as head of the bureau of benevolence. The Standard Oil magnate has only one rule in connection with Mr. Murphy's position—every dollar must be devoted to charity which will return good results.

Fifty Years the Standard. BAKER'S BAKING POWDER. Made from pure cream of tartar derived from grapes.

PASSING PLEASANTRIES. Who says that the world is not progressive? A generation ago the milk when they got provoked, used to say, "Oh, sugar." Now they say, "Oh, fudge!" Somerville Journal.

ONE DAY IN MAY. Clinton Scollard in New York Sun. Do you recall, old friend, how we pulled up the Wye one day in May? The bloom was on the Hawthorn tree, and many an upland meadow way showed plots of hyacinths as blue as glints of sky the clouds let through.

Left left gray Cleopatra's walls behind— Her crumbling gird, its burst of chimneys; With us went woeingly the wind, Repeating little bits of rhyme, And with us, too, the tide's long sweep From Severn and the other deep.

SNOW FLAKE BREAD. 5 Cents a Loaf. Pure, Rich and Appetizing. Pure, Because it is made in a modern two story strictly sanitary bakery where pure air abounds and where every precaution is used to insure immaculate cleanliness.

Browning, King & Co. CLOTHING, FURNISHINGS, AND HATS. A Rain Coat. Are you sure you won't need one today or tomorrow? Swagger Coats, in fancy and plain worsted materials; a long, loose, serviceable garment— \$15 to \$30.

Mellin's Food for the Baby. All goes well when the baby is well. Keep that baby well by giving him Mellin's Food. It will nourish him, make him grow strong and keep him happy.