

THE OMAHA BEE.

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THE BEE PUBLISHING CO., PROPS. E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

The free wagon bridge across the Missouri is complete. It is a big thing on ice.

The cable announces to us the sad intelligence that the Rajah of Kolapoor is dead. His family has our sympathy.

Commissioner Loring has given us something more on American swine, but as usual the commissioner's statistics are mere guess-work.

It is a week yet before the congressional mill will resume grinding, meanwhile the Washington reporters are grinding out empty grist.

It is rumored again that Villard will resign the presidency of the Northern Pacific, but we presume that Mr. Villard has no intention to give up his Northern Pacific pickings and stealings.

With the beginning of the new year Uncle Sam will go into the junk shop business. The Boston navy-yard will be converted into a rope walk and the condemned vessels will be broken up.

Bradlaugh announces his intention to take his seat again. The last time he tried it he had his regulation spike-tail torn off his back. This time he will probably take the precaution to put on a second-hand suit.

They have opened another real estate exchange in New York. Why not open one in Omaha? There are nearly fifty real estate brokers in this city who could wrestle over additions, divisions and commissions.

The commissioner of the land office has cancelled a large number of entries in Dakota and Colorado. There are a great many such entries in Nebraska that ought to be cancelled. Some of these are not very far from the Stinking Water creek.

The new pool is simply the Iowa pool with a change of partners, the Union Pacific taking the place of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. The question arises whether the Union Pacific can divert its earnings west of the Missouri with Iowa roads. The government has some interest in the matter as well as the corporation stockholders.

Mr. Valentine is a member of the militia committee and of the committee on elections. The latter is important, but the former has never held a meeting. There is about as much use for a militia committee as there is for a committee on astronomy.—Republican.

Mr. Carlisle knows Mr. Valentine's capability, and he has assigned him accordingly. If Valentine's late clerk cannot appreciate the compliment, he ought to see Carlisle and have the matter set right.

According to a Washington dispatch the court-martial which tried First Lieutenant W. Clark, of the Twenty-third infantry, and J. T. Cummings, of the Third infantry, on charge of duplicating pay accounts, found them guilty and sentenced them to be dismissed from the service. Why didn't the court-martial make use of General Howard's indelible branding ink?

The corporation counsel of Boston has suddenly become very fastidious. He has rendered an opinion that the councilmen have no right to incur bills for refreshments, wines, liquors or cigars in the name of the city. This is a sad blow at the individual liberties of the Boston ideal councilmen. What are we coming to, anyhow? Pretty soon a councilman will not be allowed to take a drink or a cigar at the expense of contractors! If this sort of thing is kept up nobody will want to serve as councilman.

C. P. HUNTINGTON, the head of the Central Pacific literary and corruption bureau, has as much dislike for the American hog as has Bismarck. Huntington's hogs, however, are mostly fattened at congressional troughs.

As a specimen of Huntington's edict against hogs the following will suffice: FRIEND COLTON: I notice what you say of Congressman Luttrell; he is a wild hog; don't let him come back to Washington; but as the house is to be largely democratic, and if he was to be defeated likely it would be charged to us, hence I think it would be well to let him with a democratic but I would defeat him any way, and if he got the nomination put up another democratic and run against him, and in that way elect a republican. Beat him.

Yours truly, C. P. HUNTINGTON. Luttrell found the Central Pacific hawks very nutritious, and he flopped over. So Huntington wrote another letter, June 7, 1876, as follows: "I hope Luttrell will be sent back to congress. (He was.) I think it would be a misfortune if he was not. Huntington has not always been right, but he is a good fellow and is growing every day. (He was re-elected.) Page is always right, and it would be a misfortune to California not to have him in congress. (He was sent back.) Piper is a distinguished and should not come back. (He did not.)"

CABLE'S CAREER.

The recent gathering of railroad magnates in this city included quite a number of notable men. In a great degree they were self-made men—men of sterling character, of fine business talents, and commanding personal appearance. Some of these men began their career at the bottom round of the ladder, and have gradually climbed from brakeman to manager or president. Others have drifted from other callings into railroad-ing, beginning with comparatively nothing, and in a few years acquiring fame, fortune and power. Of this latter class Ransom R. Cable, of the Chicago & Rock Island, is a fair exponent. It is said that he and General Manager Clark, of the Union Pacific, who by the way began his career as a brakeman, were the originators of the tripartite pool which has been developed into the Western Trunk Line association. Fifteen years ago, Mr. Cable, who was then thirty-three years old, was running a one-horse flour mill at Davenport, Ia., and was worth probably about \$500. About 1860 his uncle, P. L. Cable, invested \$50,000 with Judge Lynde in a coal mine in Coal valley, twenty miles from Rock Island. Nothing showed up and the judge drew out. P. L. Cable was about to do so, when Ransom appeared on the scene. He believed in the mine, and persuaded his uncle to drop in the hole all the money he could obtain. Finally, in the early part of '61, when everybody but Ransom was hopeless, they struck it rich. The war came and coal boomed. P. L. Cable made a mint of money. Ransom's share was not large, but it gave him a start. The two bought some more mines about twenty-four miles from Rock Island, and built a railroad out to the town now called Cable. The Rock Island and Peoria road was built directly after the war by Rock Island parties. The Cables got control of it about 1870, and the uncle having invested largely in Rock Island & Pacific, the Peoria road was made a branch. Ransom began his railroad career as superintendent of the branch. He held that position till 1876, when he became assistant general manager of the Rock Island. He was then considered to be worth about \$200,000. In 1880 he was made general manager of the Rock Island, and last spring was elected president. He is regarded as one of the "slickest" railroad men in the country. Mr. Cable is a very handsome man—tall, dignified and courtly. He is smooth as glass in conversation, but firm as a rock when once his mind is made up. His family relations are pleasant. After remaining a widower several years with three children, he was married about three years ago to Miss Jennie Buford, the belle of Rock Island.

A SINGULAR FATALITY.

The fact that Brigadier-General R. S. MacKenzie, commander of the department of Texas, has been relieved of his command on account of temporary insanity, caused by nervous prostration, and placed in the military asylum at Washington, recalls to mind some sad and interesting incidents in the history of the Slidell-MacKenzie family, who, it appears, have been the subjects of what seems to be a singular fatality. General MacKenzie's grandfather, forty years ago, was a naval captain in command of the war brig Somers in the West Indies. It was claimed that a mutiny was discovered on board the vessel, although no overt act had been committed, and upon the testimony of an informer, a young midshipman named Spenser was convicted of being a ring leader by a court on board the vessel. Captain MacKenzie ordered him to be hung from the yard arm of the vessel at sunrise next morning, and the order was carried out. Spenser, who was a mere youth, was the son of the then secretary of war. The tragedy created the greatest sensation of the times in the United States. Captain MacKenzie, upon his return to this country, was arrested and tried by court-martial, but as the captain had not overstepped the law, he was acquitted. His cruel act, however, was universally condemned. It was argued that, as the mutiny, if there was any, had been subdued, there was no good reason why Spenser, if guilty of any crime, should not have been kept as a prisoner until the ship returned to the United States. Captain MacKenzie never got another command in the United States navy, but despised of his fellow men he passed the remainder of his life, almost entirely without a friend, in anguish and remorse. Misfortunes have ever since befallen his descendants. One was killed in a railway accident, having his neck broken, and another was drowned at sea. The members of the Slidell branch of the family have all been overcome by sorrow, grief and want.

THE NEW ALLIANCE.

The most extensive combination that has ever been made between the American railroad systems is about to be consummated through the pool that has just been organized under the name of the Western Trunk Line Association. Great trunk lines have been consolidated and put under one control, and pools have been organized to equalize earnings of competing lines, but never has there been an alliance that included within its network over 26,000 miles of railway. Although the compact made by the parties who have become members of the new pool has not yet made public in its details, enough has been learned to warrant the conclusion that this is to be an offensive and defensive alliance, which, for at least six years, proposes to control and divide among its members the bulk of the railroad traffic west of Chicago. Overriding state lines and in defiance of all charter obligations and the prohibitions imposed by state constitutions against pooling, this gigantic confederation proposes to destroy all competition and levy arbitrary and oppressive taxes upon the people who are tributary to its lines. It will be within the power of half a dozen men in this new alliance to lower the price of every bushel of grain raised in the Mississippi and Missouri valleys, and it is equally within their power to raise the price of all commodities which the west is obliged to import from the east. They do not only control the main roads and branch lines within the vast area, but their peculiar relation to the lines east of Chicago make them virtually arbiters of most of the traffic between New York and the west. As a natural sequence the Vanderbilt and Gould systems east of Chicago and south of St. Louis will co-operate and exchange business with the railroad syndicate in the new pool. There is no doubt that Vanderbilt and Gould have been largely instrumental in organizing this alliance to fortify themselves against all rival combinations. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy is the only competing trunk line that has not joined the new alliance. Whether that corporation will pick up the gauntlet and defiantly stand its ground against the tremendous force that can be exerted by the new pool is problematic. The Burlington is the only rival of the Union Pacific, and its local traffic in Nebraska is at least five times that of the Union Pacific. To surrender that traffic and throw it into the pool would be a sacrifice for which one-eighth of the through traffic would be no adequate compensation. Unless the difference is made up by an equivalent from another source it would almost be suicidal for that road to abandon its independence. There need not necessarily be a rate war if it does stay out of the pool. The Burlington can maintain rates established by the pool without dividing its earnings with it, and if the pool should cut rates the Burlington can doubtless afford to meet it on equal terms even though the loss in such a fight should be borne proportionately by eight separate roads. In such a war the public sympathy and patronage would naturally go against the pool, because public interest would be to keep up the competition. In this view of the case there may still be one check to the arrogance and tyranny which the new alliance is liable to exercise; but we confess that we have very little faith in railway competition. Experience has demonstrated time and again that competition is always followed by combination, and in the end the railroad is found to be a monopoly.

THE DEATH OF GENERAL HUMPHREYS.

The death of General Humphreys removes another of the gallant soldiers who distinguished themselves during the late war. He was not only a brave soldier in every sense of the word, but also one of the most eminent engineers in the United States. His career in the army covers a period of over forty years active service. A native of Pennsylvania, he graduated from the military academy at West Point in 1831, and was assigned to the Second artillery. In 1838 he entered the topographical engineer corps, and was promoted to a captain in that corps during the Mexican war. At the outbreak of the civil war he was major in the engineer corps, and was assigned to duty as colonel and aid-de-camp on Gen. Scott's staff. On the 28th of April, 1862, he was appointed brigadier-general of volunteers, and in July, 1863, he was promoted to be major-general for gallant and meritorious services at the battle of Gettysburg. On August 8th, 1866, General Humphreys became chief of the United States engineers, with the rank of brigadier-general, which position he held until he was retired, at his own request, our years ago.

MR. SMITH, THE PHILADELPHIA PRESS MAN.

MR. SMITH, the Philadelphia Press man, is still after Frank Hatton with his little hatchet. Mr. Smith wants to know whether Frank Hatton has gone into the office brokerage business, by publishing bids in The National Republican, of which the following are samples: One hundred and fifty dollars will be paid a responsible party for a place as messenger or watchman in one of the departments. Address, with confidence, M. E. R., National Republican office. A rare chance—to the gentleman assisting me to procure a place in the Capitol as messenger or laborer, I will give \$500 cash, or a bonus of \$1,000. For an interview, address Loyalty, Republican office.

THE YEAR WHICH CLOSES TO-DAY.

The year which closes to-day, has been in many respects exceptional. We have had great earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, storms and great disasters by fire and flood. There have been some wars on a small scale. There have been riots, dynamite explosions and railway collisions. There has been as many assassinations and murders as in any other year. But with all this the mortality list of great men is exceptionally light. There have been no deaths among the crowned heads, and comparatively few

WELLS, MILLER AND YOST.

If this part of the subsidy to the organs is to be withdrawn we ought to know the reason why. Dr. Miller may have to cut short his European travels and the new Republican building may have to be cut down a story or two.

THE OMAHA BOIT LINE.

The Omaha boit line was not taken in the new pool. It will maintain its independence against all odds, so long as Colonel Harlow remains general manager.

THE GREAT POOL GAME.

Mr. Vining holed the fifteen ball. His salary as pool commissioner is to be \$15,000 a year.

WEST OF THE MISSOURI.

Irrigation is as necessary to the arid regions of the west as fertilizing to the east. Millions of acres of land in Colorado, Wyoming and Montana only need moisture to yield crops of grain and vegetables in such abundance as to astonish the farmers of the older states. In the Salt Lake valley, where irrigation has been carried on systematically for years, the fruit and vegetable crop find a rich and ready market as far east as Chicago and west to San Francisco. In most of the valleys of Montana irrigation is a matter of necessity, and although the expense is large and water rights costly, the crops are more certain and the quantity greater.

The largest and wealthiest irrigating company yet organized in the west was recently incorporated in Colorado. It is called the Rio Grande and Sagache company, composed of home and foreign capitalists, headed by a "real live lord" of England. The company propose to irrigate 300,000 acres of the San Luis valley by a system of canals. Contracts have already been let for the removal of two and a half million yards of earth, and 200 teams have been shipped from different points to the valley. In connection with this extensive scheme it is proposed to encourage the immigration of Swedish colonists—a class of frugal, industrious, thrifty farmers, who will build up that most powerful element of society—a well-to-do population of thriving farmers. Arrangements are already being made to establish schools and churches for them, and the Denver & Rio Grande railroad is offering great inducements for the encouragement of immigration.

The press of Wyoming have from time to time given much prominence to the oil fields of the territory. Several Omaha capitalists are interested in that region, among them being Samuel E. Rogers and Dr. Geo. B. Graff. The late "Professor" Aughey is also there experimenting on the depth and wealth of the new fields. The Wyoming Petroleum company has been organized, of which Mr. Rogers is president. Last week the company paid \$3,000 at the United States land office for 1,440 acres of land, lying 75 miles north of Point of Rocks, which is in addition to quite a large tract already owned there.

President Rogers and Dr. Graff have been interviewed by reporters as to their intentions, but stated that they should surely commence operations in the spring. They stated that they had fifty barrels of oil flowing daily now. If any railroad will build to the proposed location of their wells they will guarantee it 3,000 barrels a day. They claim they have the best oil in America and the most of it, and feel confident they can produce 100,000 barrels a month and "not half try." Mr. Rogers is enthusiastic and thinks the greatest possibilities are in store for the future.

DOCTORS IN PRUSSIA.

Berlin has 797 doctors—1550 more than in 1867, or 1 to 1,125 inhabitants; Bonn, 1 to every 444 persons (being a university town); Cologne, 1 to 978; Koelnberg, 1 to 1,029; Frankfurt, 1 to 1,104; Breslau, 1 to 1,122; Hanover, 1 to 1,148. Drug stores are strangely few compared with this country. Berlin has but 1—that is, assuming what is described as "an apothecary's shop" to be identical with a drug store—to 16,266; Breslau, 1 to 12,996; Cologne, 1 to 10,891. No city of over 25,000 inhabitants has so few apothecary shops as Berlin, the actual number being 63, while Breslau has 21, Cologne 17, Frankfurt-on-Main 14, Konigsberg 13, Dantzig 13, Hanover 12, Aix-la-Chapelle 10. In point of army physicians the singular fact obtains that, in spite of the vast military organizations, their numbers have for many years constantly declined, which, in view of the over crowded state in almost all professions, is all the more remarkable. From 996 in 1882 the number of army physicians has decreased to 965.

THE NEW YORK BANK STATEMENT.

The New York bank statement shows a decrease of loans amounting to \$35,400; specie decrease, \$236,600; legal tenders decrease, \$150,400; deposits decrease, \$94,800; circulation increase, \$32,500; reserve decrease, \$145,800. The bank now holds \$6,748,900 in excess of legal requirements.

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Coal.

The opening of the Sioux reservation is anxiously awaited, not alone by land speculators, but by the people of Northwestern Nebraska, Dakota and the Black Hills. To the people of the Hills it means early rail communication with the east, and a market for various products which cannot be transported by wagons and pay the cost. One result of rail communication, says The Rapid City Journal would be a sufficient supply of fuel for the occupants of the treeless plains of Northern Nebraska and Southern Dakota. What these

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