

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

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Thought for the Day. Selected by Sept. H. P. Emerson. Every duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known.—Ruskin.

Money is doing some talking in the war belt. Its voice grows in strength as the loan multiplies.

With congress silent for two weeks and the president happily married, holiday joys may cut loose and go the limit.

The official appeal for tolerating polygamy in certain sections of the Philippines, as a peace measure, is calculated to start a ghost walk in a Salt Lake City cemetery.

Profound weariness of bloodshed in Mexico doubtless inspired the order putting blighting out of business as a national sport. For the present the privilege of living is joy enough.

As an example of safety first efficiently applied, the action of the Central Labor union in giving conscription the solar plexus deserves to rank high among the pictured maxims of the league.

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw maintains an attitude of belligerency for the cause that makes the judicious griever. The doctor appears immune to the spirit of the season which proclaims "good will to men."

It is asserted that the country possesses "the most formidable fortifications in the world." The present need is trained men behind the guns. That puts up to congress a simple proposition in preparedness.

The failure of Pa Zimmerman's Ohio fortune to reach Bon-in-Law Manchester leaves the duke in a slough of debt judicially figured at \$275,000, with assets of \$1,000. The figures measure the distance between halcyon anticipations and realization.

The Iowa supreme court observes with due caution that corporations possess some, if not all, the elements of a soul. The beneficial force of public sentiment in this direction, of which judicial note is taken, encourages the hope of ultimate regeneration.

Missouri river boosters scored heavily in securing the endorsement of the War department for a deeper channel. But the distance from elation to appropriation is spotted with preparedness snags, which will require diligent digging in congress to remove.

Intimations lend wings to the hope that Santa Claus may hang the judicial plum on the favored Christmas tree. In that event the recipient can give uncommon fervor to the season's sentiment. "Blessed be he who gives; thrice blessed he who receives."

The postmaster general still seeks new fields of endeavor. He thinks the government ought to buy the telegraph and telephone systems and run them as the Postoffice department is run. If the P. M. G. did not fall from Texas he would be tagged as a humorist. Texas statesmen take themselves seriously.

The state school fund is perfectly safe in holding on to the defaulted bonds of Florence. There is no chance to lose. The example of South Omaha and Dundee in showing their paper on Omaha is too easy to be passed up by Florence. All the children know how to work father.

Thirty Years Ago. This Day in Omaha. Fifty couples attended the concert and ball given at Metropolitan hall by Star of the West lodge No. 146, G. K. & B. The following were on the concert program: Musical Union orchestra, Mrs. E. Jacobson, Miss Lena Moore, Rev. N. I. Benson, address; Mrs. J. H. Beer, Mrs. M. Michaels, Miss Natalie Bellington and Martin Cain.

Rev. F. W. Henry of Grand Island was ordained to the priesthood of the Protestant Episcopal church, the services being conducted by Bishop Worthington. Special round trip excursion tickets to Los Angeles are advertised at \$10.

George H. Hammond of Detroit, in an interview, said that his parking plant was running about as usual, but there was some trouble getting all the cars needed. He expressed great faith in the ultimate success of the Omaha market.

Nebraska's Semi-Centennial. Definite plans for the proper celebration of the semi-centennial of Nebraska's admission to statehood being determined upon, only the carrying out of these in detail by the committees remains to make the issue the success it should be. The people of Nebraska have sufficient patriotism and state pride to enter into the spirit, and performance as well, of appropriately observing this important anniversary. Nebraska has played no unimportant part in the affairs of the nation during these fifty years of magnificent progress. It is true that this state has not attracted public attention by its clamorous insistence upon some vagarious form of political or social activity, nor has it been made notorious through any of the agencies that have so widely advertised some of its neighbors. But Nebraska has contributed notably to the statecraft of the nation, through its representatives at Washington. It has participated prominently in national politics and has been an important factor in the life of the nation in all ways.

At home its citizens have much cause for pride than they readily realize. In fifty years Nebraska has been brought up from the condition of almost a wilderness to such a degree of productivity as places it in the very front rank. Its social growth has kept pace with its material progress, till now an enlightened people rationally enjoys the unlimited bounty of a state, whose fecundity and range of resources is beyond estimation.

With these reasons for rejoicing to inspire them, the people of Nebraska will heartily second the efforts of the committees planning for the semi-centennial and the success of the several funds now contemplated is as nearly assured as anything can be thus far in advance.

Christmas Gift from Congress. In the haste of the annual holiday rush congress has handed the United States a Christmas gift by continuing the so-called "war tax" on certain proprietary articles. The excuse for this action is the same that warranted the imposition of the tax in the first place. Other democratic measures for raising revenue have failed to produce sufficient income to meet the running expenses of the government. The objections to a war tax in peace times are many, and have been stated many times. It was a poorly considered makeshift in the beginning, and is now continued with all its imperfections, despite the criticisms offered since its first enactment. Its endorsement, even as a temporary expedient, is an admission of democratic incapacity to properly handle the administration of our government.

For Better Country Schools. Secretary Lane of the Interior department gets in line with present-day thought in his advocacy of improvement in the rural schools. This is not a novelty in the progressive states of the central west, where great stress always has been laid on the public schools, and particularly the public schools in the rural districts. It is a characteristic of these states that the advantages of education are as freely and as liberally provided in the rural districts as in the cities, and continual efforts are made to advance the work by the adoption of improved methods. Unfortunately, among some of the older states this practice does not prevail, and it is encouraging in a high degree that the matter should be urged upon the attention of congress, and thus be brought directly to the public. It is not properly a subject for national legislation or regulation, and yet it is possible that national action may be taken of a nature that will stimulate the laggard states to a more realizing sense of their responsibility to the children of the rural districts. The permanence of our government rests finally on the general intelligence of the citizenship. So any project for the improvement in methods of their application to the purpose of spreading enlightenment is good for the people as a whole.

"Met" Defines His Attitude. Just as an indication of how all-enfolding is the harmony that now exists between the democratic brethren in Nebraska, Richard Lee Metcalfe this week defines his attitude on the issue of Bryanism. With no indirection, he positively refuses to consider personal submission to the Bryan dictum as a test for democracy. It is of some moment that he absolves the great commoner from full responsibility for the predicament in which the party finds itself in Nebraska. "Brother Charley" is to blame for this, according to Metcalfe, and it is to "Brother Charley" he refuses to bend the knee. While "Brother Charley" hands out the "dope" for Nebraskans, and the late secretary of state is mixing medicine for the party nationally, the dove of peace will have much difficulty finding a permanent roost in the camps of the untrifled.

Albania gives promise of becoming a battleground between Italy and Austria. For a dozen years past both nations fought diplomatic battles over that region, created into a picaresque kingdom after the first Balkan war. Austria prevented its absorption by the Balkan states three years ago. Its controlling position on the east side of the Adriatic makes Albania the most tempting territorial grab for Austria and Italy, and its possession is bound to be contested as fiercely as Gallipoli or Saloniki.

How sweet are the uses of adversity? Producers of crude oil, long subject to the price whims of refiners, have stored enough of their product to put prices on the jump and produce soreness under the refined belt. The main job is necessarily crude and lacks the artistic refinement of the system which slips the added cost and the worry to the consumer.

Americans eager for adventure abroad after must be officially tagged at the home dock. New passport regulations require three copies of the applicant's photograph and an official inspection of the holder at the gangplank. Failure to secure the necessary permit, spells a back track to home and comfort.

About the only consolation well-disposed Mexicans derive from the situation along the border is that the looters cannot take the land. So thoroughly is the country stripped that a culture negotiating a treaty, would be obliged to carry rations.

Safety at Road Crossings

From the Railway Age Gazette.

THE railroads of the United States, through the American Railway association, have undertaken a campaign for the prevention of accidents at highway crossings. President Mudge, on the recommendation of the executive committee, has appointed a special committee, consisting of seven railroad officers, representing the railroads of the country territorially, to consider the entire question. The members of the committee are: James A. McCrea, general manager, Long Island; J. Q. Van Winkle, assistant to the general manager, Cleveland; Cincinnati; Chicago & St. Louis; C. L. Berge, general manager, New York; New Haven & Hartford; L. E. Jeffries, general attorney, Southern; Howard Elliott, inspector of transportation, San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake; W. J. Towne, assistant general manager, Chicago & Northwestern; and W. R. Scott, vice president and general manager, Southern Pacific. This committee will present recommendations, after a thorough investigation, for action to bring about a reduction of one of the most numerous classes of railway casualties, and one which is rapidly increasing in spite of the many millions that have been expended by the railroads for the elimination of grade crossings.

The importance of the problem is indicated by the fact that in the last ten years for which the statistics are available the Interstate Commerce commission has reported a total of 3,473 persons killed and 23,217 injured by being struck or run over by cars or locomotives at highway crossings.

The figures show an increase fairly consistent with the development of railway traffic, although the increase in the number of persons killed is less in proportion than the growth of the railway business, but since 1909 there has been a steady increase, unaffected by the falling off in traffic in 1914. This is doubtless largely due to the increase in the use of trucks, especially in rural districts, and this phase of the situation will necessarily assume an important place in the committee's investigation.

The standard remedy of the public authorities for crossing accidents is elevation or depression of the tracks—if the railroads can be made to stand the expense. If there is a chance that the community may be required to share the cost of an improvement made for its benefit, the zeal of the public officials for grade separation frequently wanes. The separation of grades as rapidly as practicable is much to be desired, but at an average cost of probably \$50,000 per crossing, even the most affluent railroad corporation can afford to eliminate only a small part of its grade crossings. Complete separation of grades would cost more roads more than they are worth, and in many places the expense is so great as to raise the question whether the same amount of money would not bring about a greater reduction of accidents if expended in other ways.

Mr. McCrea, the chairman of the American Railway association committee, is especially qualified for the position by reason of experience gained by him in prosecuting a vigorous campaign to install safety-first ideas into the motorists of Long Island. The committee can undoubtedly accomplish some results well worth while by working along the lines followed by the Long Island and some other roads that have made special efforts to reduce crossings accidents.

To what a large extent highway crossing accidents are due to carelessness is demonstrated by observations made by the Southern Pacific of the actions of the drivers of 17,621 motor vehicles on approaching railroad crossings in a number of widely separated localities. Of the total, 11,838 drivers, or 67 per cent, looked neither to right nor left before crossing the tracks; 27 per cent looked only one way, and only 57 per cent looked in both directions, while 3,207, or 18.2 per cent, ran over the crossing at a reckless rate of speed, and only thirty-five stopped before crossing. Of 4,589 drivers of teams, 84 per cent looked in neither direction, 88 per cent looked only one way, and only 52 per cent looked in both directions. Similar observations taken a year later at the same places, after the year had been a great deal of publicity to its efforts to reduce the kind of accidents and had appealed for the co-operation of local authorities and automobile clubs, showed a considerable improvement.

As the country develops it will be necessary for the railroads to continue to eliminate grade crossings as rapidly as they can, and the increase of population and industry that make such expenditures necessary naturally tend to so increase earnings as to enable the roads to meet them, but meanwhile a great deal can be accomplished to make conditions safer if the roads can secure the interest and co-operation of the public and its representatives.

Twice Told Tales

The Fillet.

Three bachelors, fat and bald and ugly, jeered over cigars and nightcaps at the girl who flirts. "A flirt," said the first bachelor, unbuttoning the bottom button of his waistcoat to give his stomach more room, "a flirt is a girl who wants all men's roses without any of his thorns. She ends with nothing to show but scratches."

The second bachelor, patting his bald spot reflectively, said: "A flirt is a girl who has the hobby of luring men to the heights of happiness in order to throw them over."

"A flirt," said the third bachelor, raising for another drink, "is a species of human carrot that has an irresistible fascination for two-legged donkeys."—New York Times.

Neutral Spirit.

Is there something malicious about even the fairest and kindest of neutrals? said Booth Tarkington in Indianapolis. "Does a neutral, in the very nature of things, incline to rejoice a little over a warring sister nation's misfortune? I hope not."

"I hope not, and yet, in thinking of neutrals, I can't help thinking of two boys who stood the other day and watched an enormous safe being raised up to the twenty-sixth story of a skyscraper. "The boys watched the safe rise slowly, dandling at the end of its wire rope, and when it reached the twentieth story the older lad turned away in disgust. "Come on, Joe," he said. "We might as well move on. They ain't a-goin' to let her drop."—Washington Star.

Used to It.

The man had been hailed before the magistrate on some trivial charge. "Let me see," said the judge. "I know you. Are you not the man who was married in a case of man-stealing lions?"

"Yes, your honor," replied the culprit. "I am the man."

"Exciting, wasn't it?" continued the justice. "Well," said the man judicially. "It was then; it wouldn't be now."—Ladies' Home Journal.

People and Events

A Chicago woman of 82 wants a nice, tender, elderly, well-to-do woman to adopt her and mother her as she has never been mothered before. Emphasis on the "well-to-do."

The story of a western judge, indefinitely located, who proposes to let his whiskers grow until Henry Ford succeeds in his mission, regales the eastern press. Any means of brightening the scare belt is welcome back yonder.

Henry C. Fryck, the coking magnate of Pennsylvania, observes that signs of prosperity are visible in the distance and may increase as the winter advances. Since Mr. Fryck cashed into the steel trust his horizon took on conserved colors.

A Los Angeles minister, obeying the command of a bishop, shot out his dukes so suddenly and effectively that the highwayman couldn't see to shoot, but his legs carried him out of sight. Ministerial preparedness in such conditions the laity should envy and emulate.

The Bee's Letter Box

Sins of Europe and the War

SOMEWHERE, Dec. 15.—To the Editor of The Bee: I have remained silent a long time. The present European war has caused much discussion. I have read much in your columns and elsewhere from correspondents who are ready to tear out the eyes of one or the other of the combatants. I am strictly neutral. If nations receive their punishment in this world, as the orthodox believe men do in the next, it is not hard to find something chargeable to each of the European combatants, save France and Montenegro.

To England may be charged the Opium War with China, her outrageous conquest of the Tientsin Republic, the bombardment of Alexandria, the robbery of the Danish fleet in the Napoleonic wars, the imprisonment of American seamen, and other things too numerous to mention. To Serbia may be charged the murder of her king. To Belgium the outrage committed in the Congo. The major part of Belgium's wealth came from the Africa rubber trade. I hope we have not forgotten the cutting off of the hands of negro children, if they failed to do their stint. The sins of the Russians, Turks and Germans have been commented on by everybody. It is not necessary for the present writer to say more than that most, if not all, of the charges against them, save those of Jodel and the whole house of Hapsburg, except Maria Theresa. The lecherous old scoundrel has followed the trade of being an emperor for sixty-seven years. He is cunning as a fox and hypocritical as a Pharisee.

Prussia and Bulgaria, the great grandsons of Lewis Phillip of France, is the unchanged scoundrel of Europe. It is amusing to hear pro-German Catholics say any good of that fellow. He was the murderer of Stambuloff. Have those pro-German Catholics, who love him so now, forgotten the conversion of Prince Boris, and the violation of the solemn treaty made with the duke of Parma?

I have always considered the result of this war uncertain. The Kaiser, in his offensive tactics, has followed Napoleon, with less success, however. He tried to break into Paris, and failed. Then he tried to smash into England, and failed. Then he turned on Russia; and the world forgot the two failures in what looked like supreme success. The Kaiser had learned a lesson from Charles the Twelfth and Bonaparte. He stopped in time, and turned his attention to Serbia, the baby brother. The fact is that Germany has had every advantage so far in the war. She is a compact body with the most splendid military machine the world has ever seen. She can move her troops from one end of the dominion to the other with her splendid means of transportation, while her enemies have to travel round Robin Hood's barn. The Kaiser is undoubtedly the best soldier living. Bonaparte was the greatest offensive soldier that ever lived. Frederick the Great was the greatest defensive soldier that ever lived. But the Kaiser, is not Bonaparte and he is not Frederick. Yet I would not be surprised to see another European war like the Napoleonic period, from Trafalgar to Waterloo. But I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. Sincerely, DER HILDE.

Farmers and Rural Credits.

NORTH PLATTE, Dec. 13.—To the Editor of The Bee: Of the several farmers' conferences recently held, most of them by political appointment, there seems to be, aside from politics, two paramount considerations. First, to avoid the expense of middle men in producing and marketing, consisting of which there has been much declamation, and very little remedy. Second, as to rural credits. It is claimed that the democratic federal reserve act furnishes to big business unlimited means for securing easy money for speculative purposes; but to small business, laborers and farmers, not a dollar, leaving the latter at the mercy of big business. To alleviate this indignity on the eve of an approaching national election, it is proposed to organize a "rural credit system for farmers."

This rural credit system provides that sections of farm land can be organized in districts, and bonds issued on the district, such bonds to be deposited in the federal reserve system, which will draw upon them government notes, to loan to the debtors for interest, such loans to be subject to discounts and commissions to the bank making the deal. Of course, the farmers are supposed to support the administration that organizes the rural credit system.

Bear in mind, that this little rural credit scheme operates inside the great federal reserve octopus, to which the farmers must first pay tribute in the various forms of transportation, commissions, discounts and general profits, after which what little there is left for them is what they can obtain themselves out of. The federal reserve system, the legal culmination of past predatory action, now established by law, grinds up everything in its mill of the most gigantic economic despotism ever established on this earth. To the credit of the farmers who have composed approximately one-fifth of the number of these confederates, they have bailed the whole scheme. They were like the fellow who came out of a fit, he didn't know where he was going to.

Another feature of the Chicago convention was, the land sharks, both foreign and domestic, who had gobbled up by foreclosure a quantity of land, proposed to set it in small tracts for small payments down and the balance on rural credits, long time, with conditions that would make the farmer an arrant serf for the next forty years, and probably for life. Backslaps, interest, income tax and other bank having gone out of date, rural credits is the next goat to ride into office on. But the farmers are getting wise. They are demanding the money of Jefferson and Lincoln, with no disguising laws.

LUCIAN STEBBINS.

Labor and Liquor.

HASTINGS, Neb., Dec. 12.—To the Editor of The Bee: Those interested in the continuation of the liquor traffic would have it appear that, in the event of national prohibition, millions of people would be thrown out of work, thus indicating that the manufacture and sale of liquor is a relatively important commercial enterprise. The United States bureau of the census makes the following comment upon the comparative size of the brewing and distilling industries to other well known industries: "The relative importance of these industries from a purely manufacturing standpoint is best shown by their ranking in number of wage-earners; in this respect the brewing industry ranks twenty-fifth among the industries of the country and the distillery industry forty-third." Not much danger of a labor panic in case of prohibition, it would seem.

Tips on Home Topics

Chicago Herald: The painful thing about Congressman Mann's declaration, that every community is more or less infected with the "pork" idea is that it is absolutely true.

Indianapolis News: The end of the war, which was to have occurred in October, has now been postponed until February—doubtless because of circumstances over which nobody appears to have any control.

Cleveland Plain Dealer: A West Virginia law man "bit the saw dust trail," and now he is retreating in money he gained by short weighting his customers. There are other classes among whom it might be profitable to organize a revival.

Boston Transcript: We are glad to see that our old friend Dr. Karl Liebknecht is back in the Reichstag. When last heard from he was holding down an end seat on the extreme left of the first row of orchestra trenches, and we had no idea the Russians were such poor marksmen.

Louisville Courier Journal: "Single men first," the cry of the recruiters of the British army. "Women and children first!" when a ship sinks. Wall, "married men first," will ring from the eyes of St. Peter when the meek and lowly are to be let into the Kingdom of Heaven to get their everlasting reward.

MIRTHFUL REMARKS.

"That girl you see just passing us has a lot of fellows crazy about her." "Why, she's very attractive. Who is she?" "One of the nurses in an insane hospital ward."—Baltimore American.

"This smile of the Moon Lisa is said to be inscrutable. She seems to be smiling inwardly, but nobody knows the cause." "Probably got something on her husband that the old man doesn't know about as yet."—Chicago Post.

Belle—He said he was a millionaire's son, and I find he is working for \$10 a week." "That looks suspicious! A millionaire's son couldn't get over \$3."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

"Henry," said the superstitious hostess to her husband, "you simply must find another guest." "What's the trouble now?" he asked. "There are thirty of us to sit down." "I know; but there were forty-three in—"

visited and exactly thirteen didn't come."—Boston Transcript.

"There's a crying need." "For what?" "For some musician to compose an opera calling for a baritone who weighs about 250 pounds."—Pittsburgh Post.

KABIBBLE KABARET. DEAR MR. KABIBBLE HOW MUCH SHOULD MY HUSBAND MAKE A WEEK? —A WIFE. AT LEAST HALF AS MUCH AS YOU TELL THE NEIGHBORS HE MAKES!

The famous detective gasped as he arrived at the scene of the crime. "Heaven," said he, as he looked at the window through which the thief had escaped, "this is more serious than I had expected; it's broken on both sides!"—Philadelphia Ledger.

THE HOUSE OF MY FATHERS.

Clarence Ausley in Houston Post. This is the house of my fathers, And I am my fathers' son, As ye are to be who abide here, If so we be many in one. Wide are the portals and open To all who come hither or go, But the rule of the house I insist on, And who disobeys is my foe.

My forefathers were got of much loving Far-faring on mountain and veldt, Of Saxon and Slav, Jew and Gentile, Of Teuton and Latin and Celt. But though we be kin I disown you If still ye your mother prefer, For she let you go unchristening, And who disobeys is my foe.

I've sheltered and coddled and fed you— As used of my lions ye have been; Ye sit in the seats of my children, And needs of mine own may win. For ye had abjured all allegiance To potentate, power or throne; On the sword and the faith of a soldier You swore unto me—me alone.

Let grieve for the grievance of kindred In Motherland's weeping of war; Of prayers and loving and giving And needs of mine own may win. The call of the blood is beseeching, And weeping becometh a honor. But the oath of a man in his honor Till ever his race is run.

So here is the rule—I command it: Nor Teuton nor Saxon be ye, But all who abide in this household The sons of this Fatherland be. For here is but one lord and master, One country, one flag and one name, And they shall be slain and hated Who fall of its weal or its fame.

Florida and Cuba Low Winter Fares via Rock Island Lines. Enjoy the Southland's balmy climate during this coming winter—beautiful beaches, groves of palm trees and everything that makes for a summer in winter in the semi-tropics. Tickets on sale daily to April 30th with return limit of June 1st, 1916. Only \$50.68 for the round trip to Jacksonville, Fla., \$37.18 to Havana, Cuba, with corresponding reductions to other points in the South and Southeast. Liberal Stopover Privileges. Connecting service via Rock Island Line. Automatic Block Signals. Finest Modern All-Steel Equipment. Absolute Safety. Superb Dining Car Service. Write, phone or call at Rock Island Travel Bureau, 1323 Farnam Street, for tickets, reservations, information. J. S. McNALLY, Division Passenger Agent. Phone Douglas 428.

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