

The small boy is becoming rapidly one of the most prized labor assets in Italy, according to a recent report of the ministry of labor. There is a small boy famine in all business offices, and the wages of the boy from 12 to 15 years have increased from board and lodging and \$2 or \$3 a month to \$15 to \$20.

Great Britain is again considering the adoption of a uniform decimal system of weights, measures and currency. The movement was started by the British imperial conference of commerce, which urged that the system be adopted so trade relations with foreign countries might be developed.

A "sleeper" has been discovered in the Ohio law regulating hours of labor for women. These were "city" ordinances, which were adopted by the legislature in 1911, but which do not apply to mercantile establishments in villages.

A curious possible source of value in unaccounted waste is revealed by a British chemist's thought that tobacco ash contains 20 per cent of potash. Its estimate that the ash of a cigar contains 4.5 grains of potash; that of a cigarette, 1.75 grains, and that of an ordinary pipe of tobacco, 1.5 grains.

H. C. Herrasti, of Wasterly, R. I., conducted some experiments to determine how much pressure a hen's egg would stand. The force was applied through the long axis of the egg and it was found that brown eggs broke at an average pressure of 155 pounds and white eggs at a pressure of 125.

Prokack Woodman, of Bangor, Me., tells this story: Two hunters in an automobile saw a deer come out of the bushes and walk along the road. One of the men took aim and was about to fire when another deer stepped out beside the first. The hunter changed his aim and got both with one shot.

A tussock raised by Harry A. Nickerson, of Boothbay, Me., weighed 2 1/2 pounds when pulled from the ground, and measured more than a rat around at the largest part. It is of the ordinary white variety, and all the others in the bed were of the usual size.

Sixty-six wealthy farmers living in Essex, Col., have leased 350 acres to be planted to beans in the spring, the proceeds, or such part as necessary, to be used to defray expenses to see the games of the world's series in 1917.

The erection of poles for electric wires has been facilitated by the invention of a truck for the purpose. It recently picked up four 40-foot chestnut poles, carried them 200 feet, and deposited them in holes in 25 minutes.

Eugene Heth, an aviator of Chicago, asks \$28,000 damages from John S. Berger. Heth was compelled to leave his machine in Berger's cornfield over night. The cows ate the wings. Berger had Heth arrested as a trespasser.

Two girls, students at the University of California, have concluded an experiment which consisted in living on peanuts. For three months they ate nothing else but the nuts. The peanuts cost 16 cents a day.

One of the oldest houses in Bath is that owned by Dr. William J. Rouse. It was built by Jonathan Philbrook in 1743. The frame is of heavy lumber, 16x7 inches, and the corner posts are 12 inches square.

Two new wireless stations have been established by the Colombian government, one at Aracua, on the Colombia-Venezuela frontier, the other at Orocué, on the Meta river, some 200 miles east of Bogota.

Almost a whole gymnasium is contained in a new chair in which a seated person, by pulling straps over his shoulders, manipulates levers and weights that exercise most of his muscles.

Miss Beryl Smithson, of Seattle, Wash., runs an elevator in an office building. Although still in her teens, she drives to work in an automobile bought with her savings from her elevator job.

The Turkish government has taken up a project for the irrigation of nearly 600,000 acres of the Adana plain, the Cilia of antiquity, at a cost of \$17,600,000 and eight or 10 years of work.

During the last few years refrigeration has steadily received more and more attention in Russia. A boom in cold storage construction was expected there when the war broke out.

An American built locomotive of the decaup type in hauling a train 2,800 feet long, with a load of 4,424 tons, broke the European records for hauling a heavily loaded freight train.

Ira Black, age 75, of Palermo, Me., husked out 163 bushels of corn, made 10 long traces, picked nearly all the apples on a sheet of paper, and gathered the garden vegetables this fall.

William Graham, of Blue Point, N. Y., built a model of the great sphinx of Egypt in his front yard. This model is just one-seventh the size of the real sphinx. It weighs 42 tons.

Astec corn 1,600 years old was recently planted in Kansas. It grows much faster than modern corn and the grains will be at a premium.

Paraguay has valuable forest resources, the most important of which is quebracho, particularly rich in tannin. Apparatus to enable a man to cut his own hair or that of other men without instruction is a recent invention.

HOUSE PLAYED A JOKE ON ITSELF

As a Result, There Will Be No Probe of a Car Shortage Until Next July.

Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 12.—The house played a joke on itself Friday when it failed to line up sufficient supporters for a bill to pay for an investigation ordered by that body early in the session. The house had appropriated \$1,500 to investigate the railroad car shortage and it was the opinion of many of the members that the shortage could be ended in a short time. The railway commission put on an extra force of men at railroad headquarters to find out what had become of all the cars usually on Nebraska roads, and why they were not in the state. The finance committee put in an emergency appropriation, but when it came to voting it, not enough members of the house could be found to give the necessary 67 votes for the bill with the emergency clause attached. After several members had scolded the members for being tightwads and debt dodgers the bill, without the emergency clause, secured 70 votes, but it was then too late to make the money available before July next. It is expected the senate will correct the omission. The objectors said the commission ought to have known without having to spend any extra money.

The Insurance Bill.

A determined effort will be made in the house Monday to resurrect the insurance agents' combination of the competition rate bill. The committee reported it for indefinite postponement, only one of the nine members favoring. This was Trumble, of Sherman, a member of the legislative committee of the agents' association. The objection to the bill is that while it pretends to give the state authority to fix insurance rates, the federal court has held repeatedly that the state has no authority to fix the maximum rate at which a private person or corporation may sell what it has to dispose of. This leaves the bill without a legal authorization of the present combination rates made by rating bureaus of the companies. Arthur Mullen, who was a lobbyist for the bill two years ago, is said to have again been enlisted, and between now and Monday, when the house meets again, it is expected a lot of pressure will be brought on home business interests that the insurance men feel they can call.

Women Suffragists are Not Dismayed.

When, by a vote of 22 to 8, the Sandall bill, reported to the general file, was amended for consideration along with the bill sent over by the house, where three-fourths of the members voted for it. The suffragists have pledged from enough senators to carry it, but they suspect some of these are not very strong in the faith. The opposition measure to the question settled in November, 1914, by the referendum, when full suffrage was defeated. As the referendum amendment prevents the submission of the same question until three years have passed, they say it is a violation of the spirit of the measure to ask for limited suffrage now, and that senators ought not to listen. Against this it is urged that the referendum bar would not have prevented limited suffrage from being submitted last year, as the proposition was not the same. They cite the democratic national platform, which declared in favor of suffrage and recommended that it be adopted in the states as laying a charge upon the 23 democratic senators to support the bill.

SHOOTSELF WHILE PHONING TO FRIEND

Charles Eberly's Friend Begged Him to Stay His Hand—Was Despondent.

Omaha, Neb., Feb. 12.—Calling up a Council Bluffs friend from his room at a local hotel, Charles Eberly, 51, last night told the former that he was about to blow his brains out. He did so while the friend pleaded with him to stay his hand.

"You'll hear the shot," said Eberly to E. A. Lathrop, 508 Harrison street, Council Bluffs. Lathrop heard it. Despondency because he had lost his position in a loan office and failed to find other work is believed to have been the cause of the suicide. The only known relative is Vera Eberly, a niece, living in Honolulu.

Eberly entered the hotel about 7 o'clock and asked for a room. The clerk in charge told him there were no vacant rooms, and it was Eberly's angry and demanded that he be accommodated. The clerk finally complied by giving him the room. Eberly had no luggage. He took stationery with him from the desk and wrote the name of Lathrop, with the latter's address on a sheet of paper, following this by his own name. He then got Lathrop on the telephone.

"He told me he was going to blow his brains out," said Lathrop. "I pleaded with him not to do anything like that, and told him I would be right over. He should not come and told me to listen for the shot. I could hear him weeping for a moment, then I heard the shot."

Eberly was a widower, with no children.

APPRENTICES AT WASHINGTON.

Newport, R. I., Feb. 10.—A brigade of 600 apprentice seamen with a band will go to Washington to take part in the inaugural ceremonies, in accordance with orders received at the naval training station here today. This is the first time the brigade has been asked to take part in the exercises.

CHICAGO POSTMASTER.

Washington, Feb. 10.—William B. Carlyle has been selected for postmaster at Chicago.

BALTIC SAFE IN PORT.

New York, N. Y., Feb. 10.—The steamship of the White Star line, which arrived safely at Liverpool, according to a cable message received here tonight by officers of the company.

The message besides announcing that the Baltic had reached her pier said "all well."

There were two Americans among her 44 passengers. The steamship took to England a full cargo of munitions.

No report had been received last night from the Adriatic. There is one American on the Adriatic.

SUFFRAGE BILL TO BE LIVED, BUT DEFEAT

However, Its Supporters Believe They Have Enough Votes in Senate to Pass Measure.

Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 10.—The senate judiciary committee sat in solemn state Thursday afternoon in the senate chamber on the house bill permitting women to vote for president and vice-president and municipal officers. The bill was vigorously opposed by a group of anti-suffragists from Omaha, and it was supported by equally eloquent suffragists, principally from Lincoln. The anti-suffragists said they didn't want to have the ballot thrust upon them and that the majority of the women did not want it. The chairman of the finance committee who dug up a warrant issued to W. Ball, of Valentine, one of the commissioners, for \$186 expenses for a recent junket to Washington. One of the items was \$13.50 for telephoning and telegraphing. The chairman wondered if Mr. Ball had the money advanced by his Nebraska friends of his safe arrival. The house had developed little opposition until the bill came up for passage.

Thirty-three votes were recorded already on the hog barn appropriation. One was by McAllister, of Dakota, who said that he was unwilling to vote for a palace for hogs while so many of his fellow citizens were forced to live in shacks. Reischek was against it because he did not believe the state should pay \$10,000 for a building for hogs to occupy four days in a year when there were not sufficient accommodations in the insane hospitals to care for the wards of the state. Taylor voted for it under protest, his protest being based on the fact that the state board of agriculture who supervises the expenditure, is a self-perpetuating body.

Supreme Court Debate.

The only debate in the senate was over a bill drafting the district court judges of the state in groups of three to help the supreme court catch up with its work. This would give three judges \$10,000 for a building for hogs to occupy four days in a year when there were not sufficient accommodations in the insane hospitals to care for the wards of the state. Taylor voted for it under protest, his protest being based on the fact that the state board of agriculture who supervises the expenditure, is a self-perpetuating body.

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The doctors of the state are in a nice little row over an effort made by one faction to put the secretaries of the state board of health out of business by reorganizing the health bureau, placing the same in complete control and making him the arbiter of what shall be done and by whom. The bill came before the senate Tuesday, but was sent back to the committee for a fuller explanation of its purposes. It carries an appropriation of \$25,000, increasing salaries and number of employees.

Recommend Rail Bill.

The senate recommended for passage house record 7, requiring railroads to use their abandoned right of way or else return it to the public. The railroads are fighting the bill because they claim they own the land, but the senate urged that as the land had been given by the state for certain specific use it reverted to it when such use was not made.

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Two bills introduced by McMullen, of Gage, senate files 72 and 74, were recommended for passage. The first provides that a drunken driver of an automobile may be fined from \$100 to \$300 and sentenced to jail for a term of from three to six months. It increases the maximum fine for damages done by a drunken driver from \$100 to \$300.

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The house passed house record 34, a minimum wage bill for women in certain designated employments. It says no less than \$1 a day shall be paid to minors, not less than \$20 a day to women who are inexperienced in the employment and not less than \$1.50 a day to experienced adults.

Override Rail Committee.

The house, after a lively debate, overruled the railroad committee, which had reported for indefinite postponement a bill requiring railroad companies, whenever the freight or passenger engine went out, to require it to be sidetracked at the nearest station or siding. The committee contended that this would create a great deal of delay on deposit lines, and in some cases, on branch lines, would lay up trains all night. The majority of the house, however, insisted, in view of the Smithfield wreck on the high line which killed 11 persons, due to the failure of headlights and the use of lanterns, that the bill ought to go on general file.

Protects Guaranty Fund.

The house recommended for passage a bill that bars from any claims upon the guaranty fund any money that officers, stockholders or employees of a failing bank may borrow on certificates of deposit. The experience with the Decatur bank was cited. The bill provides that in that case the officers borrowed \$30,000 from a South Omaha bank on their notes, but the money in the bank and then gave the South Omaha bank a certificate of deposit. After the bank failed this claim was allowed priority, along with other depositors' accounts.

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"HOGS IS HUGS," DEBATE IN HOUSE

After Appropriating \$80,000 for Hog Barn at State Fair, House Eliminates Forest Board.

Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 10.—The house after passing a bill appropriating \$80,000 for a hog barn at the state fair grounds, took an economical streak and defeated, 50 to 39, a bill making the temporary forest station commission permanent. The commission cost about \$1,300 the last two years, but one of the most effective arguments against it was that the chairman of the finance committee who dug up a warrant issued to W. Ball, of Valentine, one of the commissioners, for \$186 expenses for a recent junket to Washington. One of the items was \$13.50 for telephoning and telegraphing. The chairman wondered if Mr. Ball had the money advanced by his Nebraska friends of his safe arrival. The house had developed little opposition until the bill came up for passage.

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NEBRASKA HOUSES IN BUSY SESSION

To Reconsider Bill Aimed at School Teachers—New Bill Strikes at "Quack" Doctors.

Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 9.—After the house had decided to punish any school teacher, superintendent or principal who acted as agent for school book or school supply companies, by forfeiting their employment, it decided it had acted too hastily, and sent the bill back to the committee of the whole for further consideration. It was found that a clause in the bill might prevent a teacher from sharing in the profits of any text book he might write and which might be adopted anywhere in the state.

Hit at Quack Doctors.

The house thinks it has put out of business the regularly licensed doctors who go into a town, open up an office for a few days or weeks, advertise liberally and after securing notes from afflicted persons, make the state law did not reach these men because they were regular, but this amendment, introduced by Dr. Hoffmeister, declares such practice to be unprofessional conduct, and thus brings them within the statute which provides for punishment for unprofessional conduct.

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PLAN FOOD COST PROBE

Washington, D. C., Feb. 12.—The federal trade commission today announced that at the direction of the president it would begin immediately an investigation of the high cost of foods in the United States with special reference to alleged violations of the antitrust laws.

The department of agriculture will assist in the investigation. Alleged manipulations, control and conspiracies in distribution of food will be gone into particularly.

The President's Letter.

President Wilson's letter directing the inquiry is as follows:

"An adequate supply of food production is a matter of concern to the nation at all times. It is of peculiar importance at present. Our domestic food supply is normally very large and has become increasingly varied. In some respects it has steadily expanded and has kept pace with the increasing population. Unfortunately, this is not true, however, of a large number of important staple products, including certain cereals and particularly meats.

"While the population of the nation has increased 26,000,000 since 1900, the production of the two leading cereals, corn and wheat, which are the basic foodstuffs, has shown only a slight advance, and that of meat products in the same period has shown an increase of only 3,500,000 pounds, a decrease of 29 pounds per capita."

Some Headway Made.

"Much can be done and is being done to change this situation through improved methods of production and through the control or eradication of plant and animal disease. But there are problems also of distribution, and in some respects, the problem presented in this field are the more difficult. Much work has been done, and considering the limited nature of the powers under which it has been conducted, not a little headway has been made, particularly in obtaining and diffusing useful information.

"Nevertheless, it is not yet clear in many directions just what the nature of the difficulty is or what measures should be adopted to effect fundamental improvements. Many necessary facts are not available and it is questionable whether any single agency of the government at present possesses the requisite power and equipment to secure the information needed to enable both public and private instrumentalities to render their fullest services to the public.

"It is obvious that there will be no sufficient incentive to enlarge production if there does not exist an unobstructed economical system of distribution. Unjustifiable fluctuations in price are not merely demoralizing; they inevitably deter adequate production.

Trust Charges Made.

"It has been alleged before committees of congress and elsewhere that the course of trade in important food products is not free, but is restricted and controlled by artificial and illegal means. It is of the highest public concern to ascertain the truth or falsity of the allegations. No business can be transacted effectively in an atmosphere of suspicion. If the allegations are well grounded, it is necessary that the nature and extent of the evils must be accurately determined, so that proper remedies, legislative or administrative may be applied. If they are not true, it is equally essential that the public be informed to that effect, so that unrest and dissatisfaction may be allayed.

Storage Men Hit.

"Pursuant to the authority conferred upon me by the act creating the federal commission, therefore, I direct the commission within the scope of its powers to investigate and report the facts relating to the production, ownership, manufacture, storage and distribution of foodstuffs and the products, or by-products arising from or in connection with their preparation and manufacture to ascertain the facts bearing on the alleged violations of the antitrust laws and particularly upon the questions whether there are manipulative trusts, combinations, conspiracies or restraints of trade out of harmony with the law or the public interest.

"I am aware that the commission has additional authority in this field through the power conferred upon it to prevent certain persons, partnerships or corporations from using unfair methods of competition in commerce. I presume that you may see fit to exercise this authority upon your own initiative without direction from me.

"The department of agriculture has been engaged for several years in studying problems of distribution. I have noted that it has been proposed in the congress to add to the funds of the department and to the list of powers to conduct its investigations. As its activities will touch phases of the problem I am calling to your attention which may not be covered by your inquiry and may furnish information of great importance to the purposes contemplated, I shall direct that department to cooperate with you in this enterprise.

Inquires About Funds.

"For the adequate prosecution of the inquiry by both your commission and the department of agriculture it is essential that sufficient funds be available. Accordingly request that you furnish me at the earliest possible moment an estimate for an appropriate appropriation to supplement existing appropriations to enable you successfully to carry out the investigation.

"A copy of this letter is being sent to the secretary of the treasury and the direction that his department cooperate with you and with the request that he furnish an estimate for the funds needed by his department.

The secretary of agriculture, the trade commission, was announced, was asked today for a conference to arrange preliminary plans for the investigation and to make estimates for its costs.

AMATEUR RULE DEFEATED.

New York, Feb. 10.—The annual meeting of the United States National Lawn Tennis association closed early today with a fairly even break between the east and the west on questions which caused sectional divisions.

The association defeated the proposed amateur rule which would bar from amateur ranks players in the sporting goods business, but all the important national championship tournaments, with one exception, were awarded to clubs in the Atlantic states.