THE MORNING BEE

MORNING-EVENING-SUNDAY

THE BEE PUBLISHING COMPANY NELSON B. UPDIKE, Publisher. B. BREWER, Gen. Manager

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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TAXES AND THE SPOILS SYSTEM.

Counting employes of states, counties, municipalities and townships, there are more than 3,000,000 public employes in the United States, according to the estimate of Richard H. Dana, president of the National Civil Service Reform league. Something more than half of the total payroll of \$3,000,000,-000 comes out of the federal treasury.

Taxpayers, most of whom complain of the burdensome exactions made for the support of government, may well be astounded to learn that one person out of every seven families is on some official payroll. This condition, if it continue to grow. would result in making government the principal object in life of the American people and the chief industry of the nation.

However, long before that point is reached the demand for greater efficiency in public office will have resulted in retrenchment. One quarter of the total of salaries, Mr. Dana asserts, is wasted in surplus employes, unnecessary duplication of work, inadequate management and antiquated methods. "Could waste be stopped in the public service," he says, "there would be a saving to our overtaxed country of \$700,000,000 a year."

Of course he makes some suggestions for the accomplishment of this economy, most of which do not harmonize with the old-time political system. Put efficiency and employment experts into the various departments, he urges, standardize work, modernize methods and put promotion on a basis of merit instead of seniority or political pull. Officials in the higher grades he would have selected for fitness rather than as a matter of political expediency.

There is no doubt that America is wasting immense sums through the shifting in and out of public employes. Nebraska, unless all signs fail, is soon to go through just such an overturn, as is every other state, county or city that changed administrations in the recent elections. As long as public opinion countenances the spoils system, the public pocketbook must pay.

ABOLISHING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

The proposal to eliminate the ancient device of the electoral college and vote directly for president has been advanced by a Nebraskan, Senator Norris. What is more interesting is the reaction of a former Nebraskan, W. J. Bryan, to the plan. In criticising the amendment as proposed, he declares that it does not go far enough.

tem of voting with each state as a unit, retaining the present proportionate strength. Bryan would count the votes by congressional districts. "That would be as near we could get to the popular elec- extent for youthful citizens of Omaha. tion without incurring the danger involved in a system that would allow each vote to be counted directly," he said in an interview in Washington. dominant, and the opposition party not strong enough to watch the count."

ceiving a majority would be given the election. However, this would break down the identity of the states and increase the power of the more populous parts of the country. A state such as Nevada or Wyoming would have less influence than a city such as Omaha. Bryan would not urge this, nor does the present time, and even under the change suggested by Norris, if New York or Pennsylvania is carried by a few votes, that bare margin gives one party the entire state electoral vote. Under Bryan's plan, if certain congressional districts in Pennsylvania went democratic, as they often do, though the state as a whole is preponderantly republican, the democrats would pick up a few presidential votes. The same principle would work to the advantage of the republicans in parts of the south, for instance, Tennessee and Kentucky, which though democratic as a whole, have some districts that go

The power of the east and of the south might be lessened under Bryan's plan, but there would be no such disturbance of the present balance under the scheme outlined by Norris. The more this subject of abolishing the presidential electors is discussed, the more complicated does it

JUSTICE, OR MERE JUGGLERY?

An Arizona judge has added the latest item to the continually growing puzzle of the law. A man 61 years of age confessed his part in a train robbery, and the judge sentenced him to banishment from the state for twenty-five years. He is to report at intervals his whereabouts, but may not enter Arizona during the quarter of a century without permission of the court.

On the surface, no objection will be made to the act of the court so far as it includes clemency only. Yet the curious man will wonder why, if this self-confessed criminal can not live at large in Arizona, he is to be shifted onto some other community. If he is undesirable in one state, he surely will be as unwelcome in another. If the Arizona peace is in danger of being disturbed by his presence, then it would seem to be up to Arizona to put him where he will be harmless.

Banishment of criminals has been in vogue for a long time; usually in modern police practice it has taken the form of driving vagrants and like offenders from one town to another, but no proof is yet forthcoming that justice is served or the community bettered, for when one is sent out another comes in. Train robbery is a major crime, and deserves more attention from the law than a sentence of banishment implies. Allowing for any peculiar circumstances that may mark this case, it remains true that it contains elements of danger as a precedent. If the example were to be generally followed, we will come to see a continual shifting of confessed or convicted criminals, and a possible defeat of the law because of the condition.

The shortage in the cotton yield for the year will permit a lot of the hold-over stock to go on the market at top prices.

A WINTER'S STORM.

The influence of habitation and settlement upon climate is hard to estimate. Every tree, fence post and blade of corn bears its small part in breaking the force of the wind. Perhaps this is why the younger generation and later comers can not comprehend the Nebraska blizzard of thirty years ago.

The morning of January 12, 1888, was warm and balmy. Gray clouds hung overhead. The new fallen snow beneath the feet was light as swan's down; light feathery flakes were still floating lazily in the air, and one could not help but admire their perfect geometrical shapes.

.The sound of an incoming train could be heard for miles; and, as the morning advanced, the stillness grew eminous. Darkness seemed to creep down almost imperceptibly; cattle in the stalk fields grew restl ss.

At midday a gray line appeared along the horizon in the northwest. The line advanced, and before one was aware, the blinding storm in all its fury broke. Farmers were on the road taking a grist to mill or returning laden with provisions. The wind increased in violence and the air was dense with flying snow.

As the afternoon advanced, the air grew chill. In rural districts, teachers took stock of fuel and provisions, and, if staying was out of the question. lashed their pupils together and, taking the lead, struggled through drifts in an effort to reach a place of safety. The storm lasted three days, and some had used the last seat or desk to keep up a blaze; teacher and large pupils had sacrificed their wraps and gone without food in order to portion out enough to keep the spark of life in the weaker ones until reached by relief parties.

Or, the fourth day, the pitiless sun shone on a dazzling white world, and the drawn, anxious faces of the ones at home as they awaited the return of the rescue parties. In the towns no such adventure with the elements is known, nor are there such adventures in the country now, except in isolated instances. Some claim climate has changed, but it may be that, with modern conveniences, we have learned to offset and checkmate its force.

SAFETY FOR THE COASTER.

Omaha is a paradise for the small boy and his sled. However much of a problem the city's many hillsides may be for city planners, they are a source of everlasting joy to the youngsters of the community, and these have rights that have been honored from time immemorial. Yet a serpent entered the original paradise and destroyed its happiness, and the use of the hills in Omaha for coasting purposes is more or less complicated by the fact that the streets also are used for business traffic

Here's where the Boy Scouts come in. They have volunteered to do patrol duty at dangerous places, and to protect, as far as they can, the coasters from collisions with trucks or other vehicles. The chief of police has accepted the proffer, and hours have been designated for the sport of the youths, to obtain until the coming of spring puts an end to coasting for the season.

This action on the part of the Boy Scouts and the police will have the approval of all, for it is a wise move in the direction of making the hillsides safe. Boys and girls will coast, and, under the exhilarating influence of the combination of swift sled Senator Norris would preserve the present sys- and smooth track are apt to forget certain precautions and so expose themselves. With a vigilant Boy Scout on patrol duty, much of the danger will be eliminated, and the joy of living increased to that

ETHICS OF EVIDENCE GETTING.

A local prohibition "evidence getter," which is "The danger of such a system would be ballot box a euphemism to describe the man who patronizes a stuffing in states where one party is absolutely bootlegger and then snitches on him, has admitted in federal court that he solicited a bribe. The judge, in passing sentence, takes cognizance of the In an absolute democracy, the vote of all citi- fact that the compensation of the culprit was not zens would be added together and the candidate re- adequate, and so let him off with a minimum sen-

All of which opens up a rather wide vista in ethics. First, perhaps, comes the unfortunate fact that those in charge of the enforcement of the law are compelled to work with tools that might otherwise be discarded. Again, the officers knew that Senator Norris. What Bryan has in mind is that at | to get the evidence they need, a peculiar type of man, one of a class whose morals are not always temptation-proof, and the temptation to graft is ever present in this traffic.

itable enterprises are inclined to pay in lump sum and then let the municipality distribute the money to the

No surprise is felt at the confession of the "evidence getter," that he solicited a bribe. Reason enough exists for thinking that such an act is in no sense a novelty in the business. Nor is it clear that the lack of adequate compensation is a serious factor, for it is possible that in any event this man might have sought to share in a lucrative source of easy money he thought was open to him.

Law-abiding people will feel better when they can be assured that no part of the business of enforcing laws is in the hands of men whose probity is not assured. It is not especially a question of morals, but of ethics; as long as bribery in any form figures in law enforcement or evasion, so long will the fountain of justice be muddied by such cases as this, though not, perhaps, in this exact form. The problem is not one to be settled off-hand, but common decency impels the wish that the difficulty might be removed speedily.

Burning of a toy store just before Christmas is a tragedy, but old Santa Claus has his workshop running overtime to make up.

Ioway--loway

JOHN J. SMERTENKO, in the Nation. It is the boast of Iowans that one cannot cross the state's boundaries at any point without realizing that here is a land of plenty as different from its neighbors as the plains of Canaan differed from the fields of Gomerrah. Everywhere within these borders is fecundity, wealth, and solidity. The stranger is at first amazed and eventually bored by the unrelieved regularity of bumper crops, trim wire fences, pure-bred and well fed live stock, huge barns and silos, smug and freshly painted homes. And if he is surprised at the country, he must indeed marvel at cities and towns which have no slums, no ramshackle outbuildings, and no decaying genteel quarters. Virtually the only signs of the poverty that one habitually associates with urban life are the red, superannuated freight cars which house the Mexican road builders. Farm and factory, church and dwelling, school and library partake of the heavy, formidable air of prosperity which

Statistics-and Iowa "boosters" revel in statistics -bear out this impression of general well being. According to the latest United States census report Iowa leads the nation in the value of her horses and hogs, of pure-bred live stock, of farm machinery and farm property per farm; she has the greatest number of poultry, of pure-bred hogs and cattle, of autos per capita-one to 5.5 persons-and of telephones one farms; she excels in the production of eggs, corn and oats. Her road system, railroad facilities, her dairy products and packing industry are among the first in the country. She has coal, water power and lead mines, foundries and lumber mills; she produces enormous quantities of cereals and canned goods, cement and bricks. In short, Iowa is self-sufficient in most of the necessaries of life and is creditor of all other states in many of them.

"From State and Nation"

-Editorials from other newspapers-

the Bible, where the text might seem

Rev. Mr. Buckner was justly en-titled in the opinion of Methodist

periodicals in the east, to the trial on his beliefs for which he sought. His

For Our Commercial Marine.

posed bill. There are other considera-

spite efforts to bring about economic

readjustments, at prices greatly out of proportion to the earning power of

producers and consumers generally.

The farmer finds this condition re-flected not alone in the machines and

implements which are necessary in his business, but in the prices charged

for all staple commodities which he is compelled to purchase at the stores.

The wage earner in the cities finds himself face to face with the same

conditions, with the added handicap

of being compelled to pay excessive prices for the very commodities which

the farmer complains of having to sell

Secretary Wallace, as would be ex-

pected, views the entire problem from the standpoint of the farmer. It

is encouraging that he finds the eco-nomic status of agriculturists better

than it was a year ago, yet he be-lieves there should be constructive

legislation to insure against possible future losses. Perhaps it would not

be so easy for the secretary or any other supposed expert to discover a

similar improvement in the economic status of the average American wage

earner. The latter is still being ex-ploited by the gentlemen who find pleasure and profit in arranging price combinations and schedules and in

manipulating and controlling the flow of natural products.

In New England, as well as in other sections of the east, both the farmer

and the ultimate consumer are suffer-ing financial losses because of the

combinations that have been made against them. The farmer is receiv-

ing far less than he should for the things he has to sell, and the con-

sumer is paying for more than he should for the products of the farm

which he has to buy. It may be that laws can be devised to correct this

condition, but it would seem that an easier and surer way to bring relief

would be the establishment of co-

operative marketing, with immediate

cerned from the results now com-

tions, equally as important.

lationship

From the Christian Science Monitor.

Taxpayers' Leagues.

From the Osceola (Neb.) Record.

Several counties in the state have been organizing taxpayers' leagues in the cash through the teaching of liberal pastors and professors of theology. order that there might be more information disseminated in regard to the tax question and how to get relief from high taxes, and these counties as to what steps they desire taken to secure relief in such ways as may be purpose of this provision was the repossible by legislation. ossible by legislation. threment of incar it is conspicuous that while these nuated pastors.

It is conspicuous that while these nuated pastors. This invocation in hings are being done over the state. the case of Rev. Mr. Buckner, who nere in Polk county, where so much was in vigorous health and powers, noise has been made about high taxes has apparently led to the chief criticby those who were so fearfully con-terned about the tax question and Mr. Buckner in this way was intended by those who were so fearfully conburdens, it is a mighty easy matter to see why the people who made the big noise during the campaign are singing mighty dumb at this time. been a failure. Apparently there has been a failure. Apparently there has been a failure. Apparently there has been more publicity rather than less and much rallying, in press and else-singing mighty dumb at this time.

The conclusion, of course, is plain -there was not at the time and there isn't now any concern about tax re-lief for the taxpayers in the minds of those who were making the noise. What they wanted then was a campaign issue, which they could use for a few days, with the hope that they could get by and win an election and in this they were partly successful, as a taxpayers' league.

The fact is as true today as it was

a month ago that the immensely larger share of the tax burden arises in things right at home. There was no answer to this fact during the campaign and no attempt to disprove it, and, in view of the fact that a number of counties have gone into the business of organizing taxpayers' leagues to disseminate information about the tax question, the Record desires to say at this time that now, that the campaign is over and there tax proposition, we will take pleasure duty, for which the people will surely hold that legislative body responsible. What is the remedy proposed by the president? Nothing else but the granting of \$25,000,000 per year, to be paid to the steamship companies as a subsidy, in order that the operation of these ships may be made profile for tax relief are invited to make such contribution or comment as they may desire. If we cannot have a taxpayat any rate join the movement in short discussions, which may be pro-ductive of information,

America's Contribution. From the Chicago Journal of Commerce.

Just what form this country's conribution to humanity in Europe may ake in the future is on the knees of take in the future is on the knees of the gods, but the emotional and hys-would be come independent of other the gods, but the effective that at present we terical complaints that at present we are "doing nothing" may be dismissed tion of our goods and passengers. This as absolutely false and viciously mis-

The United States now, and every month since the armistice, has been ontributing to the security, the stability, and the future prosperity of

all Europe.

How? By going to work, by pro-How? By going to work, by pro-ducing wealth, by maintaining in this country law and order, by quieting one after another every social and economic disorder, by sound finance, by attention to business, and by frowning upon all ill-advised and vis-

that it has not rushed into Europe in quick response to every plea. It is that America wants first to be right before it goes ahead. It is American prudence, its purpose not to bite off more than it can chew, that holds it within safe limitations. And—America is not going to do for Europe things Europe should do for itself. It s waiting to be shown.

Community Chests. From the York News-Times.

Numerous cities are trying the community chest plan in handling the various charitable enterprises that every city must cope with. The nucoming quite bothersome. The people who give to these meritorious charorganizations that are deserving. There have been charges of more or less graft in connection with many of these drives and it is contended the graft charges can be avoided if the distribution of the funds is in the hands of responsible boards or city officials.

The American people are generous but they hate to be "worked." The money will be forthcoming for charitable work that is worthy of support. Skin games and thievery in the name of charity should be throttled

Radicalism and Conservatism in the From the Springfield Republican.

Western radicalism in politics, which is now again receiving national ad-vertisement, finds a contrast in the conservatism of the west in matters of religion. Although Mr. Bryan has transferred his residence to Florida he has not severed his connections with the west and is still largely representative of it. Where he would cast his fortunes if the agricultural block should develop into a third party and the democratic party become the party of conservatism, is perhaps uncertain. But there has been no uncertainty in the religious position which Mr. Bryan has taken during the year in sternly opposing evolu-tionists and liberals and in reassert-ing the older theology and the literal truth of the Bible.

Echoes of the struggle in the west between the older and the newer re-ligious thought have recently been servative in politics is now perhaps more progressive in theology. The special case which has attracted attention is that of Rev. J. D. M. Buck-ner of Aurora, Neb., a Methodist preacher for forty years, who against his will was placed upon the retired list by the Nebraska Methodist con-ference on the initiative of the presiding bishop in September. The cause of his retirement was the open expression of belief in a kind and loving God coupled with such explanaons of the historical development of

NET AVERAGE CIRCULATION for NOVEMBER, 1922, of THE OMAHA BEE

Sunday78,105 B. BREWER, Gen. Mgr. ELMER S. ROOD, Cir. Mgr. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of December, 1922. W. H. QUIVEY, (Seal) Notary Public

"The People's Voice"

Criticises the Progressives.

quoted as saying recently at Lincoln have been getting in readiness to retirement was accomplished, in the "We ought to have our eyes open to counsel with and, if necessary, to be opinion of these Methodist periodicals, a lot of things we were quick to forable to instruct their representatives by taking improper advantage of a in the state legislature this winter, as to what steps they desire taken to cago he scored Debs for traitorous utterances since he was from prison and asked his audience, "Must we stand such insolence?"
Again he electrified his hearers by in the late campaign, there is nothing ism among the Methodists themthe communist party in the Michigan woods no meaning for us?" He gave this warning to the American people "Do not be misled by cranks who in view of the spasms that were so liberally thrown here in Polk county to convince the taxpayers that their tax ills emanated from their state tax no further trouble," was his closing admonition.

his views what they are going to accomplish.

With an In Nebraska one bunch of faddists Mr. Buckner is to write his views for a newspaper syndicate. With an apparently wide feeling that he has are working for a new political party which is all they wished or expected and which answers the whole question as to their innocently dumb silence at this time on such questions as a taxpayers' league.

Apparently wide feeling that he has are working for a new pointical party which will contain all the good citizens and the cornerstone will be the seems assured of a larger audience "Closed Shop," with death to any man than if he had been permitted to who attempts to support his family continue his accordance to the content of the co by labor unless he is possessed of union card and obeys to a dot the that is good vote getting dope. If one page of The Bee a paragraph saying rommands of union dictators. a more crazy bunch, led by a United self-styled progressives in congress, States senator, have determined to turn to the 11th verse of the 18th Val J. Peter, in the Omaha Daily Tribune. The president has appealed to con- smash all political parties, abolish our gress for the second time with the re- state government and substitute for quest that the ship subsidy bill be passed. The message of the president is clear, convincing and definite in its power, and if congress fails to give the appeal of the chosen chief execu-

> tion of these ships may be made prof-itable. Now, please note with care. fice for one of their members in 1924. The loss of \$50,000,000 now sustained They will impeach the attorney genby the government with this com-mercial fleet will be reduced one-half, and at the same time the government they will turn all who were imprisonis enabled to maintain the commercial ed for disloyalty during the war free fleet and to provide for replacement that they and their friends may help in proper manner.
>
> The adoption of this proposal would in the new progressive move. The demand that the thing called govern enable America to ship its own mer-chandise under its own flag. We United States. They will revise our constitution just to make people be-lieve they are doing something. consideration alone should suffice to prompt congress to adopt the pro-

Congress should give its whole attention to our present day problems and not waste their high-salaried time monkeying with constitutional amend-ments which are immaterial or worthless. The bunch of lawyers who are so anxious that the constitution should be revised had better use their talents The inclination is to believe that the in improving our rotten and expensive conditions which Secretary Wallace convention no thought was given the says the farmers of the United States daily increasing murders, not a word economic disorder, by sound finance, by attention to business, and by frowning upon all ill-advised and visionary schemes for meddling in matters abroad.

It is not that America is heartless, or careless, of conditions in Europe; not that it is selfish; not that it is wholly devoted to enriching itself, that it has not rushed into Europe; that it has not rushed into Europe; that it has not rushed into Europe; that it has not rushed into Europe. prices received for farm products and the prices paid for things the farmers any issue that might lose them votes. It pays better to damn the railroad This same distorted re-exists generally. The or demand that foreign nations shall lationship exists generally. The things which the farmers and wage earners must buy are still sold, de-

Oxford, Neb .- To the Editor of The

and much rallying, in press and elsewhere, to Rev. Mr. Buckner's support. His church in Aurora stood loyally by him and protested against the action of the conference, but he counseled it to stand by the newly appointed paster and to work for liberal views within the church organization. The latest development is that Rev. Mr. Buckner is to write his views want, what they are going to accomplish. It is truly encouraging to know that tive proper consideration this time, vice. The people who now have a lit-that body will be guilty of gross the rest between sessions will then neglect of an important national have a continual feast of legislative duty, for which the people will surely enactments.

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