

MORNING—EVENING—SUNDAY THE BEE PUBLISHING COMPANY NELSON R. UPTON, Publisher. B. BREWER, Gen. Manager.

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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.

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 salaries, Mr. Dana asserts, is wasted in surplus employes, unnecessary duplication of work, inadequate management and antiquated methods.

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.

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.

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 criticizing the amendment as proposed, he declares that it does not go far enough.

Senator Norris would preserve the present system of voting with each state as a unit, retaining the present proportionate strength. Bryan would count the votes by congressional districts.

In an absolute democracy, the vote of all citizens would be added together and the candidate receiving 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.

ETHICS OF EVIDENCE GETTING. A local prohibition "evidence getter," which is a euphemism to describe the man who patronizes a bootlegger and then snitches on him, has admitted in federal court that he solicited a bribe.

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.

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.

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.

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 life offenders from one town to another, but no proof is yet forthcoming that justice is served or the community benefited, 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.

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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.

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 ominous. Darkness seemed to creep down almost imperceptibly; cattle in the stalk fields grew restless.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

AMERICA'S CONTRIBUTION. Just what form this country's contribution to Europe in the future is on the knees of the gods, but the emotional and hysterical complaints that at present we are "doing nothing" may be dismissed as absolutely false and viciously misleading.

How? By going to work, by producing wealth, by maintaining in this country law and order, by quieting one after another every social and economic disorder, by sound finance, by attending to the duties of citizenship, by frowning upon all ill-advised and visionary schemes for meddling in matters abroad.

COMMUNITY CHESTS. Numerous cities are trying the community chest in handling the various charitable enterprises that every city must cope with. The numerous drives and tag days are becoming quite a burden to the people.

Radicalism and Conservatism in the West. Western radicalism in politics, which is now again receiving national advertisement, finds a contrast in the conservatism of the west in matters of religion.

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"From State and Nation"

Editorials from other newspapers Taxpayers' Leagues. Several counties in the state have been organizing taxpayers' leagues in 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 have been getting in readiness to counsel with and, if necessary, to be able to instruct their representatives in the state legislature this winter, as to what steps they desire taken to secure relief in such ways as may be possible by legislation.

It is conspicuous that while these things are being done over the state, here in Polk county, where so much noise has been made about high taxes in the late campaign, there is nothing being said or done about such matters by those who were so fearfully concerned about the tax question and in view of the spasms that were so liberally thrown here in Polk county concerning the taxpayers that their tax bills emanated from their state tax burdens, 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.

There was not at the time and there isn't now any concern about tax relief 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 to get a vote, and then they could get by and win an election and in this they were partly successful, 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.

For Our Commercial Marine. Val J. Peter, in the Omaha Daily Tribune. The president has appealed to congress for the second time with the request 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 approval of the chosen chief executive proper consideration this time, that body will be guilty of gross neglect of an important national 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 shipping industry as a subsidy, in order that the operation of these ships may be made profitable. Now, please note with care. The \$25,000,000 now sustained by the government with this commercial fleet will be reduced one-half, and at the same time the government is enabled to maintain the commercial fleet and to provide for replacement in proper manner.

The adoption of this proposal would enable America to ship its own merchandise under its own flag. We would be completely independent of other nations, even England, for transportation of our goods and passengers. This consideration alone should prompt congress to adopt the proposed bill. There are other considerations, equally as important.

Unequal Price Levels. From the Christian Science Monitor. The inclination is to believe that the conditions which Secretary Wallace says the farmers of the United States are now compelled to face are being likewise faced by the great majority of producers and wage earners. The average consumer in the United States, declares the head of the Department of Agriculture in his annual report to the president, had it not been for the distorted relationship between prices received for farm products and the prices paid for things the farmers must buy." This same distorted relationship exists between the prices of things which the farmers and wage earners must buy are still sold, despite 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 reflected 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 average consumer in the United States 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 too cheaply.

Secretary Wallace, as would be expected, views the entire problem from the standpoint of the farmer. It is encouraging that he finds the economic status of agriculturists better than it was a year ago, yet he believes 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 exploited 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 suffering financial losses because of the combinations that have been made against them. The farmer is receiving far less than he should for the things he has to sell, and the consumer 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 release for both parties chiefly concerned from the results now complained of.

THE BIBLE, where the text might seem to conflict with that belief, as have long been familiar in the east through the teaching of liberal pastors and professors of theology. Rev. Mr. Buckner was justly entitled in the opinion of Methodist periodicals in the east, to the trial on his feet of his new thought. His retirement was accomplished, in the opinion of these Methodist periodicals, by taking improper advantage of a provision of the church law never intended for use in such cases. The purpose of this provision was the retirement of incapacitated or superannuated pastors. This invocation in the case of Rev. Mr. Buckner, who was in vigorous health and powers, has apparently led to the chief criticism among the Methodists themselves.

In so far as the retirement of Rev. Mr. Buckner in this way was intended to prevent the public airing of opposing religious views that might have resulted from a heresy trial, it is evident that the course adopted has been a failure. Apparently there has been more publicity rather than less and much railing 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 managed it to stay by the newly appointed pastor and to work for liberal views within the church organization. The latest development is that Rev. Mr. Buckner is to write his views for a newspaper syndicate. With an apparently wide feeling that he has merely been expressing what others and which answers the whole question as to their innocently dumb silence at this time on such questions as a taxpayers' league.

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"The People's Voice"

Editorials from readers of The Morning Bee. Readers of The Morning Bee are invited to use this column freely for expression on matters of public interest.

Critiques the Progressives. Oxford, Neb.—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: General Pershing is quoted as saying recently at Lincoln "We ought to have our eyes open to a lot of things we were quick to forget as soon as the war was ended—bocheism and I. W. W., for instance." A few days later in Chicago he scored Debs for traitorous utterances since he was pardoned from prison and asked his audience, "Must we stand such insolence?" Again he electrified his hearers by asking, "Has the Herrin massacre or the 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 are always tampering with the constitution." Let the constitution alone and live up to it and we will have no further trouble," was his closing admonition.

It is truly encouraging to know that we still have men who, like Roosevelt, have the courage to call a spade a spade and who stand for true representative government. Our newspapers are clouded with glaring headlines, and columns of dope are written about what self-styled "progressives" want, what they demand and what they are going to accomplish. In Nebraska one bunch of faddists are working for a new political party which will contain all the formal citizens and the cornerstone will be the "Closed Shop," with death to any man who attempts to support his family by labor unless he is possessed of a union card and obeys to a dot the commands of union dictators. There is a more crazy bunch, led by a United States senator, have determined to smash all political parties, abolish our government and substitute for our legislature a body of hand-picked judges who must have the O. K. of the university law school and who shall receive salaries compatible with their high calling and constant service. The people who now have a little rest between sessions will then have a continual feast of legislative enactments.

At Washington things are even worse. The farm bloc which was organized to catch farmer votes is to be scrapped and a progressive bloc organized to catch votes is to be the main to make life miserable for the president and to capture that office for one of their members in 1924. They will impeach the attorney general for trying to protect the lives and property of American workmen and they will turn all who were imprisoned for disloyalty during the war free that they and their friends may help in the new progressive move. They demand that the thing called government in Russia be recognized by the United States. They will revise our constitution just to make people believe they are doing something.

Congress should give its whole attention to our present day problems and not waste their high-salaried time monkeying with constitutional amendments which are immaterial or worthless. The bunch of lawyers who are so anxious that the constitution should be revised had better use their talents in improving our rotten and expensive court procedure. In the La Follette convention no thought was given the daily increasing murders, not a word of disapproval of the brutal Herrin massacre that shocked the civilized world, and no attempt was promised to stop the lynchings and inhuman burnings at the stake that have become common occurrences. They call themselves progressives but prove themselves adepts at dodging any issue that might lose them votes. It pays better to damn the railroads and to threaten to crush Wall Street or demand that foreign nations shall pay the last penny they owe us, as

that is good vote getting dope. If one desires a true-to-life definition of our self-styled progressives in congress, turn to the 11th verse of the 18th chapter of St. Luke. A. C. RANKIN.

Crowing for Adams County. Hastings, Neb.—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: I see on the editorial

page of The Bee a paragraph saying Grand Island shipped 2,700,000 eggs, "something to cackle about." Come over to Hastings, we will give you something to crow about. We will show you 2,664,000. This is 181 cars, 400 cases to the car, 30 dozen to the case.

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We Worry Along Year After Year.

JAPAN HAS SOME NIFTY OLD METHODS. CANADA MIGHT SUGGEST SOMETHING. JAMAICA OFFERS AN