

## News of the Week

Diaz has been re-elected president of Mexico, but as that thing has been happening regularly for about thirty years, it causes no surprise. Mexico is the only Spanish-American country that has been able to establish a stable government. It is to be hoped that some of the other South American republics can reach that stage of development in the near future.

A great strike of the workers in the packing houses is on which involves, all told, nearly fifty thousand. The price of meat has already advanced in the cities and the business at the stock yards at Omaha and elsewhere is at a standstill. If the strike continues long, the consumers of meat in the cities will suffer from high prices and scarcity, but out here in Nebraska we will kill and dress our own steers and hogs, just as we did years ago before there was any meat trust.

The only rhyme that the newspaper poets have so far found for Fairbanks is "slim shanks" and it fits his physique exactly. They have found two for another vice presidential candidate, "scribbles," which fits his occupation, and another, "nibbles," which don't fit anything. As for Davis, he is too old to write rhymes about.

The Chicago Chronicle, which has been a gold standard democratic paper and a persistent fighter for all that Wall street ever wanted, has now turned over and will be from this on a straight-out republican organ. It don't have to change its principles in the least.

There has been much discussion in Lincoln during the week among democrats about "fusion." When they talk on the subject, they look like a prima donna when she is nearing the end of a dashing phrase and realizes that she has not breath enough to finish it.

The nomination of ex-Senator Davis, 81 years old, who is the father-in-law of the rantankerous, railroad, republican Senator Elkins from the same state, shows how much the delegates to the St. Louis convention had to do with the nominations. Probably not one in twenty of them knew that there was such a man in existence. But Davis is worth between thirty and forty millions.

The Guatemalan ant, imported by the agricultural department and let loose in the Texas cotton fields, has entered into an irrepressible conflict with the boll weevil that destroyed last year more than \$50,000,000 worth of cotton. From the last report it appears that the nest of them brought from Guatemala by the entomologists has cleared one plantation of 600 acres of the weevil and is moving on to find other fields to conquer.

Golden Rule Jones, mayor of Toledo, is dead. While somewhat erratic, nevertheless he was a great character and a powerful force in the field of reform.

When they get Davis into the vice presidential chair there will be a nice lot of old codgers in the senate chamber. There will be Senator Pettus, who is 83; Senator Morgan, 80; Senator Hoar, 78; Senator Platt, 71; Senator Cullom, 75; Senator Depew, 70; Senator Hawley, 78; Senator Frye, 73; Senator Allison, 74, and Senator Proctor, 72.

The Japanese war goes fiercely on. In the north the Russians have been constantly forced back and the two armies at last accounts stood facing each other ready for battle. There are rumors that the Japanese suffered severe losses in front of Port Arthur, losing thousands of men by the explosion of mines, but they have not been confirmed.

## THOMAS E. WATSON

Feeling secure in the belief that the people's party has gone the way of all other reform parties which followed the practice of co-operation with an older organization, the plutocratic press has quite generally tried to ignore the recent national convention at Springfield, its platform and its candidates. The local sheets at Springfield out-Heroded Herod in their attempts to put the convention news as near as possible to the want-ad page. But the Cincinnati Enquirer gave its first two columns on the front page to the populist convention report, as well as an excellent picture of Watson. The following from the Kansas City Journal of July 6 will interest readers of The Independent not only because of the information it gives, but because it shows a

## Great July Clearing Sale

Will be continued for another week. Do not fail to take advantage of this sale. Special prices in all departments.

20 to 50 per cent discount on Wash Goods, Ladies Neckwear, Belts, Purses, Hand Bags, Ribbons, Laces, Embroideries, White Goods, Parasols, Hammocks and Underwear.

## Ready to Wear Department

20 to 33 1/2 per cent discount of Dress and Walking Skirts, Shirt Waists, Dressing Sacques, Mackintoshes, Lace and Portier Curtains.

## Men's Furnishing Department

1-5 off on Straw Hats. Special discount on Men's Neckwear, Hats, Dress and Work Shirts, Overalls, Pants and Underwear, Boys' Knee Pants.

## Shoe Bargains

20 to 40 per cent discount on broken lines of Shoes and Slippers  
20 per cent discount on Canvas Shoes and Oxfords.  
Special discount on regular lines of Shoes and Slippers.

**FRED SCHMIDT AND BRO.**

Lincoln,  
Nebraska.

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broader spirit than most of the plutocratic sheets manifest:

For many generations Mr. Watson's ancestors had been of the landed gentry of the Georgia neighborhood where Mr. Watson now lives. They were slave-owners and representative men. The first legislature of Georgia had a Tom Watson in it. The first public meeting ever held in that state to declare against Great Britain had a Thomas Watson among the signers, besides several other members of the family. That meeting was held within eight miles of Mr. Watson's present home.

Mr. Watson's father was a man of wealth, or large landed estate, and owned many slaves. The new system made necessary by emancipation, the constant decline in cotton, and the panic of 1873 reduced the father to poverty. He had given his son a thorough high school education, had then sent him to college, and had intended to give him a finished education. For lack of money Mr. Watson had to quit college in his sophomore year and go to teaching school for a living. He had a hard time of it, being only 18 years old. He read law at night, gained admission to the bar in 1875, began practicing law in 1876 when 20 years of age, and was married in 1878. He now bought back one of the family estates and settled his parents and the younger children upon it, supporting the parents and educating his younger sisters. He soon built up a large practice, worked hard and read much, served in political conventions and in the state legislature.

Mr. Watson was at the head of the democratic electoral ticket in Georgia in 1888, and was elected to congress in 1890, carrying by the heaviest majority every county in the district save that of his opponent's residence, in which no contest was made. He was elected on what was known as the farmers' alliance platform, though not a member of that order. He pledged himself to adhere to that platform independent of either of the old parties.

He secured the free delivery postal service and the first appropriation congress ever made for it. This was in February, 1893. At the time he proposed it much ridicule was heaped upon him. Congress at the next session renewed the appropriation and then the government went to work. This is the actual beginning of the free delivery system as applied to rural communities.

In 1896, while Mr. Watson was sleeping soundly at his home in Thomson, the populist national convention at St. Louis nominated him

to lead its national ticket. Upon the assurance that his acceptance would mean a combination ticket of Bryan and Watson, the union of all the reform elements, and the harmonious political action of the south and west, Mr. Watson reluctantly accepted the nomination which he had not sought. He soon realized that he had been deceived, and that he was leading a forlorn hope. He publicly denounced the national executive committee of his party with having sold out the party for a small mess of patronage, and retired from the canvass. He then devoted himself to the practice of law for several years to restore his finances; and, this having been done, began to give his time exclusively to literature and to lecturing.

While editing a newspaper Mr. Watson began to write historical sketches to illustrate political doctrines. The work grew on him and his purpose broadened until his first book, and the one which aroused immediate interest, "The Story of France," was evolved. His point of view was seen to be novel. History usually concerns itself with kings and battles. Macaulay went farther and treated national movements and the influence of parties. Green, going a step beyond Macaulay, treated of the people. But Green stopped far short of what Mr. Watson believes should be accepted as the true scope of history. He holds that no work of the life of a nation can be complete which does not realize that the statute book in its widest meaning is the people.

Unless he is grievously in error Mr. Watson believes that the world is ready to have history so written that it will understand the effect of laws, as well as of battles—will understand the influence of a system, as well as the influence of a man. In "The Story of France" Mr. Watson's method of treatment had free play. In his "Life of Napoleon" he found ampler opportunity for that mode of treatment. In his "Life and Times of Thomas Jefferson" he has brought to his theme not only these principles, but what is of far more importance and interest, the principles of American democracy.

Mr. Watson's home town is Thomson, Ga. Thomson is a small country town of some 1,700 people, situated about forty miles from Augusta.

Mr. Watson's home is at the edge of the town next to the cemetery. The house is a small, but comfortable, story and a half frame structure, with a broad porch in front. Near his home, situated at the top of a high hill which commands a splendid view of the entire surrounding country, is a fine old two-story mansion house in

the center of a tract of 250 acres of rich farming land. Mr. Watson bought this place, rented the land out to tenants and converted the house into his literary workshop.

Up there on that commanding hill he is as solitary as a man on a desert isle. From the upper windows one can see the faint outline of the last spur of the Blue Ridge mountains.

This is only part of Mr. Watson's holdings. In McDuffie and adjacent counties he owns some 10,000 acres of land which bring him in a revenue of approximately \$10,000 a year.

Prior to the publication of his two most conspicuous works, Mr. Watson had already attracted attention by several pamphlets dealing with various characters of French history. The story of how he came to be interested in this phase of history is best told in his own words and will be of interest since it has a direct bearing on the publication of "The Story of France."

## Douglas Co., Nebr.

Editor Independent: Please find enclosed \$1 to pay for my paper. Kindly thank Mr. De France for sending me same on trial. It's the leader of populist weeklies.

I hope the farmers will let their corn go one day this year and give their worst enemies a dose of vote. The enemies I refer to are the railroads and the trusts. They are more to be feared than floods, drouth, or grasshoppers.

Unjust taxation is driving home-builders from the state, and the young man who expects to build up a home in Nebraska should have caution and see that he votes for a party that is in sympathy with the citizen and not the corporations.

Vote the populist ticket this fall all the way down and send the pie-chasers back to the mines and then we will have two years of government of, for, and by the people. I am doing my share here in Douglas. Yours for victory.

L. M. HUNT.  
Omaha, Neb.

G. W. Benjamin, Trenton, Neb.: "Enroll me with the Old Guard. I send you 50c with this letter, which will make \$1.50 from me to the Old Guard fund. I cannot go to Springfield, but will contribute my part to send some one from this part of the state. Would like to see Uncle John Powers go. (He is a delegate.—Ed. Ind.) You can count on me when the scrap begins. I want to see the boys put up a straight ticket; nothing else will go in Hitchcock county."