

begin with its size; the Press calls it "a huge quarto, three by four and a half inches, pp. 16." They compliment the publisher on his mathematical skill in making the distance, 188 miles, from Omaha to Fort Kearney, by the North Platte route, shorter than a straight line; and wonder at his moderation in allowing only 250 miles to the Nebraska City route, when, by his map, it meandered about so as to cross every watercourse along the line.

They were also kept busy denying other malicious reports, circulated by their industrious enemies; as that the grass had been burned off the Central route, that the Nebraska City ferry had been discontinued, or that the Morton House and Nuckolls House had closed their doors. One wonders, in reading these things, whether all the stories they themselves printed about the other lines were strictly so; as of the dearth of necessaries of life along the southern route, and the bottomless sloughs and impassable river crossings encountered on the northern. These things interest the explorer of the old newspapers, and we may quote further from them another time. There were able men putting forth strenuous efforts in behalf of their several towns through all those years; but they worked out their own salvation, or otherwise, and it is all over long ago.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AGAINST SUBSIDIES.

The American Federation of Labor in session at Detroit took action on the ship subsidy question on December 16. The subsidy seekers—made up of ship-builders, a few ship-owners and the politicians who are indebted to the shipping people and who, through Mark Hanna, have promised to put the subsidy bill through—were present in full force in the hotels and worked hard to get the delegates to favor subsidies. In fact they overdid themselves. Because of their great numbers—one delegate says he counted 19 subsidy lobbyists—and the great zeal displayed in their work, the delegates, at first apathetic, became violently opposed to a subsidy scheme which could command such an expensive lobby. After three hours' discussion only one vote was registered in favor of the subsidy proposition.

After squelching this particular subsidy scheme the federation, while its blood was up, adopted a declaration upon the subject which is so pronounced an expression of sound principles as to be worthy of quotation. It is as follows:

1. "A subsidy in the very nature of things is the granting of special privileges empowering some men to fill their pockets at the expense of others through the forms of law.

They Debauch Legislatures.

2. "Special privileges have a cor-

roding and demoralizing effect on the citizenship of our country, inasmuch as they debauch our legislatures and tend to the belief that a public office is a public snap, to be worked for personal gain and class interest.

3. "Such legislation cultivates the belief that anybody may, if he can, stick his hands into the public treasury and fill his pockets without harm to others.

4. "We are further opposed to the indorsement of such legislation by this body because subsidies in general are passed by the liberal use of corrupting funds and we cannot afford to have it charged that the labor movements of America have had their judgment warped and conscience polluted by meddling with boodle measures. Its indorsement would justify the rank and file of our members in raising a question of the integrity of delegates so voting, thus destroying the confidence of our representative men, undermining the very foundation of our movement and inviting universal disintegration.

5. "To sanction this at this session would be but an entering wedge to open wide our doors for subsequent legislation of the kind and the lobbyist, armed with a corruption fund and his loud pretense for labor's interests, would be a fixed institution in our midst, polluting the very atmosphere in which he moves. With all confidence destroyed in one another, we would find ourselves overwhelmed by the greatest disaster that could possibly befall the masses struggling for a higher civilization.

6. "Even were the principles of government subsidies permissible in justice and equity, it would be unwise for this body to commit itself to ship-building subsidies until the shipbuilders of this country have unionized their plants and shown by their conduct that they are in harmony with the objects of organized labor."

Republican Recklessness.

The most notable thing about the present attitude of the Hanna-McKinley machine is its apparent recklessness in arranging for legislation that will result in the extravagant expenditure of public money. They seem to take it for granted that the people are too dazed to see through their schemes, one of the most costly of which is the ship-subsidy job, which is to be started with an appropriation of \$100,000,000, to be disbursed in ten years. This job was endorsed by Mr. McKinley in his message, and by the republican national committee at its recent meeting, and it is to push it along that Assistant Postmaster-General Perry Heath, and Comptroller of Currency Dawes have been selected so long in advance of the campaign, and in absolute defiance of the civil service law, to prepare literature to be distributed by the national committee. The principal duty of this

republican literary bureau for several months will be to try to fill republican papers with demands for the passage of the ship-subsidy bill by congress, in order that the weak-kneed republicans in congress, who are disposed to balk on this subsidy business, may be made to believe that the press of their party is demanding the legislation.—From the Ithaca Democrat, Dec. 28, 1899.

Pacific Mail Buoyant.

A report from Washington that the passage of the subsidy bill seemed assured helped Pacific Mail yesterday, with the result that, on buying of less than 6,000 shares, a gain of 2½ points was scored.—From the New York Times, Dec. 30, 1899.

Republicans in Favor of It.

Republican senators and representatives have been pretty generally approached on the subject of the steamship subsidy bill. As heretofore announced in this correspondence, this measure has the active sympathy of the administration. Many powerful influences are also at work in its favor, and if it does not go through it will not be for want of pushing and log-rolling. According to reports, it will be brought in pretty soon after the recess. It is claimed by its advocates that they have the promise of party support to a very large degree, so much so that it is freely said the caucus will have no trouble in bringing all up to its support.

There are a number of republican senators and representatives whose whole record is in opposition to measures of this character. One of these is Senator McComas, of Maryland, but it is alleged he has been practically won over, and a subsidy advocate said tonight that McComas was down on their affirmative list. * * * As a party measure, there is no means of stopping its passage through the house. * * * In the rather uncertain event of the success of the bill, the merchant marine would be benefitted very little, but favored ship-building firms, contractors, politicians and lobbyists would realize most handsomely.—From the Baltimore Sun, Dec. 23, 1899.

"It is not necessary to get alarmed or excited over the large number of pension bills that have been or may be introduced in congress, or the peculiar character of some of the measures presented," counsels the Washington Post (Ind.). "Under existing conditions, with an annual outlay of \$145,000,000 on account of pensions, and a strong prospect that it will be increased to some extent by adjudication of claims resulting from the military operations of the last two years, we can scarcely conceive of the possibility of the passage of bills adding hundreds of millions or even tens of millions to the rolls."