

POSITIONS. Epaminondas, after having won great glory for the Thebans at Leuctra, became the object of wrath to enemies and less successful rivals. And when at Athens, after a victory, the distribution of offices began they sought to humiliate him. The occasion was not entirely unlike one soon to be celebrated, by our republican victors, at Lincoln. And so the competitors and the revilers of Epaminondas appointed him to superintend the cleanliness of the streets and the maintenance of the common sewers of Athens. "He gave dignity to this employment and showed, as he himself had said, that we should not judge of men by their places, but of places by those who fill them."

This philosophical reflection is commended to the political organization about to confer, in Nebraska, great honors upon certain citizens, as worthy of being thought about again and again. A position may be honored by a man who can and will, with patriotic intelligence, completely discharge the duties which it imposes. But there is no position which can honor an ignorant, incompetent and characterless citizen. Positions can not make men, while men can make positions, illustrious.

TRUNDLEBED DEBATES. The public school system of Nebraska is a hot-house where potted slips of intellect are trained to efflorescent oratory. Debates upon subjects which have troubled experienced statesmen and economists of renown for generations are carried on by trundlebed occupants with a composure and a now-it-is-settled air similar to that which characterized the astrologers of ancient times.

The Dutch and the British in South Africa, and their respective rights, were calmly defined and determined last winter in our High schools. And now the question as to whether United States senators would improve in intellectual and moral quality, if elected by the People instead of by the Legislature, is about to be disposed of by infant prodigies who will discuss the proposition from the trundlebed standpoint.

Without study, without thought, the ability to talk emptiness and parade superficialities in acquirements is encouraged and applauded. How would it do to limit discussions to those who have investigated the question at issue? Where the constitution of the United States is involved, why not exclude from the debate all pupils who have never read that instrument?

JAMES J. HILL. James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railway, is not only a successful railway man but is also a prosperous ship owner. He is, with others, interested in a line of merchant

vessels plying on the Pacific coast. He has made a study of the problem of navigation as well as transportation. He recently addressed the Bankers' Club of Chicago upon the ship-subsidy bill and, referring to the agricultural argument advanced in favor of the bill, said that our farmers needed better markets, and a subsidy based upon the amount of agricultural products carried would have "some justice" in it. The inference is plain that Mr. Hill does not believe there is very much "justice" in the present bill which bases the subsidy upon the cargo capacity, or the space allotted for a cargo whether occupied or not, and not upon the actual cargo carried of the products of our farms. Practically, Mr. Hill says that a subsidy bill, not the one now before congress, however, but one based upon entirely different principles, would have "some justice" in it. He does not say that the interests of the farmer demand it or that it is essential to the building up of an American merchant marine.

It is significant that Mr. Hill frankly admits that his company has built ships without subsidies and that it is now building more without government aid or the assurance of any form of special privilege. Mr. Hill is in a position to know whether ship-owning and operating is a paying or a losing investment for American capital. It must be an attractive field for investment or Mr. Hill and his friends would not now be building ships. So that any subsidy or bonus would be the taking of money from the people and putting it in the pockets of men engaged in an already profitable industry.

TO BE PAID. The Nebraska regiment which served with such conspicuous courage and efficiency under the lamented Colonel Stotsenberg, returned to San Francisco and was there given the option to be paid off in full at that city, with fare home added to each man's stipend, or to be taken home and then paid. The regiment, almost unanimously, decided each man to take his pay and the added price of transportation to his home. The United States so paid and discharged them then and there, in California; whereupon a demand that subscriptions to liquidate railroad charges for bringing the soldiers to Nebraska was made upon the citizenship of this state. It was not a very reasonable demand. The soldiers had been paid in full for services and also for their fares home. Nevertheless a subscription was started and at last D. E. Thompson advanced about twenty thousand dollars, paid the railroads and brought the troops to Nebraska. That bill is now to be paid by the state. It will be due as soon as the legislature begins business at Lincoln in January, 1901.

THE OPEN DOOR. Mark Twain, with characteristic cleverness, in a recent address noted the inconsistency and hypocrisy of some American statesmen when he somewhat irreverently remarked: "How piously America has worked for that open door in all cases where it was not her own."

SOUND DEMOCRAT. The Daily Democrat, of Topeka, Kansas, is exceedingly instructive and conservative relative to fusion politics in that state and in Nebraska. The Democrat is an out-and-out advocate of the gold standard. It is therefore vigorously opposed to any fusion with populism and the financial vagaries which that word implies.

AMERICAN STEAMSHIPS. It pays or it does not pay to build and operate steamships from the West side to the East side of the Atlantic.

If it pays, no subsidies are needed. If it does not and will not pay, no subsidies ought to be granted. It is not right to take money from all the people to build steamships for a few people. The power to tax all to enrich a few is not vested in congress by the constitution.

GOOD ROADS. Our common country roads in this state are made, by law, sixty-six feet in width. This is too wide. Every road is a weed propagator. Nebraska will never have really good roads until they are made narrower. The legislature should authorize county commissioners to appraise and sell sixteen and one-half feet on each side of each road to owners of land adjacent. This would reduce the width of roads one-half. It would also make a road fund of large dimensions out of which permanently improved highways could be maintained. It would in the older counties, if the fund is honestly and efficiently used, do away with all road taxes.

MILLIONAIRES WANTED. Nebraska wants a couple of dozen men with a million dollars each to come into her citizenship and build up industrial plants. Straw-board paper manufacturing and milling offer allurements to energy and capital. By the anti-calamity majority cast at the election by Nebraskans, in 1900, money invested here is assured of welcome and of fair treatment.

The legislature will repeal all the obnoxious laws, which populists and those pandering to populism have in recent years enacted for the purpose of annoying and burdensomely taxing capital in Nebraska. The laws respecting partnerships and corporations are in need of revision or immediate and unconditional repeal.