

The Omaha Bee.

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The BEE PUBLISHING CO., Props. E. ROSEWATER Editor.

THE bill to retire General Grant with the rank of general of the army is to be favorably reported to the house. Two years ago it would have passed; now the prospects of its passage are said to be hopeless.

It will astonish nobody to learn that Vincent, the absconding Alabama treasurer was known as "an amateur of some pretensions as a poker player." Polk, of Tennessee, was afflicted in the same way, and the taxpayers of both states will have to pay the piper.

If congress passed a law to make unsuccessful contestants for seats bear the expenses of the contest it would save the government a great deal of money and diminish the number of contests. The contested election cases brought before the present congress have cost the country \$63,000. Such appropriations are a standing premium to the running up of hotel and bar bills at Washington.

INDIANA wants neither woman suffrage nor prohibition. Both proposed amendments have been voted down in the state senate. The wave of compulsory totalism does not seem to be gaining strength, and the millennium of universal suffrage is as far distant as ever. Some reforms are practicable and others are not. With our present system of legislative checks and balances it is difficult enough to secure those which can be enforced and which are of admitted public necessity without wasting time on measures whose wisdom is to say the least very doubtful.

THE Sun is still calling for army reduction. It insists that our skeleton army ought to be cut down to ten thousand men. Mr. Dana was not in favor of army reduction in the days when he used to travel from corps to corps as assistant secretary of war under an armed guard. His dislike of the service dates from the day when General Grant refused to make him collector of customs at New York. Since then the Sun has shone for everything else but the United States army, and its editor's quill has never passed over a chance to stab the service. A few months residence on the frontier would work a change in Mr. Dana's convictions.

It looks as if there was a great deal of triple tongued lying in Dublin. The stimulating rewards of thousands of pounds offered by the English government has developed an amazing crop of informers, who seem ready to swear away the lives of their nearest relatives to secure patronage and plunder from the lord lieutenant. Such glib tongued confessions are very suspicious. They ought not to be accepted unless strongly corroborated by outside testimony. There is a wide spread impression that many innocent men have been hung in Ireland on informers' testimony. No guilty man ought to escape, but it is better that ten guilty men should evade the penalty of law than that one innocent creature should suffer for the guilty.

GOLD IN ALASKA. Gold has been discovered in the Yukon valley in Alaska, and combinations of capitalists are forming for the establishment of the necessary machinery and mills to conduct operations on a large scale. The reports pronounce the deposits exceedingly rich, the quartz being easily distinguished, and much of it of a fine milling quality. A large area of placers has also been discovered. The news has created great excitement on the Pacific coast, and it is predicted that a stampede of fortune-seekers will at once set Alaskawards. One report states that within three months there will be 10,000 men on the ground from California and Nevada.

While there are good grounds for believing that the news of rich gold discoveries in Alaska is true, we doubt whether any great stampede can set in very soon for the new gold fields. Alaska is a long way distant from California, and the Yukon valley is not the most accessible part of the country. The cost of outfitting is so great, the transportation so uncertain, the country so difficult, the climate so severe, and, above all, the season in which placer mining and prospecting can be carried on is so short, that the usual crowd of fortune hunters would seem to be pretty

well cut off for the present at least. Still all experience has shown that the presence of rich and lasting deposits of the precious metals is a wonderful stimulus to enterprise. If the Yukon mines are what they have been represented, measures sooner or later will be taken by consolidated capital to effect permanent settlements, upon regular lines of communication and establish supply posts. When this is done, a cold climate will prove no great bar to the entrance of the miners.

Perhaps this is to prove the opening wedge to the permanent settlement and development of the country. To most of us Alaska is still nearly as much a mystery as it was when Seward purchased it from Russia in 1867. It cost the United States \$7,000,000 and the only revenue which it has brought in is a small royalty of several thousands of dollars a year from the Alaska seal company who own the right to hunt in its waters under government protection. Alaska is said to be heavily timbered and not deficient in agricultural possibilities. If the gold deposits hold out immigration will certainly sooner or later be attracted to it in large numbers and the story of California, Colorado and the Black Hills is likely to be repeated. Meantime, a territorial government is greatly needed and congress ought not to be backward in giving it.

RAILROAD LEGISLATION. Now that the senatorial contest is over the legislature can concentrate all its energies to the work of law making. By all odds the most important problem before the legislature is the enactment of well digested and practical laws. There is no further use in trying to investigate the conduct of Nebraska railroads. Through the efforts of the corporate managers assisted by a willing tool in the person of Speaker Humphrey the late investigation was turned into a farce. A majority of the committee was packed with men opposed to any inquiry that would expose the abuses of the present system. Every effort of the minority who were honestly inclined to bring out the facts was thwarted. The railway managers instead of giving frank and candid answers to the questions asked, blocked the investigation through hired attorneys who interposed objections to any pertinent inquiry, and when they did answer their responses was, for the most part, frivolous, evasive and misleading.

In view of such conduct by the railway managers, further trifling by the legislature would be criminal. Enough is known about the outrageous exactions and highway robberies to which our people are mercilessly subjected to leave the legislature no room for doubt as to its duty to devise measures of relief.

The opinion of the supreme court has effectually disposed of every proposition to create a railroad commission with executive power.

The section of the constitution which devolves upon the legislature the duty of passing laws regulating and restricting the railroads, makes it equally impossible for that body to delegate its powers to a commission even if it should be composed of state officers. Nothing, therefore, remains for the legislature but to draft and pass laws, which directly regulated the freight and passenger charges on railroads operating in this state. This was the plain intention of the constitution which the legislature cannot shirk.

There need not be as much difficulty in drawing up such a railroad bill as many suppose. Other states have already enacted laws to regulate the railroad charges, and the measures they have adopted, with such changes as may be suggested by the conditions of settlement and traffic in our state, may be used as guides. The first thing to be considered is a proper classification of freights, arranged according to their bulk, weight, and the risk of their carriage. The next matter is the adjustment of the tariffs according to such classification.

Public sentiment is very well agreed that the passenger rate ought not to exceed three cents a mile. No arguments have been advanced by the railroad managers to show that such a rate would work any injustice to the roads. That it would temporarily slightly diminish their revenues is neither here nor there. In the end a fairly low rate invariably stimulates travel and pays the best. Texas, which is more sparsely settled than Nebraska in proportion to its area, restricts all its railroads to a maximum rate of three cents per mile. There is no reason why our legislature should permit a greater one. The maximum tariff should be enforced by proper penalties, and publicity should be given to established rates. The attorney general and the respective district attorney, should be charged with prosecuting violators of the law. It is recognized that statistics bearing upon the management of railroad systems are valuable in indicating the operation of laws regulating the railroads and in furnishing material for their amendment or extension. With this end in view it would be well for the legislature to delegate to the secretary of state the power to collect and tabulate such statistics by sending out annually to each rail-

road in Nebraska blanks with questions relating to the equipment of the roads, the passengers and freight transported, the expenses and receipts, the cost per ton per mile, revenue from fast freight, express, sleeping cars and telegraph, etc. This would make the secretary of state a supervisor of railroads, just as the auditor is now supervisor of insurance. The service would be purely ministerial, and on this account would in no way conflict with the constitutional mandate. It would perform all the duties which any commission created in Nebraska could perform.

It was twenty-five cents a mile by Holliday's overland stage line across the plains, and people had to grin and bear it when the U. P. charged ten cents a mile. To reduce passenger fares below four cents a mile simply means ruin and starvation to poor \$15,000 a year managers like Tom Kimball.

REFORM is necessary in the Kearney reform school for boys. The first step in the direction of reform must be the dismissal of the girls from the institution.

This trouble with the Kearney reform school is that the boys are a trifle fast and the girls a trifle loose.

The return of the Mutual Life Insurance company of New York, for the year 1882, will be found in our advertising columns to-day. The exhibit of this, the largest of the life companies, is certainly in the highest degree encouraging, and shows that the confidence with which the company is regarded by the public is deserved and rests upon a sure foundation, excellent management, ample reserves and financial resources of great strength. At the beginning of 1882 the number of policies in force was 101,400; now the number is 186,214. The amount of insurance outstanding has risen from \$315,900,137 on the 1st of January, 1882, to \$329,554,174 at the present time. The assets of the company, which in the previous year had reached the large aggregate of \$94,702,957, were during the year still further augmented, and are now up to almost 98 millions (\$97,961,318). These assets comprise over 47 millions of real estate mortgages, 204 millions of government and other bonds, 17 millions of loans on collaterals, pretty nearly 8 millions invested in real estate, almost 3 millions of cash, and various other items.

Court vs. Commission. David J. Republican. The people of Nebraska do not want laws which are liable to be plucked to pieces by the supreme and lower courts, as being unconstitutional.

When a bill is introduced for passage by the legislature, one of the first duties of the member, in our opinion, is to ascertain whether or not such proposed law would, if passed, stand the test of the twisting arguments of keen and shrewd lawyers before the courts. J. C. Roberts, representative from this county, having doubts of a law creating a board of railroad commissioners being constitutional, introduced a resolution in the house, there by asking the opinion of the supreme court on this point. The chief justice and judges of the court rendered their opinion in a communication to the house on the 25th, which ought to put a stop to all further argument favoring the creation of railway commission, but it seems that the railroad lobbies disregard this decision, and are yet advocating the passage of such a law. The State Journal of last Saturday, in a column article, attempts to make its readers believe that this decision amounts to nothing, and would have the legislature pass such a bill. The Journal is a first class paper, but we believe it should regard the interests of the people as well as those of the railroads. But the Journal is not alone in attempting to set aside the decision of the opinion of the highest authority on the interpretation of our statutes. Senator Butler, of Pawnee, who has introduced a bill providing for a board of railroad commissioners, says that he cares no more for the opinion of the supreme court than for the opinion of the humblest citizen of the state, and declares the bill should pass. We would ask, in the name of common sense, what kind of a position is this for a law-maker to take? Is it the people who interpret law, or is it the courts? Senator Butler was elected to his present position as an Anti-Monopolist, but his action in this matter would indicate that he has been either converted to the other side of the house, or that he is one of those fellows who "must be queen or he won't play," and probably the latter is true of this honorable Senator. It would seem so, at least, from his action concerning his resolution which he wishes the senate to pass providing for furnishing the officers of the senate with five papers, five one cent wrappers and five three cent stamps. During the session of the 24th, on the senate refusing to pass this resolution, this hot-headed ex-governor, gave the members fair warning that they should vote on the resolution every day during the session.

"Now without questioning the propriety of the resolution, is it justice to his constituents for Butler to present the thing every day and waste valuable time, simply to gratify his boyishness? More work and less play is what the people want. We believe that Mr. Butler, as an anti-monopolist will bear watching.

Regulating Railway Charges. The Minnesota legislature has taken hold of the matter of railway charges with a vigorous hand. So far there have been introduced as many as six bills for that purpose, with a probability that many more will follow. One introduced by P. H. Robilly, a farmer from the southern part of the

state, will give a fair idea of the general character of the others:

It provides that all railroad companies shall carry freights for equal and reasonable rates, and prescribes a penalty of \$1,000, recoverable by an action in court for either exceeding such rates or refusing to accept freights offered. The bill prescribes what shall be considered as reasonable rates as follows: For fourth class freight, including grain, flour, potatoes, meats, and heavy groceries, for distances not exceeding 10 miles, 6 cents per ton per mile; 10 and not exceeding 20 miles, 4 cents per ton per mile; 20 and not exceeding 30 miles, 3 cents per ton per mile; 30 and not exceeding 40 miles 24 cents per ton per mile; over 40 and not exceeding 60 miles, 1 cent per ton per mile; over 60 and not to exceed 70 miles, seven-eighths of 1 cent per mile; over 70 and not to exceed 80 miles, three-quarters of 1 cent per mile; 80 miles and not over three-quarters of 1 cent per ton per mile. For other classes of freight the charges which the companies may make are limited to 3 cents per mile per ton for first class, 24 cents per ton per ton for second class, and 2 cents per mile per ton for third class for all distances.

FIGHTING A LIONESS. A Keeper's Struggle for Life - The Fierce Beast at Large - A Narrow Escape.

Philadelphia Times. A monster lioness belonging to J. R. Doris's Inter-Ocean Circus created the sensation of the year in the winter quarters of the show in Frankford on Monday evening. Numerous additions have been lately made to the menagerie of the Inter Ocean show, and the animals occupy several buildings on Harrison street. The tropical animals are kept in a room by themselves. This apartment is 50 feet square, and three of the walls are masked in by heavy oak and iron cages. There are three tiers of these massive doors, and behind the bars of each are from one to three specimens of rare wild animals. The lions, tigers, leopards, panthers and hyenas are imprisoned in the lower dens, while the smaller animals and tropical birds occupy the upper tiers. In the center of the room is an immense stove, which is kept red hot night and day. A tame pelican, three created cockatoos, a flamingo, half a dozen monkeys, and a throng of performing dogs formed a drowsy circle around the glowing stove yesterday afternoon. A row of elephants along the east wall stood up to their knees in fragrant hay, and in stalls near by were a score of other herbivorous animals from South Africa. High above the tiers of cages are the sleeping banks of the attendants of the animals.

The dozen lions in the collection are as fine specimens as have ever been seen in captivity. Juno, the largest lioness of the lot, is five years old. Until last summer she was regarded as one of the best dispositioned beasts of her species. In June, 1882, another lioness in the menagerie became the mother of three cubs. Juno, who occupied an adjoining cage during the travels of the Inter Ocean show, became greatly interested in the cubs and was in the habit of watching them for hours at a time. Last fall the mother of the cubs died, and they were raised by hand. Juno's interest in the lioness babies increased after the death of their mother, and finally she became so jealous that when any one approached the cubs she would become furious with rage. In the animal house Juno occupies a cage in the lower tier in the north wall. The cubs, which now weigh about fifteen pounds each, are lodged in the lower tier at the end of the building. Juno to have an unobstructed view of their cage.

Just before dark on Monday evening Mr. Marvin was feeding the animal. He gave the cubs their share of liver, and paused a moment to fondle them. "This was Juno in a frightful rage. Marvin turned to quiet her, and as he advanced toward the cage he was struck and fell against the bars. In an instant she reared up, her paw above the elbow. In order to protect his head and body the man fell, and with his left hand grasped the bottom of the cage. Juno held his right arm with one paw and struck through the bars at his head with the other. A lad named Dunham grabbed an iron bar and tried to make Juno drop Marvin. The boy's efforts only increased the rage of the beast. Her paw held fast and she swung in the place was wildly excited, and their roars and cries were heard a quarter away. To increase the din the animals of O'Brien's circus in an adjoining building added their voices to the chorus. Dunham ran out of the building, shouting for help. As there is a small army of workmen about the place the lion house was soon surrounded with men. In the meantime Juno had torn the flesh from Marvin's arm, struck him several wicked blows on the shoulder, and then allowed him to drop to the ground and crawl away. Just as the rescuers reached the doors they heard a sound of crashing timbers accompanied by a series of blood freezing roars. Juno had broken her body against the bars and broken through. The approach of night made the interior of the building dark, and no one cared to venture in. They heard Juno charging around the place and they hesitated. They supposed Marvin was dead. He, however, managed to reach the rack in which the heavy iron bars used to clean the cages are kept, and snatching one, boldly advanced on Juno, who crouched in a corner. All this time the other animals were making the most frightful noise. Above the din the men at the doors, to their astonishment, heard Marvin ordering the lioness back to her cage. This reassured them and they started to enter. As the doors opened, Juno sprang over Marvin's head and took refuge in a stall near the blue books. Marvin stalled to close the doors, and following the now partially cowed lioness, struck her twice with the iron bar. Then he poked her out, and with an angry roar she vaulted back into her cage and the danger was over. New bars were quickly fitted in, and the cage was made doubly secure by the addition of new iron braces. Marvin's injuries were attended to by a physician, who says he will not lose the use of his arm. After Juno was caged it was noticed that one of the blue books was trembling like a leaf, and tears trickled down the frightened beast's face. Ten minutes later it was dead.

Decline of Man. Nervous Weakness, Dyspepsia, Impotence, Sexual Debility, cured by "Wells' Health Renewer." \$1.

has any other than honorable motives to this Hatch arrangement. He was "too fresh." Uncle Rufus knew he was from the sucker state, and played him accordingly. His eye teeth have been cut by this time. From the quiet retreat of a rural office to the glare of the interior department was a dazzling, not to say dizzy, like the boy who had been kicked by a mule, he knows more than he did.

Secretary Toller is familiar with frontier sharpness and Wall street sleepiness. He will look to it while he is in charge of the interior department that no monopolies are granted. But he will not be there always, and subsequent secretaries may be less competent to protect the public against the sharks. Legislation could be secured which will, so far as possible, protect the park from being made the prey of speculators. The warning already given ought to be sufficient to secure the necessary safeguards.

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Balance Sheet. To Reserve for four per cent... \$2,463,050.00. By Bonds secured by mortgage on Real Estate... \$4,750,317.83. Total Assets: \$97,961,317.72. Total Liabilities: \$97,961,317.72.

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