

The Omaha Bee.

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

In Omaha to have a new postmaster before she elects a new mayor? If not, why not?

Now please don't, Doctor! Don't abandon the helm of the U. P. D. and frigate in the midst of such a storm.

"Oh, I won't go to the National convention."--G. L. Miller. But you must doctor. We can't spare you.

PETITIONS are now in order to induce Dr. Miller to revoke his unalterable decision not to be a delegate to the next national democratic convention.

SECRETARY FREELINGHUYSEN'S urgent diplomatic instructions ought to be sent by cable. They are heavy enough to sink any ship chartered to carry them across the water.

THE present confessions of the editor of the Herald are interesting reading. The doctor appears to be troubled with softening of the brain combined with hardening of the heart.

FOUR thousand people attended the funeral of a prize fighter in New York Sunday; but if it had been a man whose life was spent in deeds of charity and benevolence, there would not have been a corporal's guard in the procession. Moral: Cultivate the noble art of self-defense for a living if you want a grand funeral.

A New York correspondent says that school marms never marry. Secretary Conroy takes exception to this remark and complains that Omaha schoolmarms are dead on the marry, and that the best are constantly resigning their posts to give employment to the parsons. Last year the board of education lost five teachers through the matrimonial mania, which has not yet spent its course in Omaha's public schools.

THE new telegraph regulation law requires all telegraph companies and press associations to deliver dispatches to all newspapers alike. The next legislature will be called upon to require wholesale merchants to deliver goods to all retailers alike and require retailers in turn to deliver to all customers alike. The matter of ownership of property will occupy no place in the legislation of the future. Whatever a man wants he must have. If he is not able to pay for it, that makes no difference. It must be legislated to him. If he is to buy to work, and thus earn money, he must not be allowed to go without anything anybody else has, if he happens to want it. [Lincoln Journal.]

Oh, what a stunner. Such knock-down logic is simply irresistible. Now, pray answer this conundrum! If press dispatches that aggregate 7000 words each day, can be delivered at Omaha to two papers for \$100 a month each, why should the third paper pay five times as much for a like service? And here is another: If the Lincoln Journal, 70 miles beyond Omaha can be served with the same dispatches for \$150 a month why should nearly four times as much be exacted for a like service at Omaha. Is not one man's money as good as another man's money? What loss will the man who is favored by reasonable rates incur if the party that pays extortionate tolls is placed on a level with him?

Do our courts recognize as property the favors granted by a public carrier to one class of patrons to the exclusion and detriment of another class of patrons? Does the right to use the telegraph at reasonable rates belong exclusively to a privileged few? If so, the country will have to depend for its intelligence upon blockheads and knaves.

If the favor or privilege of cheap telegraphic news constitutes property, when and where has any owner of such alleged property in this state ever listed it for assessment, or paid a dime of taxes on it? Where is the analogy between wholesale and retail dealers and the press? and where does the dead beat come in? Isn't it notorious that THE BEE has for years paid for and published a greater quantity of dispatches than all other Nebraska dailies combined? If any dead beatism is tolerated in telegraphic news, it is an exclusive privilege of newspaper dials that depend for success upon a "monopoly" instead of building up live newspapers by enterprise and brains.

RAISE THE ASSESSMENT.

A year ago THE BEE opened the war upon the iniquitous evasion of taxation by wealthy property owners in the city. We published figures from the records in the county clerk's office to show that real estate was assessed all the way from one-third to one-twentieth of its market value. We called upon the assessors to make a show of a fair assessment and directed their attention to particular instances where the most glaring discrepancies existed between property of equal value. At considerable expense ex-County Clerk John R. Manchester was hired to compare the market value of real estate in the business center of Omaha with the assessment list and the names of taxpayers whose property was undervalued were published without fear or favor.

THE BEE then merely scratched the surface of the ground. It proposes to go deeper. Ten years ago, when Omaha had a population of less than 20,000, her property valuation was over \$10,000,000. Last year it was placed by the local assessors at \$7,200,000. A comparison of the assessment books with the records of real estate transfers shows that at least one-third of the property in this city is assessed for purposes of taxation at from one-seventh to one-thirtieth of its market value. Large tracts of land laid out into city additions where lots are selling at from \$300 to \$1,000 each escape taxation on an assessment of from \$25 to \$30 a lot. In other instances such property is lumped and assessed at from \$50 to \$100 an acre. When business or residence property attains a market value of \$5,000 or upwards it is for the most part listed at an average of one-tenth of its actual value, while the small cottages of our clerks, laborers and mechanics pay on a valuation of 33 per cent. Such a method of assessment is no less suicidal to the city than it is unjust to individual owners of property.

Every real estate dealer in Omaha knows that the present market value of real estate in this city is fully forty millions. Since 1879 there has been an average advance of over 50 per cent in the value of business property. In all the additions the increase has been still more marked, running from 60 to 200 per cent above the prices demanded for real estate four years ago. In the face of these facts, which are known to every one who takes the trouble to watch the real estate transfers, our assessors who are paid for their supposed knowledge of property valuation have kept on copying the assessment rolls of the previous year for the last five years, with the most trifling changes.

It is high time that a halt should be called. A radical reform in the process of taking the assessment is not only needed but demanded by our citizens. Omaha is being injured in the eyes of outside capitalists by this sorry showing of her real estate assessment. Our tax levy which could be reduced to two per cent by a fair equalization of taxes, is now quoted at five per cent; and our bonded debt, which is smaller per capita than that of any city of our size in the country, is made to appear out of all proportion with our property valuation. Capital which with a fair showing to the real prosperous condition of our city would be attracted is repelled, and the statistics of Omaha's growth are compared to her disadvantages, with those of a score of smaller and less wealthy communities.

But entirely aside from considerations affecting the financial standing of this city the gross injustice of our law valuation makes itself felt in clogging the wheels of public improvement and checking the material growth of Omaha in all the elements which go to make up a metropolis. Every demand for improvement bonds is met by a growl that the statutory limit of ten per cent on our assessed valuation has almost been reached. The demand for paving and sewerage for gutting and grading awakens a howl about the heaviness of our tax levy while the men who are escaping taxation use the bugbear of high taxes to frighten the very citizens who are already bearing more than their share of the municipal burdens.

The remedy must be applied and applied at once. The assessment of property in Omaha ought to be raised by readjusting property values on an impartial basis, and listing all property that has heretofore been assessed at a nominal value at the lowest possible estimate, an equalization of assessment on the basis of one-third the market value would give Omaha an aggregate valuation of \$13,000,000. The taxes of the small property owners would be materially decreased, but the tax shirkers would be made to contribute their full share of the expenses of maintaining this city. With such a valuation Omaha could at once enter upon a system of public improvements that would place her where she ought to be among the growing metropolises of the Missouri valley.

COLORADO is trying to raise another Leadville boom. Like the old Leadville, the new camp is in Colorado and bears the name of Jintown, which is supposed to be a corruption of

Jamestown. It is said to have inexhaustible beds of carbonate ore, which is much richer than the Leadville mineral. The new camp is not well described, but it is said to be located northwest of Denver, only a short distance, and nearly on the line of railway. The marvellous reports from there, however, are to be taken with a grain of allowance, or to be more explicit, several tons of allowance.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

The amended school law recently enacted by the legislature has enlarged the board of education of this city from six to nine members. Three members of the present board, Messrs. Points, Long and Conroy hold over until 1894, and six new members are to be elected at large at the coming city election.

THE BEE urges upon our citizens to exercise the greatest care in choosing the new members of the board. Entirely aside from questions affecting the standard of education in our public schools the board of education is charged with grave financial responsibilities. Over \$100,000 a year is disbursed by this body. For the careful and proper expenditure of this sum none but the best men ought to be selected. During the present year the board will be engaged in extending our school facilities. Two new school houses will be erected this summer and steps will be taken to secure land west of the high school preliminary to the erection of another primary school at an early day. The surplus money already on hand amounts to nearly \$50,000.

It makes little difference whether the new members of the board are democrats or republicans, but it makes every difference whether they are fitted for the duties which they will be called upon to fill. With this end in view, two years ago THE BEE urged and supported non-partisan nominations, and it still believes that nominations regardless of party would do much to increase the efficiency of the board. Every interest of our taxpayers and citizens demands that the school board shall be composed of cool headed, intelligent and reputable men who take pride in our educational system. Our public schools are steadily improving. The standard of studies has been raised, methods of instruction improved and the calibre of the teachers bettered. But it is precisely at its present stage that the most care should be taken to maintain the efficiency already attained. While much of the supervision of our schools must devolve upon the superintendent, the board of education is either an aid or a check to the carrying out of every reform. As the holders of the school purse, the brains of the teachers, the judges of the necessity of increased accommodations, they exercise a powerful influence over the school system. It is of the highest importance that they should be chosen with great care.

THE army bill as recently amended has been published. The most important of the legislative riders is that which opens the retired list for disability by virtually creating a separate list for officers retired under the compulsory retirement act of last summer. Provision is made for the reduction of the pay corps by the stipulation that hereafter all vacancies in the grades of lieutenant colonel and major shall not be filled by original appointment until the corps is reduced to forty. This will check promotions in the pay department for several years to come.

A change made in the bill by the conference committee throws open the quartermaster and commissary departments to civilians, by providing that hereafter vacancies occurring in these departments "may, in the discretion of the president, be filled from civil life." From the wording of the clause it would appear that any vacancies in any grade come under this proviso, thereby permitting the president to appoint civilians to the grade of major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, and even brigadier general, over the heads of officers now serving in lower grades, if he so sees fit. It is hardly possible that this was the intention of the framers of the amendment. The opening of the staff to civilians is in itself of questionable propriety. Such positions ought to be reserved for deserving lieutenants and captains of the line. To jump a score or so of officers who have worked their way up in these departments would be a gross injustice for which there would not be the shadow of an excuse.

A reduction of \$9,000 is made in the item for pay of civilian clerks in the subsistence department, which will probably result in decreasing the pay of the higher grade of clerks.

Apart from these changes the army bill has few items of general interest. All the principal reforms suggested by the bill as it first came from the house have been lopped off. The appropriation aggregate \$24,681,350, as against \$27,250,000 for last year.

effect of the viaduct bill as an argument against any increase in the assessment or further prosecution of public improvements in Omaha.

THE lower house of the Missouri legislature has passed the farmer's bill, which cuts down local freight rates twenty-five per cent. This is what Dr. Miller would call another monstrous villainy, and terrible things are predicted already by the railroad organs of St. Louis, if this bill should become a law.

THE Republican joins in the demand for a fair assessment for Omaha. The editor of the Republican is still absent from the city, and Yost is too sick over his failure to secure Collector Cronin's shoes to pay much attention to the vagaries of the U. P. organ.

THE repeal of the bank tax will cut the government out of about \$3,000,000 more revenue than congress really intended; but like the national debt this is another blessing in disguise. It insures an increased dividend on bank stock.

A VIEW FROM THE GALLERY

The Peculiarities, Appearance, Hobbies, Ambitions and Virtues of Congressmen. Washington Letter to Cleveland Leader. There are a number of members of congress who seem to have set themselves aside to oppose not jobs but men. Perry Belmont is ever trying to break down anything that Blaine has built up. Dannel, of Minnesota, is in opposition to all measures espoused by Senator Windom. Governor Curtin fights the Camerons day in and day out; Desendorf, of Virginia, is continually against Mahone; Whitmore, of Tennessee, always opposes Geo. M. Robeson; and Benjazzar Belzhuover is ever ready to throw what mud he can on General Fitzgibbon and his signal service bureau. Men of small ideas are numerous. Other congressmen have ambitions. Geddes wants to be governor of Ohio, Knott of Kentucky and Wadsworth of New York. Randall, Carlisle, Springer Cox, Morrison, Townshend and Converse are looking toward the speakership. Leedom wants the position of assistant-treasurer and Alkin that of doctrooper of the next house. McKinley and Townsend, of Ohio, are said to aspire to the senate; Haskell, of Kansas, thinks he has a chance at the White House, and Jay Hubbell wants nothing but to hear no more of assessments at 2 per cent.

McLane, of Maryland, waxes everyting to go by the president of forty years ago. Ben Le Fevre, of Ohio, prides himself on his system of distributing seeds to his constituents. Blount, of Georgia, revels in the beauty of small hands. McLean, of St. Louis, spends his time thinking of his liver pills, and Emory Spear, of Georgia, rejoices in thinking himself the prettiest little fellow in the house.

Ben Wood, of New York, is conspicuous by his absence. He has only twice answered roll call, and has never occupied his seat during his congressional term.

Mr. Kasson, of Iowa, is noted for his polished manners and his Miss Nancy address; George M. Robeson, of New Jersey, for his love of good living; Sam Cox, of New York, for his wit and sarcasm; Proctor Knott for his irony; Joas of Texas, for his poverty; Seales, of North Carolina, for his knowledge of the Indians, and Singleton, of Mississippi, for his likeness to Jeff Davis.

Singleton, of Illinois, is the ugliest man in congress; Frank Hiscock is the handsomest; Candier, of Massachusetts, is the most pompous; Waite, the conceited; Foster, of Missouri, the youngest; Townshend, of Illinois, the most bombastic; Crapp, of Massachusetts, the most modest; Tom Reed, of Maine, the brightest; and Walpole Colerick, of Indiana, decidedly the dullest.

Congressman Hammond, of Georgia, is the ablest lawyer in congress; Wadsworth, of New York, is the biggest farmer; Farrell, of Chicago, the biggest merchant; Russell, of Massachusetts, the best manufacturer; and Balford, of Colorado, the most extensive miner.

Governor Curtin is the great diplomat of the house, George W. Robeson the great orator, Robert J. C. Walker the great poet, George Wise, of Richmond, the great duelist; Ranny, of Boston, the great criminal examiner, and Anson McCook the great military hero.

Sixty of the senators had academic educations, and twenty-seven are college bred men. Nine senators were educated in the common schools, four were brought up under military discipline, and two are put down as having no education whatever. Senator Davis is a product of Yale, Hoar of Harvard, Sausbury of Dickinson, Cameron, of Princeton, Grover and Frye of Bowdoin, Ben Harrison and McMillan of Miami university, and Allison and Conger, of the Western Reserve college, now located at Cleveland. Nearly all the senators are lawyers by profession, fifty-three having studied law, and nearly all practicing it. There are a couple of business men, several farmers, and a half dozen bankers, but the lawyers have a monopoly of the senate.

BURROWS' BRIEF.

The Senatorial Election in Nebraska and its Meaning.

Partisanship a Poor Grade of Patriotism--The Monopoly Position.

A few days after the election of the United States senator, Secretary Burrows, of the Nebraska Farmers' Alliance, communicated his views on the political outlook to a leading anti-monopolist in Otoe county. His letter has just been made public in the Otoe County Optic. This candid and dispassionate review of the outcome of the late senatorial struggle, will be read with interest by man of all parties.

My Dear Sir:--Your letter of the 12th is at hand. You are right in thinking that I am hoping for some financial aid from your county. The drain upon our treasury has been so great of late that I have been compelled to advance funds to the amount of about fifty dollars from my own pocket--and you know my pocket is not very well lined. But I have no doubt these things will all come right in the end, as they always have heretofore. At any rate it gives me great pleasure to receive cheering words and to know that my friends are remembering me in this work.

As to the senatorial contest, our only victory consisted in what we prevented, not what we achieved. There is no doubt that, if it had not been for the anti-monopoly sentiment which the alliance has developed, Mr. Millard would have been elected. The U. P. had a quiet, but very able and determined lobby working for him, and had he succeeded he would have been the devoted henchman and servant of the corporation. The election of Mr. Manderson was purely a republican victory, and certainly a very creditable victory for that party. But it was made possible by the anti-monopoly sentiment which had been developed in that party, which, while it would not consent to the election of an anti-monopolist purely--who had definitely left the ranks of the republican party--would have opposed to the bitter end the election of an ultra railroad candidate like Mr. Millard. Probably Mr. Manderson was the ablest and most acceptable in all respects of all the republican candidates.

I think he owes nothing to railroad influence, and he is certainly entirely free from any indebtedness to the anti-monopolists. He made them no pledges and received from them no favors. He owes his election to the fact that there were twelve or fifteen republicans in the legislature who were so strong anti-monopolists that they could not be dragged into voting in caucus for a railroad candidate, and the party was obliged to select its least objectionable man, or submit to defeat. He has every incentive to do just the right thing. He is free from entangling alliances; he is young, able and ambitious; and there is no good reason why, if he makes a clean record and puts himself on the side of the people on the vital issues of the day, that he should not be his own successor. But, in his speech to the legislature he particularly emphasized the fact that he was elected "as a republican." The staunchness and purity of his republicanism was his particular pride and boast. And herein lies the danger to the interests of the anti-monopolists.

The nomination of Stanley Mathews, a railroad attorney, to a seat on the supreme bench, was a republican nomination, and was confirmed by a strict party vote. The great corporations operate through the strongest party, and the man who goes to the United States senate as a strict party man, will be very apt to be their tool when the emergency arrives, no matter how pure and patriotic he may be, especially if he considers, as Mr. Manderson seemed to, that the highest patriotism consisted in devotion to the republican party.

The supreme court and the United States senate are the keys to the monopoly position. So long as the monopolists can entrench themselves there, they can defy the people. The Dartmouth College case originally merely the affirmance of the sanctity of a contract, but gradually expanded in its significance until it is made the ground work of the claim that all rights and privileges deducible from any kind of charter have also the sanctity of a contract, and that once granted by the people they assume the character of vested rights and can never be resumed by them, followed by a consistent line of judicial decisions, come to be the foundation upon which a gigantic tyranny over the American people is being builded. Relief from this tyranny can only be found in a judicial independence which will break away from vicious precedents and go back to sound principles of right and justice. But continue in the hands of the monopolists the power to mould the supreme court to their liking, through the United States senate, and relief in this direction will be long delayed.

Hoping you may succeed in keeping life and energy in our organization in Otoe county, I remain, Yours sincerely, J. BURROWS, Sec. State Alliance, Melro, Neb., Feb. 15 1883.

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