

THE OMAHA BEE.

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LAIRD'S VINDICATION.

Congressman Laird's long-expected vindication has at last appeared in his organ, the Hastings Gazette-Journal. His "complete vindication," as he calls it, was written by himself, and occupies six solid columns. It is an amusing document. Mr. Laird disproves what was never charged, and by implication admits the material parts of all that has ever been charged, except that he was in collusion with the local land officers at McCook. The answer to that allegation is simply what accused persons generally plead when arraigned, namely, not guilty. No intelligent man can read and digest the statements of the land officers without reaching the conclusion that Mr. Laird is simply laboring hard to disprove what nobody has alleged.

Mr. Laird has been charged with wanting a stock ranch on the Stinking Water creek, and that in accordance with that want he went into that section with Simon Kelly, the Hastings gin mill keeper, and Mr. Francis, the surveyor of Red Willow county, to hunt up the lines of the land which he coveted. Neither of these charges does he deny.

It was charged that Mr. Laird paid Galen Baldwin the sum of \$500 to abandon a squatters claim which he (Baldwin) had in that neighborhood. Mr. Laird does not deny nor attempt to disprove this, but introduces Baldwin to disprove a charge that never was made, that he paid Baldwin \$500 for making a dug-out and plowing patches of ground. Baldwin states that the contracts for plowing the ground were made with each one of the persons who made the entries—some of the contracts being made verbally and some by writing. Baldwin admits in his statement that only eight out of the eleven bogus homesteaders have ever been in the neighborhood, but he does not state whether these contracts were made before or after the exposure of the fraud.

It was charged that after the lines to these lands had been found by Laird, Kelly and Francis, the surveyors of Red Willow county, that a party of men from Hastings, the home of Laird, went to McCook on B. & M. railroad passes furnished by Laird, and entered lands selected by himself and Kelly and Francis, and that the first entries that were made on the day of the opening of the McCook land office were those of these identical lands. This is not attempted to be denied in Laird's so-called vindication, but to all intents and purposes is admitted for he introduces the officers of that land office, who simply deny that they were in collusion with Laird or any body who made the entries of these lands, and also the attorney of the men, Mr. Starbuck, who makes the same denial. Opposed to this is the affidavit of Moore, heretofore published, which shows that other pre-emptors tried to get the ear of the land officers at McCook so as to make the entries of their claims, which were on this tract, but failed. It is an established fact that Laird's associates were given the preference. Is it not, then, a fair inference that they made the entries at the request of Laird and Kelly?

Mr. Laird publishes another affidavit from Moore which is very long, but which, when boiled down, means only this and nothing more, that he did not intend to charge that James Laird was in collusion with the local land officers, in making fraudulent entries. We shall republish this affidavit at an early day, and will ask the public to carefully peruse it. There is no withdrawal of any charges of collusion or favoritism on the part of the land officers with Mr. Starbuck and his clients. Moore, in his second affidavit, simply says, and as we understand he intends to say, that he did not intend to charge that Laird was present or in collusion with the officers in making these entries.

The fact is that Laird with his natural cunning increased by his practice as a lawyer, builds up a straw man and knocks the dummy over, instead of answering the real charges that have been published against him.

We will not stop to analyze the bombast and fusian which Mr. Laird indulges in, to distract the attention of the public from indisputable facts. Mr. Laird has been very unfortunate in his business associations, and his memory has been so defective that few who know him could depend on any denial he makes even if in the shape of an affidavit. His connection years ago with rotten schemes and corrupt jobs has given him a notoriety that is more malodorous than the stinking water ranch deal.

There are a few questions which he propounds to THE BEE directly. Mr. Laird asks, "Will the Omaha Bee state who is its authority for the charge of fraud by James Laird in connection with the organization of Phelps county?" If Mr. Laird desires to locate the authority let him look in and around the North Platte land office, and if he can not find it there, we will cite a few old settlers who have a distinct recollection on that subject.

Mr. Laird's next question is, "Will the same paper state who was its authority for the charge that James Laird applied for and deposited money for the survey of land in Northern Nebraska?" Mr. Laird to disprove this has fished out an affidavit from ex-Surveyor or General Smith, who swears that the identical James Laird who deposited the money to locate lands in Nebraska on survey scrip hailed from Wyoming. This is but another case of "Vegeham." Our information came from the records of a congressional committee charged with investigating these survey scrip frauds. This committee while investigating entries made by a California ring, stumbled on the name of James Laird, who made entries in Nebraska. Mr. Smith testifies that the man Laird was from

Wyoming. It is presumable that if he lived in Hastings he would not likely be stupid enough to give himself away.

The third and last question asked by Mr. Laird is, "And will the same paper state who is its authority for the statements reflecting on James Laird in connection with the Knevals case?" Our authority is the conduct of Mr. Laird and his associates who went to New York to compromise the settlers. Why did they steal away without taking Senator Van Wyck into their counsel? Why did they compromise on a larger amount than Knevals was willing to take in the first place? How did it come that Knevals served up a champagne supper at Delmonico's regardless of expense, after Laird had helped him to dive into the pockets of the homesteaders. And for further particulars, if any are desired, we refer the Hon. James Laird to Charles H. Van Wyck, United States Senator, Washington, D. C. Has Mr. Laird any more conundrums?

COMPETITION WHICH DOES NOT COMPEETE.

The Iowa pool has since more struck a snag. One of the partners, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, has gone on a strike for higher wages. For a few days we may have competition; then the pool will be reorganized, concessions will be made and the combination will exact the expenses of the war and the increased proportion accorded the kickers from the shippers. The lamb shearing will then go on more vigorously than ever. It is an established fact that there can be no such thing as permanent competition in parallel railroads. Of necessity the rates over all must be the same. Whenever a new road is built the territory tributary to it and the lines that are parallel is made to contribute the additional running expenses, and interest on the investment. Competition always will be followed by combination. The public may temporarily profit by a ruinous freight and passenger war, but in the end it has to make good the losses of such a war. There is only one way in which the public can be protected against ruinous rate wars and extortionate tolls by combination. The national and state legislatures must enact laws fixing a minimum as well as a maximum rate. We want laws that will prevent any railroad from engaging in competition at less rates than it can afford to carry the business. We want laws that will prevent pool lines from exacting from shippers, who are compelled to patronize them, exorbitant and oppressive tolls. When such laws are enacted it will be unnecessary for railroads to pool as a matter of self-protection, and competing roads will only be built when the traffic of the section through which they run shall demand additional facilities. It is a mistaken idea that every railroad built is a blessing to the country.

Experience has shown that the needless building railroads by jobbers and speculators, who build on borrowed capital and issue fictitious stock, is a great curse. Such roads may develop prematurely sections of the country which they traverse, but in the long run, instead of cheapening transportation they compel roads that share the traffic with them to keep up high rates.

Take for example the railroads that traverse the continent. The Union and Central Pacific roads, unrestricted by law, have for fourteen years exacted outrageous tolls from their patrons. They have laid heavy tribute upon the producers and industrial classes from the Missouri to the Pacific coast. It was expected that the building of competing roads to the Pacific would afford relief by forcing material reductions in passenger and freight tolls. What is the result? The traffic of which the Union and Central Pacific had a monopoly is now divided among five monopolies. The high rates heretofore exacted by the Union and Central Pacific are kept up by mutual agreement. They could hardly do otherwise. The traffic that paid a handsome dividend on two millions of inflated stock is now expected to pay dividends on one thousand millions. The Union and Central Pacific corporations, gorged with spoils exacted by highway robbery, might have loosened their grip and given their patrons reduced rates, but when they have to divide with four other giant monopolies they naturally continue their oppressive exactions. To be sure, the construction of four other railroads to the Pacific has developed and peopled sections of the country that were barren wastes, and increased the traffic at the terminal cities, but the increase is by no means proportionate to the increased expenses and vast capital upon which interest and dividends are to be paid. Hence, the country will be bled for many years when it might have had relief had not the speculators built more roads than we need. Sooner or later the chartering of railroads will have to be regulated by the population and traffic. Until then and until the legislatures and congress fix maximum and minimum tolls, pooling will continue and ruinous pool wars will disturb commerce by fluctuating rates which are always followed by a levy on the shippers to make up the shortage.

ROSEWATER is vindicating his reputation as a liar these days, as all Saunders county people may perceive by the following: "The back precincts of Saunders county are still held back to make Reese's election sure." The foregoing appears in THE BEE of November 13. The returns from all the precincts of this county were in by the 9th of November and were counted or canvassed on the 10th.—Wahoo Tribune.

Then why were the Saunders county returns on Supreme Judge withheld from the press? Why did not the Wahoo or Ashland papers publish them promptly? Why were they not telegraphed to the Omaha Republican on the day the canvass was completed? Up to the 14th

it was given out in this city that Reese had from 1,000 to 1,400 majority and THE BEE credited him with 1,200 on its first estimate. In view of the fact that the returns from nearly every county were in before Saunders had been heard from the inference was perfectly natural that the back precincts were held back for some purpose. By the way, why were THE OMAHA BEES to Wahoo subscribers, held back a day or two almost every issue during the closing weeks of the campaign, while the Omaha Republican was delivered with promptness and dispatch.

The opinion of Justice Harlan, dissenting from the decision of his colleagues on the United States Supreme bench in their decision pronouncing the civil rights bill unconstitutional, will commend itself as eminently sound to every sincere believer in the fundamental principles of Republicanism. Justice Harlan plants himself broadly upon the ground that the supreme court is in duty bound to respect the intent of the makers of the constitution. It is a matter of history that the constitutional amendments under which the civil rights bill was framed, were voted and adopted not merely to abolish slavery and confer the elective franchise upon the freedmen, but to insure equality before the law in its broadest sense to every citizen without regard to race, color or previous condition. The duty of the National Legislature to prohibit discrimination against any citizen in the full exercise of his civil rights was expressly pointed out in the proviso that grants to Congress the power to enforce the constitutional amendments by suitable legislation. To say that this power was negative, and could not be exercised until some State attempted to discriminate against one class of citizens by hostile legislation, because of their race or color, was virtually to nullify the very essence of the amendments. To enforce equality before the law in respect to the rights of all citizens to equal privileges on public highways and in public places there must be laws to punish offenders. It would not be necessary for any State where people were hostile to the exercise of equal privileges on railroad trains, steamboats, parks or other public places of amusement to enact laws creating class or race distinctions in order to nullify the civil rights of all its citizens.

Such distinctions could be carried on with impunity as long as no law was enacted to prevent them, and punish their infraction. Under the late decision congress never will be called on to protect the civil rights of American citizens where they are violated by State statute, and yet the violations will be a matter of notoriety and common occurrence. Justice Harlan lays down the fundamental principle involved in this decision when he declares: National legislation, may, without transcending the limits of the constitution, do for human liberty and fundamental rights of American citizenship, what it did with the sanction of the Supreme court for the protection of slavery and rights of masters over fugitive slaves. In every material sense, it is applicable to the practical enforcement under the amendment.

PEOPLE WILL TALK.

"I attended the consecration services at Trinity cathedral," remarked a prominent citizen to THE BEE's Man About Town, "and was very much pleased with the beautiful interior of the new church. I have one fault to find, however, and that is with the seats. I occupied one of the back pews, and as they are all on a level I could not see over the persons in front of me without bracing up and stretching my neck to the utmost. It was certainly very annoying. It then occurred to me that it is about time to make a new departure not only in the general architecture of churches but in the manner of arranging the seats. If I had anything to say about the construction of a church, I should certainly have the pews on an inclined plane, so that the last pew in the church would be the highest and command as good a view as those near the pulpit. What opportunity do the ladies have to display their new bonnets if the seats are all on a dead level, and how many ladies are there who do not like to have their new bonnets admired?" "Wait till we get our church finished!" interrupted a prominent member of the English Lutheran congregation, "and then you will see a church that will suit you exactly. It is arranged on the opera house plan—parquet, parquet circle and gallery—every seat in the house commands a good view of the audience and the stage—I beg your pardon—I mean the congregation and the pulpit. The idea was suggested by our holding our services in Boyd's opera house. I believe our church will be the first ever built after this plan. It is a new departure in church architecture but it is destined to be the popular style at no distant day."

"I was out at Cheyenne, the other day," said Councilman Dunham, "and among other persons that I met there, was Converse, who was in the crockery business in Omaha about sixteen years ago. He wound up his business here, and pulled out for Cheyenne, transporting his crockery, without getting it smashed, with two or three teams and wagons. He was not worth over \$1,500 all told, but to-day he is said to be a millionaire. He has been wonderfully successful in every enterprise that he has had anything to do with—crockery, cattle, mines, banking. He is now the president of the First National bank of Cheyenne. A million dollars in twelve years is doing pretty well." "Yes," remarked a bystander, "but he wouldn't have had so much had he not got in with the Union Pacific railroad, which gave many a man a big start on the road to fortune during its construction days. There's Boyd, for instance, who made a big sum as a contractor. So did Paxton, who sold his cattle the other day for over \$700,000, and still retains an interest in it, and this is only a part of his fortune. Ed. Creighton also had his big start on the road to fortune during the construction days of the Union Pacific contracts. Those were days when fortunes were made which

have since accumulated with great rapidity by good management in some instances and by good luck in others."

"Isn't it about time that the Pleasant Hours club is organizing for the season? What's the matter with Charley Squires?" Such were the questions asked by a society man who is anxious for the hope of this popular club to be resumed. The reply made to him was that Charley had made a good thing on asphalt pavement—several thousand dollars during the summer—and that he proposed to attend strictly to business and drop society affairs, for a while at least. Mr. Barber, the paving contractor with whom he is interested in the Omaha contracts, is very much pleased with Squires' success, not only in securing contracts in this city, but also with his competency as an accountant. That Charley Squires has struck a good thing there is no doubt, and his many friends will be glad to hear it. The result will be that he will have many "pleasant hours" in the near future, for there is nothing so pleasant as prosperity.

Barber, the asphalt paving man, was heard to say, while in the city, the other day, that Omaha, when she gets her next year's work done, will be one of the best paved cities in the United States, and that her prospects are of the brightest. He has the greatest confidence in Omaha, and believes that in less than seven years she will have over a hundred thousand people. The many public improvements even during the last few months astonished him upon his recent visit. The fact is that Omaha's prosperity is attracting general attention throughout the length and breadth of the land. With her paved streets, her water works, her hotels, her opera house, her many new, beautiful, and substantial public buildings and elegant private residences, and all the modern conveniences of a metropolitan city, she is bound to keep up the boom for years to come. The more she grows the faster she grows. Omaha has changed beyond recognition since the time when the following "gem" was written concerning the city:

Fast ever been to Omaha,
Where rolls the dark Missouri down,
And four strong horses scarce can draw
An empty wagon through the town?
Where sand is blown from every mound,
To fill your eyes and ears and throat;
Where all the steamers are aground,
And all the shanties are aloft!
Where whisky-shops the living night
Are venting out their demon-juice;
Where men are often very tight,
And women deemed a trifle loose!
Where taverns have an anxious guest
For every corner, shelf, and crack;
With half the people going West,
And all the others going back!
Where theatres are all the run,
And bloody scalps are to be traded;
Where every thing is overdone
And every body underpaid!
If not, take heed to what I say:
You'll find it just as I have found it;
And if it lies upon your way,
For God's sake, reader, go around it!

"What is John B. Furay going to do, now that he has resigned his position as postoffice inspector?" was the question asked by a politician the other day. "He is going to work his farm and write a book on his experiences as a detective in the postoffice department," was the reply made by a gentleman who seemed to know what was talking about. "The title of his book," continued he, "will be 'Among the Mails and Mail-bags.' If John can write as fluently as he can talk, he will make a luminous volume, and one that will be interesting from beginning to end. He has caught many a slick thief in the most ingenious ways, and the history of some of his clever captures would make very entertaining reading matter. I understand that he has already made a contract with an eastern publishing house on the subscription plan, for the publication of his work, for the manuscript of which he will receive a handsome sum."

Everybody knows Bill Nye, the humorist, by reputation, at least. Cerebral meningitis has been wrestling with him for many months, and Bill has had a tussle to keep out of a coffin. His illness compelled him to sever his connection with The Laramie Boomerang, and to resign his postmastership at that place, and move to another locality in hopes of once more regaining his health. He is now at Hudson, Wisconsin. In a private letter to a newspaper friend in Omaha he says: "I have decided that my duty is plain. It is to keep moderately quiet for a year anyway. I've good offers from St. Paul to Portland, and from San Francisco to New York, including Chicago and Detroit, but this year I'll write a few sketches per week at mighty good figures and get the balance of my North American spine into shape. Then I'll see what I can do for a steady thing, whether I'll lecture or go to horse-trading. I am comfortably fixed here, within twenty minutes' ride of St. Paul, with a dozen trains a day each way, two being Chicago trains. My health is greatly improved since I crossed the Missouri, and last week I heard with much joy that my candidate for the Laramie postoffice had been appointed, though 99 out of a possible 100 at Laramie said when I came away that it could not be done."

The collection at the Trinity cathedral consecration services was a very liberal one, so THE BEE man was told, and instead of applying it towards the finishing of the building, as is usual on such occasions, it was devoted to the use of the Nebraska missionaries. The rental of the pews in the Trinity cathedral will amount to the handsome sum of \$7,500 per year, and they have all been taken. Under the circumstances Trinity could well afford to give the missionaries a lift. It may well be called the rich man's church, but at the same time it will prove a great assistance to the poor man's church.

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