

THE OMAHA BEE.

Omaha Office, No. 916 Farnam St. Council Bluffs Office, No. 7 Pearl Street, Near Broadway. New York Office, Room 65 Tribune Building.

Published every evening, except Sunday. The only weekly morning daily. No Year \$10.00 Three Months \$3.00 Six Months \$5.00 One Month \$1.00 THE WEEKLY BEE, PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.

TRADE MARKS. One Year \$2.00 Three Months \$1.00 Six Months \$1.50 One Month \$0.50 American News Company, Sole Agents, Newsstands in the United States.

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

WITH water, gas and electric lights Omaha ought to be able to see through the dark.

JOHN BULL will find a warm reception in Paris if he attempts to mediate between the French and Chinese.

The Union Pacific skating rink won't hold water, and has been abandoned. This shows that Union Pacific has been watered too much.

FOURTH OF JULY kills off a great many boys with the toy pistol, but Christmas disposes of a large number of men with the full-grown revolver.

It will be advisable for the aspirants to Pendleton's senatorial seat to keep their eye on old man Thurman. He has lately visited old Simon Cameron, and has got a pointer.

SUNSET COX is on his ear. He threatens to resign from the chairmanship of the committee on naval affairs, and President Arthur may yet have to sail around the world in a wash tub.

With Mr. Bland at the head of the committee on coinage St. Louis feels confident of getting that mint. Perhaps she is counting her chickens before they are hatched.

They say that Bill Morrison is nearer to Speaker Carlisle than any other person in Washington. We modestly venture to say that Mrs. Carlisle is a little nearer to him.

The following advertisement appeared in a Denver paper of last Saturday: WANTED—A newspaper in which a citizen and taxpayer can express his views and opinions openly. Address P. O. box 2334.

Omaha tax-payers do not have to go the expense of paying for such advertisements. There is at least one paper in Omaha in which a tax-payer may express his views on public affairs free of charge.

KENTUCKY judges do not hold enviable positions so long as Tom Buford is at liberty. It will be remembered that he killed Judge Elliott a few years ago on account of an adverse decision in a law suit. He was sent to an insane asylum, from which he escaped, and it is now reported that he is out gunning for Judge Pryor. We advise the judges of Kentucky to increase their life insurance.

Down in Yazoo the compliments of the season were passed between a number of colored men and white gentlemen on Christmas. It is the first time in the history of Mississippi that the colored man's revolver went off before the white man's shot gun. The city council of Yazoo was called as a coroner's jury, and they came to the conclusion that this little quarrel, in which several gentlemen were killed, was due to a mere difference of opinion.

In his lecture on America Oscar Wilde states that the national game of this country is euchre. This shows that Oscar did not learn very much about America after all. He has done the United States an injustice in giving euchre the pre-eminence over poker. Oscar forgets to mention anything about the bunco game, to which he was introduced in New York by Hungry Joe. It is very likely that he was a loser at poker, as he was at bunco, and hence he intentionally omits mention of those games.

SHALL it be peace or war? That is the question which agitates railroad men in this part of the country, as well as the business men. That the Iowa pool is near its end, everybody knows. The only problem now is whether the tripartite pool will take the place of the Iowa pool, or whether we shall have two pools, and a war of rates. While this section of the country has been compelled to submit to a good deal of extortion and unjust discrimination at the hands of the Iowa pool, a rate war is by no means desirable.

THE Chinese are knocking the stuffing out of American eagles. They put ten dollar gold pieces on a small lathe and with a hard tool like a fine graver's tool they hollow the middle as deftly as it is possible to do it. They fill the cavity with a mixture of platinum and lead, re-mill the coin, gild its edge, and the work is done. The coin is equal in weight to the genuine, and by some deft process the original ring is preserved. They take from a ten dollar piece three dollars and fifty cents. Their work is almost perfect, but they are closely watched, and their natural timidity keeps the number of "artists" small indeed. It is quite likely, however, that a large number of laundries will abandon their business and establish branch mints. Omaha may possibly get a mint in this way.

THE TRADE SITUATION.

The present depression in commercial circles is due mainly to speculation and over-production. Railway securities have been expanded by watering the stock and by fraudulent manipulations until they have become inflated to their actual value is not more than one-half of the quotations. Investors, becoming aware of this fact, have gradually stopped putting money into any class of securities subject to the variations of gambling. The result has been that the big holders of such securities have been obliged to come down. The probable shrinkage in railway securities alone during the last sixty days has been equal to two billion dollars.

It is a natural consequence that such an enormous shrinkage in any commodity causes a general depression in values. The overproduction of all classes of manufactured articles, more especially of iron, is largely in excess of the demand. The industrial situation has also become somewhat blocked. An unusually large number of operatives have been thrown out of employment in the coal and iron districts of Pennsylvania and in the New England factories. In some instances the manufacturers have made a readjustment of wages. Slight reductions have been made, and the workers continue. In other instances the capitalists have thought best to close the doors of their factories. This is the worst feature of our system. The manufacturing monopolists, who make fortunes in times of prosperity, and when everything is booming, close the doors of their factories when there is no longer any profit in the business. Having pocketed the profits of a prosperous season, they care no longer for their operatives. Rather than continue work and give them a chance to bridge over a dull period, even though there is no money in it for the employers, they throw them out until affairs brighten up. When it comes to a question of loss, it is the workingman who has to stand it in nine cases out of ten.

As to the general outlook there is no danger of a panic. Our currency is of the most stable character, and is worth one hundred cents on the dollar. There is a general stability so far as real estate values are concerned. There has been an immense cutting down of debt—municipal, state and national. There can be no such panic as occurred in 1873. For a time it may be close work for business men and for manufacturers of all classes. A good season, or a good harvest, or a resumption of work in the factories, will bring everything out in good shape. A war in Europe, which is not unlikely to break out at any time, would immediately revive commerce in this country to a wonderful degree. By retrenchment and economy the commercial interests of our country have been shaped so as to avert a general financial crash. Quite a number of the heaviest business features in the large eastern cities have been due not so much to the depression of trade as to mania for speculation. As a rule business men who have attended to their legitimate dealings, and not meddled with outside ventures, are safe. And these men are not by any means despondent of the future.

The west has no reason to grumble. The causes of the temporary eastern depression do not materially affect the business centers of the west. Here we are more dependent upon agriculture and live stock. Our farmers, as a class, are better off now than they have been for years. This, of course, infuses confidence among trades people. It is also a noticeable fact that there are comparatively few heavy business failures in the west. This is very likely due in a great measure to the fact that our far-western merchants are remote from the great speculative centers of the east and have had little or no opportunity and but slight inclination, if any, to dabble in risky stocks.

WHILE Iowa has drawn no capital prizes in Carlisle's Christmas distribution she cannot complain of being entirely left out. Mr. Kasson has been assigned to the committee of ways and means; Mr. Cook on elections and expenditures; Mr. McCoid on judiciary; Mr. Henderson on banking and currency and expenditures in the state department; Mr. Pusey on coinage, weights and measures, and public buildings and grounds; Mr. Wilson on agriculture and Pacific railroads; Mr. Weller on agriculture and war claims; Mr. Struble on territories and pensions; Mr. Hepburn on patents, and Mr. Holmes on invalid pensions and enrolled bills; Judge Murphy on railroads and canals and rivers and harbors. This assignment is not only very gratifying to Judge Murphy, but it is an act of friendly feeling to the Hennepin canal. The judge is devoted heart and soul to this canal, and Mr. Carlisle has put him in where he can be of most use to it. Judge Murphy is more pleased to be where he can help the canal than he is over the compliment paid him, a new member, in assigning him to these two important committees.

BEN BUTLER is setting all his machinery in motion to punish the democratic leaders who refused to follow him. A few days ago he held a consultation with some of the editors who conduct organs of the defunct greenback party. Among these was Grandall, the editor of The National View. He had heretofore been very pronounced against Butler, but is said to have been conciliated. A call has since been issued for a national convention, to meet at Washington on the first day of May. The object of the call is the nomination of Butler for the presidency, as the standard-bearer of the greenbackers, knights of labor, the grangers, independents, prohibitionists,

and other elements that desire to rally under Butler's standard. The evident object is to compel the democracy to endorse that nomination in June or take the risk of defeat. The chances are that they will take that risk.

THE LABOR QUESTION.

The question is now being raised in the east whether this country shall have protection against imported labor as well as against imported wares and commodities. Some months ago when a large number of Italians and Russian Jews entered into active competition in New York, a revolt was raised among the freight handlers and dock hands in that city against this cheap imported labor. For weeks there were riots nearly every day in the streets of New York, but finally the excitement subsided, and the imported labor became Americanized enough to demand higher pay than they at first received. Matters were then equalized. And now we learn that similar labor troubles have arisen in the Connellsville coke region of Pennsylvania. War has been declared by the miners and laboring men of that section against the Hungarians and Slavonians, and the cry has gone forth that "they must go." A manifesto has been issued which charges these people with crowding out the miners and laborers who are established, and good citizens, from employment and homes. It is charged that they are extremely filthy in their habits, and live on what the American people cannot eat. Their habits grow worse the longer they stay, until they can no longer be endured. Their morals are said to be the lowest of any Caucasian race, and their intelligence lower than that of the Chinese. Only about five per cent can read and write, and they will not become naturalized citizens, but with all the cash they can save they finally return to their own country. "These people," says the manifesto, "are degrading American labor, are an injury to our commerce, and a blot on the commonwealth not to be endured. American labor as well as American manufactures must be protected." Here we have substantially the same complaint against white immigrants from southern Europe that has been made by Denis Kearney and his followers against the Chinese on the Pacific coast. And this brings us to the question, where is the line to be drawn? If any one class of people who come to this country to better their condition can underbid the labor of another class by reason of being more frugal, in food and dress, or by being obstinately and able to save by living in wretched squalor, and subsisting upon what others would throw to the dogs, are they to be driven back? Can we establish by any law or by any system of police regulation what men shall wear, eat and drink, and how they shall furnish their homes? This is not now a problem as to the Chinese alone, but with nearly all foreigners. There are Irishmen who come to this country willing to live upon food that the American laborer rejects and willing to live in houses in which Americans would not stable their cattle. There are Germans, Scandinavians, Bohemians, Poles, and people of all races and all climes crowding into our labor market, against whom the same complaint might be made. It is not the question of morals, nor of education, nor of naturalization, that is at the bottom of the outcry against cheap imported labor. Dennis Kearney and his followers would not insist that the Chinese must go on account of their ignorance or their low morals, or their refusal to vote at elections, if it were not for the fact that the Chinaman enters the labor market at a greater advantage over the white man, because he can subsist on less costly food, dress in cheaper clothing, and work more hours than the white man for the same money. It is the conflict between cheap and high labor, and not between high and low morals, or between education and ignorance. To protect American labor and to keep up high wages it is no longer sufficient to exclude foreign manufactures by a high protective tariff, because a high protective tariff begets manufacturing monopolies and over-production, which in turn forces a suspension of manufacturing and keeps thousands of workmen unemployed during certain seasons. High wages for six months and no work for the balance of the year is worse than steady employment at low wages all the year round. To maintain wages at uniformly fair rates there should be no obstruction to commerce by extravagant tariffs. At present our factories are over-stimulated, and when they produce more than they sell in America, they must close their doors until their products are consumed. Meantime the unemployed laborer, the farmer and other consumers, are paying two prices for everything they wear and for the materials out of which their houses are built.

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How UNBROTHERLY all these woman suffragists are! Here is Senator Lapham, of New York, who champions their cause and goes on the record in favor of the sixteenth amendment, but the leaders of the woman suffrage movement are not at all pleased with him. They actually say that Lapham has become chairman of the woman suffrage committee in the senate for selfish ends. They say he had the committee created in order to give his son a place as a clerk at six dollars a day. Now we understand Mr. Lapham. He evidently has an eye to business when he shuts for woman suffrage.

THE thing that most agitates the people where they have adopted township organization is the question whether they will have to elect a new set of county officers next year. In the opinion of leading attorneys the change to township organization will retire the election of new county officers. With the national ticket, congressional and state officers, legislature, county and precinct officers to elect, the people will have their hands full next fall.

JUDGE GASLIN, while holding court last week in Buffalo county, sentenced a man, who had forged a note for forty-five dollars, to fifteen years hard labor in the penitentiary. One year was for forging the note, and fourteen years were for general cussedness. Judge Gaslin ought to be invited to sit in the Douglas county district court occasionally. There would be less general cussedness in Omaha.

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