

THE OMAHA BEE.

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RETALIATION.

The preliminary steps taken by congress towards retaliation upon Germany and France for their prohibition of the importation of American pork are already causing a marked effect upon the governments of those countries. Some of their leading citizens, merchants, manufacturers and newspapers are becoming alarmed lest the United States shall adopt strict retaliatory measures which will seriously affect their trade with this country. If Germany and France think that prohibition is all on one side, they will soon find out that they have made a grave mistake. Unless the prohibition upon American pork is removed or modified, congress will certainly take decisive action, several bills having already been introduced with that object in view. Germany and France are keeping their eyes on the American congress, and are watching with deep interest its every movement in this matter. The introduction of retaliatory bills is causing a general discussion in those countries, particularly in France. The distinguished French economist, M. Simonin, acting no doubt in the interest and upon the suggestion of a large constituency, emphatically protests against the present policy of prohibition. In a forcible leader in La France he denounces the bill of Paul Bert as absurd and dangerous measure. The official returns of France show that the value of the imports of pork shrank in the last year from 50,000,000 francs to 150,000 francs. This loss of trade fell upon the ports of Havre, Bordeaux and Marseilles. The poorer classes of people were deprived of cheap and nourishing food. So it will be seen that the prohibition effected every class of people in France. The French government has remained obstinate in its position on this question, notwithstanding the protests of the various chambers of commerce throughout that country, the Academy of Medicine, and the council of public health. It is plain that the French people want American pork, but the government does not. The government, however, will probably be forced to back down from its stubborn position. M. Simonin gives a plausible explanation of the prohibition movement in France. He asserts that the war against American pork was begun and continued in the interest of a ring of protectionist pork-packers at Nantes, who want to monopolize the home market. In concluding his vigorous protest against protection, M. Simonin says: "Now it is high time that the French people should open their eyes to the danger which is now menaced by American reprisals. The reports of the American consuls to their government have directed attention to the alleged adulteration of French wines. The analysis of the municipal laboratories of Paris lend color to this charge, and perhaps give cause for the action of the American congress. If the United States restricts or prohibits the importation of French wines another enormous loss will be inflicted on French commerce, and this at the very moment when our economic disturbance and diminishing exports are greatest. In the event of such prohibition 37,500,000 francs will be lost, thus making a total of nearly 100,000,000 francs, and thus paying dearly for the protection of a few pork packers of Nantes."

What M. Simonin says of the effect of retaliation upon France, can be applied with equal force to Germany. His protest has evidently alarmed France in the interest of her exports, and cable advice now inform us that Leon Chateau will sail for America on Wednesday next, his mission being to prevent, if possible, retaliatory measures on the part of the United States. The result of his mission no doubt will be a compromise in which the American heg will bob up serenely and be given the freedom of France. Paul Bert's attack on American pork is based on the fear of disease. The answer to this is that competent inspectors at the ports of shipment and delivery can prevent traffic in diseased meats. UTAH legislation promises to occupy a large share of the attention of congress, and the probability is that a strong effort will be made to pass an effective bill for the suppression of polygamy. Senator Cullom's bill provides for a special government for Utah, to consist of a governor and a council of nine, to be appointed by the president and confirmed by the senate. In speaking upon his bill, Senator Cullom made a scathing review of Mormon affairs and methods. He charged that they have trampled under foot all the laws of the United States, and he asserted that they hold the balance of power not only in Utah, but in Arizona and Idaho, and perhaps in Wyoming. Senator Cullom maintained that congress has a constitutional right to make rules and regulations to govern territories. This proposition, however, was opposed by Mr. Brown, of Georgia, who said that if it can crush out one religious sect why cannot it crush all religious sects. Senator Cullom's speech attracted marked attention, and will set congress to thinking upon the subject. The solution of the Mormon problem will prove a most difficult one. Laws may be enacted for the suppression of polygamy, but that is but the preliminary step. The enforcement of those laws is what will trouble the government, as much in the future as it has in the past. CONGRESSMAN CALL, of Florida, has introduced a bill for the establishment of a national university of medicine at Washington, for the advancement of science and discovery of improved methods in the treatment and cure of disease. This is a practical and sensible idea. If there is any science that deserves support and development at the national expense it is that of medicine. A national university could be made an institution that would far surpass all others in its resources of knowledge and facilities for the thorough and practical education and training of the medical fraternity. Money expended in this cause will be wisely invested, and the expenditure will meet with the approval of the people. The money spent on useless arctic expeditions would in itself be sufficient to establish and maintain a national university of medicine.

A NATIONAL DIVORCE LAW. A movement is being inaugurated in favor of the passage of a national divorce law, and petitions to congress are being circulated for signatures throughout the country. That such a law is greatly needed there is no doubt. At present nearly every state in the union has a different divorce law. In some states the marriage contract can be easily dissolved for the most trivial alleged causes in from fifteen minutes to twenty-four hours, and so loose are the laws that a divorce can be obtained by fraud without any fear of detection or punishment. In other states it is a difficult matter to secure a matrimonial dissolution, the causes for absolute divorce being very limited. In two or three states a separation may be obtained on various grounds, but an absolute divorce is not granted except for adultery and perhaps for two or three other almost as serious charges. The result of this varying system is to give to those states which have loose laws upon this matter the monopoly of the divorce business. This explains why Chicago has become the great divorce center of the country. People from all parts of the country flock thither for the purpose of freeing themselves from matrimonial bonds, which are dissolved in that city almost as easily as two passenger cars are uncoupled. A national law governing marriage and divorce would prove very beneficial. What constitutes a legal marriage should be explicitly set forth, the causes for divorce should be enumerated, and the manner of procedure should be plainly expressed. The wide differences between the laws of the several states have led to conflicting judicial decisions, so that a marriage is often treated in one state as dissolved, and at the same time in another as existing. Under the present laws cases may arise where a man may be convicted of bigamy or adultery in one jurisdiction upon what would be a lawful marriage in another. It is a question, however, whether congress has any right to legislate upon the marriage contract. Such a right is not enumerated among the powers granted to congress under the constitution, but congress has the power to regulate commerce between the states, and if the marriage contract assumed between citizens of different states can be construed as meaning interstate commerce, then congress has undoubtedly the power of legislating upon the subject. The Bee respectfully refers the whole matter to John H. Keagan, chairman of the house committee on commerce.

THE irrefragable and voluminous Jim Brislin is again relishing histories and encyclopedias. In Saturday's Chicago Tribune he occupies two columns and a half in telling about "The war's beginning." The valiant major, who was not in the war at its beginning, believes that the pen is mightier than the sword, in acquiring notoriety through the newspapers. Brislin is a wind mill—a machine to fill space, at a certain price per yard.

CITY WALKS AND TALKS.

"While at the Harrison-Saunders wedding, at Trinity Cathedral," said ex-Senator Paddock, "I was reminded of the first marriage in a church in Omaha. It was twenty-four years ago." "Whose marriage was it, governor?" asked the Bee's Man About Town. "My own. It took place in Trinity church, a small brick structure yet standing, at the southwest corner of Farnam and Ninth streets, and is now called the Tivoli. It has long been used as a beer hall. When we celebrate our silver wedding next year, I shall have to rent the old church for a day, and hold a sort of quarter-centennial there as one of the incidental events of the occasion."

"I wish I was an editor," remarked a lady as she was sitting in the Paxton hotel elevator, on her way to the Harrison-Saunders wedding reception. "Editors are such favored persons at weddings. I suppose they have seen the presents, and the trousseau, and have learned all particulars in advance of everybody else." There are more favored persons than editors, remarked a gentleman. "Who are they?" asked the lady. "The ministers, of course." "Please explain," said she. "The minister kisses the bride," replied he, "and the editor only takes the cake."

"If there is anything I detest it is the habit of grown-up persons, and particularly of men, kissing little children," said a lady in a street car the other day after a young man, whose breath smelled of whisky, had kissed her pretty little child good-bye, as she left the car. "Just think of men with breath made foul by whisky, beer and tobacco, and other vile stuff, kissing innocent little children in the mouth and tainting their sweet lips and breath with poison. I believe that disease is often communicated to children in this way, and although it might seem rude I think mothers would be perfectly justified in putting a stop to the promiscuous kissing of their children."

"I see that the man who was in the Custer massacre and survived the scalping process has turned up again in the eastern papers, and is getting considerable notoriety," remarked an ex-conductor of the Union Pacific to the Bee's Man About Town. "I know of two or three cases of men being scalped and surviving the operation. The first was Tom Cahoon, who has been conductor on the Union Pacific almost since it started, and who is yet on the west end, where he has been for years. One day, in the summer of 1868, Tom Cahoon and Wilkes Edmondson went out fishing in Lodge Pole creek, near Sidney, and they were cornered by a small party of Sioux Indians. Edmondson was pierced with three arrows and fell to the ground. The Indians rushed upon Cahoon, and scalping him, left him for dead with Edmondson. Why they didn't scalp Edmondson, I never learned. He may have been bald-headed, or all that I know. I know that Cahoon was bald-headed after the Indians left him. Both Cahoon and Edmondson recovered from their injuries, but Cahoon never recovered his scalp. Edmondson is now on the Central Pacific. The effect of

the scalping was to make Cahoon rather nervous and irritable, and he doesn't like to have anybody ask him about his experience. The train men sometimes tell the passengers about Cahoon having been scalped, and when he comes through the train and some traveler attempts to draw him out on the subject, he feels more like punching the passenger than his ticket. For some years after the occurrence he was bothered almost to death in this way. About the same time that he was scalped near Sidney, an Englishman, who was working on the track near Overton, was scalped and left for dead, together with two or three others, who died. The Englishman, whose name I forget, survived. This fellow had better luck than Cahoon, for he recovered his scalp. He found it a short distance near the place where the Indian had downed him, the scalper having dropped it. The fellow came to Omaha for treatment. I think that he afterwards became partially insane. He was in Omaha for quite a while. Dr. Peck treated him, and if you'll ask the doctor he will probably tell you more about the case." The Bee's man accordingly interviewed Dr. Peck on the subject, and learned some additional facts. The Englishman's name was Thompson, and he was a large robust man. He was brought into Omaha and he had his scalp with him. He had it in a bucket of water, and thought the doctor could sew it on again. It was a strip about ten inches long, and at one end five inches wide, it having been cut from the center of the head, from the forehead to the neck. The wound was a terrible one, the knife having penetrated clear to the bone. The victim was sick for a long time, owing to a high fever. He was considerably disappointed when informed by Dr. Peck that the scalp could not be replaced. The doctor stretched the scalp on a piece of board and tanned it for him, and when Thompson recovered he took it away with him as a "souvenir."

ACRUSES OF THE FEE SYSTEM.

Congressman Herbert, of Alabama, is making a move in the right direction. His investigation of abuses of the fee system by federal officers opens a big field for reform. It is a notorious fact that federal officials who depend upon fees as compensation work the system for all there is in it, and in many instances they thus make for themselves a much larger salary than they are entitled to. It will be remembered that two years ago it came out that Middleton, clerk of the supreme court at Washington, had been for years making twenty thousand dollars per annum, or twice as much as the salary received by the chief justice. It will not be denied that United States marshals and their deputies concoct all sorts of schemes to work up fees. Congressman Herbert, among the numerous abuses referred to in his own state, cited the case of a man who was brought 100 miles before a United States court charged with having cut timber on land belonging to the government. The witness against him was the man who entered the complaint and who received witness fees and traveling expenses. When placed upon the stand, he swore to the facts in the case and also testified that he knew that the cutting took place so long before that the case was outlawed. It was dismissed, but the United States had to pay a considerable sum. Such cases are not confined to Alabama alone, but can be found in almost every state and territory. It is not at all unlikely that congress will abolish the fee system, and fix salaries for federal officers, and hold them accountable for every cent received as fees. It is high time also that the fee system should be done away with among county officials in the various states. Every county office should be made a salaried office, and the officials should not be allowed to have the benefit of one cent of the fees. Under our present system several of the most important county officials in Nebraska receive salaries and at the same time have the privilege of disbursing the fees of their office. Every fee should be turned into the treasury, and a strict fee account kept by the different officials. There is no telling how much certain county officials pocket over and above their fixed salaries.

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