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THE OMAHA BEE.

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NECKTIE sociables are all the rage just now in Colorado.

MR. KEIFEE and the American hog centinue to attract the attention of the public.

In Cleveland they are clamoring for the street cars to run all night. In Omaha we will be glad to have them run until midnight.

A BLLL has been introduced in the Iowa legislature to establish a separate insurance department. Nebraska needs something of that kind. The present supervision is worse than nothing.

It will be gratifying for people who sympathize with Mr. Villard that his new home on Madison avenue is not yet in the hands of his creditors. It is still in the hands of the joiners and decorators. law, a man by paying \$14, can settle on

The only excuse the government di- remain there as a supposed resident for rectors of the Union Pacific have for ex- five years. The practice has been for isting is that their names are needed to a parties to go on their claims at the end certificate of good behavior, which the of the six months, turn over a few feet road issues ence a year under the name of sod with a spade or plow, erect a misof an annual report.

The report that there was to be an- claim during a period of five years) they other conference of railroad magnates in prove up and sell their land. Frequent-Omaha in hopes of inveigling the ly they seil their homestead rights to Burlington into the Union Pacific pool pre-emptors long before they secure the proves to have been unfounded, and it is patents. asserted there is to be a furious war.

THE quality of our gas supply and the condition of our gas works are becoming matters of public concern. Whoever the owners of the works may be at this time, they are in duty bound to furnish a steady supply of gas of sufficient illuminat. of a certain number of trees annually for ing power to afford light for all practical uses. As it is now, those who rely upon the gas are frequently left almost in the instance, where hundreds of thousands dark.

in Arkansas they THE HOMESTEAD LAW,

into the hands of land sharks, who never fore, be taken as a settled fact, and, with failure, had any intention of living upon them, the few modifications experience has

and the system, instead of promoting shown to be best, will become one of the permanent settlement and development, the nocessaries of every day life. has been the means of withholding vast

A NATIONAL COMMISSION.

tracts of valuable land from the peop' The system has begotten organized fraud Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, in his arguand perjury. The Stinking Water frauds. perpetrated by Simon Kelley and his associates from Hastings, are still fresh in the public mind, and are fair samples of the swindles that have been accomplished under the pre-emption laws. Yet Simon Kelley and his associates have not done anything unusual. Thousands of men have done the same thing all over the west, wherever there was any valuable

land to be acquired in this way. The pre-emption system is rotten to the core. The land officers are as much to blame for this outrageous state of affairs as anybody. They have knowingly allowed these things to go on without making the slightest protest, and in many cases they have been in collision with the land sharks. We distinctly remember how Dr. Peter Schwenk con-railroad commission created by congress York: D. Appleton & Co. ducted the land office business in the could be anything more than a bureau of Elkhorn Valley, and there have been several men in the public service as bad as he was. The proposed referm of the

land laws is timely and almost absolutely necessary, so bold and extensive have the land swindles become. Under the present homestead entry streams and dividing states. Congress can exercise this power by establishing general rules to govern the railway trafhis claim within six months, and he must ic, fixing the maximum and minimum

rates and providing suitable penalties and forfeitures for violation of such regulations. But the powers delegated to congress by the constitution must be exercised by ongress alone, and by no one else.

erable shanty and call it a residence. Congress cannot delegate these pow-After paying occasional visits to the ers to a railroad commission any more than it can delegate to a commission its power to make laws, or declare or ratify treaties, or any other power vested railroad commission its members will The pre-emption law requires the paybe only a set of dummies, drawing salarment of \$1.25 to \$2.50 per acre and a

ies for doing clerical work. If the combrief residence to perfect the ownership. But the worst swindle is the timber-culture act, which provides that a claim of eighty acres may be taken up and finally acquired absolutely by the planting a certain period. The tree-planting has proved a great farce. Take Dakota, for of acres have become the property of

land sharks, who have hired sprouts to MORE FEDERAL JUDGES NEEDED.

far there has been no loss incurred by sympathetic young men, who would Congress has finally waked up to the through alteration or counterfeiting, and, watch the gleam of her red stocking on fact that land-grabbing is not confined to so far as known, not one note has failed the bridge, and stand by to catch her the railroad companies alone. Millions to reach its destination. The notes have, back hair in case it should go adrift. She vai in the Tubuai archipelago, eightyof acres of the public domain have been to a moderate extent, taken the place of would not be a woman did she not reward four islets in the archipelago of Tuamota, taken up under the present pre-emption small bills and silver, as it was antici- this admiration with coquettish glances the Isle of Rays, and one or two other isletr. and timber-culture acts, with no other pated they would when the law was and piquant words. Even if she did not

purpose than to become the property of passed. But the expectation that they actually neglect her ship, all the elderly speculators. It is almost safe to say would cause a serious diminution in the and female passengers would feel conthat fully one-quarter of the lands dia- demand for money orders has not been vinced that she neglected it, and hence posed of by the land offices have gone realized. The postal note may, there as a captain she would be an utter

LITERARY NOTES.

Mr. Herbert Spencer opens the Feb-ruary number of "The Popular Science Monthly" with an article on "The New Toryism," which will be good reading for Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, in his argu-ment against the Reagan bill before the of those interested in observing modern house committee on commerce, main-tained that congress had no right under the constitution to enact laws to regulate laws of transportation. According to Mr. Depew the power vested in congress athletics at college. A succeed by the constitution to regulate inter-ing paper will be devoted to the disadvantages of "College Athletics." state commerce was never intended to Dr. Oswald, in his "Remedies of Na be applied to the regulation of railroad traffic. Mr. Depew was, however, of the opinion that if congress must take action it should do so through a railroad commission. Now we apprehend that lions on methods for the detection of Mr. Depew is well aware that if congress "Dangerous Kerosene." In a paper on has not the power to regulate inter-state "Under-ground Wires," Dr. W. W. commerce under the constitution it can-shows that there are two sides to the not legally confer upon a commission the question of burying the electric wires,

Many noted names lend weight and statistics. Congress undoubtedly does importance to the table of contents of the have the right to regulate commerce be- February Century, either as subjects, or tween the states, and by virtue of that frontispiece is given one of Rembrandt's power it has chartered railways, tele-graphs, and bridges crossing navigable skill that has seldom been excelled in the msgazine. This painting, "The Head of a Man," is from "The Hermitage" in St. Petersburg, containing a remarkable but little known art collection, of which Richard Whiteing gives a description in the same number. Signor Salvini contributeshis impressions of "Shakespeare's Lear,'"-a paper which shows how deeply the actor has studied the peet and with what thought and elevation of purpose he approaches the Shakespeareau drama.

The two articles on Dante are well calculated to extend the interest in his genius. The most popular of the two is "The Portraits of Dante," by Miss Sarah Freeman Clarke, which is illustrated by the original portraits and busts of the exclusively in it. If congress does create poet, and by a sketch from the death mask. In the other paper, by Miss Christina G. Rossetti, the poet is illustrated out of his great poen

Keats is also illustrated in a remarkmission should attempt to regulate rail-road rates or punish discriminations and life-mask. The "Bric-a-Brac" departextortions, Mr. Chauncey M. Depew and ment has the benefit of a humorous son other railroad attorneys would promptly short poems by Austin Dobson. Among appeal to the courts to protect the roads the other contributors of poems are Mrs. against the lawless interference of a Frances Hodgson Burnett, Sidney Lanisr, body that seeks to usurp the powers George Parsons Lathrop, Edmund W. which congress can alone exercise under Cheney, and Miss Helen G. Cone. A Gosse, Mrs. Celia Thaxter, John Vance full-page portrait of "Lieut,-General Sheridan" is accompanied by a striking description of his military career, by General Badeau. George B. McClella writes of "The Princes of the House of Orleans," including special reference to their service in the Army of the Potomac. Harper's magazine for February is a strong number in both its artistic and literary features. The two serial novels, William Black's "Judith Shakespeare," and the Rev. E. P. Roe's "Nature's Serial Story," have a commanding interreference to it. This is a matter of too much importance to be longer delayed, Abbey's drawing, "The Bible Reading," as the supreme court has more business is an illustration for Black's novel; and both Dielman and Gibson have done their best work for "Nature's Serial injustice and a hardship to litigants, who are depressed in spirit and purse by the ber, by Joseph Hatton, is a description tedious delay of the courts. Litigation at the most is a very expensive luxury, and when it is long drawn out it becomes cludes her very interesting article Mentone, which is pro At fusely and beautifully illustrated courts it takes from two to three years to St. Nicholas for February is a bright crisp and cheerful midwinter number and the seasonable frontispiece-an and the seasonable frontspiece—an original wood engraving by Elbridge Kingsley—is called "A Midwinter Night." Accompanying the frontispiece is a paper, entitled "An Engraver on Wheels," which gives a pleasant and in-structive account of wood engraving in be general, and, in particular, of Mr. Kingaley's peculiar methods of work. Another wintry feature which will find a merry welcome is "The Brownies on Skates," one of Palmer Cox's family illustrated ness than any one judge can possibly at-tend. A circuit which ten years ago Valentine's Day is commemorated with covered several states that were compar-atively thinly peopled, now embraces a population that has increased many fold. It is no wonder that some of our circuit judges jump at a good opportunity to re-sign. If this state of affairs is allowed to



have be planted by nurserymen each season The United States senate last year hung two of the supreme court These nurserymen have rushed over the passed the Davis bill for the relief of the judges in effigy for defeating the country and have planted their sprouts. supreme court, but the bill was perants of justice, by granting two nine-tenths of which have died. The mitted to die in the house. At the bemurderers a new lease of life by splitting necessary affidavits as to the number of "trees" planted have been made, and the hairs on technicalities. In Nebraska the supreme judges, when they cannot find sharks have acquired the land. A a hairs to split, write letters to the govern- general rule the "cultivation" is proved or to induce him to override the juries up by parties hired to testify. Thus it will seem that the homestead and the courts.

pre-emption and timber culture acts in-

stead of being a great benefit to the WHILE the ponderous intellects that actual settlers, have played right into the represents the country in the national hands of speculators, who have seized legislature are racking their brains over the problem of wiping out polygamy the almost every available foot of agricultufive commissioners, who were appointed ral land in the western country, so that under the Edmunds bill, to supervise the it is now a difficult thing for an honest politics of Utah, are swinging around the homesteaders to find a piece of land that circle between Washington and Salt is really worth taking up under these Lake, and drawing their \$5,000 a year laws, which were supposed to have been and mileage, with due regularity. There passed for their benefit and not for the is nothing like being a commissioner unsharks. It is proposed now to work a der our system of government, whether reform in the land laws, and although it it is a railroad commission, a tariff com- is a very late day to do so some good mission, an Indian commission, or a river may yet be accomplished. The amendcommission. All those commissions are ments to the homestead act that mere sinecures to provide for the retired will be recommended by statesman. In nine cases out of ten sub-committee of the committee on public lands and buildings commissions have proved a failure.

will make the law more faverable in WE still insist that the scheme of buildsome respects to honest homesteaders. ing the proposed viaduct either on Eleventh and prevent speculation. It is proposed or Tenth streets is not good policy. It to give the homesteader one year in should by all means be built on Ninth which to fix his residence on his claim. street. If it is built on Eleventh the and to show his good faith he must lower portion of Douglas, Farnam and prepare a certain area of land Harney will be cut off from a great deal for cultivation. The time for making of travel and traffic. Ninth street is final proof to be extended to seven years. already closed by the depot and the The timber culture law will probably be viaduct will not materially interfere with done away with, but as a substitute the the traffic that is now on that street or is homesteader will be required to plant a liable to be there in the future. Of certain number of trees on his claim. course the viaduct would have to cross this of course applying only to a region the Union Pacific depot, the landing devoid of trees. The tendency of the amendmends throughout is to induce the would be south of the B. & M. depot. homesteader to stick to his claim. This would give access to these depots,

while Eleventh street would be a block The relinquishment of claims under the pre-emption law are not to be acaway from either of them. All the damcepted by the local land officers, and age that might result in crossing the depot would be in the depression of the when accepted by the commissioner of the land department the land can be roof, which will certainly not disfigure that structure very much. taken up by the first applicant, who

THE Lincoln Journal says it is decidedly idiotic as well as palpably dishonest for the man who signs himself "Oscar Keyser," to ask the question why 400 miles of railroad sidetrack remain unpealed. taxed in Nebraska. We admit that it is paloably dishonest for the railway managers not to return their sidetrack for taxtion, but we can't for the life of us see

ginning of the present session of congress the Davis bill was again introduced. but nothing further has been done in reference to it. This is a matter of too than it can attend to. This works an doubly burdensome. Owing to the accumulation of business from the lower

> reach a final decision in a case in the supreme court. Not only should the supreme court be relieved in some way, but some measures ought to be devised to (equally relieve the circuit courts. It should borne in mind that the legal business of the the country has grown very rapidly since senate the present circuits were established. Nearly all the circuits now cover too much territory and involve more busicontinue it will eventually require al. Boy Magistrate." most a life time to reach a final decision in any case. The circuits ought to be made smaller and more judges should be

provided for. PEOPLE cannot be too careful in the vicinity of the electric light wires. Numerous fatal accidents have already occurred in New York and other eastern cities. The latest accident of this kind is reported from Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Many of the young men and boys employed at the Cambria iron-works at that shall actually reside on the claim for two years before he can purchase it. So far place emulate each other in touching the wires of the electric light system and the committee has not paid much attenreceiving a shock. John Baxter, a young tion to the pre-emption law, but it will married man, threw the hook he was very likely receive a thorough amendausing over a wire conveying an unusually tery overhauling, if it is not entirely restrong current and was instantly killed.

His features and body were horribly con-WHEN the new postal notes made their torted.

appearance a great hue and cry was raised against them. It was claimed that the ation, but we can't for the life of us see why it is idiotic for any one to ask why this is thus? It may be that the Lincoln Journal can explain away this palpable fraud upon the tax payers to its own sat-infaction, as it always does, when the state treasury is invaded by public THERE is a great deal of indignation state treasury is invaded by public thieves and robbers, but men who do not wear the brass collar will pronounce the system of wholesale tax-shriving no bet-ter than downright robbery. The Jourter than downright robbery. The Jour-next says that Mr. Keyser, wheever he may be, should make his complaint to the attorney general. He might just as

French Colonies.

As France is developing a colonial policy, it may, perhaps, be interesting, says Truth, to note the different colo-nies that she has:

Asia-Certain isolated fractions of territory in India, which are the remains of the colony founded in 1693, and which was lost in 1761. Their total area is about 80,000 acres, and there are about 285,000 inhabitants in them—viz.: Pon-dicherry, 153,600; Chandernagore, 22,-000; Karikal, 92,000; Mahe, 8,300; Yanaon, 5,000. Cochin-China: In 1863 this colony was acquired after a war with the Emperor Tu Duc, and in the same year Cambodia. The area of Cochin-China is about 12,000,000 acres, and its population 5,400,000, of which only 1,-825 are French. Africa-The Island of Reunion-It has

been occupied since 1838 by the French. Its area is about 500,000 acres. In 1870 its native population was 212,000; now it is only 172,000. Besides this, there is a formation of the statement o

floating population of about 40,000 Indians, 20,000 Africans, and 6,000 Chi-