

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.

THE HOMESTEAD LAW.

Congress has finally waked up to the fact that land-grabbing is not confined to the railroad companies alone. Millions of acres of the public domain have been taken up under the present pre-emption and timber-culture acts, with no other purpose than to become the property of speculators.

A NATIONAL COMMISSION.

Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, in his argument against the Reagan bill before the house committee on commerce, maintained that congress had no right under the constitution to enact laws to regulate the laws of transportation.

LITERARY NOTES.

Mr. Herbert Spencer opens the February number of "The Popular Science Monthly" with an article on "The New Torianism," which will be good reading for our politicians, and stimulate the thought of those interested in observing modern political tendencies.

MR. KEYSER and the American hog continue 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 BILL 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.

THE only excuse the government directors of the Union Pacific have for existing is that their names are needed to a certificate of good behavior, which the road issues once a year under the name of an annual report.

THE report that there was to be another conference of railroad magnates in Omaha in hopes of inveigling the Burlington into the Union Pacific pool proves to have been unfounded, and it is 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 illuminating power to afford light for all practical uses.

Down in Arkansas they have hung two of the supreme court judges in effigy for defeating the calls of justice, by granting two murderers a new lease of life by splitting hairs on technicalities. In Nebraska the supreme judges, when they cannot find hairs to split, write letters to the governor to induce him to override the juries and the courts.

WHILE the ponderous intellects that represent the country in the national legislature are racking their brains over the problem of wiping out polygamy the five commissioners, who were appointed under the Edmunds bill, to supervise the circle between Washington and Salt Lake, and drawing their \$5,000 a year and mileage, with due regularity. There is nothing like being a commissioner under our system of government, whether it is a railroad commission, a tariff commission, an Indian commission, or a river commission. All those commissions are more sinucure to provide for the retired statesman. In nine cases out of ten commissions have proved a failure.

We still insist that the scheme of building the proposed viaduct either on Eleventh or Tenth streets is not good policy. It should by all means be built on Ninth street. If it is built on Eleventh the lower portion of Douglas, Farnam and Harney will be cut off from a great deal of travel and traffic. Ninth street is already closed by the depot and the viaduct will not materially interfere with the traffic that is now on that street or is liable to be there in the future. Of course the viaduct would have to cross the Union Pacific depot, the landing would be south of the B. & M. depot. This would give access to these depots, while Eleventh street would be a block away from either of them. All the damage that might result in crossing the depot would be in the depression of the roof, which will certainly not disfigure that structure very much.

THE Lincoln Journal says it is decidedly idiotic as well as palpably dishonest for the man who signs himself "Osacar Keyser," to ask the question why 400 miles of railroad sidetrack remain untaxed in Nebraska. We admit that it is palpably dishonest for the railway managers not to return their sidetrack for taxation, 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 satisfaction, as it always does, when the 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-shirking no better than downright robbery. The Journal says that Mr. Keyser, whoever 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 colonies that she has:

India.—Certain isolated fractions of territory in India, which are the remains of the colony founded in 1633, and which was lost in 1761. Their total area is about 80,000 acres, and there are about 285,000 inhabitants in them—viz.: Pondicherry, 153,000; Chandernagore, 22,000; Karikal, 92,000; Mahe, 8,000; Yanam, 6,000. 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 1638 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 floating population of about 40,000 Indians, 20,000 Africans, and 6,000 Chinese. Mayotte, Nossi Be and Saint Marie, three little islands in the vicinity of Madagascar. Senegal, with a population of 191,000, and the island of Goree, close by it; Gaboon, and certain trade depots on the gold coast.

America.—Martinique, area, 200,000, and population, 107,000; Guadeloupe, area, 123,000 acres; population, 160,000; Guiana, population, 17,000, a penal colony; the two small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, in the vicinity of Newfoundland.

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gona islands, population about 12,000; Tabiti and Manarua, population, 10,000. Besides these islands, France also possesses the islands of Tubuai and Raiava in the Tubuai archipelago, eighty-four islets in the archipelago of Tuamotu, the Isle of Kapa, and one or two other islets.

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