THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

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FATE OF A GREAT NATION.

The Decision on Irish Home Rule Trembles in the Balance.

STRONG OPPOSING FACTIONS.

The Hope Expressed That Chamberlain Will Return to the Ministerial Fold — Agitation in the Country.

A Most Wonderful Debate.

LONDON, April 18.—[Special cablegram.]—The debate on the home rule bill has surpassed in the level of excellence any debate of recent years. On Monday and Tuesday Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir William Harcourt, Goschen and Gladstone all spoke. Whitbread brought much needed support to the government—the only outsider whose help has been fruitful. Lord Randolph Churchill was critical, acute and damaging. Sir William Harcourt made one of the most amusing and least effective harangues ever heard in the house. Goschen was weighty, statesmanlike, and business like. The most striking passage of all contained the English answer to the demonstrations in favor of home rule from the American state legislatures and the Boston mass meeting, "All Europe," said Goschen, "was against the north in the struggle for the union. The north, fortunately, declined to listen to the advice of Europe and England in favor of disunion. England will equally decline to listen to such American voices as counsel disunion here."

Gladstone's closing address was an incomparably finer effort of oratory than his speech in the opening debate. It let in a flood of light on the state of mind which had led to his present policy. He avows that his personal confidence in the good intentions of the Irish people is complete, and that he has only fenced about home rule with guarantees in order to quiet the alarm of other people. If the Irish people have faults, or Irish agitation is marked by irregular incidents, it is because England has governed harshly and landlords have tyrannized over tenants. He announced, nevertheless, that if he were allowed to introduce his bill, the door should be left open for amendments. His own convictions were unchanged, but he was ready to make certain concessions. The tories, who desired to throw out the bill on its first reading, found they could not induce their allies to go with them, so the bill was introduced without division. Gladstone's pledge to reconsider the exclusion of Irish members from Westminster, and the question of imperial taxation, though vague, conciliates a number of wavering liberals. The present estimate is that the second reading may perhaps be carried by twenty majority in May.

Many Gladstonians declare themselves to be little impressed by the meeting of Wednesday, which listened to Lord Hartington, Lord Salisbury and Goschen on the same platform. Radicals tell you there were too many nobles and blue ribbon men on the stage, while Lord Hartington's open co-operation with Lord Salisbury only impaired the effect of the speech he made in the commons. The fact remains that the meeting was influential and impressive, and wholly without precedent. The Spectator describes it as "a brilliant inauguration of a national protest against a disruption of the United Kingdom." The next day, however, appears the text of the home rule bill, the effect of which has been that it has taken the point out of sundry criticisms on the measure heard in parliament and elsewhere. There are some essential features which Gladstone hardly touched in his statement. The veto, for example, is worked out elaborately in the bill. The press, hurriedly discussing the text, finds the outlines of legislative separation no wise softened, and abates nothing from its opposition.

Without allowing an interval for the digestion of this vast proposal, Gladstone, yielding to the impatience of the house, and denying himself adequate time for preparation, introduced his land purchase scheme. The bill had been narrowed in scope since the proposal to borrow £120,000,000 in order to prevent the confiscation of Irish landlords' property drove Chamberlain out of the cabinet. Gladstone still recognizes and proclaims England's moral obligation to protect the land owners against spoliation by his new Irish legislature, and excludes no class of owners of rented agricultural land. He puts no limitation on the principle of purchase, and invites every landlord in Ireland to avail himself of the opportunity to sell. He admits the capitalized value of Irish estates approaches £150,000,000, but asks the house to sanction the issue of consols for £50,000,000 only. This sum, moreover, is spread over a period of years. The explanations of this arithmetical puzzle are two. First, the moral obligation is to be applied experimentally. Gladstone, perhaps, believes and hopes that the landlords will believe that the Irish legislature will plunder nobody. Many landlords, therefore, will not avail themselves of the option of selling. Secondly, a great political experiment is in progress.

Hopes have sprung up that at least one erring ship may return to the ministerial fold. Chamberlain's objections to the original scheme were based largely on the enormous amount of debt to be created. By reducing the amount it was supposed the objections might be met. They have not been met. Chamberlain, following Gladstone last night, clearly pointed out the possibility that enough landlords might apply for the benefits of the act to exhaust treble the sum appropriated. He offered many other penetrating criticisms, and expressed the doubt whether the Irish would accept the proposed rate of purchase, based on twenty years net rental. The doubt was amply justified by the dead silence with which Parnellites had been receiving Mr. Gladstone's proposal. Nevertheless, Chamberlain keeps the door open. He assures Gladstone that he would be only too delighted to be able to renew his allegiance. The truth is, the radicals think they see a chance to execute their long meditated coup. They propose to treat Lord Hartington's presence on Wednesday, at what they call a tory meeting as a final severance of his connection with the liberal party. Most of the whigs are going with him. This, they think, leaves the way clear for "radicalizing" the whole organization, and insures a radical succession to the leadership on Gladstone's retirement, which cannot be long postponed. But Chamberlain is the only possible radical leader. He must, therefore, resume his relations with the party, while Lord Hartington remains outside. He must take his place under Gladstone's umbrella, ready to receive his mantle. Chamberlain, however, whose political honesty is of a higher type than that of some of his followers, still adheres to his objections, which he regards as objections of principle, and still declares himself opposed to the central features of both of Gladstone's measures. The comedy, in any case, cannot be played out in the present parliament. The house will adjourn Tuesday for the Easter holidays, when the agitation will begin on both sides throughout the country on the whole home rule question.

SHOT BY A PRIEST.

The Bishop of Madrid Fatally Wounded—His Assassin Arrested.

MADRID, April 18.—At 10:30 o'clock this morning, while the bishop of Madrid was ascending the steps leading to the entrance of the cathedral, he was shot with a revolver by a priest standing at the top of the steps, the ball entering his abdomen. This was followed by another shot, which wounded the bishop in the side, whereupon the wounded man fell upon the steps. The priest then descended the steps and fired still another shot, which took effect in the bishop's thigh. The bishop was borne in an unconscious condition to his private chamber in the cathedral, where the last sacraments for the dying were administered to him. The priest was arrested. Being Palm Sunday, the cathedral was more than usually crowded by worshipers, and when the fearful work of the priest was realized a furious mob followed the carriage in which he was conveyed to prison by gendarmes, whose presence alone prevented his being lynched. The motive for the crime was revenge. The man who fired the shots was recently dismissed from the priesthood, and had fruitlessly applied to the bishop to be reinstated.

The bishop is still alive. The priest made an attempt to commit suicide.

HORRIBLE HOLOCAUST.

A German Town Destroyed — Hundreds of Lives Lost.

VIENNA, April 18.—The town of Stry, in Galicia, has been almost completely destroyed by fire. The number of houses burned is 600. Many persons were killed. The inhabitants are destitute.

A high wind was blowing and the fire started in several parts of the town about the same time. A hundred persons were killed in one street by falling walls. The town hall, railway station and telegraph office were destroyed. A large number of wounded were sent to Lemberg, a distance of forty-two miles, where the hospitals are crowded with sufferers. Hundreds of persons are missing. A lack of water rendered aid by the military futile. Money and food are being collected in the surrounding towns for the relief of the sufferers.

Tenants Oppose the Land Bill.

DUBLIN, April 18.—At a meeting of tenant warmers at Kildysart to-day the land purchase bill was denounced as simply a measure for the relief of land owners. It was declared that if the farmers got their holdings on a basis of four years rental their position would be very little improved as they are without the necessary capital with which to obtain a start. A resolution was adopted asking the Parnellite members of parliament to oppose the bill.

Four hundred tenants of the Earl of Bessborough's Kilkenny estate held a meeting today to consider the earl's offer of a reduction from 10 to 20 per cent in the rentals. The tenants had asked for a reduction of 33 per cent. At to-day's meeting 235 of the tenants voted in favor of accepting the earl's terms.

The Bartlett Poisoning Case.

LONDON, April 18.—The Bartlett poisoning case was given to the jury yesterday. In closing the case for the crown, Attorney General Russel contended that from the evidence it was clearly impossible for Bartlett to have committed suicide, and therecould be no doubt he was killed by the prisoner, Mrs. Adelaide Bartlett, who had been maintaining relations with Rev. Dysen, and who was inspired to remove her husband because he was regaining his health. The judge, in summing up, told the jury that Dysen had taken advantage of the husband's maudlin nonsense to supplant him in the affections of his wife, and advised that no part of the clergyman's testimony, although he had been a witness for the crown, be accepted as reliable. The jury were out but a short time, and rendered a verdict of acquittal.

Home Rule is Secure.

NEW YORK, April 18.—[Special Telegram.]—The Times' London cable says: It is not easy to get the English members to talk about the land scheme, but there seem to be no doubt that the prevailing sentiment regarding it is favorable. It is at least certain that no new antagonists have been created by it. Whether Chamberlain comes in or not, it is sure that a majority of the house of commons favor both bills, and it is not probable that this advantage will be lost during the holiday agitation. Gladstone is absolutely confident that the dangerous point has been passed and that home rule is secure.

Cost of Cablegrams.

LONDON, April 18.—The conference of representatives of the Anglo-American Telegraph company, United States Cable company, French Cable company and Western Union Telegraph company, as lessees of the American Cable company, was held yesterday, when it was decided that on and after May 1st the cable rate to and from all places in the United States east of the ninety-seventh parallel of longitude to all places in Great Britain, France and Germany shall be twelve cents per word by the cables of these companies.

The Cholera Outbreak.

VIENNA, April 18.—Cases of cholera are reported from Trieste. The outbreak of the disease in Italy is said to be more serious than was at first stated. The authorities there, it is alleged, are hiding the truth regarding the ravages of the disease. The Austrian authorities have again established a cordon on the Italian frontier, and every precaution will be taken to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

ROME, April 19.—The sanitary board admits that Asiatic cholera has broken out at Brindisi, and has ordered that all arrivals at other Adriatic ports from Brindisi be quarantined one week.

Death of a Journalistic Smith.

SPRINGFIELD, April 19.—George Smith, senior member of the firm of Smith, Clandenin & Rees, proprietors of the State Register, died yesterday. He had been poor in health some years, but was only confined to his bed for three weeks. The immediate cause of his death was pymenia. Smith was born in Newark, O., in 1827, and was connected with journalism in that city and state before coming west. Some thirty years ago he located in Keokuk, Ia., where he was connected with the Gate City newspaper until 1876, when the present firm was formed.

An Embezzler Arrested.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., April 18.—News is just received of the arrest of John W. Jones, formerly editor of the Newport (Ark.) News but for several months absent in Idaho as Indian school commissioner by appointment of President Cleveland. He was secretary for Arkansas of the American Legion of Honor, and was arrested on a requisition of Governor Hughes charged with embezzling several thousand dollars of the endowment fund. Jones came to Arkansas from Virginia several years ago and was a member of the last legislature from Jackson county.

The Murderous Deputies.

CHICAGO, April 18.—The Inter Ocean's Springfield (Ill.) special says: Companies of militia at Peoria, Farmington, Carthage and Delavan have been ordered to East St. Louis to relieve four other companies. The Governor's guards are among those relieved. Gov. Oglesby has issued a requisition on the governor of Missouri for the delivery of Stewart Martin, Samuel Jones, John F. Williams, George Burnett, W. F. Laird, Charles Hentzler, alias Kingler, Wm. Lurton and L. G. Hewlett, the deputy sheriffs who fired into the mob in East St. Louis.

Robbed and Cremated.

XENIA, Ohio, April 18.—An aged couple were cremated in a house south of town, between 12 and 1 o'clock yesterday morning. The fire is believed to the work of an incendiary. It is thought the old people were murdered and robbed and the house fired.

IN LETTER, NOT IN SPIRIT.

How General Black Complies With Civil Service Rules in Appointments.

DEMOCRATS GETS THE PLACES.

Vilas' Methods of Reforming the Foreign Mail Service—An Instance of Democratic Inconsistency and Meanness.

Black's Partisan Scheme.

WASHINGTON, April 18.—[Special Telegram.]—Commissioner Black has adopted a system by which he appoints democrats in the pension office with the assistance of the civil service commission. When a vacancy occurs in a classified grade of clerks in the pension office the civil service commission is notified, whereupon the names of three or four candidates, who have passed the civil service examinations, are transmitted to Commissoner Black. The civil service rules do not permit or allow a candidate's politics to be questioned, but there is nothing to prevent the commissioner from instituting a quiet inquiry as to whether certain men are democrats or not. This information is obtained in this way: For instance: the names of three persons are transmitted to the commissioner. He calls for their examination papers, which show that the candidates are from certain towns in certain states. The congressmen representing their respective districts are consulted, and if they are found to be democrats one of them is selected for appointment. If all of them should be republicans the civil service commission is called upon to send in an additional list of names until a democrat is found to fill the vacancy.

EX-PRESIDENT ARTHUR'S CONDITION.

A friend of ex-President Arthur writes here that the latter's health is far from being so much improved as the newspapers represent it to be. "The fact is," says he, Mr. Arthur has been under the weather for two years or more. He suffers much from what was misnamed malarial influences during the last year of his term, and he has been a very sick man since February last, most of the time since then being confined to his bed. He is not cheerful about his condition of health, and this has a reactionary influence upon him. I do not believe that he has Bright's disease, as is so frequently said, but he shows evident symptoms of an affection of the kidneys and in nutrition."

INCONSISTENCY AND MEANNESS.

An instance of democratic inconsistency and meanness has just come to my knowledge that may be pitted against any political act known to politicians. A messenger who has held a position in the treasury department for a long series of years was informed the other day that he would be dismissed at a certain time, about a week hence. The messenger was a favorite in the building. He was the most faithful and accomplished of any man who has filled a position of that kind since the war. Everybody knew him, and he knew everyhody and every place about the building, and he was more frequently than any other employe designated to show visitors about the building. He was very much astonished when he learned that he was to be discharged, because he had honestly performed all of his duties and had offended no one. He went to Chief Clerk Youmans and inquired why he had been dismissed, and was frankly told that it was because he was a republican. "So I understood," replied the messenger, "and since I learned that I was to be removed I have been casting about for another position. I find that I can get one in the employ of a railroad as a porter on a sleeping car, but the railroad company requires every man it employes to have an endorsement from his former or last employer. I would like to ask you, Mr. Youmans, to give me a letter of recommendation, if you can." Mr. Youmans looked nonplused, and, after a few moments' hesitation, asked the messenger to return presently. When the latter went back to the former's office he was told that he could not be endorsed by an official in the treasury department. "So far as I am concerned," said Mr. Youmans, "I would give you as many recommendations and as strong endorsements as you could possibly want, for now you are one of the most satisfactory men that has ever been connected with the department, but I have seen Treasurer Smith and Appointment Clerks Higgins, and it I endorsed you it would be disapproved by them, because you have been ismissed from the service of this department. You see it would be inconsistent if I wrote that you were a faithful and efficient man, and that you gave satisfaction here. People would want to know why you were removed if this were true, and it would on its face show that a case of very bitter and unreasonable partisanship was being perpetrated here. I would not hesitate to tell any body verbally, and, as I said, I would not hesitate, if it were not for Mr. Smith and Mr. Higgins, to write to anyone about your efficiency and your manhood and moral character." The messenger hung his head a few minutes, thanked Mr. Youmans and left to battle with the world as best he could.

NOTES AND PERSONALS.

Hon. George G. Wright, of Iowa, is in the city.

To-day's (Capitol) says: "Mrs. Van Wyck, wife of the senator from Nebraska, entertained the young ladies and gentlemen who take part in the Kirmes minuet on the 10th prox, at a handsome supper party. The immediate descendants of those who, a few centuries since, stepped the stately measure in merrie England proved on this occasion that they had inherited the grace and beauty of their ancestors."

OLIVER VILAS ASKS FOR MORE.

Postmaster General Vilas started out as a red-hot reformer and economist—especially the latter. For economy's sake he has been paying the Cunard British steamship line 38½ cents per mile per annum for carrying the American mails, while he pays American lines for the same service from 1½ to 5 cents per mile. And yet with all his chase-paring economy he has asked congress to appropriate nearly $2,000,000 more for the postoffice department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1886, than was appropriated for the current year. What occasion there is for this increase no one seems to understand, for there has been a cutting down of the mail service all over the country, even to causing much howling upon the part of the people. Perhaps Mr. Postmaster Vilas, the Wisconsin sap-sucker, wants to increase the pay of British steamship lines for carrying our mails for us.

To-day's Herald, of this city, says: "In connection with the rumors of the president's intention to be married to Miss Folsom during the current year, it is of interest to recall that her name was one of five on the list which was put with the wedding cake under the president's pillow the first night he slept in Washington, which was at the Arlington hotel, March 3, 1885."

Western Nebraska Storm Predicted.

WASHINGTON, April 19.—[Special Telegram.]—The conditions appear to-night favorable for severe local storms in Western Nebraska, which necessarily does not mean tornadoes, but quite high winds, with fair weather. Stationary temperature in the east.

LABOR'S STRUGGLE.

Switchmen's Strike Settled—A New York Tie-Up—The Boycott.

CHICAGO, April 18.—The switchmen employed in the various yards of the Lake Shore railway throughout the city and suburbs have carried out their threat to strike if the company refused to discharge eight men who accepted work from the road during the strike of 1881. The strikers number seventy-four men. The feature of the strike is that, unlike the Missouri Pacific strikers, the men who have gone out do not claim to be any longer employes of the Lake Shore road. They say they have "gone out for good." All disclaim any intention of interfering in any way with the operation of the road.

It is reported that the switchmen on the Rock Island and Burlington roads here have grievances similar to those of the Baltimore & Ohio switchmen, and they talk of going out. The Rock Island and Burlington officials intimate that they are prepared for a fight and will support each other in resisting what they think are unreasonable demands.

Late last night Lake Shore officials attempted to take out a freight train from their yard at Forty-third street. There were large crowds of people in the vicinity, and the sight of a moving train quickly excited their ire. A rush was made for the engine, and before any protection could be afforded the engineer and firemen both were dragged from their posts. Each was given a terrible beating before being allowed to escape. In addition to maltreating the engineer and fireman, the fire was drawn from the engine, and for the time it was feared the crowd would be led to further and much more serious depredations.

No further disturbance, however, was created to-day, but the switchmen stand firm and say they will make no concessions. No freight came in or went out to-day on the Lake Shore. Officials of the road remained reticent, and nothing is known regarding their contemplated action in the matter.

THE B. & O. STRIKE ENDED.

First Vice President Smith, General Manager Dunham and Superintendents Foracker and Britton, of the Baltimore & Ohio road, held a consultation to-day with the committee of striking switchmen and arrangement was made whereby the freight blockade of that road will end at 7 o'clock to-morrow morning. The strikers modified their demand that eight men be discharged into a request that they be transferred to some other point. The eight men referred to announcing their willingness to be transferred, the company agreed to a settlement of the difficulties on this basis. The strikers have been orderly since the difference came up and will return to work contentedly in the morning.

Saturday in East St. Louis.

ST. LOUIS, April 18.—Great activity prevails in all the railroad yards to-day. About 9 o'clock last night in East St. Louis First Lieutenant Burroughs, of the Eighth regiment, on duty guarding the coal dumps south of the St. Louis bridge, noticed six men prowling about the cars in that vicinity, who attempted to escape when they saw the soldiers. They were surrounded and the officer in command questioned them as to their business in that vicinity. As they could give no satisfactory account of themselves they were placed under arrest and marched to the guard house north of the relay depot, where they were searched and placed under guard. The prisoners appear to be strikers. Two of them are Bailey brothers, who figured prominently in East St. Louis labor affairs. The cases will be investigated to-day.

Louis Kelly, a passenger engineer at De Soto, Mo., received a letter purporting to come from the wife of a Knight of Labor, warning him that the Knights will soon put some deadly agent in locomotives to destroy boilers without a moment's warning.

A member of the citizens' committe appointed to make arrangements for arbitration of the southwest labor troubles have written letters, similar to that addressed to Hoxie, to the resident directors of the Missouri Pacific railroad company, and are now awaiting replies. Members of the committee say they all expect the directors will take the same view of matters as that taken by Hoxie in his answer to Dr. O'Reilly, and their efforts at arbitration will be fruitless. Should this be the case, the committee will make no further attempts to settle the strike.

McGarrah, Burdette and Chase, three strikers tried a few days ago for interfering with the Missouri Pacific railroad and obstructing trains, and acquitted, were indicted to-day for the same offense. Martin Irons, A. C. Coughlan and George Jackson, for whose arrests bench warrants were issued yesterday, voluntarily appeared before the criminal court this morning and gave bonds in $800 each.

THE DIRECTORS REPLY.

Resident directors of the Missouri Pacific railroad company, who were communicated with by Thos. O'Reilley, president of the citizen's committee, have replied to that gentlemen's letter, but the correspondence cannot be obtained. It is understood, however, that the directors decline to serve as or on a committee.

A Big Boycotting Scheme.

ST. LOUIS, April 18.—It has transpired here that a scheme is on foot to boycott the Gould railroads through eastern manufacturers. District Assembly No. 30, Knights of Labor, with headquarters in Boston, embraces about 300 local assemblies, with a membership of some 40,000 shoe and cotton workers. Large quantities of articles made in the territory covered by these assemblies are shipped to points on the Gould system and the plan is to notify all manufacturers to stop shipping their goods over these roads. There is to be a meeting of district assembly No. 30 at Boston this week to discuss this matter, and if the plan is decided upon, and manufacturers refuse to accede to the demands of the assembly, a strike will probably be ordered of the workers in the territory named. A representative of this district assembly has been in consultation with the general executive and local committees here and will report to the Boston meeting what he learned of the situation here and in the southwest. It is also said that district assemblies 77 and 78, which include the shoe and cotton workers in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, will hold meetings immediately after the Boston assembly, and it is thought possible that they will pursue the same course decided upon by that body.

Riotous Strikers Sentenced.

GALVESTON, Texas, April 17.—The News special from Dallas says: United States Judge Pardee, in the trial of the contempt cases yesterday, passed sentence on the following persons, who had been convicted of offenses against the Texas & Pacific: Charles Wilson, charged with misplacing a swith for the purpose of derailing an engine at Denton, was sentenced to five years imprisonment in the county jail; C. Bishop, for taking possession of a switch engine at Fort Worth, was remanded for sentence; F. P. Lane, taking possession of a switch and preventing its use, admitted to bail in the sum of $1,000 and case continued; Richard Gordon, striking a switchman with a stone, three months in the county jail; Charles Barlow, intimidating laborers in Palo Pinto county, continued till next term of court; Timothy Higgins, found guilty on Thursday of intimidation by using abusive language, was held for sentence. A number of others were discharged.

The Street Car Strike.

NEW YORK, April 18.—The first car on the Third avenue line left the depot at 8 o'clock yesterday morning and at noon twenty-eight cars were running. Policemen were aboard each car and lined the route at regular intervals. Everything is quiet. About 600 men applied yesterday in answer to the company's advertisement, and seventy were engaged at once. They were drilled to-day in the depot. No cars were run out to-day for prudential reasons. Some of the strikers swore out arrest warrants for the new drivers who have no licenses. The president of the road says the new employes will not be discharged to make room for the strikers in case a settlement is reached.

NEW YORK, April 18.—The executive committee of the car drivers' association have decided to "tie up" all the surface lines in the city excepting on Eighth and Ninth avenues, at 6 o'clock this morning.

A CROP FAILURE IN KANSAS.

A Large Proportion of Grain Winter Killed and Being Plowed Under.

THE HESSIAN FLY IN MICHIGAN.

Reports From Other States Highly Satisfactory, With Good Prospects For Excellent Crops —Flax in Nebraska.

The Crop Summary.

CHICAGO, April 18.—The following crop summary will appear in the Farmers' Review this week:

The chief feature of the crop returns up to the close of the week is contained in the closest uniformly gloomy tenor of the returns from Kansas. The reports from Kansas for the past six weeks have indicated only a partial crop, but the latest bulletin predicts an almost total failure in a number of the counties, while at the best there is the promise of not to exceed one-third an average yield for the entire state. The reports from McPherson county are that the prospect is the poorest ever known, and the yield will not pay for the cutting. The outlook in Neosho county is very little, and already many fields are being plowed under. In Ottawa county fully 50 per cent of the crop is reported to be winter killed, while in Sedgwick county the outlook does not promise to exceed 25 per cent of the acreage. In some of the southern counties the outlook is slightly more favorable, but a bountiful yield does not seem to promise in any portion of the state.

The prospect in Michigan shows no improvement, and in many of the counties wheat is reported to be going backward on account of the recent dry and freezing weather. In some of the counties a great deal of the wheat is reported lying on the top of the ground. In Lenawee and two other counties indications of the Hessian fly are reported.

Except in these two states, the outlook continues not only good, but in many the prospect is flattering for winter wheat. In some portions of Ohio the recent storms have left the ground full of water, which with the accompanying cold weather, has threatened the growing plant, but, as a rule, the reports are very favorable. Throughout all southern Indiana the fields are looking green and the plant healthy. The fields on some of the high lands do not appear at the best, and some look badly, but they are the exception. In Missouri some of the upland wheat is looking poorly, but on the low lands the prospect could hardly be better. In some of the counties in Tennessee the plant has already attained the growth of twelve inches, and the general prospect is encouraging.

In the spring wheat area Dakota appears to be in the lead, with fine weather for sowing and plenty of moisture. In three of the counties reporting there will be a large increase on the acreage. Very little seeding has been done, either in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa or Nebraska, and in the two last named states seeding threatens to be delayed twenty to thirty days. In many portions of Nebraska the season is already becoming so far advanced that large tracts will be seeded to flax.

COMPLICATED LEGISLATION.

A Demand Made on Congress to Explain the Spalding Act.

WASHINGTON, April 18.—The postmaster general has written to members of the house committee on postoffices and postroads a letter urging that congress definitely and unmistakably declare the purpose and intent of the so-called "Spalding act" for a readjustment of the salaries of postmasters who served between 1864 and 1874. When this act was passed, in 1883, its true intent and meaning was a matter of great doubt and perplexity. Postmaster General Gresham studied it carefully and wrote an elaborate opinion upon it. He also called upon Attorney General Brewster for his construction of the law. The interpretation placed upon the law by the attorney general formed the basis which made the readjustment adopted by the department. This mode has given great dissatisfaction to most of the 29,000 ex-postmasters who supposed the law to mean one thing, while the officials construe it to mean another. They are pouring their complaints into congress and demanding that the method of readjustment be changed. Postmaster General Vilas has thus far pursued the method adopted by his predecessor. He did not feel authorized to change the rule in view of the fact that the forty-eighth congress appropriated nearly a quarter of a million dollars to pay the readjustments under the rule adopted. Up to March 19 some 24,875 cases had been reviewed. Of this number 9,358 claims were allowed, the aggregate of the allowance being $548,874. As an expenditure of over three-fourths of a million under the construction of the law now followed is not likely to put a quietus to those claims, the department is desirous that congress make plain a very complicated and perplexing piece of legislation. A resolution is pending before congress declaring the postmasters' view of this law as the true construction. A bill is also pending ratifying the action taken under Attorney General Brewster's interpretion of the Spalding act, and instructing the department to continue to follow it.

A Whitehouse Wedding.

NEW YORK, April 18.—[Special Telegram]—The Sun's Buffalo special says: The statement of Rev. Wm. Cleveland, brother of the president, that the latter will marry Miss Frances Folsom, the lovely daughter of th late Oscar Folsom, together with some additional information gleaned by the correspondent of the Sun, leaves no doubt of the fact that a white house wedding will take place. The wedding will be of the most quiet character possible, and it is to be solemnized in the white house in June. There will not be a dozen persons present, and if it is possible, the time of its occurrence will be kept secret until after the ceremony. Miss Folsom is modest, retiring and sensitive and her wishes are that there shall be no display. In this, it is understood, the president concurs.

A Black Murderer Hung.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 18.—Robert Smith (colored) was hung yesterday at Nicholasville, Ky., before a small crowd. He ascended the scaffold with trembling steps and told the story of his crime, saying he was ready to die. Smith killed his stepfather, James Sea, at Pekin, Ky., Nov. 28, 1875, by beating his brains out with an axe while he was asleep. Taking the dead man, whom he had killed for $12, Smith wrapped the body in a blanket and threw it into the Kentucky river. The crime was easily traced to him, as he had tried to secure the assisance of his brother to help him commit the crime. Smith was only 19 years of age.

Knights in Secret Session.

DENISON, Texas, April 18.—Four local assemblies of the Knights of Labor are holding a consolidated meeting here to-night, the attendance being unusually large. The knights give indications of something important under consideration. An extra guard watch the doors and backsliders were carefully excluded from the meeting.

Collapse of a Steel Mould.

PITTSBURG, April 18.—Shortly before noon yeterday a mould containing over 1,000 pounds moulten steel, suddenly gave way, scattering the steel in every direction, at the iron works of Singer and Menick. Some fifty or sixty people were more or less burned. Five supposed to be dangerously injured.

A Fatal Vigil.

NEW CASTLE, Pa., April 17.—Mrs. Hogue and a lady visiting her, eight miles from this city, were standing in the doorway watching the storm about 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon, when a stroke of lightning killed Mrs. Hogue and injured the other so severely that she died several hours later.

The Weekly Bank Statement.

NEW YORK, April 18.—The weekly bank statement shows: Reserve, decrease, $833,000. The banks now hold $14,723,050 in excess of legal requirement.

THEY MET AT THE DEATH.

A Wily Old Fox Whose Four Wives Attend His Funeral.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 18.—[Special Telegram.]—Elijah Fox, who, as an attorney, gained a wide reputation in connection with the case of Annie Cutler, the colored girl who killed her lover, has died with a record that seems impossible to credit. As his body lay in a coffin in the house of George B. Barnewes, 413 South Eleventh street to-day, three veiled mourning women entered the room and took seats near the casket. They followed the remains to Monument cemetery. A fourth woman telegraphed from Chicago to delay the funeral to permit her attendance. All these are, or claim to be, widows of Lawyer Fox. The true wife is now living in poverty after years of neglect and desertion. Fox, during the past three years, has been away from her a great deal, and she believed his assertions that he was hard at work, and was compelled to sleep in the office. She believed his excuses for short financial allowances, and sympathized with and pitied him. During all that time Fox has lived with Harriet Little, who claims to have been married to him by the Friend's ceremony. They lived together as Mr. and Mrs. Fox in a number of fashionable boarding houses, the last place being 117 Pine street, where Fox died. When not residing with Harriet Little, Fox, it seems, was known as the husband of Maggie Williams. They lived in a boarding house at 262 South Ninth street. The woman who telegraphed from Chicago for a delay of the funeral was May Carney, who also was known as Mrs. Fox. Strangely enough, Fox, in 1871, caused the arrest of his own father for bigamy, the latter having left his wife and gone to live with another woman, for which he was sentenced to four months in the penitentiary. Fox had a remunerative practice and could have given one wife comfortable and even luxurious surroundings. He always dressed well, and wore diamonds valued at from $1,000 to $1,500. His fee in the Cutler case, it is said, was $1,000, but his true wife and pretty ten year old girl received only a slight pittance from it.

THE BASE BALL RECORD.

The Leading Clubs of the Country on the Diamond.

At Louisville—The first game on the home grounds was witnessed by 10,000 people, and was won by the Louisvilles by hard hitting at the right time. Ramsey struck out fourteen men. Louisville 4, Cincinnati 3.

At St. Louis—The American association, which was to have opened the season here Saturday, but which was postponed on account of the rain, was packed with an attendance of 30,000. St. Louis 8, Pittsburg 4. The second game between St. Louis and Pittsburg was played in the afternoon to 12,000 people. St. Louis 10, Pittsburg 3.

SATURDAY'S BALL GAMES.

The championship season of the American association opened Saturday and the following games were played:

At Washington—Nationalists 14, Jersey City 2.

At Savannah, Ga.—Savannah 22, Chattanooga 4. Eight innings.

At Augusta—Augusta 6, Nashville 13.

At Macon—Macon 1, Memphis 3.

At Charleston, S. C.—Atlanta 8, Charleston 3.

At Norfolk, Va.—Boston 7, Rochester 2.

At Baltimore—Fully 6,000 persons were present at the opening of the American association championship season. Baltimore 4, Brooklyn 1.

At Philadelphia—Nearly 9,000 persons witnessed the opening of the American association championship game. Athletics 10, Metropolitans 3.

At Cincinnati—Over 5,000 saw the opening of the championship season. Cincinnati 1, Louisville 5.

At Newark—Philadelphia 1, Newark 6.

A Frightful Explosion.

MILWAUKEE, April 18.—Eight kegs of giant powder exploded while being unloaded from a train at Clintonville. Arthur Edwards, station baggage master, had the top of his head blown off. J. Ringwood, telegraph operator, and George Storms, brakeman, were fatally injured. The conductor and three other train men were seriously injured. The force of the explosion was terrific. Houses in the village were shaken and glass in buildings at a considerable distance from the depot was broken by the concussion. The exact cause of the accident could not be ascertained this afternoon. The persons most seriously injured are young men, and it is understood they have families depending upon them. An eye witness of the accident says the scene was a most harrowing one, as the injured were fearfully disfigured. He states that the explosives were being taken to Shawnee to be used for mining purposes.

Public Land Measures.

WASHINGTON, April 18.—The senate committee on public lands yesterday agreed to report favorably Senator Ingalls' bill to create two additional land districts in Dakota and to define the boundaries of the Deadwood district. Mitchell's bill to establish additional land districts in Oregon, and Blackburn's bill fixing the price on the exemplification of patents or papers of record in the general land office to parties in interest at 15 cents per hundred words and 20 cents each for photo-lithographic copies of township plates.

An Anarchist's Harangue.

NEW YORK, April 18.—What is known as the Workingmen's rifle corps to-day filled the hall at No. 9 Second avenue. They were addressed by Editor Sowoitch of the Volks-Zeitung, upon the labor question. He advised his hearers to arm themselves as rapidly as possible and prepare themselves for future troubles. Rifles could be had for $6 each and amunition was cheap. The crowd cheered these sentiments.

Business Failure.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, April 18.—David L. Johnson & Co., furniture dealers, assigned yesterday to Fred A. Johnson. Liabilities $30,000; preference $18,000. Assets estimated at $15,000.

THE WEEK IN WALL STREET.

The Strike Holds Operations in Check, But a Strong Undertone Exists.

DEALINGS ONLY IN SIX STOCKS.

With Changes Entirely Unimportant —The Money Market Too Free For a Bear Movement— New Railroad Bonds.

The World of Speculation.

NEW YORK, April 18.—[Special Telegram]—Strikes continue to play an important part in Wall street operations. The favorable condition of affairs at the beginning of the past week led to considerable appreciation in values of securities dealt in at the exchange on Monday. The advance, in fact, was too great not to tempt operators for small profits to realize. Hence a moderate reaction followed, but this was succeeded again by a firm tone, with good promises of a reasonably active market during the week, and with a decided advance in prices. The first check to the bullish sentiment which pervaded the street on Wednesday, and which promised to produce decided results, was given in the letter written by Powderly to Gould and published on Thursday morning. It was felt, after reading the papers Thursday morning, that Mr. Powderly had been forced by his more hotheaded associates to take a very different position from that which he had occupied in the past, and the fear was entertained that his more recent assertions would lead to such encouragement to the men in the southwest and elsewhere as to preclude the possibility of an early settlement of the troubles existing. The immediate result was a moderate decline in prices. But this has since been followed by extreme dullness, without any material change in quotations. The fluctuations during the latter part of the week have been within very narrow limits and furnished no indications of the plans or purposes of speculators other than they are disposed to await further developments.

Naturally, the bears took advantage of the situation to circulate adverse reports, as well as to attack certain stocks which were supposed to be most directly affected by the existing condition of affairs. These attacks, however, have been of a spasmodic character, and had so little effect upon the general market as to lead to the impression that stocks are closely held in strong hands, and that heavy holders are not yet frightened to such an extent as to induce them to throw their stocks upon the market. In other words, while yielding moderately at times, the market has exhibited such a strong undertone as to call for general comment.

The total sales for the week were 1,737,100 shares, but much more than one-half of that was during the first three days. Only six stocks were dealt in to the extent of 100,000 shares, and they jointly contributed 969,500 shares. These were Union Pacific, Lake Shore, Lackawana, St. Paul, Western Union and Pacific Mail, in the order named. The changes are altogether unimportant.

The same conditions which have so long controlled the actions of the leading bear operators still exists. Money is as easy as at almost any time within the past year. The supply is far in excess of any demand, accompanied by satisfactory profits to lenders. As long as this condition of the money market continues it will remain extremely hazardous to sell the market short on any considerable amount, as the power is always within the reach of the bulls to make operators pay dearly for such operations.

The cut in cable rates as announced yesterday, is a reduction to figures which will not pay the actual cost of transmission, and of course this can have but one object, and that is to cripple the direct cable company, which is controlled by Mackay and Bennett. Nevertheless, the news of the cut had little, if any effect on the price of Western Union, although it was announced that the company would forego their arbitrary land rate and pro rate with the Cable company on the reduction. Furthermore, Western Union is also responsible to the American Cable company for the interest and dividends, thus practically assuming the payment of any deficit that may occur in the accounts of the latter company.

The action of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad in reducing its semi-annual dividend from 5 to 4 per cent, and the announcement that the Chicago & Northwestern was to issue additional bonds, had no particularly unfavorable effect either upon the stock of the latter (the Baltimore & Ohio is not listed here) or upon the market in general. The new Northwestern bonds are understood to be issued for the extension of its lines further west, and as the rate of interest in the loan will be only 4 per cent, instead of 5 to 7 per cent, as on the older issues, in this respect it is altogether favorable to the company. President Mitchell, of the St. Paul, is quoted as saying that the new issue by that company will be $2,000,000, instead of $2,500,000, as previously reported. The bonds will bear interest from July 1, but the first payment of interest will not be due until January 1 next. The bonds, it is generally understood, have been taken by prominent bankers, but Mr. Mitchell is quoted as saying he will pay 95 for them.

Carpet Mills Shut Down.

CLINTON, Mass., April 18.—The Bigelow carpet mills, employing 1,000 hands, shut down yesterday on account of trouble