THE DAILY BEE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

All communications relating news and editorial matter should be addressed to the EDITOR OF THE BEE.

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All business letters and remittances should be addressed to THE BEE PUBLISHING COMPANY, OMAHA. Drafts, checks and postoffice orders to be made payable to the order of the company.

The Bee Publishing Company, Proprietors.
E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

THE DAILY BEE.

Sworn Statement of Circulation.

State of Nebraska, County of Douglas, } s. s.

Geo. B. Tzschuck, secretary of The Bee Publishing company, does solemnly swear that the actual circulation of the Daily Bee for the week ending Dec. 2, 1887, was as follows:

Saturday, Nov. 26	15,290
Sunday, Nov. 27	14,450
Monday, Nov. 28	15,315
Tuesday, Nov. 29	14,695
Wednesday, Nov. 30	14,660
Thursday, Dec. 1	14,640
Friday, Dec. 2	14,660
Average	14,816

GEO. B. TZSCHUCK.

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence this 3d day of December, A. D. 1887.

N. P. FEIL, Notary Public

(SEAL.)

State of Nebraska, County of Douglas, } s. s.

Geo. B. Tzschuck, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he is secretary of The Bee Publishing company, that the actual average daily circulation of the Daily Bee for the month of December, 1886, 13,227 copies; for January, 1887, 16,266 copies; for February, 1887, 14,108 copies; for March, 1887, 14,400 copies; for April, 1887, 14,316 copies; for May, 1887, 14,227 copies; for June, 1887, 14,147 copies; for July, 1887, 14,035 copies; for August, 1887, 14,161 copies; for September, 1887, 14,349 copies; for October, 1887, 14,533; for November, 1887, 15,226 copies.

GEO. B. TZSCHUCK.

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence this 3d day of December, A. D. 1887.

N. P. FEIL, Notary Public.

(SEAL.)

ONE of the luxuries of life enjoyed by residents of Los Angeles, is coal at $16 per ton.

THE gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Turpie, is evidently wondering what a day will bring forth.

SENATOR RIDDLEBERGER, whose ears are little shorter than Cleveland's message, holds the key to the situation.

THE Mexican railways have agreed to pool. Mexico needs an "inter-state commerce commission," of some kind.

IT appears that Honest George Timme has again shown his hand in assisting Cadet Taylor in his jobbery and job office.

A GOOD time is coming for the farmers. There is a decided upward tendency in the price of agricultural products.

ONE of the "eye-witnesses" to the Haddock murder has been proven to be a blind man. Yet there is nothing like keeping Sioux City before the people.

CLINTON B. FISK, of New Jersey, will be the prohibition candidate for president. This is strictly a geographical selection. The idea is to carry New Jersey.

SATURDAY last, all the Nebraska delegation had arrived in Washington except Jim Laird. He was busy having himself interviewed along the line, and will be on hand to-day.

THE committee for locating the next national republican convention should have an eye to the golden mean. Omaha is the embodiment of that term, geographically speaking.

CHICAGO authorities have made little progress in solving the problem of how to light their town without bankrupting the city. The gas companies formed a "trust" and immediately wanted the earth.

IT must have been a painful picture to Mr. Blaine, who was in Paris, to see a president named and elected within twenty-four hours. He probably thought that at least all republics were not ungrateful.

A ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE fight in the first democratic congressional caucus, with nothing more than the office of door-keeper at stake, gives cheering promise of what may be expected when the momentous business of the session begins.

TWO Syracuse papers have imitated the example of the New York *Herald* and raised their price. There seems to be a general desire on the part of eastern papers to adopt the same course. They have had all the experience they want in the "Cheap John" business.

THE mayor of Bradford, Pa., has been fined for keeping nitro-glycerine within the city limits; the mayor of Dublin has been sentenced to jail for two months by the tory government; the mayor of Lincoln, this state, has just been released from jail—and the mayor's office has lost dignity.

THE New York *Times*, referring to the several cities that will urge their claims for the next national republican convention, says that the ambitious western cities, meaning Omaha and Minneapolis, "are seeking only for some way of booming themselves." We know nothing of the motive that inspires the application of Minneapolis, but we desire to assure our esteemed contemporary that Omaha is actuated by no such selfish feeling as it ascribed to her. She will make her application from a conviction that it will be to the advantage of the republican party to hold its national convention in this western metropolis, and also for the reason that she believes the party owes this consideration to the great west, of which Omaha is the most representative and progressive city. The *Times* is further assured that Omaha does not need to have recourse to any extraneous means of this sort to give it a boom. In an entirely legitimate way it is enjoying a most satisfactory progress, with the certainty of continuing its onward march, whether the republican convention shall come here or go to some less desirable city.

The Fiftieth Congress.

At noon to-day the fiftieth congress will assemble. The democratic caucus, having chosen Mr. Carlisle for re-election as speaker of the house, the work of organization can be speedily accomplished. Mr. Reed, of Maine, will again receive the republican vote for the speakership. In the senate the organization is already complete, and interest in the first day's session of that body will relate to the Indiana, West Virginia and Florida contests, and especially to the first of these. A committee of the causus of democratic senators held Saturday evening reported favorably to seating Turpie and advised that the democrats act together as a unit in support of this view. The intention of republican senators regarding these contests is only a matter of conjecture.

The new congress assembles under circumstances which give it great importance, and its proceedings will be watched by the country with unusual interest. The first session will doubtless be prolonged far into next summer, and promises to be an active and strong one. What is the prospect of accomplishing such legislation as the country hopes for and requires for reducing taxation, diminishing the excessive revenues of the government, and providing for a wise employment of the surplus on hand? These questions overshadow all others in the public mind, and are very far in advance of all others in their importance, immediate and remote. Men of both parties recognize the urgent necessity for legislation to effect these objects, but there is a wide divergence of views as to methods. Can these be brought into accord upon any measure that will accomplish the desired end? The very general opinion is that it will be found extremely difficult, if not impossible to do this.

The actual democratic majority in the house is only eleven, and the party is not a unit on the question of revenue reform. The strength of the faction opposed to any extensive interference with the tariff is not certainly known, but is claimed to be twenty-five or thirty. If it shall prove to be one-half of the least of these numbers it will be strong enough, assuming that perhaps not more than half a dozen republicans decline to act with their party, to prevent any revenue legislation objectionable to it. There is no doubt that the leader of this faction is fully determined to assert himself in this as he did in the last two congresses. He has been ominously ignored by the revenue reform leaders, and he has been equally careful to avoid them. Reports of proposed conferences between Mr. Carlisle and Mr. Randall are shown to have had no foundation. The policies of these leaders, there is every reason to believe, will be found as hostile as ever. There is great possibility that an effort will be made to exclude the latter from the party councils, which could serve only to intensify the hostility. Such is the situation at the beginning of the new congress, and it is certainly an unpromising one.

There is really less reason to expect wise revenue legislation of this congress than there was of the last, in which the democrats had a majority of forty, and in which, also, they had leaders who will be absent from the fiftieth congress. The only respect in which the conditions are changed is the fact that the presidential election is nearer, but it is not apparent that this consideration is exerting any influence upon those democrats in congress who have hitherto opposed the will of the majority.

The Crisis Safely Passed.

The French republic is on a more stable and secure basis to-day than it has ever been before. There has been an attestation of loyalty to the republican system, and a vindication of patriotism, which have gone very far to remove all the doubt that was entertained regarding the fitness of the French people for republican government and a sincerity of their devotion to that kind of government. What was universally regarded as a perilous crisis, involving almost any political possibility, has been safely passed. Except a few noisy demonstrations in the streets of Paris, readily suppressed by the vigilance and firmness of General Saussier, there was nothing to disturb the tranquility of the nation or disturb the regular progress of the people's affairs. The assembling of the national congress at Versailles on Saturday was signalized by no extraordinary circumstances. The intervening time since the resignation of M. Grevy had been fully occupied by the various leaders in a careful survey of the situation and a thoughtful canvass of the conditions surrounding the men most prominent for the succession. The result was the selection of a candidate upon whom the republicans could unite and who was elected on the second ballot by a majority so decisive as to effectually silence all opposition. The prompt accomplishment of this was due in no small degree to the patriotic course of some of the leaders, conspicuously Ferry and De Freycinet, who publicly abandoned all personal claims in the interest of the republic. It was a critical juncture when men of unscrupulous ambition might have brought on the most calamitous consequences by seeking their personal ends at the sacrifice of every other consideration, and those who patriotically rejected the opportunity have earned the right to an honorable fame greater than the presidency, gained by unworthy means, could possibly have bestowed.

Carnot, the new president of France, has not been greatly distinguished in the national councils, but he seems to be known and respected as a man possessing all the qualifications necessary to a successful performance of the executive duties. While never having been an active politician, he has achieved reputation as a wise and prudent financier, and France at this time has use for the talent of such a man. He will probably have no difficulty in forming a ministry that will be entirely acceptable to the country. The popularity of his election will be a strong inducement to aspiring politicians to become identified with his administration, which, it is believed, will be earnestly directed to conserving the peace and welfare of the nation. With a most honorable ancestry, identified with republicanism, and himself most thoroughly of that political faith, President Carnot, supported by the confidence of the great majority of the people of France, has the opportunity to fix more firmly the foundations of the republic, and in all respects to advance the interests and welfare of his country. The friends of republican government everywhere are to be congratulated upon the peaceful and prompt termination of the crisis in France.

Is It Political Blackmail?

The old water-soaked Douglas street raft is evidently anxious to make another raise. It is presumed that stock in the recently rejuvenated concern has become almost worthless and is a drug in the Omaha market. Extravagant bills for election tickets and campaign documents must be paid. Every man who was a candidate or who ever intimated that he might be a candidate, is, it appears, liable to an assessment. Dr. George Roberts, of Creighton, candidate for regent of the state university, was assessed $50. Mr. Roberts had already contributed to his county campaign fund, and knowing that the office of regent was merely honorary, with neither salary nor compensation, concluded he would not pay into the state campaign fund the amount demanded.

The committee finally made a sight draft on him, which he refused to honor. Under ordinary circumstances this would have ended the matter. But Cadet Taylor, the old Nebraska pioneer who has spent about twelve months of his life in this state laboring for the campaign fund, writes the following suggestive letter:

OMAHA, Neb., Nov. 28, 1887.—Dr. George Roberts, Creighton, Neb.—Dear Sir: We are advised by the state central committee that you have not only failed to pay your share of campaign expenses, but within a day or two a draft made upon you has been returned unpaid. By this action you compel others to pay your debts.

This is so unusual that, before commenting thereon in the *Republican* we shall be very glad to have your explanation. Very respectfully,

CADET TAYLOR.

How long, pray, has Cadet Taylor been the guardian of the state central committee? How long ago, we wonder, did the republican party of this state commission the Omaha *Republican* or the secretary of its company to levy blackmail upon republicans who have lived for years in our state? Why did Mr. Roberts have any "share of campaign expenses" if he had already subscribed to his county's campaign fund? Why and how did he compel others to pay his debts? And even if Mr. Roberts was morally responsible for the amount claimed by the committee, why should Cadet Taylor threaten to "comment" in his readerless paper, if it were not for the designed purpose of blackmailing Mr. Roberts?

If the republican state central committee is in collusion with a gang of reckless politicians and foundering business men, its members had better call a halt. The party cannot afford to bleed its candidates with suspicious threats of "comment" because they refuse to pay an excessive and unjust assessment.

Postal Service Reforms.

Postmaster General Vilas thinks there is need of reform in the postal service, especially in regard to the compensation of third-class postmasters. If the business of such an office amounts to, say $8,000, the postmaster must bear all expenses, and there will be left for himself only what remains of his salary of $1,900. If the business is only $100 more, the postmaster, who will then belong to the second class, receives $2,000 net for his services, the government paying all expenses. A third-class postmaster must often pay out of his salary more than half for assistance and office rent, besides doing a large part of the work himself. This is manifestly an unjust arrangement.

The postmaster general advises a reclassification. He would operate all offices whose receipts aggregate $3,000 or less as fourth-class offices now are managed. All over that figure he would make salaried offices, with the expenses paid by the government. The pay of postmasters of this class would, of course, be proportioned to the amount of business done. Offices of this class might be separated into two divisions, those whose business amounts to more than $30,000 constituting the first, and those from $3,000 to $30,000 the second class. On this plan the upper salaried offices would number 118, the lower 1,471, and the third, or commission offices, 53,845.

Another important recommendation is that the government should erect the buildings for these 1,471 middle-class offices, all built alike and expressly for the postal service. This looks like a reasonable suggestion. As this class of offices are now operated they are often found not only in strange but also very inconvenient locations, according to the whim or convenience of the postmaster.

The People's Favorite.

The SUNDAY BEE of yesterday was not only a complete newspaper, but it was a model of journalistic enterprise.

Sixteen pages containing fresh and original comment from the pens of some of the most popular writers of the day; carefully selected miscellany; a full and complete narration of all local happenings; special state telegrams from all parts of Nebraska and Iowa; news from all parts of this continent by special service and Associated press,—with the first page filled with special cablegrams from all the news centers of the old world.

The SUNDAY BEE compares as a newspaper with any publication in the west, and so far distances its drowsy competitors that comparison is a useless task. It was a great undertaking on the part of the BEE to attempt to handle the cablegrams of the New York *Herald*. Yet the money was expended and the thousands of readers of the BEE are served each morning with the cablegrams that appear the same day in the New York *Herald*.

This and other enterprises are the marked advantages possessed by the BEE, which have caused it to stand at the head of western newspapers.

THE Burlington began its fast train service yesterday between Chicago and Denver by the way of Omaha. This will, necessarily, be followed by equally as fast time on the part of the other roads between Chicago and Omaha. This gratifying change is not due so much to the Burlington folks as it is to Tom Potter, vice president of the Union Pacific. Mr. Potter, by decreasing the time between Omaha, Denver and San Francisco over his road, forced the Burlington to follow suit. Mr. Potter's enterprise is appreciated by the public. Had he taken charge of the Union Pacific years ago that road would long ago have been brought out of the mire. Mr. Potter is a man of nerve, judgment and prompt and decisive action, and is proving a very valuable acquisition to the Union Pacific.

THE only objection that has been raised against locating the national republican convention in Omaha is the inability to properly accommodate the guests. This is a mistake, as the Nebraska committee will show upon its arrival in Washington. Omaha can find quarters for every one who attends the convention. Every delegate can be assigned a room before the date of the convention and the exposition building can be easily thrown into one large room for the accommodation of the convention itself. It is generally conceded that Omaha stands a good show of securing the prize. She has influential friends all through the west at work in her behalf.

AN ordinance was passed by the council some time ago for the regulation of the construction of sidewalks in the business center. The intention was that the sidewalks should be of uniform grade and of durable material, and that old and dilapidated walks should be replaced with new ones. The ordinance so far is a dead-letter. The authorities should at once see that it is strictly enforced all along the line, and that the walks are put in a condition to correspond with the paved streets.

STATE JOTTINGS.

The wild boy of the Nemaha bottoms has been given a well earned rest. His escapades are a trifle woolly.

Dodge county will give $200 for a brief interview with the fire bug who burned the Platte river railroad bridge.

Omaha is threatened with another "air line," the latest direct to Mexico. It will eventually parallel that built to Yankton.

P. F. O'Sullivan, assistant postmaster of West Point, is booked for several weary weeks of pain with a broken leg for a partner.

The express messengers on the Elkhorn Valley road run from Missouri Valley to Sturgis, Dak., a distance of 550 miles, without rest.

"Hurrah for Omaha," heartily shouts the Holdrege Nugget, coupling it with a hope that the metropolis will capture the national republican convention.

Homer, in Dakota county, is an active rival of Ponca in perpetrating coal finds. It is believed to have a continuation of the Omaha find of Thanksgiving, 1886.

The dashing and handsome wife of the editor of the Palmyra Pilot is the latest "mysterious disappearance." It is feared she has made away with Nebraska City's wild boy.

The famous Second regiment band of Nebraska City is no more. The members grew weary of blowing in both money and wind to give the city a silver cornet. The last toot in Chicago broke their burdened horns.

The city of Beatrice has been thrown into political chaos by the announcement that Senator Paddock wants to represent her in the national republican convention. The brigadiers of the rank and file are already combining to capture the "power and prestige" of the position.

Columbus reports that the niggardly economy of the Union Pacific strikes the maimed veterans of the company with greatest force. Aaron Cue, who was crippled for life by a snow plow last winter and given a job as crossing watchman, had his wages cut down from $40 to $25. It is a clear case of starve or resign.

Johnny Price, a slippery son of York, who forged the name of his father and others to notes, and relieved bankers and money lenders of $20,000, was run down in Kansas and escorted home. He has had a wild time on the proceeds of his penmanship, and will now rest and recuperate in Lincoln. His people are among the best in York.

The canning factory at Blair has closed a profitable season with a record of 308,000 cans of splendid corn, 246,000 of peas, 136,000 of tomatoes, and of beans, pumpkins and apples sufficient to swell the total to 834,000 cans. The value of the goods packed is $67,800, and two-thirds of the stock has been sold. The factory has been a success beyond anticipations, profitable alike to farmers, owners and employes.

Willie Innes, a budding genius of Blair, who built a gun out of gas pipe and fired the breach into his skull, two weeks ago, died early last week and was buried Monday. His death caused a deep feeling of sadness and sympathy, the schools were suspended to give his playmates an opportunity to attend the funeral, and become impressed with the uncertainties of life in the midst of powder and guns.

A score or more candle lights of democracy display uncommon levity in the midst of death. They affect "I-told-you-so" expressions and point to the huge majority of Judge Maxwell as a warning to the party to put up better timber or retire from business. The fact is that Judge Maxwell proved to be an irresistible jurist, who stood by the interests of the many as against the few, and democrats as well as republicans attested their regard for his work by their votes. Mr. O'Day sacrificed himself for the sake of party, without the slightest expectation of being elected. His ability and integrity entitles hi mto respectful treatment in the house of his friends.

H. R. Crouch teaches in a district school in Gage county. What he lacks in brains and manliness he makes up with the gad. Last week he inaugurated the cramming system and unmercifully beat a small boy for missing in his spelling lesson. The boy's body was frightfully bruised and cut. It is almost beyond belief that the inhuman hounds of the sixties are yet abroad in a land where hemp grows luxuriantly from tree tops. Crouch will likely escape with a slight fine, but the father of the beaten boy will not increase his stock of self-respect and neighborly regard if he permits that incarnate cur to crawl out of the county with a sound carcass.

"Omaha is a great city," in the opinion of the North Bend Flail, "and its contemporaries on the American continent may as well admit the fact that it is a strong and earnest competitor to the title of emporium of the west. It is enjoying a steady and sturdy growth that is astounding, and the visitor of a year ago is lost when he treads its magnificent marts of to-day. The buildings now being erected are all of metropolitan height, style and finish, and its business men take great pride in what they flatter themselves is to be the queen city of the west. The state may well be proud of its first city and glory in its well-deserved prosperity."

The Creighton Pioneer reports that Dr. George Robert, regent-elect on the republican ticket, was assessed $50 for campaign expenses by the state central committee. The doctor preferred contributing to the county campaign and so informed the committee. Some time after the committee drew on him for the amount, but he declined to honor the draft. Now comes the Omaha Republican through Cadet Taylor with the following threat and letter, dated "Omaha, Nov. 28, 1887: We are advised by the state central committee that you have not only failed to pay your share of campaign expenses, but within a day or two a draft made upon you has been returned unpaid. By this action you compel others to pay your debts. Thi is so unusual, that, before commenting thereon in the Republican, we shall be very glad to have your explanation."

Plattsmouth is not ambitious to rival Nebraska City as a sensation and wild boy center. Her warm blood flounders through modest veins, and revolts at pica headlines and naked notoriety. This explains the slow-mule pace of details of a recent astounding occurence in that city. The ice gorge above Omaha last week, it appears, reduced the river at Plattsmouth to a narrow gurgling stream. For several days an unusual commotion was noticed in the waters on the river front, but no attention was paid to is until late Thursday evening, when a monster of unsightly shape crawled on the sandbar and made for the shore. The people around the depot were paralyzed with fear, and for minutes that seemed hours they gazed immovable at the slimy, quivering beast. Suddenly the cry of "devil-fish" arose, broke the spell-bound people, and away to the hills they ran. Slowly the devil-fish, for such it appeared to be, approached the shore, its huge tentacles, yards in length, smiting the air and sand for something to devour. The river bank at this point is about fifteen feet high, fringed with railroad tracks, water-tank and depot. Up to this bank the amphibious monster had fair weather sailing. A huge eye, as large as an alderman's head after an all night's session, glared with demon-like joy from the center of its circular body. Up to the precipitous bank it came and whooped the rubbish and rabble out of its path like a young cyclone. The huge arms circled ominously in the air, and fell upon the tracks and platform, scattering boxes and barrows right and left. At this moment the crowd on the hillsides, realizing that a benefactor was near, opened its throat, and with a mighty effort that shook the valleys and rattled the windows in Oreapolis, cried out, "The depot is doomed." Meanwhile the monster vigorously whirled its dukes in search of a grip on the tottering tinder-box. The suckers pulled and snapped, but captured only cadaverous cockroaches and cobwebs, musty volumes of Missouri river rates and decayed editorial passes. The cry of unshackled joy rolled down with irresistible fury on the writhing beast, chilled its efforts and laid it flat on the bar, a mass of lifeless flesh or fish, covering half an acre of ground. For hours after no one ventured near the spot. Finally Dr. Cook secured a posse of brave men and, armed with axes and sabres and lamps, marched to the river, followed by a wondering crowd. They dissected the beast in a few hours and found, to their profound regret, that the plans and specifications for a new depot had been swallowed by the beast and, lodging in a vital spot, caused death. The hide of the monster, with its fringe of moss and barnacles, was captured by William Neville and will be cured and presented to the democratic club of the county, while the tentacles will be stuffed and presented to the enlightened and progressive managers of the B. & M. Mr. M. O'Rourke has been secured at great expense to patch up the rents on the levee and remove all traces of the last futile attack on a corporation carbuncle, which now promises to rot and rile the residents for generations.

The Telegraph.

The Epoch.

Another advantage is the lowering of rates. This suggests a charge made against the Western Union, which its friends have failed successfully to meet. Its stock has been watered by the issue of large stock dividends till it has reached an enormous sum. Its nominal capital is at least three times the cost of its plant. This makes it possible for the company to maintain high rates, and yet appear to pay only reasonable dividends. If competing lines could be run successfully, this might be prevented; but it can never be done. History proves that such enterprises are destined to be absorbed by their great rival after a short struggle for existence. The rates charged by the Western Union are monopoly and not competitive rates. They are much higher than the prices charged for equivalent work in Europe. According to the best estimates, we pay about twice as much to send telegraphic messages as is paid in England. The difference between our rates for telegrams and those paid on the continent of Europe is still greater. Also local and personal discriminations prevail here, but do not exist there. One important result of this is that the telegraph is used much less generally in this country than it is in Europe. Here, its business is nearly all commercial; there, it is largely social as well.

Viewing the subject from the social standpoint, the building of competing lines involves a serious waste of capital, which can be prevented by the establishment of a government monopoly.

In spite of many points of excellence in the present system, it must be admitted that a strong indictment has been presented against it. It fails in several ways to render the best possible service to the whole community. The outcry against private monopoly in this case is largely justified from the history of the concern. Its past record will not bear honest scrutiny. It is capable of becoming the source of political corruption. Would the evils be increased should the government buy out the Western Union company at a fair price, and add perhaps 20,000 officials to the present number of government employes? If we had a civil service organized and administered according to scientific principles, the answer would not be difficult. As it is, the situation furnishes an argument in favor of a thorouhgoing reform of the civil service, so that, if it should become necessary, the government may be able o resume new functions.

Dr. Pierce's "Pellets"—the original "Little Liver Pills (sugar-coated)—cure sick and bilious headache, sour stomach and bilious attacks. By druggists.

PEARL FISHING IN THE EAST.

A Perilous Industry on the Australian Coast.

VALUES AND SIZES OF PEARLS.

A Natural Curiosity—Methods of Natives and Europeans—Artificial Formation of Pearls.

PERTH, W. Australia, Oct. 1, 1887.—An important industry of western Australia is the pearl shell and pearl fishery. The number of vessels fishing off the northwest coast of Australia has been increasing rapidly during the last few years, and there are prolific banks there in abundance, on which are found the shell oyster, the shell of which is principally valuable for the mother-of-pearl of which it is composed, and the small oyster, which is the true pearl-bearer.

The larger kind is from six to ten inches in diameter, and the pair of shells weigh from two to four pounds, or sometimes more. These oysters not infrequently contain pearls, but it is for their shells that they are sought. The true pearl-bearing oyster is scarcely larger than an eastern oyster, and the shell is of very little value. Single pearls have been found on this coast valued at $7,500 and $3,500, but the most curious pearl discovery that has been made, either here or elsewhere, was made on this coast a few years ago, when the now famous "crude australis," or southern cross pearl was revealed. This is a perfect natural cross of nine pearls, all in one piece. The finder of this unprecedented gem was, as often happens, unaware of its value, and sold it for $100. The purchaser considered himself fortunate when he was offered $2,000 by four gentlemen in Perth. They sent the curiosity to England and had it mounted and exhibited in the recent colonial and Indian exhibition in London, where it attracted a great deal of notice, and was offered for sale at the advanced price of $50,000.

Whether a purchaser has yet been found for it is not known. The exhibitors hoped that his holiness, the pope, might consider it his duty to become the possessor of so marvelious a natural reproduction of the holy tree; and perhaps some pious devotee may before now have purchased it for a jubilee offering to the pontiff.

Curiously enough the largest single pear l on record has recently changed hands on the death of its proprietor, Beresford Hope, an English member of the parliament. This gem, which, till the discovery of the Southern Cross, was the most valuable pearl known, weighs no less than three ounces, is two inches and an inch and a half in diameter.

Pearls are not valuable in modern days as they used to be in modern times. There is a pretty story told in the Talmud which illustrates the fact in the very earliest days they were considered the most precious of all gems. This is not, however, to be wondered at, when it is remembered that all the gems which in modern times have eclipsed the pearl, owe a great part of their beauty to the skill with which they are cut and polished, while the beauty of a pearl is purely natural.

Pearl fishing has been going on during the last few years all around the north coast, off Port Darwin, in Torres straits and off the coasts of northern Queensland generally, but just lately the fisheries off the western coast have been coming into higher favor, and boats have been arriving there from the other parts of Australia and from Singapore. Mr. Streeter, the famous jeweler of Bond street and Cornhill in London, has himself had a boat there for the past year or two, and only toward the end of last year or the beginning of this lost one of his sons, who was engaged in the pursuit of pearls.

These new comers have introduced the use of the diving-dress, in which white men descend to collect the shells, but a large part of the fishing is still carried on by Austrailian natives, who are very good at diving and can stay under water for a long time. Most of the boats which boast of a diving dress are strong lugger-rigged craft of seven or eight tons burden, built for the most part in Sidney. They are generally manned by seven men, one of whom combines the functions of skipper and diver. He goes down to the bottom, and one of the crew keeps hold of the signal rope.

For deep sea fishing, of course, the diving-dress is of a very great advantage, but the price of the outfit is considerable, and on the shallower banks at any rate the natives do very well. These, of course, wear no sort of clothes, but dive to the bottom, carrying with them a sack or basket in which to collect the shells. They can stay down for a full minute, and sometimes longer, and they occupy their time in busily loading the receptacle they have brought down with shells.

In this they make a good deal of use of their toes, with which they can pick things up with marvellous dexterity. Their great toes can be moved out from their feet as easily as a white man's thumb from his hand, and this is the way in which they habitually pick up any small object off the ground, thus saving themselves the trouble of stooping.

The life is a very trying one, owing to the great pressure of the water at the depths to which they have to descend. Sharks also introduce a formidable element of risk, and a pearl-diver's life is rarely, if ever, a long one. The poor fellows get so little for it, too, that one cannot but pity them. On the coasts of India the diver gets one-fourth part of the produce of his labor, but not so the poor West Australian, though for the matter of that he would be no scrap the better off if he did, but rather the worse, for, having no idea beyond the beasts of the field what to do with money, he would assuredly spend it all either in drink or clothes, both of which would be most injurious to him.

The export of the pearl shells from Western Australia during the year of 1885 was valued at over $217,000, and the pearls for the same year were worth about $75,000. Probably the take last year was considerably larger, but this year it will be very small indeed, for last April, just at the end of the fishing season, a most terrible catastrophe overtook the whole of the fleet of boats which was fishing off the coast in the neighborhood of Roeburn and Cossack.

A hurricane of the very violent and local type known as a "cock-eyed bob," or by the native name of "Willy Willy," dispersed the fleet and sank nearly all the boats. Some six and twenty boats, most of them luggers, and laden with shells, were lost, and a considerable number of white men, with as many as 140 native Australians, were drowned.

The business of getting the pearls out of the oysters is a tolerably disagreeable one. The oysters are thrown into large vessels and left to die, when the shells open of their own accord. The shells are then removed, but the oysters themselves are left in buckets till they become decomposed, when they are well stirred. The pearls sink to the bottom, and the remainder is poured off. It may be readily inferred that the odor in the camps of pearl-seekers is more powerful than pleasant. The innumerable flies, sand-flies and mosquitoes that swarm around do not tend to make the neighborhood more soothing to the feelings.

If the end of the pearl's connection with the oyster is offensive to our nostrils, the beginning of it is supposed to be not less offensive to the excellent bivalve itself. The pearl has its origin in the efforts of the oyster to protect itself from the irritation caused by the presence of some foreign body between the shell and its mantle, as the soft skin of the oyster is technically termed. The foreign matter may, perhaps, in some instances, be a grain of sand, but is believed to be more often either a parasite of some kind, or, perhaps, an egg belonging to the oyster herself. To mitigate the suffering caused by this vexatious intruder, the oyster deposits therein a coating of the same material as that of which the shell is composed, and when once this process has begun, it continues till in time the pearl grows large enough to kill the oyster. If this occurs the shells open of their own accord. The pearl is soon lost to man. This danger and others that attend the lives of oysters, even in their deep sea home, makes it inadvisable to leave the bank too long unfished, though, of course, so long as the oyster continues to live the older they are, the larger the pearls they contain. It is thus a matter of doubt at what age it is most advisable that oysters should be fished for, but the general opinion here seems to be that they are at their best, on the average, when four years old.

If the pearl is buried in the soft substance of the oyster, it is round or pear-shaped generally, and is called a pearl, or if very small, a "seed pearl." If, on the other hand, one side of the pearl is adhering to the shell, while the other is round, it is called a "button pearl." Sometimes a boring parasite makes its way through the shell, but before it gets quite through the oyster feels the irritation and pressure which it causes, and deposits a layer of pearly matter on the shell itself. This is called a pearl blister. These are often found of curious shapes, but they are not of great value, except as curiosities.

Linnæus, the "father of naturalists," received the honor of knighthood for demonstrating the possibility of artificially inducing the formation of pearls in the pearl bearing mussel. But, as has been the case with other European inventions of which we have thought a good deal, it has since turned out that John Chinaman has been doing this thing for a couple thousand years or so. The Chinese method is to take the mussel from the river, carefully force the shells a little way apart and insert between the mantle of the oyster and one of the shells a few little pellets of clay, tiny pearls or foreign bodies of some kind. When this has been done the oyster is turned over, and the poor fellow is obliged to submit to a similar uncomfortable process on his other side. He is then put back into a pond where he is kept well and fat by a diet more nourishing than nice. After a few months, or sometimes a year or two he is again taken from his bed, his pearls are taken out and he is eaten.

A Blood-Thirsty Engineer.

Philadelphia Record: "When the Chesapeke & Ohio road was built," said a veteran brakeman, "an old Scotch engineer, let us call him McIntosh, was the first engineer employed. He had the reputation of eccentricity, and began to sustain it by killing and crippling his brakemen. He would whistle and slow up for a dog, throw his lever over to keep from killing a cow, but when he felt ugly he would kill a brakeman without losing a breath. When I went on the road five years ago he had acquired the name of 'Devil Mac' and the 'Man Killer' everywhere, and the train master had hard work to get a crew when Mac was in the engine. He had a fine locomotive, and could pull as big a train up the New river grades as any man. He had killed, it was said, an even dozen men when I was put on the crew of Beb Jenkins, as brave a conductor as you ever heard of.

"Mac was engineer, and one day during one of the fights at a station (by the way, Jenkins would stop his train to fight a man) I incurred Mac's ill will by accidentally knocking down an old friend of his. He had it in for me, and when he made a stop would give me lots of trouble. I was front brakeman then, and tended to switches and couplings. Mac had seemingly reformed, as he had made no breaks for some time, and Jenkins cried out in horror when he saw me narrowly escape being crushed by a sudden crash of the cars while making a coupling. 'Mac's after you,' he said. Then he told me what to do and the old demon's plan. When Mac wanted to kill a man he would wait till he had been making a coupling. Then he would stop just near the place or come back too hard, till he got the brakeman rattled, and finally the man would stay in to put the pin down. Mac would come back slowly till he thought he had his victim, and then with a fiendish laugh and a full head he would send his engine back, and four times out of five would kill or maim his man. I was naturally scared, but tried to do my work as usual. He caught me once, but it was only a bruise. As I hobbled into the caboose, Jenkins put a 44-revolver in my hand and said: 'If he cripples you, kill him.' I only needed a few hours' rest and was able to work back with my crew. Mac was anxious to get home, and the way he kept his engine puffing up the grades as he climbed toward the Allegheny's crest was wonderful. We had side-tracked for an express (it was a moonlight night), and in trying to get out too quickly the train broke. With an oath I was directed to hurry and couple up. I did not hurry, and, after several times backing up, Mac came with a rush and caught my arm, crushing it and taking off that finger. Summoning all my nerve I walked to the engine and told him that he must die, pulling my gun. The old man went down on his knees on the cab floor and prayed for my forgiveness, pleading an accident. He besought me in the name of his daughter, his only child, his Mary, for his life, and I relented. The boys carried me back and put me in the caboose, for I had fainted from the shock and loss of blood. He lived, but I never did any more work on that road."

A Fine Rat Story.

New York World: About two years ago Frank Kleindimst, then proprietor of the Ligonier house, at Ligonier, Pa., was presented with a pair of white rats, the gift of a Washington friend. He took great delight in his pets and had a large cage constructed for them. In a short time they began to multiply and his pets soon numbered up in the seventies. One dark night some friends broke open the cage and set them all free. The rats fled in all directions, and the town is now overrun with rats of all colors and shades. The citizens are indignant, and they are loud in denouncing the individual who liberated the rodents.