THE WORKMEN OF BRITAIN

Stirred to Uncommon Activity by the Struggle of Parties.

POLITICIANS DISPENSE PROMISES LAVISHLY

Electoral Disadvantages of the Workers Seriously Felt—Review of the British Elections, How Managed and the Restrictions on Expenditures.

(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)

LONDON, July 6.—My visit to England, to take up anew the ever interesting study of her working class life, has happened to occur at a most fortunate point of time. No blare of trumpets had announced it. Neither her majesty's late government nor the powers in opposition could have known of it, excepting by a transatlantic thought cable. Yet both acted precisely as I could have wished them to do, the papers which came aboard at Queenstown conveying the intelligence that there had been a grand upset of the powers that were, and subsequent events making it possible for me to take my first observations of the British workman just as he is rolling up his sleeves for a tussle with the ballot box.

It was my happy fortune to be here at the election three years ago. One thing in these great struggles is a perennial surprise. It is so different from the usual English way that one is puzzled to understand it. The Englishman does almost everything with exasperating slowness. He starts late in the morning and never seems to care about catching up. Business is conducted as though it were a pastime. Electricty as a means of transit has no charms for him; he is still quite content apparently with the jogging 'bus and slowgoing tram, and the slowest coach of all is that parliamentary process by which after endless talk and the full use of every means for obstruction, he manages once in a while to get himself landed at some goal of advanced legislation. The average Englishman glories in his slowness. It contrasts with our style of life, it is a mark of superiority, the repose which springs from mellowness and conscious ability. So he thinks at least. But when an election impends, wheelbarrow methods give place in this tight little island to the spurt and plunge of the bicycle. Now, everybody is in a hurry, and events hasten at such a rate that they tread upon each other's heels. I write while the old Parliament still sits; probably by the time my letter appears most of the voting will have been done by which a new Parliament is to be called into life. This rapid transit is accomplished in this way. For every vacant seat a writ is issued. These are all mailed on the evening of dissolution. To facilitate their delivery at the points to which they are sent postoffices throughout the country are kept open after hours. It is the queen's business and it requires haste. Then, the writs delivered, the further process, as the law declares it, is that in boroughs, where the population is compact, the nominations must occur not later than the day following, and the election not later than four full days after that. For counties, which usually embrace the outlying villages and hamlets, a little more grace is allowed; in other words, two days may elapse before the nomination and nine days between nominations and elections. Imagine, therefore, what an election means to these slowgoing folks. Manifestos, election appeals, speeches, canvasses, campaign lies, their denials, and finally the ballots, all these sweep over the kingdom with the fury of a western tornado. Imagine, also, the whirl of the working man's brain during this storm, how little of clear thinking he can do, how likely he is to be hoodwinked by fair promises and stampeded by a false cry into the wrong political pen.

Superficially the British workman is master of the situation at this time. The programs of all parties and of every group enthusiastically accord him the place of honor. The liberals are promising even more than was embraced in their platform of three years ago, and the fusion of conservatives and unionists seems to sum up everything in his interest, and to keep back nothing, by promising "to do all that is humanly possible to remove the causes of insufficient employment and pauperism, and to promote in every way his material prosperity, comfort, and freedom." I spoke of campaign lies. Well, they have such a product here, and the nailing process has begun—all in the interest of the working men. Lord Salisbury is charged with saying to a deputation of miners that "No matter what time the miners worked, it was their duty to uphold the aristocracy of the country," and his lordship comes out flat-footed to declare that he said no such thing. Sir William Harcourt is hauled over the coals for having expressed himself in favor of low wages, and the reply comes, "It is untrue." Thus, all sails are trimmed in this electoral storm for the breezes of the factory and the mine. The working man has more friends just now that he knows what to do with. Superficially he is master of the situation. If platforms, promises, and professions were taken at their face value, it would seem as though he had only to cast a discriminating vote and be forever afterward happy and prosperous.

But there is a reverse side to this picture. He approaches the ballot box greatly handicapped. His vote will count no more this year than it did when he last deposited it, and this means that it still counts for less than that of his social superiors. Many of these have two votes. It is still true in England that a man can vote in every constituency in which he holds property. He may not do it, because it may be impossible for him to spread his physical presence in so short a time over such widely separated localities. But the election laws help him out to some extent by the fact that they have not yet been so changed as to require that all candidates shall be voted for on the same day. Another disability of the British workman is that being only a poor renter he changes his place of residence oftener than his better-to-do neighbors. In John Burns' district, out of a total registration of 12,000, there have been 3,000 removals in three years. This means that under existing registration laws many of these will lose their votes, as also will many of those who have moved in during that time. These disadvantages the late government had pledged itself to remedy, at least measurably, before another election came off. But the "One man one vote" cry still awaits enactment into law. So does the "One day, one election" promise, and there are still great inequalities in the making up of voting lists.

Still, likewise, are large numbers debarred from the franchise by pauperism. No man can vote at either a parliamentary or local election if during the year preceding he has drawn from the parish the slightest relief, even though it was no more than a bushel of coal or a loaf or two of bread. In a country where so many have to be helped this excludes vest numbers from the polls. The workmen loudly protest, and the evil will no doubt be abolished in the course of time, but so far the only step in this direction is that just taken by a special parliamentary committee. By a majority of one, the chairman turning the scale, it was voted to recommend to the new House that the poor laws be changed so as to make it possible for deserving workmen to be helped in time of need without losing their votes as the penalty. It is commonly held that the payment of salaries to members of Parliament would contribute to the electoral enfranchisement of the working classes in this country, but this is another reform which lags, and, in fact, the working man, so far as his electoral privileges are concerned, is not a whit better off today, in spite of the prominent place he has occupied, and the many friends who have crowded about him, than when he came into power three years ago upon the shoulders of Mr. Gladstone. In some other respects he is far better off, but I am treating now simply of his relation to the electorate. The economic and social aspects of his situation will be considered later.

But English reforms, though they are slow in coming, do materialize in the process of years. To be hopeful for the future one only needs to recall the past. Formerly it was the exception for the workman to have a vote, now it is exceptional for him not to vote. In place of a franchise which excluded vast multitudes for no reason apparently other than that they happened to live in agricultural districts, and which only a few years before had also excluded great masses of artisans simply because they did not pay rent to a certain amount—in place of such a franchise as this, that which is now in operation confers the right to vote upon one person in about every six of the entire population. No freeholder is without this right, nor is scarcely any occupier of what in truth or by courtesy may be termed a dwelling; while, upon certain conditions, which ought to be made easier, the lodger and the servant may find their way to the polls. This, to be sure, is not manhood suffrage, but it is a great change from the conditions of some years ago and it suggests hopefully how very much of progress the near future may bring.

It is estimated that out of every four adult males in the United Kingdom three at present are parliamentary electors. The fourth, if he isn't a lunatic or a convict, is, of course, a working man, and the great political question of the future must be how to bring in this lost sheep and get him with the ninety and nine on the register. Another question is how to get those who are registered to materialize at the ballot box. The stay-at-home vote among the working classes is very large, owing, no doubt, in some measure to the conditions attending their employment. In all there were 1,500,000 of abstentions three years ago, making the total vote for a full Parliament and for the entire kingdom something less actually than 5,000,000.

It is surely to the interest of the workingmen of England that the franchise is so well safeguarded against corruption. Formerly in English elections money flowed like water, while that which is stronger and more dangerous than water ran into the homes of the people and down insatiable English throats with the force and volume of a mountain freshet. This is all changed. More stringent laws could scarcely be devised. Things had been so bad that half measures would have been futile, and it really looks as though English politicians, from the way in which they have tied their hands in this matter, had lost all self-restraint and could only trust themselves alone when, so to speak, they had a policeman at their heels. Fancy a law which limits a candidate in the money he may spend. This, however, is precisely what the English law does, and it carefully prescribes also for what purposes this amount may be paid out.

If the constituency be a borough, containing not more than 2,000 voters, the candidate may spend upon it, exclusive of his personal expenses and the fees of the returning officer, not more than $1,750, and an amount not exceeding $150 for every additional thousand. In counties, owing to the greater distances to be covered, it is $2,500 for the first 2,000 votes and $200 for every 1,000 beyond. The legitimate expenses of an election are defined by the English law as follows: Personal expenses of a candidate, charge of returning officer, salaries of one election agent and one subagent for each polling place, salaries of one polling agent, one clerk and one messenger for each polling place, expenses of public meetings, cost of stationery, printing, advertising, postage and hiring of committee rooms. In boroughs the candidate is allowed one committee room for every 500 voters, and in counties a central room, and one in addition for each polling place. Thus, committee rooms are supposed to be centers of temptation, which must be restricted as far as possible. In striking and happy contrast with how it used to be, it is further ordained that none of these committee rooms shall be in saloons or in places of refreshment of any kind. This is a safe guard against the treating of possible supporters—also, perhaps, as things go in this somewhat bibulous land, a necessary precaution against overindulgence by zealous political healers.

The election agent cuts quite a figure in English elections. This functionary receives from the candidate the money necessary for legitimate expenses, and then as occasion requires disburses this sum. He is at once an agent of the candidate and an officer of the government, the latter holding him strictly responsible. The election over he must make a return of his receipts and expenditures, swearing to the same before a justice of the peace, the candidate likewise making an affidavit to its correctness, and this return, besides being published in two newspapers, is held by the returning officer, subject to public inspection, for not less than two years. The day of judgment lasts a long time in England.

Comparatively few in these days are the infractions of these stringent laws, and when one recalls the penalties attached, together with the sure process of English courts of justice, this is not surprising. A candidate who is found guilty of bribery, or even an attempt to bribe, of treating, or even offering to treat, can never sit in Parliament for the place where the offense occurred, nor, until seven years after, for any other place, and in addition he is liable to a year's imprisonment, not to speak of so small a matter as the loss of his vote for seven years. An election agent guilty of a similar offense is also liable, with other disabilities, to a year's imprisonment. Moreover, a candidate who commits bribery or uses undue influence through his representatives is just as responsible as though he had acted personally. Fancy, too, having a fine of $500 over one's head if caught at the seemingly innocent business of hiring a conveyance to carry voters to the polls, or paying money for such things as music and flags, or hiring electors to display posters on their premises. Such, however, is the law in England, and it is under the protecting mantle of this law that the English workman will begin next week to fight out at the polls his new battle for a decent living, for political equality, and for the reasonable pursuit of happiness.

HENRY TUCKLEY.

A New Deal and a Big One in the Ammunition Trade.

The King Powder company, by far the largest and wealthiest powder company in the west, and Mr. Milt F. Lindsley, well known throughout America as the inventor and late manufacturer of the American Wood powder, have recently closed a contract which will have a very decided influence upon the sporting powder trade generally. The King Powder company have been experimenting and seeking for a safe, uniform practical every day smokeless powder, a powder that would not generate offensive or poisonous gases that would not be affected by age or climate, that could be loaded with equal safety and efficiency by a boy or an expert, in short, a powder with all the good qualities of the best black powder and the best nitro powders and with none of their defects. A search extending through America to England and Germany failed to reveal anything better than our old friend "wood powder," and they therefore got into communication with Mr. Lindsley with the above named results.

Mr. Lindsley has achieved a most enviable reputation as a nitro powder maker, and, as is well known, his wood powder has been winning the first places in all the large tournaments for years, and today is used by the best known trap shooters in the world. Mr. Lindsley will be given every facility for manufacturing his powder that his long experience suggests and the new powder plant will be built in accordance with his specifications and upon the broad, liberal basis that marks the work of the King Powder company. Processes which have heretofore been performed by hand will now be done with scientific precision by electric power and materials which have heretofore been bought and manipulated in small lots will now be handled in ton and car load quantities. Mr. Lindsley says "If the old wood powder can come out ahead of everything in all the big shooting tournaments the new "King's Smokeless" will be perfectly irresistable." It is expected that the new "King's Smokeless" powder will be ready for the market in time for the late summer and early fall shooting.

Pleased the Court.

Three alleged vagrants were arrested in Pendleton, Ore., recently and locked up over night. Next day they pleaded before the recorder that they were not tramps, but acrobats on their way to fill an engagement in a neighboring town, and they were saving money by walking instead of traveling by rail. Their appearance was against their plea, but the judge said they might prove their case by doing some tumbling in court if they cared to. The tables and chairs were cleared away and the alleged vagrants gave a very clever acrobatic exhibition on the floor of the court room. The judge forgot his dignity and the court officers the circumstances of the tumblers being there, and all applauded vigorously, and his honor was so much pleased with the show that he held circus in court for an hour, and then released the men and chipped in to a subscription for their benefit.

AT NEBRASKA'S WHITE CITY

Work at the State Fair Grounds Being Rapidly Pushed Forward.

MAGNIFICENCE AND SPLENDOR COMBINED

What Was Recently a Field of Waving Grass and Grain Now a City of Stately Structures—Details of Buildings in Course of Construction.

It is beginning to dawn upon the community that there is no use in wasting force in petty differences and jealousies when force can be much better employed in increasing business and making better times, not only for Omaha, but for the whole state, so that the state fair, with its attendant Feast of Mondamin, judging from the way people are talking, is likely to prove the open sesame to the glories of thrift, progress and prosperity once more. All the natural influences combine happily in this direction.

That the hard times are on the wane the most pessimistic cannot dispute, or if so presumptuous, a trip through the rural regions of the state will effectively dispel any leaven of doubt or gloom. Mondamin reigns. Nebraska today is little more than a world of corn. On every side the broad fields stretch away like oceans of emerald, up from which wells an increasing melody of swaying stalk and waving blade, and this is a song of hope and encouragement that the perennial winds carry to all parts of the land. With the sights and sounds of rural hillside and valley, the low of fattening kine, the tinkle of sheep bells, the rustle of yellowing wheat and the drone of cicadae, makes a panorama of picturesqueness and grandeur that neither brush nor pencil can describe. This is what gladdens the eye and quickens the pulse, not only of the plodding, industrious farmer, but the restless business man of the city; in fact the whole working world. Good crops make good times. Could there be better crops than those in promise, and isn't the golden lustre of returning prosperity already discernible in the glint of the corn's tassel? Could there be a more auspicious time for the feast of that mythical god, Mondamin, for the inauguration of a rollicking autumnal carnival in the way of the state fair? Surely the era of revelry is almost here. The perfume of flowers and the throb of music is in the air.

WILL EXCEL EACH AND ALL.

The coming fair and feast should indeed be made a notable occasion for Omaha and Nebraska, as it unquestionably will be. The plans are rapidly maturing that will surely render this a carnival that will take its place in the front rank of the splendid group of holiday affairs for which our fair land is famous. The Mardi Gras of the Crescent City, the Veiled Prophets in St. Louis, and the glorious fiestas of color, flowers and music on occidental shores, will unfurl their banners with Omaha's Feast of King Corn and the state fair. All the good people of the state are invited to come and join in the festivities, and general rejoicing, and they will be here by the thousands and the tens of thousands, and when they depart it will be to spread the glory of their metropolis.

With her beautiful new grounds, Omaha will be most royally equipped for her inaugural fair.

On Tuesday morning the board of managers, Eli Barnes, R. W. Furnas, John B. Dinsmore, Milton Doolittle, E. S. Vance, S. C. Bassett and Mark Dunham, accompanied by a representative of The Bee, visited the grounds and took a thorough look over the same and through the buildings, and to say that they were delighted would be expressing it mildly, indeed. Every member was enthusiastic over the progress being made, and each one was lavish in his predictions of the great success that already seems assured. The work in all departments is so far advanced, so well under way, that there isn't the slightest doubt but that everything will be in absolutely perfect shape weeks before the advent of the great event. Superintendent Overbeck is making the best of every moment's time. He now has a force of 200 men sawing, hammering and hustling away on his embryotic castles, and the scene is an exhilarating one. Where one month ago was naught but rolling meadow and pasture land, now stands a little city, wrought as in a single day, seemingly, as by the wand of a giant magician. Huge buildings, ornamental, imposing and substantial, dot the elevated plateau on every hand, and still the hum of industry goes on. The grounds were certainly well selected, situated as they are in the midst of as lovely a country as lies out of doors, with the majority of the buildings forming an immense court on the brow of a broad elevation that commands a birdseye view of the whole environing region. To the north is a grand sweep of rolling meadow land, just now a veritable kaleidoscope of gay colored summer flowers; to the east fields of waving corn that continue on up to the city's outskirts, with an occasional bunch of timber, alone greet the eye, while away to the south opens up the widening valley of the Little Pappio, whose silvery sinuosities can be seen here and there glistening from out the universal green, or flashing athwart yellowing fields of grain; to the west are graceful, grassy hills, rolling in their fullest verdure, and making an entrancing background to a charming picture.

NEBRASKA'S WHITE CITY.

So far as convenient and pleasing location is concerned, or the architectural beauty and number of buildings, the perfection of its race course, breezy amphitheater, elevated promenades and devices for pleasure and comfort of visitors, there are no state fair grounds in the whole west that will come anywhere within hailing distance of Omaha's There will be twenty buildings in all, arranged so as to form a broad court, which is to be elaborately beautified, a variety of flowers, with fountains, aquariums, grass plots and shaded walks. All of the buildings will be painted white after the fashion of the World's fair, and again will a minature White City have sprung in creation.

The Agricultural building will be the main building this year, as it has been determined to take no steps toward the construction of the Administration building, which is to be a magnificent affair, until next year. The Agricultural building faces the court on the south, and is really an imposing structure, with its huge gilded domes, heavy pillars and ornate facade. Its dimensions are 100x200. Following in order is Horticultural hall, a handsome building, 60x100; the Palace of Fine Arts, 42x80; Bees and Honey building, 48x60; Poultry palace, 52x160; Textile Fabrics, 40x100; Headquarters, 30x72; Manufactures hall, 80x150; Power hall and Machinery building, 32x150; Dairy, 60x70; Fish building, 28x150; the Police building, 30x40; Telephone, Telegraph and Express building, 16x30; Floral hall, 32x72, and several lesser structures.

Then there are four large hog barns, 26x96, with thirteen show bins, judges' stand and amphitheater; six cattle barns, 32x100, with cattle ring, judges' stand and amphitheater; two sheep barns, 26x104, and a feed barn 20x40.

The race track, the construction and preparation of which has been surrendered wholly to Superintendent George Swigert, will unquestionably prove one of the very best courses in the country. There was much adverse criticism on this score, but Mr. Swigert is rapidly demonstrating that there was no good foundation for any unfavorable comment. It is a regulation mile track and as level as a billiard table. Every foot of the way is under the eye of every occupant of the grand stand, which has been located with rare discrimination on the gradual slope north of the track.

GETTING INTO THE GROUNDS.

The amphitheater is 52 feet by 400 and is a well balanced structure, with promenade platforms in both front and rear. A double picket fence will enclose the course and in front of the grandstand and along the home stretch will be an ornamental iron fence for the protection of spectators. A paddock fifty feet in width and 400 feet in length extends along the entire front of the grandstand. On the south side are five twenty-stall stables, furnished with all the modern appliances and improvements known to the racing realm, and everything in and about the course bespeaks of the care and intelligence that are being exercised in getting it in shape for the autumn dedication. Several miles of tiling underlie the course, and the best possible draining facilities are assured.

Reverting to the fair again, the board of managers located the Alfalfa palace Tuesday adjacent to the alfalfa farm, which embraces four acres and is located in the northwest corner of the grounds. It also made some small and immaterial changes in the site of a number of the entrances and exits. The street railway tracks will traverse either Center or Leavenworth street, but as yet this has not been determined. The company is only waiting for the settlement of some right-of-way privileges, when it will put down the tracks. The entrances for the street railway service will be on the east side, while the railroad will come in on the southern and west line. The Elkhorn is already engaged in laying sidetracks and putting in switches at the grounds. The B. & M. will come in from Seymour station and will build its own line, the distance of three-quarters of a mile, direct to the grounds.

On the north Elmwood park entrance is located, and there will be entrances on either side of the park. At the southwest corner is the gateway for the speed stables. There are five of these, 40x100. There is another gate on the south at about the center of the track. A bridge is being built across the Pappio on the west for the railroads, which will enter between the hog and cattle barns, with strong wire fences enclosing the same as a measure of safety. A panel wire fence seven feet high is being built about the grounds and will be completed by the last of this month. Fire extinguishers have been put in all of the buildings, and every precaution taken to insure their preservation. The grounds at present are being policed by the contractors, but the regular force will be in operation during the fair. Superintendent Overbeck says that some of the buildings will be completed this week, and most all of them by August 1. Many of them have already received their first coat of paint and are rapidly assuming the appearance of finished buildings.

Picked Up on the Grounds.

The big rollers were put on the western half circle of the race track yesterday and Superintendent Swigert says they will be kept constantly going until the course is as compact as concrete. The filling in with loam is being vigorously pushed forward and by the middle of August the model race track of the west will be in shape for the advent of the horses. It may not be consummated this year, but if Superintendent Swigert's designs are worked to a successful issue the fall of 1896 will see a turf center at the state fair grounds that will qual, if not eclipse, many of the famous resorts in the Atlantic states, in point of both natural and artificial beauty. The grand stand, in addition to overlooking every inch of the way, will command a sweep of as pretty Nebraska scenery, rolling farm land and luxuriant valley as one would wish to see, and next season the space within the ring will be as attractive as artistic ability can make it. Special features to the amphitheater will be handsomely appointed boxes for all these who feel able to indulge in the luxury, an admirably equipped press stand, with special provisions against inclement weather of any kind, the judges' stand, a model in its way, and a score or more of other innovations, novel and unique. There will be refreshment stands, a musicians' alcove above the porte-cochere at the highest point back of the grand stand, a private way for the ladies to the reserve departments and all of the modern conveniences to the best known courses in America.

There will be a club house modeled after a Swiss chatlet to the right of the grand stand—a one-story affair, with verandas and balconies, inclosing the same, and all of the fads and fancies of the fashionable world catered to, as there will be several big race sessions here outside the State Fair meet annually.

State Fish Commissioner Lew May has been appointed superintendent of the Fisheries department at the fair by the board of managers. The Fisheries building at this fair is going to rank with its premier attractions, and under the direction of Commissioner May many new and good things can be sanguinely looked for. Heretofore the state commission alone had an exhibit at the fair, principally from its own resources, but Mr. May's idea will be broader and more comprehensive, and will be patterned after the exhibit at the World's fair. There will not only be an elaborate display of all the native fishes, and the results of the commission's labors, but exhibits from the trout, carp and bass plants of private parties; indigenous fish and foreign fish; a space for the exhibit of the anglers' paraphernalia and another for the different preparations for food made of fish. Mr. May was one of the judges in the fisheries department of the World's fair, as Nebraska people well know, and he will exert himself to make this department a leading one at the coming fair.

The erection of the Administration building, which is to be on a grander scale than any of the buildings now in course of construction, will be begun immediately upon the settlement of the weather next spring. This building is to be a magnificent affair and possibly of double the dimensions of any structure on the grounds.

There will be no apprehension of inadequate facilities for transportation to and from the grounds, as the Omaha Street Railway company and the railroads are fully cognizant of their own interests and will make the most abundant provisions in this line.

The prospects for an artificial lake, a la the Lagoon, are good for another season. This can be supplied from two sources, the Little Papio and the city water works. The one drawback just now is a suitable location.

It must be understood that it is not the intention to confine the sport at the track to racing, for besides the trotting and running meets there will be a diamond for baseball, lawn tennis courts, foot ball, olf, cricket, lacrosse and kindred games, with a special track for the cyclers.

ANTE ROOM ECHOES

The warm weather Wednesday evening was not too disagreable to bring out a large crowd to the regular meeting of Nebraska lodge, No. 1, Knights of Pythias, to witness the work in the rank of knight upon an esquire who had the courage to undergo the terrible ordeal and prove himself a man of iron nerve, a fit companion for all well tried knights. A number of members of Fontanelle lodge of Bellevue and Enterprise lodge of South Omaha were present.

After the ceremony refreshments were served, and while the blue smoke of the Havanas seemed to put every one in a pleasant mood, Brother Charles I. Goss, who "did not indulge," relieved his mind of a speech he intended to make one week ago. Brothers Patrick and Betts gave a very interesting sketch of the death of Fontanelle, the chief of the Omahas. Brother George Magney's description of a freak was well received by the audience. The "Stowaway," although an old piece, is always new and interesting when rendered by Brother Rothered. Others of the visiting brothers took part in the entertainment until the hour of midnight was not far off, when the knights left the castle hall to mingle again with the outer world.

Two big picnics were held yesterday, accounts of which will be found in another column. One was given by Patten lodge No. 173, Ancient Order of United Workmen, and was held at Bellevue. The other was given by Clan Gordon, Order of Scottish Clans, and was at Calhoun.

A Demorest medal contest was held Friday night under the auspices of Lifeboat lodge No. 150, Independent Order of Good Templars, in the lodge rooms in the Continental block, and was largely attended. The contest was under the direction of Mrs. Shinrock. Such a contest is held under the auspices of the lodge once each quarter.

Lifeboat lodge No. 150, Independent Order of Good Templars, gave the first of a series of weekly home socials at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Heine last Wednesday evening. The social was largely attended and was very enjoyable. Strains of music mingled with the conversation throughout the evening. Light refreshments were served. These socials are given for the purpose of making the members of the order better acquainted with each other, and promise to be highly successful.

Two conferences were held last week by the committees from the various lodges of the Ancient Order of United Workmen of this city and South Omaha, which have in charge the matter of establishing a headquarters for the order on the state fair grounds. It was practically decided to erect a neat and substantial building, but neither the plan nor the cost was determined upon. Two different plans were considered, but as the exact amount of money that will be available was not known, neither was chosen. Enough money, however, has been subscribed by the local lodges as bodies, and by individual members, to make it certain that a separate building will be erected as headquarters. The headquarters will be at the disposal of all members of the order from this and surrounding states who visit the fair.

At its last meeting Golden Rod grove No. 1, Woodmen Circle, installed its newly elected officers. The ceremony was followed by a very enjoyable impromptu program, at the conclusion of which refreshments were served. The officers are as follows: W. G., Mrs. Anderson; E. A., Mrs. Walker; G. M., Mrs. Roose; S., Mrs. Black; W. A., Mrs. Keiser; J. S., Mrs. Tott; O. S., Mrs. Worthington; E. P., Dr. Claussen.

Last Thursday evening Hesperian encampment, No. 2, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, commenced its work for the present term. A very large attendance was present and a pleasant and an exceedingly profitable evening was spent, especially in diagnosing the various conditions of two candidates who were put through the royal purple degree. The new officers were also installed by D. D. G. P. Harry Jackson. All of which tended to make the assemblage dispose of a vast amount of refreshments after the work was over.

The following are the new officers: Chief patriarch, John Swanson; high priest, David A. Moyer; senior warden, David L. Morgan; scribe, Charles A. Patterson; treasurer, Frank B. Bryant; junior warden, Harry E. Burnam.

On July 19 G. Stuffler, D. D. G. M., installed the following newly elected officers of Omaha lodge No. 2, Independent Order of Odd Fellows: N. G., Erasmus K. Bradway; V. G., Durry E. Tracy; secretary, Charles A. Patterson; treasurer, F. B. Bryant.

In addition to the installation ceremonies the first degree was conferred upon one candidate.

On and after August 3 the regular meetings of the lodge will be held on Saturday evenings, instead of Friday, as heretofore.

The reports for the term show a decided gain, and the outlook for the lodge is exceedingly bright. All the rooms in the new temple have been rented for every night in the week.

Canton Ezra Millard No. 1, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, has elected the following officers: Captain, N. B. Heim; lieutenant, C. G. H. Kartman; ensign, E. K. Bradway; clerk, Charles A. Patterson; treasurer, D. Hartson.

Ruth Rebekah lodge No. 1, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, has installed the following officers: Miss Laura Hartson, N. G.; Mrs. Frankie Morgan, V. G.; Mrs. Mattie Rhodes, S.; Mrs. Mary Stuht, T.; Mrs. Carrie Smith, C.; Mrs. Alice Henderson, R. S. N. G.; Mrs. Hattie Woods, L. S. N. G.; Mrs. Mary La Tissers, W.; Mrs. Eva Greenleaf, C.; Miss Beda Nillson, G.; Mr. Harry Jackson, G.; Mrs. Minnie Myers, R. S. V. G.; Mrs Johana Strawn, L. S. V. G.

America lodge No. 299, Ancient Order of United Workmen, has the following new officers: Frank C. Wagner, master workman; Thomas McKay, foreman; Nels Vandell, overseer; Claus Conrad, recorder; Alfred Johnson, financier; E. A. Fredrickson, receiver; Walter A. Scott, guide; Charles McIvor, inside watchman; Otto Olson, outside watchman.

At the bi-annual session of the supreme lodge, Order of the World, held in Wheeling, W. Va., July 9, Clarence E. Embree of Indianapolis was elected president and Irving G. Baright of Omaha was elected vice president of that body.

Mr. C. E. Embree, the newly elected president of the supreme lodge of the Order of the World, spent Sunday and Monday in this city. Mr. Embree is on his way to the Pacific coast on business connected with the order.

At the regular meeting of Concordia lodge No. 345, Order of the World, on Thursday evening last, Max Adler was elected president to succeed Louis Olsen, resigned. Mr. Olsen leaves the city in a short time.

Exeter lodge No. 11, Ancient Order of United Workmen, and Degree of Honor lodge No. 42 of Exeter will have joint installation of officers in their hall next Thursday night. The Fairmont lodge "team" will perform the installation ceremonies. The Ancient Order of United Workmen male quartet will furnish good music and the Degree of Honor will serve ice cream and refreshments after the exercises. Only members and their wives will be admitted.

The Daughters of Rebekah of Osceola had an election, initiation, installation and a feast of good things all one night. They installed as noble grand, Mrs. M. E. Saunders, with Judge Hurst and Mrs. Westburg as her supporters; vice grand, Mrs. Dr. Whaley and her supporters, Mrs. Karrer and Mrs. Pheasent; conductor, Mrs. M. E. Wilson; warden, Mrs. S. G. Gushee; inner guardian, Mrs. Hurlburt; outer guardian, Miss Bettie Anderson; recording secretary, Mrs. Julia Holt; financial secretary, Mrs. R. K. Baum; treasurer, Mrs. George R. McCoy.

Owing to financial depression the treasury of Abe Lincoln post No. 10, Grand Army of the Republic of David City, was getting quite low and the ladies of the city gave an ice cream social and supper on July 13 for its benefit. A short program of army songs, speeches by the veterans and instrumental music was rendered. The entire affair was a decided success, netting the ladies a nice sum, which was turned over to the post.

Serious Case.

Indianapolis Journal: "Why," asked Dismal Dawson, leaning over the fence, "why do you keep on diggin' when the boss ain't around?"

"Because I really like the job," said the new farm hand.

"Got a real likin' fer work?"

"Sure."

"You'd orter take treatment."

ETCHINGS OF THE FAR EAST

Congressman Mercer Sketches Scenes in China and Japan.

THE COAST AND ISLAND CITIES

Enormous Traffic, Stifling Smells and Overworked Cemeteries — British Commercial Supremacy — Observations on the War.

Personal letters have been received in Omaha from Congressman Mercer, stating that Mr. and Mrs. Mercer will arrive in the United States on their return from their extended journey through the Orient on July 26. The party with which they traveled left San Francisco on April 5 last.

"Our voyage over," writes Mr. Mercer, "was memorable in this, that we were almost twenty-two days in reaching Yokohama and quite thirty-one days in sighting Hong Kong. It does not seem possible that any ship could consume that much time, but our excuse is not only an exceedingly slow boat, but the meanest of sea sick weather every day. At times we were sure that the ship would turn over completely. If a horse can perform such a feat on land he is said to be worth $100. If our ship had done so much in the sea she would not have been worth 1 cent. We were miles from land and not a single sail did we observe until we were almost in sight of the Japan coast. The north Pacific ocean is a very lonesome place. Mrs. Mercer insists that superstition played a prominent part in our trials. Perhaps so, although I am not sufficiently superstitious to admit it. We left on Friday. The voyage was the thirteenth made by the ship across the Pacific and our worst storm happened on April 13. At any rate, we were quite thankful when we reached Yokohama and rested our sea legs on terra firma."

Mr. and Mrs. Mercer went by boat from Yokohama to Hong Kong. Among other Chinese cities visited were Amoy and Shanghai. From Shanghai they crossed to Japan, doing the country at leisure. They enjoyed Kobe, Asoka, Kyoto, Otsu, Nagoya, Hokone, Yokohama, Miyonoshil and numerous other places well known there, but little known here. During their travels they encountered Colonel John A. Cockerill of the New York Herald; Mr. E. W. Barrett of Atlanta, representing a number of American newspapers; ex-Secretary of State J. W. Foster, who had just completed effecting the peace negotiations between China and Japan. They saw The May Day Bee in Yokohama, where they also spent the glorious Fourth of July and whence they have already commenced their homeward voyage on the City of Pekin.

"Hong Kong," says Mr. Mercer, "is a beautiful city of 350,000 people, 10,000 being Europeans and Americans, and the rest Chinese, of course. The European part of the city is very pretty and picturesque, built upon the side of a range of mountains, the highest peak of which towers 1,900 feet above the harbor. Most of the level part of Hong Kong is made ground. The process of filling the bay is going on today the same as in San Francisco. This city and island are owned and governed by the British, and here we obtained our first impression of British power, method and interest in the way of colonization and trade. Their success has been remarkable, and in some ways worthy of emulation by America, especialy in relation with her territory near her own jurisdiction. Hong Kong is at the mouth of the Canton river, and commands all the trade of the vast stream, a commerce that is astonishing in immensity. Hong Kong is the third city in the world in point of importance as a shipping port, and in case of war in the east, fortified as she is, she would prove of incalculable benefit to England. British trade is carefully guarded and encouraged, and many a good business turn is done for England by this British possession.

"One afternoon we boarded a steamer at Hong Kong for Canton, the Chinese metropolis, so large that no one knows its population. Eight hours' travel on the Canton river from Hong Kong, and we are in the most interesting of cities. As we neared the wharf our eyes met a river scene unequaled anywhere else. Over 250,000 people living in boats—boats of every size and shape imaginable, and engaged in all kinds of business. For instance, I noticed a ferry system, twenty-seven small boats in the company, carrying capacity five to ten people, according to size and amount of baggage, fare one-fifth of a cent to cross the river, or one boat to yourself for 1 1-5 cents. A collector in a small house on shore keeps tab on the ferry man and settles with each boat at night. He pays no attention to passage money. The boatman must look after that. Here comes a large wheel, here a slipper boat, slipper shape, fairly flashes by, only one or two people in sight, but undoubtedly a dozen living in the small concern, for on all these boats the people eat, sleep and labor, are born, wed and die.

"Leaving the river and under the guidance of 'Ah Cum' and 'Third Son,' professional guides, we made a tour of the principal places of interest. Although quite a number of foreigners visit Canton during a year, yet they are always a curiosity, and crowds followed up everywhere, sometimes making it quite unpleasant. Rather rough and impertinent to say the least. They hate the 'white devils,' as foreigners are dubbed. We saw more dirt, filth, people and wealth in less space than we ever expect to see again. The streets are scarcely four feet wide. On either side a mass of stores and a mess of humanity and everybody busy—few drones—few beggars. Some of the Cantonese had heard of the war results, and these were quite bitter in denouncing the cowardly Chinese who had given up Port Arthur. They, the Cantonese, were anxious for the Japs to go up and fight them. They knew how to fight and could easily whip Japs. The whole world for that matter. The Cantonese did not seem worried over the turn of affairs, not realizing that they were part and parcel of the Chinese empire, and would necessarily contribute from their coffers to pay Japan fat indemnity. Silk, ivory, art stores, public mint, prison where people are yet beheaded, temples, padogas, etc., until you are sick of all. Enough of Canton."

Congressman Mercer describes Amoy as follows: "Amoy is said to be the dirtiest city in China. It may have the first prize. It deserves it. Whew! my nose fairly earthquakes with stench when I even think of the trip. We visited a cemetery said to contain 13,000,000 bodies, ten or twelve deep, besides jars and jars of dried bones of those dying in foreign lands, bones that are cleaned regularly once a year, for what purpose I know not and care less. Some graves have caved in and the 'pig tail' protruding therefrom left no doubt as to the nationality of the corpse. Graves by the million, it was indeed a grave scene. In passing down one street we were jostled into a corner by a funeral procession, which always has the right of way. I say this in no irreverent sense. The streets are too narrow for more than one procession and we gave way. The chief mourners, hired for the occasion, did not look sad, but cracked jokes and howled with delight at their wit. (I give this on the word of a guide. I did not understand the jokes.) The musicians pounded the tom tom and howled, and the corpse, sitting upright in the partially closed box, was yanked by four coolies as if it were so much freight. The man may have died of the plague, as it was prevalent in Amoy, but we had no time or desire to inquire.

"Shanghai! beautiful Shanghai! We now regret leaving her so soon. Situated on the banks of the Woosung, not far from the great Yangtse, she is admirably located for commerce. Her great drawback at present is the large bar at the mouth of the Yangtse, an impediment to large ships landing at her wharf. This can and will be remedied in time. Shanghai, that is the foreign part, is the prettiest city in China. The leading hotel, the Astor house, and the principal thoroughfare, Broadway, are American enough to suit the most patriotic. We here saw the Petrel, an American man-of-war, the first one met. Afterward we were more fortunate in this regard, for at Nagasoki four others, the Baltimore, Charleston, Yorktown and Concord, delighted our eyes. They, with fourteen other men-of-war, English, Russian, French, Italian, Spanish, German and Japanese, made the harbor look quite warlike. In going from Shanghai to Nagasoki we passed six Russian torpedo boats and two cruisers, all cleared for action, and apparently practicing for the future naval conflict. They were going toward Formosa."

"A word as to the war. It was no war. The Japs simply made up a program and carried it out to the letter, and in doing so necessarily killed a few Chinese. There was scarcely any opposition to Japanese progress. The Chinese would not fight. They preferred to run or sell out. I firmly believe that the 'almighty dollar' did more damage at Port Arthur than the bullet, for this fort, with its equipment and good soldiery, could have withstood for days and weeks the combined powers of Europe. To be a Chinese soldier is to be in disgrace. He is looked down upon and despised. He is given a gun, a spear or a battle flag—and they were more often armed with flags and spears or poor guns than with modern weapons—and then told to fight, and at the same time look out for his own food and clothing. He received little or no pay. If any, it went through the 'squeeze' and a mere pittance finally landed in his pockets. No discipline, no patriotism, no pay, and despised because he was a soldier. What could be expected from such a being in a war? Nothing, absolutely nothing! And Li Hung Chang was not disappointed in results, his only hope vanishing when he failed to interest a foreign power in China's behalf.

"On the other hand, the Japanese were well organized, disciplined, full of patriotism and anxious to die if necessary in order to protect the mikado, son of Heoren and head of the great Japan family, of which each Japanese is a member. In Japan it is an honor to be a soldier. It is a position next to royalty. Then the Japs are natural sailors, many of them born on the water, and they have in them the possibilities of a first-class navy. They are born fighters and seem to enjoy it, in fact, enjoy it so much that now and then they get up a first-class war at home and for a time slash heads galore. The Japs are anxious to learn the ways of modern civilization, while the Chinaman builds stone walls around his cities to keep out white devils and their accursed methods. Had France or Russia interfered in the peace treaty between China and Japan the war would still be on, for in naval warfare for a time at least Japan could entertain Russia, while France would have been licked. But when Russia, France and Germany united in a demand, Japan bowed her head in submission and surrendered the best fruits of her victory. She has Formosa, a mine of wealth, and is now fairly subjecting the island, a no small task, as it has never yet been controlled, although Germany, France and China have attempted it. Much of the best tea used in America comes from Formosa, and nearly all tea raised in Formosa goes to America, while camphor, coal and even gold and silver are also her resources. Japan is very progressive, but she is endeavoring to grow too rapidly for her own good. There is much of the mushroom about it. Just now she has the 'swelled head' over her victory, and unless she exercises a care some nation may crack it and let out a little surplus egotism. We have seen much in Japan to admire. The nation is very friendly to America and Americans, and calls America the mother country, because Commodore Perry and his fleet first opened the doors of western civilization. Many of her sons have been educated in American schools, and in various ways she does as we have done. Let us hope that her future course will be to her benefit and that of mankind in general, and that China will soon follow in her footsteps."

Gratuitous Insertion.

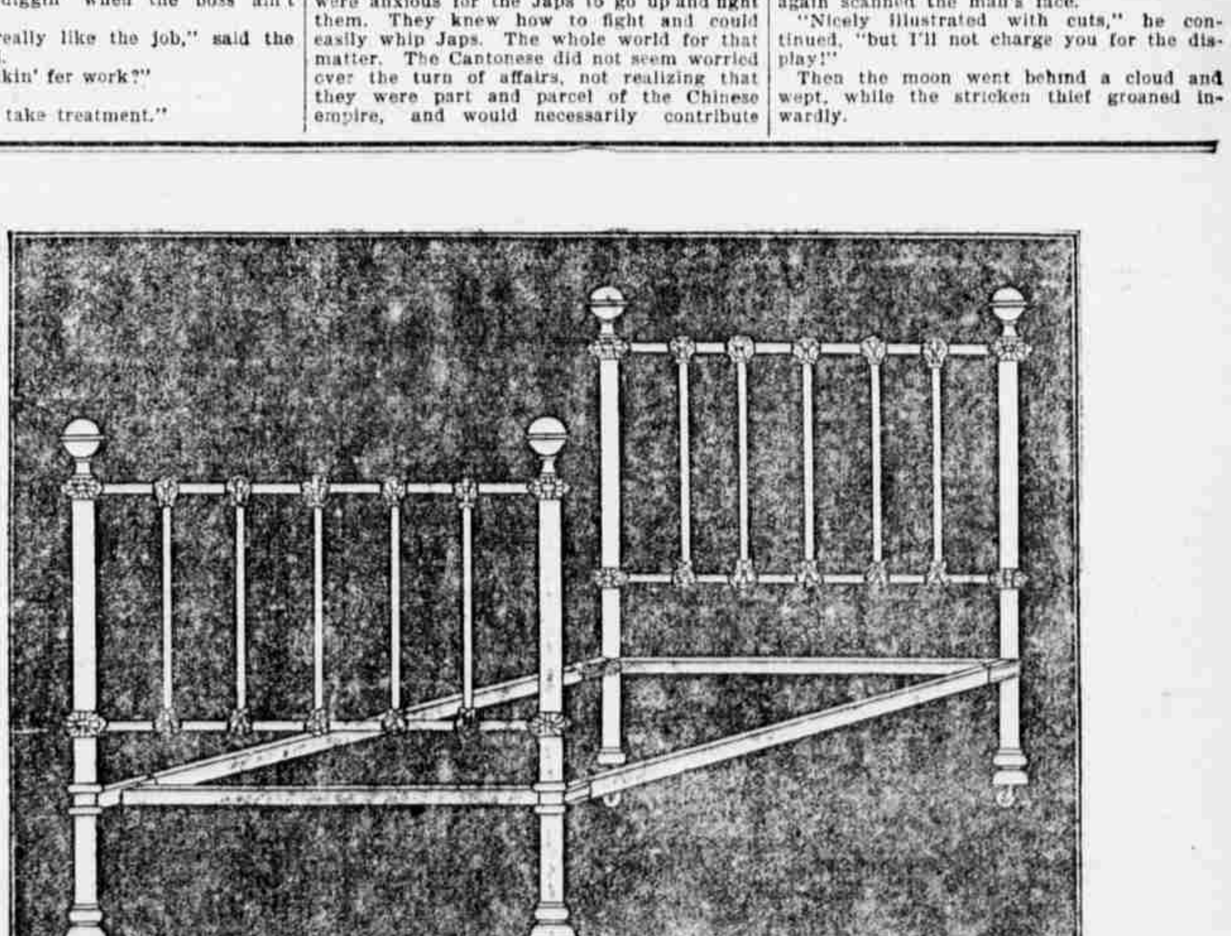
New York World: "That's all right—"

The advertising manager leaned over the prostrate form of the burglar whom he had caught in his room. He had struck the robber down, but his hand was injured by the blow.

"I put it in bold-faced type," he murmured. Then kicking the fallen robber he again scanned the man's face.

"Nicely illustrated with cuts," he continued, "but I'll not charge you for the display!"

Then the moon went behind a cloud and wept, while the stricken thief groaned inwardly.



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