

THE OMAHA DAILY BEA

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THE NIAGARA CANAL.

The house committee on interstate and foreign commerce has under consideration the Niagara canal project. In regard to which it is said that a bill will be framed and reported to the house and probably passed at this session. Just what the character of this measure will be is not indicated and perhaps much will depend upon the report of the engineers sent to the president for more than two months. The salient points of this report have been given to the public, but a great deal of its information is yet to be made known, the effect of which may have a more or less decided bearing upon the action of congress.

In a recent address Mr. Warner Miller of New York, who is prominently identified with the project, declared that if the present congress failed to give it support foreign capital would be sought for its construction. It is impossible to say whether this was simply a threat or a serious statement of the intention of the canal company, but it is undoubtedly a fact that something practical will have to be done soon in order to avert the enlistment of foreign capital, with all that may imply, in the enterprise. Nicaragua is becoming impatient and if this country does not act she is very likely to look elsewhere for the means to construct the canal, which would mean another international complication. It was recently reported that a judge of the supreme court of Nicaragua, to whom that government referred the question whether or not she could annul her contract with the Maritime Canal company, had advised that Nicaragua first demand prompt and full compliance before declaring the contract annulled as the only legal course that can be followed. The fact that an opinion was asked of a judge of the supreme judicial tribunal shows that the Nicaraguan government is dissatisfied and is ready to rid of the contract with the canal company and place it with another company that will carry it out. There is no doubt of the right of that government to do this, the only question being whether any foreign company could be induced to take up the enterprise in view of the hostility which it would certainly encounter from the United States.

Manifestly this is a matter which congress ought to decide one way or the other with the least possible delay. It is not creditable to the country that after so prolonged a discussion of this question we appear to be no nearer a solution than at the outset. The present congress should take decisive action.

VERY MUCH LIKE OMAHA. The Chicago papers do not miss words when they discuss the conduct of their boodle aldermen. Recently the bellwether of the Chicago council insolently declared that it is high time the council arises and teaches Mayor Swift that an alderman is more than a messenger. This piece of aldermanic pleasantry is dissected in the following fashion by the Sunday Tribune:

When have most of the aldermen been anything but messengers? It has been the duty and the pleasure of most of them to run errands for the disreputable of their constituents. When they have not been messengers for those who wanted to get out of the bidwell or the police station they have been at the beck and call of every man who wanted his sidewalk mended. They have run their legs off to get passes on street railroads for henchmen in their wards. Some of them have been the willing messengers for corporations. They are at the beck and call of the latter. There are two or three aldermen who are chief messengers, through whom these corporations, when about to buy a franchise, communicate with aldermanic messengers of lower degree. Any concern or individual, with a fair amount of money, can hire one of these messengers to run its or his errands.

Where is the Cadet Taylor of Chicago? Would it not be well for him to fetch out that plank which commands the people to believe no reports that reflect upon public officials until they shall have personally investigated the facts for themselves?

OUR EASTERN COMPETITORS. The competition in our home market of the products of the far eastern countries was a subject of consideration at the recent national convention of manufacturers, which adopted a resolution calling upon the senate of the United States to appoint a commission or to direct one of its own committees to inquire respecting the alleged invasion of our market and the menace offered to American manufacturing industry by the products of cheap Oriental labor; also to determine what is the cause of this menace and what means should be adopted to avert the threatened injury to domestic producers. In this action of the convention of manufacturers there was indicated a serious feeling of concern regarding this competition.

The latest issue of consular reports contains a report from the American consul general at Shanghai, in which it is shown at what relatively small cost Chinese and Japanese labor produces the articles that are sent abroad. The consul says that a Chinese laborer will save money on wages that would hardly be sufficient to supply the absolute necessities of an American laborer. This is made possible by the cheapness of the vegetable diet on which the Chinese laborer is content to live, the small cost of house accommodations, for several families will subdivide one room of a house and live in contentment in it, and the low price paid for clothing, which is made of the coarsest cotton. In Japan labor is somewhat better paid than in China, but there also it is far below the wages of American labor. The balance of trade between the United States and China and Japan has been steadily against this country and the indications seem to be that it will continue to be, increasing from year to year, unless something is done to check the growing movement of Oriental products to the American market, which it seems is not producing a corresponding increase in the demand from those countries for our products.

The latest show in this matter by

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF MANUFACTURERS AT CHICAGO LAST WEEK WAS SO STRONG AND URGENT THAT IT SHOULD COMMAND THE ATTENTION OF CONGRESS.

The national convention of manufacturers at Chicago last week was so strong and earnest that it should command the attention of congress. There is presented in it a new phase of the policy of protection that merits very serious consideration.

HIGH TIME TO ORGANIZE. The heavy property owners and taxpayers of Omaha made a good beginning by appointing committees to confer with the city and county authorities for the purpose of impressing them with the necessity for greater economy and reduced taxation. But the efforts of these committees will come to nothing unless they are followed up by an organized movement of the great body of the taxpayers. There can be no permanent relief from extravagance and lawless expenditures of public moneys until we have a permanent organization that will invoke the power of the courts whenever an attempt is made to overstep the limits laid down by law.

To dispense with a few needless clerks and consolidate some minor offices is at best only a start in the direction of retrenchment. In fact, it may turn out to be merely a deceptive makeshift to open the way for the appointment of another batch of political hangers-on. The demand of the hour is for a strict application of business methods today, tomorrow, and every day in the year. That applies not solely to city, county and school board employes, but to every transaction that takes money out of the public treasury.

How can this be brought about? Surely, not by spasmodic whittling of the salary list nor by reducing the tax levy, while all departments are creating overlaps and the money raised for one purpose is transferred into funds that have been unlawfully overdrawn. We have had examples of this false economy during the past year, when the health fund and police fund were recklessly squandered and the illegal deficits made up by appropriations from the general fund. The entire sinking fund has been absorbed by advancing money out of it to the other funds, and the credit of the city has thus been endangered.

These pernicious practices can be effectually stopped only by a taxpayers' association employing a competent attorney to interpose such barriers as the courts afford against infractions of the law. What is everybody's business is nobody's business. No single taxpayer can afford either to stand up all the year round against jobs and steals or to incur the enmity of those who are engaged in despoiling the whole body of taxpayers. Nor is it rational to expect a half-dozen of the leading property owners to bear the whole burden. An association representing thousands of voters would exercise a wholesome restraint upon public officers, while a corporal's guard would be often ignored and defied.

CONGRESSIONAL GARDEN SASS. Time was when farmers' votes could be caught by the gift of package of squash and cabbage seeds or a half ounce of peas sent free through the mails under pretext that they were foreign varieties for experiment and introduction on American soil. This political garden sash supplied at the expense of the farmers through the commissionary of agriculture afforded the cheapest electioneering material for congressmen of the Texas steer brand and was regarded by these great statesmen as a most indispensable requisite of their high offices.

For years past, however, the quantity of the congressional garden sass has been increasing and its quality deteriorating. Instead of rare orchids and flower-bearing plants from the tropics and the orient the farmers have received morning glories and sunflowers. Instead of Egyptian corn and India wheat they have received army beans and Canadian distillers. In fact, the congressional garden sass became so common that a self-respecting western farmer considers it almost an insult to be officially notified of the arrival in his postoffice of one of the musty befranked seed packages.

While the farmers of the country may not take kindly to some of Secretary Morton's views on live economic questions, his effort to abolish the abuse that has grown out of the free distribution of seeds will meet with their approval. There is no good reason why the people should be taxed for the purchase and transmission through the mails of worthless seeds for electioneering purposes. Even if these seeds were what they purport to be it is questionable whether such an investment of money taken out of the national treasury would be justifiable. Uncle Sam has just as much right to distribute foreign varieties of pigeons, pigs and puppies among the fanciers or to import Merino sheep, Angora goats, Peruvian llamas and Australian kangaroos for distribution among congressional constituents.

If there is any real reason for the maintenance of the Department of Agriculture it must be something higher and more beneficial to the agricultural interests of the country than the supply of political garden sass to members of congress.

AMERICANS IN THE TRANSVAAL. It is gratifying information that the authorities of the South African republic have released on parole all the Americans that were arrested in connection with the recent raid, with the single exception of Hammond, whose case appears to be regarded by the government as of a more serious nature than that of the other Americans. The great anxiety manifested by Hammond and his friends may, indeed, be not unfairly regarded as a confession that his course was more indefensible than was the conduct of the other Americans who were identified with the organized movement for reforms in the interest of the foreigners. At any rate it is not difficult to understand that the authorities of the South African republic should deem it to be expedient, under the circumstances, to keep Hammond in custody for a time, perhaps until those released on parole shall have demonstrated that they are disposed to relinquish all further attempts to bring

ABOUT DESTROYING REFORMS BY FORCE.

Our consular agents express the opinion that the Americans are in no serious peril and say that the Transvaal government has acted magnanimously, which seems to be the case. The Americans will in due time be brought to trial, but there is no reason to apprehend that any of them will be very severely punished. In the meantime our government continues to interest itself in their behalf, having now direct intercourse with the Transvaal government, and it is not to be doubted that its representations will have favorable results. The Boer republic, it is to be presumed, will not disregard any reasonable request from the United States affecting our citizens.

It is stated that a large proportion of recent fires in this city were unquestionably of incendiary origin. Chief Redell said last year, in referring to the subject, that he knew of no city where as little effort is made to convict incendiaries as is the case in Omaha. Why this should be true it is difficult to say. The law against arson is certainly stringent enough to cover any case where evidence would warrant conviction. The opinion has been expressed that the law officers do not secure evidence upon which convictions can be based. Instances are cited where men whose buildings have burned have had to leave the city because of the strong popular belief that they committed arson, yet no one was willing to swear against them.

A lengthy opinion composed by the judge advocate general of the Nebraska National Guard, approved by the adjutant general, the brigadier general and two colonels of the First and Second Infantry regiments, and approved and promulgated by the governor as commander-in-chief of land and naval forces, makes public the announcement that should the federal government require the assistance of the state militia to repel foreign invasion the militia of Nebraska would be subject to the call to military duty under the statutes. If any one of military age in Nebraska did not understand his legal liability before the array of names attached to this proclamation ought to at once remove all doubts from his mind.

The Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic is asking for bids for the location of its next annual reunion, which, among other things, must guarantee the use of at least 240 acres suitable for a camp and the usual commissary supplies needed by a small army on the march. This means that the intention is to continue the barbarous camping-out system. The veterans of the war are entitled to all the conveniences and comforts which the best accommodations in our larger cities can provide. Let the Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic make the start in abolishing the camp and in refusing to expose its aging members to the hardships of this needless outdoor life.

The two new Utah senators have committed themselves in public interviews in favor of congressional recognition for the proposed Transmississippi exposition at Omaha. The representatives of other western states will doubtless be equally enthusiastic over its prospects as soon as the project is forced to their attention. If the present congress is to be persuaded to act there is no time to be lost in prosecuting the work of explanation and education. The senators and congressmen who have expressed themselves favorably might become like-warm in their support if the proposition is not pushed with energy by the people most vitally interested in it.

If sublime cheek and adamant audacity were the only qualities that gave a newspaper a commanding position in the political arena, the Omaha World-Herald would long ago have been the most potential factor in Nebraska state politics. A free silver democratic paper with a populist veneer over a monopoly body trying to set up candidates for the republican party to nominate presents a spectacle of conceit that would command admiration if it were not so supremely impertinent.

GOOD ROADS THE CAPER.

Governor Drake has widened his popularity in Iowa by his positive declaration in favor of good roads and such legislation as will provide for making them. It is strange how slowly people accept the fact that investments made in this direction yield larger returns than almost any other expenditure of public moneys.

WRANGLING OVER A SHADOW.

We have been wrangling with Great Britain for half a century or more over the control of an isthmian canal, and the senate resolution that the attention of congress be drawn to the fact that the canal which the fuss is about is not to be constructed. We are apparently nearer to a war over the control of it when built than we are to the thing of it. What children these nations be!

FOOLS TO FILL HIS ROOM.

Senator Davis' scheme to get in the Monroe wagon by letting out the coupling pole an indefinite number of holes doesn't seem to meet with the unanimous approbation desirable for a presidential candidacy. The senator is in the condition of those literary gentlemen whose best ideas having been anticipated seek to snipe up by amplification for their slow-fire match of thought.

INADEQUATE FOR DARK HORSES.

The entry of Senator Manderson of Nebraska as a presidential candidate is not likely to sum up as a cent. An account is opened with him. For his cent he is given a card divided into ten compartments, each containing a cent stamp, and a cent stamp which the postmaster affixes to the card. For 10 cents the entire card is thus filled, and in exchange for it the depositor receives a card divided into ten compartments, each designed to receive ten-cent stamps. Upon surrendering his 10-cent card he is given a 10-cent card with one of the compartments of the card containing a cent stamp. When this card is filled he surrenders it and receives another card divided into ten compartments, but each representing one of the compartments of the card with a 10-cent stamp in exchange for the filled 10-cent card which he has surrendered. The next card has 100 compartments.

ONE STATE CONVENTION.

The newspapers over the state generally are now discussing the advisability of the republicans holding but one state convention this year. The sentiment seems to be favorable for several reasons, principally, however, that one convention held the first week in June will answer all purposes. There are nearly six months in which to prepare for the office. The signs, though, are not auspicious for dark horses, and it would not be wise for General Manderson to build too much on the effort of his friends to crowd him into the presidential race.

MAKE THEM FLOCK TOGETHER.

Article IV of the constitution of this country contains this emphatic declaration: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for any office or trust under the United States." And yet a class of citizens are urging the adoption of a policy of proscription which aims at the very heart of this republican form of government. It is not to be doubted that the victory will be overwhelming. We believe that the republicans of this section of the state are desirous of but one thing, and let's make that one a hammer.

A GOVERNMENT OF LAWYERS.

"Ours is a lawyer government." There is no doubt of it. Perhaps that is the reason it is the most expensive government under the sun. Perhaps that is the reason it can't get on with the people. Under the present government it has been necessary to borrow several millions of dollars within the past three years to pay the salaries of the lawyers and pay the costs of prosecuting delinquents.

DRAWING THE LONG BOW.

The only paragraph of Senator Wolcott's speech which is worthy of comment is this: "What advancement of progress for the human race the republicans shall bring about, largely come, in my opinion, through the spread of the religion of Christ and the dominance of the English speaking peoples, and not through the negro and the Indian." This is a flattering idea for us who speak the language of the republicans. We look into the history of races, do we not find that the freedom which exists where an English speaking people rules is for the benefit of the whole world? We are limited to those who have white skins? Does Anglo-Saxon domination in parts of our own country bring freedom and the reign of law among the negroes and the East Indian? Guiana the suffrage is restricted to about 2,000 men, most of whom were born in Europe. The remainder of the 288,000 inhabitants are Negroes, Chinese and East Indian coolies. They are practically shut out without political rights. Across the Orinoco in Venezuela the suffrage is extended practically to all classes of people, negroes and Indians, as well as white men. Is this an evidence that English domination brings freedom?

FORCING THE PACIFIC RAILROAD MORTGAGE AND POCKET THE LOSS.

The condition of the United States treasury has stimulated a strong sentiment in favor of the government foreclosing its mortgage on the Union Pacific and Central Pacific properties. The outstanding principal of the Pacific railroads' bonds is \$4,623,512, and on these bonds the government has paid \$105,698,926, of which only \$1,000,000 has been paid back by the railroad companies.

POSTAL SAVINGS.

In past years whenever an attempt to pass a postal-savings scheme through congress failed the cry was raised that the defeat represented the influence of the banks. We have not observed that the attention has been called to any such opposition in the case of the postal-savings measures which have been recently introduced in congress. The logic of the case is plain and to any assent of bank opposition, for the reason that the interest proposed to be paid by the government is much smaller than that paid by savings banks, and the postal-savings account would more than likely be transferred to savings banks after it had received a sizeable sufficient for bank account purposes.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

Mark Twain writes to a friend in Hartford that he went away in debt and will come back in a first cabin.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

A Washington correspondent says that his morning editor was on a vacation when he delivered the following speech:

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

Speaker Reed, Senator Frye, chairman of the senate, and Chief Justice Fuller are graduates of Bowdoin college.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

General Bourke of France is now nearly 80 years of age and in precarious health. He was born at Pau the year following the battle of Waterloo. Bourke, while retreating before Mantua, fell army toward Switzerland, tried to blow out his brains, and for weeks hovered between life and death.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

A Washington correspondent is authority for the report that John W. Brown, the general, when he was a mountain bandit, plotted the capture of John Sherman, while his lieutenant was making a tour through Cuba some years ago. It was intended to

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