THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

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THE BEE PUBLISHING COMPANY.

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION.

State of Nebraska, Douglas County. } ss.

George B. Tzschuck, secretary of The Bee Publishing company, being duly sworn, says that the actual number of full and complete copies of The Daily Morning, Evening and Sunday Bee printed during the month of November, 1896, was as follows:

1	27,969	16	29,620
2	21,114	17	29,616
3	21,656	18	29,429
4	27,795	19	29,322
5	21,427	20	29,296
6	27,957	21	29,011
7	21,238	22	21,860
8	21,350	23	29,072
9	28,956	24	29,051
10	29,051	25	29,121
11	21,001	26	19,803
12	29,176	27	29,161
13	29,269	28	29,015
14	29,081	29	29,925
15	21,819	30	29,625
Totals			899,342
Less deductions for unsold and returned copies			12,782
Total net sales			847,560
Net daily average			21,582

GEORGE B. TZSCHUCK.

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 1st day of December, 1896.

N. P. FEIL,
(Seal.) Notary Public.

Now look out for the labor-saving genius who writes it Xmas.

Isn't it pretty near time for Senator Tillman to break loose once more?

If the people's party is no longer good enough for General Coxey, how can any of the other great and good men possibly stay with it?

Evidence is rapidly accumulating that the revision of the existing revenue law will be among the first and most important duties of the state legislature.

The first surgical operation the legislature will have to perform will be to cut open the treasury cancer which has been eating into the vitals of the state.

Coxey deserves credit for one thing. He boldly asserts that he has left the people's party instead of hiding behind the cowardly subterfuge that the party has left him.

If President Cleveland will only wait until after March 4 next he can go away on duck hunts as often as he pleases without encountering the slightest criticism of his conduct.

If any of the new populist congressmen-elect want to rival the record of Congressman Mercer they will have to get up early in the morning and work late at night every day in the year.

Mrs. McKinley is in Chicago doing her Christmas and inauguration shopping. Here is another fine opportunity for New York to raise a howl about the first lady in the land discriminating against the metropolis and fashion center of the country.

With the whole of block 86 covered with a structure in keeping with the present Sixteenth street front Omaha will have a federal building which will be a credit to the city, to the government which erects it, and to the representative in congress through whose efforts it has been secured.

If the Omaha curfew ordinance conflicts with state statute and is on that account invalid, then all the curfew ordinances framed on the same plan that have been adopted by other Nebraska towns must be equally worthless. The curfew apparently is not appreciated by nineteenth century lawmakers.

Washington hotel keepers are preparing to reap their regular quadrennial harvest of officeseekers' patronage, and, in fact, are already ready to entertain all the future ministers to Dahomey who may apply, provided only that they have the requisite money to part with.

The substitution of salaries for fees in compensation of federal court officers is said to be working very well. The salary instead of the fee is unquestionably in line with common sense and more efficient service. The fee office must go eventually, whether in national, state or local governments.

"No man can tell what this congress will do between now and the 4th of March" is the wise remark of one of our national solons in response to a question as to the probable fate of the public building appropriation bills reported to the house last week. Nobody can tell, but the chances of the public building bills are as good and better than those of most other bills on the calendar.

The political fishing excursion conducted under the guise of a contest by the defeated fusion candidates for the legislature has not been very successful so far. All the popocrats want to know is how the republicans carried on their side of the national campaign. This has no more to do with the election of members of the legislature than it has with the election of Transmississippi Exposition officers.

The activity of the Postoffice department in issuing fraud orders against swindling concerns that use the mails in the transaction of their business will have the approval of all good citizens. It is probably a hopeless task to prevent gullibles from throwing their money away on all sorts of fraudulent schemes, but the government can not be expected to co-operate with the swindlers by countenancing the use of the mails by them.

CONDITION OF THE STATE TREASURY.

For nearly two years it has been an open secret that the condition of the state treasury is not what it ought to be. It is also an open secret that State Treasurer Bartley has persistently disregarded the safeguards which have been imposed by law upon him as custodian of public funds. From the very outset he has assumed that the state treasurer is accountable to nobody for his acts excepting his own bondsmen and may at his pleasure farm out public money for the benefit of himself or of favored bankers.

According to the best information accessible, there are now presumed to be some $1,700,000 in the custody of the state treasury, exclusive of the sums tied up in failed depository banks. Of this amount nearly half a million is drawing no interest for the state and the balance is on deposit at 3 per cent. While this vast sum is at the disposal of the state treasurer more than $2,000,000 of murdered state warrants are out, on which the state is paying interest at 5 per cent. The best of these warrants are being hawked about at 3 per cent discount, and some creditors of the state are forced to accept even less. Against the general fund alone there are outstanding over $1,900,000 in warrants, while the treasurer is supposed to have on hand to the credit of that fund $580,000.

Taking advantage of the defects of the state depository law, the treasurer has interpreted its provisions so as to leave him free to appropriate the interest on the uninvested part of the permanent school fund, amounting to a half million dollars. That is not the worst, however. Some of the banks in which the treasurer has deposited state money are reputed to be in a precarious condition and fears are expressed that they will not be able to produce the cash on demand when the treasurer is called on to turn it over to his successor in January.

This is indeed a very serious situation, which must be confronted with prudence and yet demands prompt and decisive action. While nothing should be omitted to protect the state from loss, the reckless disregard of law and willful misappropriation of public funds must be put an end to. The first officer upon whom will devolve the duty to deal with this subject will be the governor and he must not falter in fearlessly discharging it.

THE IRRIGATION CONGRESS.

Some revival of interest in the important question of irrigation is to be expected from the deliberations of the irrigation congress soon to meet at Phoenix, Ariz. Whether what shall be done by this congress will have any better results than the action of preceding congresses is problematical, but in any event it will serve to stimulate interest in a subject that is universally admitted to be of great concern to the country and particularly to the west. The question of the reclamation of the arid lands grows in importance as the area of the public domain diminishes and it will command increasing attention until a wise and comprehensive policy with respect to the arid region is settled upon.

There are 500,000,000 acres of arid lands and the secretary of the interior states that it is assumed by persons familiar with the subject that about 100,000,000 acres might be reclaimed by the most conservative use of the water and by the judicious selection of the lands to be irrigated. The secretary directs attention to the defects of the Carey act, providing for donating arid lands to the states, conditioned upon their reclamation and settlement, and expresses the belief that the bill now pending before congress, amendatory of the Carey act, will remedy the defects pointed out. The report of the secretary of the interior says: "When it is considered that five-sixths of the vacant public lands lie within a region where the rainfall is not sufficient to produce agricultural crops without artificial irrigation, that a comparatively small per cent of this territory can be utilized by reason of the limited supply of the water subject to control, and that existing laws are ineffective to secure the reclamation of the lands susceptible of irrigation, the demand for congressional action comes to us with irresistible force." The secretary further says that it is impossible under the laws now in operation to control the reclamation of lands in the arid region so as to prevent the improvident use of water, over which the general government has no control. This can only be accomplished by a system which contemplates the reclamation of the entire territories from a common source of supply and the utilization of that supply.

The problem is by no means a simple one, as everybody at all familiar with the subject knows, but its solution is not impossible. Some of those who have given the greatest study to the irrigation question urge that the only safe means of devising a broad, scientific and satisfactory national policy is through the medium of a national irrigation commission, to be authorized by congress and appointed by the president. It is not improbable that the coming irrigation congress will recommend the creation of such a commission, with ample authority to consider all the aspects of the problem.

NO STAR CHAMBER CHARTER-MAKING.

Has the Douglas delegation, or rather the popocratic part of it, the new city charter up its sleeve? The people of Omaha would like to know what changes are to be proposed in their municipal government some time before the legislature acts upon the charter bill. They have already had too much sad experience with eleventh hour secret charter tinkering. The work of revision should be done out in the open and subject to the discussion and criticism of the public.

No star chamber charter-making can be satisfactory to the people this year. It is nothing less than an invitation for the contractors and corporations and tax-eaters generally to pull the strings on legislators while it keeps the property owners who foot the bills completely in the dark. The tax-shirkers always manage to have their interests looked after by some one on the inside, while the taxpayers are left in ignorance of the raid that is being made upon them.

If any members of the legislative delegation from this county imagine that the charter is to be revised solely with a view to creating political capital for the party that happens to have the majority in that body they will find that they are greatly mistaken. Legislating officials out of office for the sake of economy because there is not work enough for them to do is one thing and legislating officials out of office simply to give political opponents an opportunity to scramble for the places vacated is another. Rather than to have the charter mutilated for political ends the people of Omaha will prefer to put up indefinitely with the present cumbersome municipal machinery.

TARIFF REVISION.

The house ways and means committee will meet today for the purpose of formally considering the course to be pursued in revising the tariff, the work of which it is proposed to proceed with at once. It is understood to be the intention to begin the hearings with the holiday recess and continue through the holidays. To prevent them from dragging along indefinitely a limited time may be assigned for testimony relating to each of the most important schedules. Obviously this will be necessary if the committee expects to frame a bill during the present session, which appears to be the plan. Two weeks ought to be ample time for the hearings.

According to Washington dispatches certain features of the new tariff bill have been practically decided on already by the republicans. It is said that those schedules of the existing law which have proved satisfactory will not be disturbed. Among these the cotton schedule is likely to remain unchanged. Having been guarded by democratic protectionists in the senate that schedule has been satisfactory to manufacturers and operatives and the duties being specific are in accord with republican policy. Of course the ad valorem features of the present law will be very largely done away with and the most satisfactory and conclusive reason for doing this will be found in the experience with ad valorem duties during the past two years. This indefensible system, which is excluded from the tariff laws of all other countries but this, has deprived the treasury of many millions of dollars through undervaluations. It is an incentive to fraud, by which the government is robbed and a great injustice done to our own manufacturers. Ad valorem duties may be necessary in some cases, but they should never be employed where specific duties are practicable. Not only do the latter protect the treasury against fraud, but they greatly simplify the collection of customs and reduce the cost, since fewer officials are required in the service.

In regard to reciprocity, it is said that there may be established two schedules of articles on which concessions are desired from other countries—one schedule for goods when imported from other countries which agree to reciprocity treaties, the other schedule for those which do not. This feature of the new tariff will have to be very carefully arranged in order to make it successful, because conditions have somewhat changed since the reciprocity policy of 1890 went into effect. Merely restoring that policy would probably not enable us to renew reciprocity agreements with some of the countries which then entered into them. There is reason to believe that most of the American countries will be found favorably disposed toward the principle and it is not unlikely that some European countries may be induced to accept it. At any rate a reciprocity system will be formulated and if enacted into law there can be no doubt that the next administration will seriously urge it upon the acceptance of those countries with which the United States shall desire commercial reciprocity.

The disturbing question is whether after the republicans have prepared a bill revising the tariff they can secure its passage by the senate. There is certainly ground for apprehension as to this. It does not now appear probable that the republicans will have a majority in the senate of the next congress. As the situation stands they can only count with entire certainty on forty-two senators, but there is a possibility of increasing the number to forty-five, which would enable them to tie the senate and give the vice president the casting vote. The fact must be recognized, however, that there is danger of the defeat of a tariff bill in the senate.

According to the report of the comptroller of the currency, four of the twenty-seven national banks which went into receiverships during the last year were banks that had failed in 1893 and subsequently resumed business. These banks had the sanction of the comptroller to resume on a showing of sound resources, but by reason of the continued financial depression and the slowness of their assets have been forced to suspend for a second time. All this goes to prove what a difficult thing it is to reorganize a banking institution successfully after it has once gone to the wall. Banking more than any other business rests on a foundation of confidence and credit and when its reputation for substantial backing is impaired it can regain its former standing only by slow degrees. Its former prestige instead of being a help becomes an obstacle in its way through unfavorable comparison. A bank more than any other institution must keep its credit like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

The house of representatives is still passing private relief bills to pay people for property said to have been used or taken by union troops during the war. Anybody who had such a claim against an individual and failed to press it for payment within reasonable time would have been barred long ago by the statute of limitations. Yet congress keeps on wasting time and money on claims over 30 years old whose justice or injustice could not be established at this day by any conclusive evidence. These private relief bills stand on a par with the disgraceful legislation removing the charge of desertion from bounty jumpers and runaway soldiers.

State Treasurerelect Meserve has the reputation of being an honest man. So far as we know there is no disposition to discredit or embarrass him in his effort to secure the sufficient bond required by law from the state treasurer before he can assume control of the state funds. On the contrary, the people of Nebraska, irrespective of party, will be glad to have him secure a bond which the governor can conscientiously approve. It is, however, a matter of very serious concern to the people of Nebraska that Mr. Meserve shall not become a party to any arrangement that will prevent a full turning over of the cash in the treasury and stop forever the illegal farming of the state's money as private speculation. It would be unfortunate, indeed, if the new state treasurer should, in order to secure signatures to his bond, enter into any compact which would obligate him to become a mere tool of the old warrant-shaving ring or, worse still, to make him the silent partner of bank wreckers and wrecked bankers.

One of the very next things in order in congress will be a sanitary commission to inquire into the abnormal and increasing mortality of senate and house bills. The bills that survive the ills that beset them in the infant stage are so few and far between that they are the exception rather than the rule. Unless something is done to prevent the bringing of so many bills into the congressional world—bills that are but born to die—or to prolong their life upon earth after they have once been set loose, the reputations of the congressional doctors will be forever blasted.

The project for the erection by the federal government of huge water storage reservoirs among the mountains of Colorado in order that the untold quantities of water which run to waste in the spring may be utilized in irrigation is big with promise for the agricultural future of that state. The preliminary surveys to this end will be in the competent hands of Captain H. M. Chittenden of the corps of engineers, who formerly had charge of the improvements to the Missouri river at this point.

Murat Halstead is nothing if not erratic. During the war he scored Lincoln for being too slow in suppressing the rebellion and after the war he scored Grant for being too fast in trying to annex San Domingo. Saturday he delivered a lecture at Evanston, Ill., in which he declared himself in favor of the annexation of Cuba, the Hawaiian islands, Iceland and of other islands. The next thing we will hear will be Halstead clamoring for the annexation of Patagonia and the south pole.

The address of County Clerk Redfield concerning the revenue laws of Nebraska which was read before the state commissioners and supervisors at Lincoln, is worthy of careful attention. While all Mr. Redfield's recommendations may not be practicable at the present time, there can be no doubt that the reforms he suggests would greatly increase the efficacy of the laws relating to taxation.

Patriotism is defined as devotion to country. The highest patriotism therefore is devotion to the preservation of the union without expectation of reward in the shape of remunerative public patronage. There were thousands upon thousands of patriots who stood up for sound money and the national honor who do not want an office in recognition of their services.

An Ungallant Thrust.
Chicago Times-Herald.

The newly elected county attorney of Chadron, Neb., is Miss Estelle Mae Davison. It is very evident that the voters did not know her second name.

Notable Feature of the Message.
Globe-Democrat.

The president's message is principally notable, after all, in the way of showing how many important things the next administration will have to deal with on account of the neglect and incapacity of the present one.

Insuring Registered Letters.
New York Tribune.

Congress has done well in placing, without extra charge to the sender, an insurance of not more than $10 upon every registered letter. That will oblige the government to pay an indemnity for every registered letter lost or stolen. But the increased business thus attracted will doubtless make the new system a source of increased profits to the Postal department.

Good Example of Citizenship.
Kansas City Star.

Benjamin Harrison prefers to wield the influence of a highly respected private citizen rather than to assume the responsibility and the labor of office, so he refuses to be a candidate for senator from Indiana. Mr. Harrison is just the kind of man who is needed in the senate; but, then, he is just the kind of man who is needed to set an example of high grade private citizenship, too, and he does it admirably.

Prodding the Kaiser.
Springfield Republican.

The administration is playing a very good hand at diplomacy if its action in reimposing tonnage duties on vessels from German ports was dictated by a purpose to draw concessions from Germany for our meat products and life insurance companies. The German idea of diplomacy is very largely that of simple barter, and our government will be much more likely to get something from the kaiser if the kaiser wants something from us.

Notable Change of Tune.
Indianapolis Journal.

The survivors of the late Bryan party who met in this city recently had not a word to say in favor of "free silver at 16 to 1," and the "crime of 1873" was not even mentioned. The talk was all of "bimetallism," and the advocates of sound money were referred to as "monometallists." These ignorant persons evidently know they have been badly whipped and have got to change their line of battle, but it is equally evident that they do not know what bimetallism means. They represent a very discouraging kind of illiteracy.

A Wrong Righted.
Baltimore Sun.

The Virginia court of appeals, composed entirely of democrats, on Tuesday righted a wrong by commanding the board of canvassers of Buckingham county to reassemble and canvass the vote as cast for congressman in that county in the recent election. The republican vote was cast for Hon. J. Yost, but the election officers in several precincts returned it as being cast for Hon. Jacob Yost. On this slight technicality the state board of canvassers, Governor O'Ferrall alone dissenting, deprived Mr. Yost of the votes returned by the election officers for Jacob Yost and awarded the certificate of election to Mr. H. D. Flood, the democratic nominee. The latter promptly declined to accept a certificate based on this technicality and the court of appeals now orders proceedings which will secure to Mr. Yost his certificate of election and thus avoids a contest before congress. Thus the will of the people is vindicated by the highest court of the state and the congressman of their choice will take the seat to which he is entitled.

OVERHEAD WIRES.

Their Abolition Making Progress in Several Cities.
Chicago Times-Herald.

The decision of the Metropolitan Traction company of New York to adopt the underground trolley system on its Fourth, Madison, Sixth and Eighth avenue lines is gratifying news to those who have been waging war on the overhead trolley in various parts of the country.

The Metropolitan company has expended over $200,000 in improving the underground trolley system. It has also experimented with compressed air motors. Its final determination to adopt the underground trolley on an extended scale in the equipment of important lines in the spring may be taken as unassailable proof that this form of traction is a practicable possibility in this climate, and that the claims of corporations, when seeking franchises, to the effect that it presents insuperable mechanical obstacles to perfect locomotion, are unfounded.

The two chief objections urged against this form of traction by railway companies are the great expense involved in the construction of the conduit and in the necessary excavations and the difficulties in the way of operating the system in severe winter weather.

The Metropolitan company claims, however, that by the use of an "improved yoke" it is able to put down the line with less than half the excavation necessary for the cable system. It is claimed that it costs about $125,000 a mile to put down the cable road, while the underground electric can be put down for $40,000 per mile.

The difficulty that comes from snow in the winter is obviated by constant sweeping, and it is claimed that it is as easy to keep clean as the ordinary cable conduit.

The use of the underground trolley on such a large scale is certain to give a marked impetus to the crusade against overhead wires of every description. The city of Indianapolis was among the first cities to compel the placing of wires, telephone and electric, underground, and the work which is now under construction is the most important of that character that has been inaugurated. The time must surely come when not only the dangerous and unsightly overhead trolley must be placed underground, but all overhead wires of every description will have to be placed in subterranean conduits.

THE TOTTERING TRUSTS.

Speed Their Destruction with effective Legislation.
St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

The fact that the Bessemer Steel pool is in straits and that the Window Glass trust is going to pieces, coupled with the further fact that the Wire Nail trust collapsed recently and that other aggregations of the same order were wrecked earlier in the present year, prove that, contrary to the popular notion, the "combines" have their vicissitudes of fortune like all other forms of business enterprise. Rapacity, which was the inciting cause in the creation of most of the pools, has already proved the undoing of many of them, and their overthrow from this cause, even if the law were not to intervene, would end the career of others still apparently in a flourishing condition. Through the greed which impels them to force up prices until outside competition necessarily presents itself, the trusts contain in themselves the seeds of their own destruction.

All three of the trusts named here did great harm to the country, and, moreover, all of them were, in a certain sense, propped up by the tariff, for duties are imposed on the articles in which they deal. But the very system which aided them at the outset wrecked them in the end by the home competition which it had created. The great number of manufactories which the tariff built up rendered it impossible for them to be controlled indefinitely by any sort of a pool, and hence subjected the combinations to a pressure which was sure to smash most of them in the end, and which did smash, or is about to smash, these.

It is the duty, however, of the republican party to hasten the smashing in the case of those "combines" which are a detriment to the country. There are many of this class in the metal industries besides the Nail and the Bessemer Steel trusts and all of them will have to be proceeded against by the republicans during McKinley's term. The trusts can be attacked in three ways—by a general law of congress like the Sherman act of 1890, which act, however, has not hurt the "combines" much thus far; by the state laws against combinations in restraint of trade, and by reducing or abolishing the duties on trusts' articles when on the dutiable list. No time is going to be spent by the party in ignorant and empty denunciation of monopolies in the abstract, but they will be dealt with in the concrete in an intelligent and practical way.

SUGGESTIVE AND SEASONABLE.

Timely Hints in Rhyme, Run in for Convenience.
Boston Advertiser.

Up from the mind at break of day, causing to each woman fresh dismay, the thought comes, wrinkling each feminine brow, that Christmas shopping should be done now. No need to wait for the frantic rush, the ruder shove and the angry push, that wreck the temper and cause dismay to those who wait till the very last day; no need to wait for the frenzied fight that starts at dawn and lasts till night, when shoppers torn and in tears do grieve that they put off shopping till Christmas eve. The wiser woman thinks of that fray, with Christmas fully two weeks away.

The shoppers who shop at their leisure know the best the well filled counters show. The crowd at present is not so thick and they who go early may take their pick. The stock is larger and spotless, too, untouched by the eager, struggling crew who are yet to come in tumultuous group, a pushing and irresistible troop. So the wiser woman resolves at once that this year at least she will not be a dunce; she will make out her list and will quickly get to the down-town stores e'er the sun has set. She will do her shopping with leisurely ease and will straightway go where'er she may please; and all will be done to a single day with Christmas fully two weeks away.

Of all the mad words that mankind doth know, the maddest are these: "I told you so!" Yet the chances are that two weeks from now, with tired muscles and feverish brow, we'll see in the thickest of the fray the woman who said she would shop today; for good resolves like those "bon-bons" gay, are made to be broken, philosophers say. Today seems so short and tomorrow so near, that one surely forgets the former fear, till she wakes to find that her leisure's done and the "Christmas rush" has at last begun. And then with regret and contrition loud she finds herself in the swaying crowd and fights her way through the much-thronged store just as she's done each year before. Each year it's the same, tho' each year she says "Nay, I'll shop now while Christmas is two weeks away."

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

Harry A. Garfield, son of the late president, is being boomed for mayor of Cleveland.

Governor-elect Tanner of Illinois is credited with the ability to say "No" in 2,000 or 4,000 different ways. And yet they do say his marriage engagement was a leap year proposal.

Contributions for the memorial statue to be erected at Rugby in honor of the author of "Tom Brown's School Days" are coming in with surprising rapidity. Already 1960 has been raised.

The 100th anniversary of Schubert's death is to be celebrated in Vienna with considerable splendor. A search for relics of the composer brings to light the fact that at his death his entire effects were officially valued at less than $15.

New York City has paved thirty-five miles of streets with sheet asphalt since January 1, and claims to have saved $542,080 on the price of it as compared with figures under the Tammany administration. It gets a fifteen-years guarantee with the paving.

There was no Indian war last year, yet the troops in Arizona and New Mexico marched 42,457 miles in pursuit of the Apaches.

A Wisconsin lodge has been bequeathed $4,000, with the stipulation that once every year its members drink two kegs of beer at one sitting. Up to date the lodge has not found it necessary to order a new lot of withdrawal cards.

A most interesting prodigy has been discovered in Alphonse Nelis, a blind lad who is an inmate of an asylum near Mons, in Belgium. He was given instruction in music three years ago, and now, at the age of 11, he has composed a mass that is to be publicly performed.

Mrs. Barney Barnato, wife of the fairy-tale millionaire of South Africa, literally blazes with jewels. She has some of the most superb diamonds that ever dazzled the eyes of London, and with pathetic nouveau riche display she wears nearly every gem she possesses at one and the same time.

General Wade Hampton has been obliged to abandon for a while his duties at Washington as a member of the railroad commission, and is now at his old home in Columbia, S. C., trying by the aid of rest and quiet to get the better of renewed troubles from which he has been suffering lately, resulting from the amputation of his leg many years ago.

Harry Waldby, a bank cashier of Adrian, Mich., keeps many cats in his barn. When asked why he did this he said: "When I get up in the morning and things go wrong with the hired girl and the children and the household generally I don't scold and storm. I just grab an ax and go out to the barn and kill a cat."

THOSE SUPERFLUOUS SECRETARIES.

Red Cloud Argus: In choosing the secretaries of the state board of transportation the pops subdivided their party into three grand divisions and selected a secretary from each thus ignoring the provisions of the law which requires that said officials shall be chosen from at least two political parties. This is reform.

Alma Record: This is a great year for the fusionists. The law creating the State Board of Transportation, including three secretaries, clearly contemplates that these three secretaries shall represent the three predominating political parties. This year the fusion gang has selected as one of these three secretaries a free silver republican (whatever that may mean), as another member a straight populist and as the third a Bryan democrat! This is a little bit the smoothest construction ever placed on the law.

Kearney Hub: Daddy Laws has got around to the crib again. He was formerly a republican secretary of state, and was appointed to fill out the unexpired term of deceased Congressman Laird. In the last campaign he consorted with the populists and Bryanites as a free silver republican. Now he bobs up as one of the secretaries of the State Board of Transportation agreed upon by the new officials. Laws is a good citizen a fine old gentleman and is competent for the position that has been awarded him, but the spectacle that he presents is not very edifying just the same.

Chadron Signal: The people of the state of Nebraska, and particularly the populists of the state, will look earnestly to this board for real railway reforms when they take their places next January. Hitherto the board has done nothing but draw its salary and ride around over the state, doing political work for the party which kept it in office. This performance has been so notorious that for years the people of the state have been demanding the abolition of the board as a useless and extravagant expense. The new board will be expected to do something to earn its salary. There is real hard work and plenty of it in mastering the subject of railway regulation in Nebraska, and then enforcing the demands of justice. If the new board will do it it can earn its salary and the gratitude of the public without regard to party.

Tekamah Herald: The men who will draw $2,000 a year as secretaries of the State Board of Transportation under the incoming administration have been selected, and none of the Burt county patriots are among them. They are Gilbert L. Laws of Lincoln, James C. Dahlman of Chadron and J. W. Edgerton of Grand Island. Although the demo-pop party made a great bluff as to the reforms they were going to enact, this first selection of official timber gives out the impression that they are going to hew as close to the line followed by the republicans as is possible for them. Laws is ex-republican secretary of state, and as a former member of the State Board of Transportation made himself conspicuous as opposed to anti-monop rulings as supported by Attorney General Leese. It was Laws who opposed the reduction in coal freight to Tekamah, which Senator Sutherland obtained six years ago. Dahlman is wholly acceptable to the railroads, and Edgerton is the man who was such a notorious lobbyist during the pop legislature of four years ago, and was charged of many things in connection with the anti-monop stock yards legislation.

Heldrege Citizen: The three incoming secretaries of the State Board of Transportation have been named by the powers that be, and at the earliest possible opportunity they will indulge in the pleasure of drawing their snug salaries of $2,000 per annum. The anti-republican party has had much to say about the republican party being under the wing of the railroads. Long and loud has been the wail concerning the farce of the State Board of Transportation. One might have thought that, by the way the populist press has ranted for the past two years concerning the farce of the board, that if they got a chance the great reform party would abolish this so-called fraud. It may be they will, but the promptness with which the state officers have proceeded to elect the secretaries does not indicate that it was a part of the reform. It may be that it is the purpose of the elect to bring about reforms by the board. We hope so, but the secretaries chosen by the board do not indicate that they will be so much better than those who preceded them. It looks as if they were chosen because of political reasons rather than because they were qualified for the position. This indicates that human nature is much the same in all parties. That the folks that stand at the pie counter and distribute the pastry are apt to be governed by political reasons rather than a desire for the betterment of the public.

THE BILTON FIASCO.

David City Press: The state of Nebraska never wins a suit against a treasury-looter. No jury can be empanelled in Lancaster county that will convict a man who plunders the state treasury. The case brought against ex-Oil Inspector Hilton is the latest instance recorded.

Columbus Telegram: The jury in the case of ex-Chief Oil Inspector Hilton, whose bondsmen were being sued by the state to recover $5,000 fees collected by Hilton while a republican officeholder, could not agree on a verdict. The bondsmen will probably never have to pay. Stealing from the state has never been considered much of a crime by the party Mr. Hilton used to belong to.

Minden Gazette: The case of the state against ex-Oil Inspector Hilton is receiving the attention of the courts at Lincoln this week. Hilton refused to turn over fees of his office to the state and the state has sued for them. It is to be hoped he will have to "cough up." From the testimony given in the case our law providing for state oil inspection is nothing but a blooming farce, and it should either be made of some account or abolished.

Hastings Democrat: The district court of Lancaster county and jury couldn't find heart to stick ex-State Oil Inspector Hilton. While he held the office he collected some $5,000 in fees which he never turned over to the state. He was sued, but the jury disagreed upon some trifling matter, though there was no doubt about the money being collected and not turned over. Let us hope that men in authority will not permit such rascality in the future.

Plattsmouth News: Another legal farce has been enacted at Lincoln. Suit was brought by the state of Nebraska against the bondsmen of Oil Inspector Hilton for the sum of $5,000, which Hilton had kept that belonged to the state. The testimony was sufficient to convince an ordinary individual that judgment ought to have been promptly rendered against Mr. Hilton and his bondsmen. After the jury had been out twenty-four hours on the case, the jurors finally came into court and declared they could not agree—eight standing in favor of the state's claim and four holding out for Hilton. Lincoln courts already have an unsavory reputation in the state, and this Hilton suit will in no wise lessen it.

FREE ADVICE FOR LEGISLATURE.

Norfolk Journal (rep.): If the new Nebraska legislature makes no bad breaks there will be no trouble about the credit of the state.

Wisner Chronicle (rep.): One of the things that the next legislature will certainly attend to is the revision of the state oil inspection law.

Fullerton Journal (rep.): The Australian ballot law of this state needs Americanizing a trifle. Just now there is too much speculation on the result of a man's effort to vote—there being too many ways by which the ballot can be rendered illegal.

Stanton Picket (rep.): Eighty-seven of the 133 legislators of Nebraska are honest tillers of the soil, not just agriculturists. Now if Nebraska farmers don't ask for what they want and get it, too, who is to blame but themselves?

Tobias Gazette (rep.): If the members of the Nebraska legislature don't make fools of themselves, men who have cash to loan will send it to Nebraska to invest. If the legislature should enact laws that would be of the Kansas order, it would be some time before we would recover from the effects of pernicious legislation.

Creighton News (rep.): No public funds should be expended by the coming legislature unless absolutely essential for the prosperity of the state. The people have suffered too much during the past few years from financial embarrassment to be taxed beyond the necessary requirements of an economic administration of state.

Pierce Call (rep.): We believe the Nebraska legislature should change our election laws somewhat. The Iowa system is a much better way of voting, and so many mistakes are not liable to be made. The blanket ballot would be a big improvement over the present system and would be of benefit to the election board. Change the way of voting.

Pawnee City Republican (rep.): The present Australian ballot law would have undoubtedly been amended by the last legislature had it not been for the statesmen from the central and western part of the state. Now, that the same party is in power that enacted the measure, may we not expect that the crudities that crept into that measure will be eradicated?

Hastings Tribune (rep.): The populists, having full control of both branches of the legislature, will have an opportunity to do the state a great service by remodeling our revenue laws. The present laws, assessment and levy of taxes are a farce. The county assessor plan has been tried in several of the older states and found to work better than our precinct or township assessor law.

Valentine Republican (rep.): Regarding our assessment laws it has been suggested that the time of assessing property should be changed to January 1 of each year and that taxes should become delinquent on April 1 of each year. One of the principal reasons given in support of this change is that more taxes would be paid into the country treasury and thereby reduce the rate of taxes upon her citizens. During the fall and winter months several thousand head of cattle are brought into the county to be fed and in most cases are removed from the county just before the time of making assessment, and in this way escape being taxed at all. Certainly there can be no good reason why such a change should not be made, and there are many other changes that ought to be made by the next state legislature.

David City Press (pop.): Those who get the appointments are our friends. They will not take kindly to the idea of having their salaries cut, yet it is in keeping with the promises made in populist platforms, and accepted as wise and just by the silver democrats and republicans. The salaries of public officers have two and one-half times the purchasing power, when measured in corn, they had three and one-half years ago, and nearly double when measured in beef and hogs. The superintendent of the three insane asylums get each $2,500 besides their living—more than the governor, counting their living. The superintendent of the girls' reformatory at Geneva gets $2,000 a year and living, equal to 20,000 bushels of corn. This superintendent has a matron, bookkeeper and family manager, at $800 each, to assist him in managing sixty-seven girls. There are sinecures which can be dispensed with very easily. As an illustration: It being whispered around the capitol that Attorney General Smyth is having trouble to find a lawyer that suits him, who will take entire charge of the office and do all the work, for $1,800 which the law allows per annum to a deputy attorney general. For years the work of our attorney general's office has been performed by deputies, while