

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

E. ROSEWATER, Editor. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION...

OFFICES: Omaha: The Bee Building, South Omaha: City Hall Building, Twenty-fifth and N streets...

CORRESPONDENCE: Communications relating to news and editorial matter should be addressed: Omaha, Bee, Editorial Department.

BUSINESS LETTERS: Business letters and remittances should be addressed: The Bee Publishing Company, Omaha.

REMITTANCES: Remit by draft, express or postal order, payable to The Bee Publishing Company...

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION: State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss. George B. Tschuck, Secretary of The Bee Publishing Company...

Net daily average, 30,447. Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 1st day of December, A. D. 1900.

Are we to have a contest between the Sunday theater and the Sunday sermon as a drawing card?

The Nebraska legislature convenes this time on New Year's day. An early start should mean an early adjournment.

Several statesmen would like to get into the Nebraska senatorial game, but find themselves left without cards by the dealer.

By the time South Omaha's charter gets down to Lincoln it is likely to appear in duplicate or triplicate and each copy different.

It should not be inferred from the fact that the Boers are to be confined on the race track at Pretoria that they will lead fast lives there.

Mr. Bryan has already begun to break his rule about refusing to be interviewed on questions raised by current events. The interview habit will not down.

Almost a week of congress has gone by and Senator Pettigrew has only introduced one resolution of inquiry. The late election must have taken the senator's breath away.

Christmas presents payable on the installment plan is the tempting bait offered by advertisers in several eastern newspapers. But beware of the gift with a string tied to it.

In all the cry for relief for the Nebraska supreme court the voices of the supreme court judges are inaudible. The judges do not appear to be disturbed whether relieved or not.

Santo Domingo wants a reciprocity treaty with the United States. If it is negotiated the president should insist on the exclusion of that country's most prolific product—revolutions.

The auditorium promoters should find some wealthy benefactor to signalize the incoming of the new year with a big jump in the auditorium fund. Don't every one speak at once.

Mr. Bryan says he has heard nothing of the Indiana movement to form a new party. Possibly the promoters are keeping the affair quiet for fear the Nebraska man will want to join it.

Iowa sheriffs are combining to ask the legislature to authorize an increase in their fee bills. The fees of Nebraska sheriffs could be cut down to the Iowa scale without any hardship on litigants who have to pay them.

A number of fusion state officials have reached the conclusion that with their exit from office next month they have nothing more to expect in politics. They should be given credit for reading the message of the election correctly.

Portugal and Holland are at odds and the ministers of the two countries have taken their playthings and gone home. A war between these two countries is as much to be feared as a duel with brickbats at a half mile range.

As a general thing Americans are not considered slow, but congress on its opening day was several laps behind the English Parliament in sensational features. Unless America is to fall behind Texas should make haste to return Joe Bailey to Washington.

General Funston is back at his old tricks, swimming rivers to get at the rebels in the Philippines. General Wheeler should at once climb a tree, just to show the country that he is not falling behind in the race simply because he is on the retired list.

At the fall end of his term Treasurer Meserve has reduced the amount of school money lying idle by half, the uninvested portion now amounting to \$105,968. There may be some good reason why this should not have been done long ago, but it is not apparent to outsiders and the treasurer has never made it known.

DISCUSSING THE TREATY.

Discussion in the senate of the Hay-Pauncefote treaty has thus far given no certain indication as to the probable fate of that convention. It is assumed that there will be no action on the canal bill until the treaty is disposed of, its ratification being generally regarded as a necessary preliminary to legislation authorizing the construction of an inter-oceanic canal.

Senator Morgan of Alabama, who thinks it is competent for the United States to proceed with the building of the canal regardless of the treaty or of Great Britain's wishes in the matter, yet said in his speech on the subject Thursday that he had no doubt that if the United States should proceed with the construction of the canal without first taking steps to secure the neutrality of the waterway Great Britain would be grievously offended.

We do not think there need be any apprehension on this score. Great Britain would not go to war with the United States for such an offense. But this country cannot afford to disregard an international duty and obligation, even though it may do so with impunity. We have a treaty with Great Britain which our government has admitted is in full force and effect. That treaty—the Clayton-Bulwer convention of 1850—provides for joint neutralization of a canal and forbids exclusive control, together with fortification and colonization.

The treaty before the senate modifies the terms of the convention of half a century ago. It yields the prohibition of control, but retains the theory of joint guarantee of neutrality on the lines of the Suez canal internationalization. If the new treaty falls international duty will require that the United States observe the terms of the old treaty until such time as it could be abrogated and it is not to be doubted that President McKinley would veto a canal bill that disregarded our international obligation.

It is not probable that the British government can be induced to make any further concession. It may be regarded as absolutely certain that it will not yield on the question of the neutralization of the proposed canal and in this it will have the moral support of the commercial nations of the world. The principle established in regard to the Suez canal is universally accepted as the correct principle and Great Britain, in insisting upon it in connection with the Nicaragua canal, will have all the commercial nations on her side.

One of the tasks devolving upon the legislature, which concerns Omaha particularly, consists in straightening out the jumble created in the legislation governing paving by reason of the numerous court decisions which have given new interpretations, playing havoc with the old and established practices.

It is if possible, and no good reason exists why it should not be possible, to correct the errors which have led to the vacation of so many paving tax levies. It should by all means be done. If there is a way further than that to frame the law so that the courts will give the public the benefit of legal technicalities rather than the tax-shirking property owners trying to evade their obligations, that, too, should be done.

In justice to the taxpaying public at large, the validity of these levies should be upheld irrespective of minor technicalities, unless it is shown that actual fraud has played a part, or gross injustice would ensue. In most cases, however, where paving assessments have been invalidated there has been neither fraud nor injustice, and the only way to secure exact justice is to reimpose the levy and enforce collection. Such assessments have been validated by legislative action over and over in other states whose examples should be followed by the coming legislature.

READY FOR STATEHOOD. The report of the governor of Oklahoma shows that the territory is prepared for statehood. It is in a highly prosperous condition and is steadily growing in population and in the development of its resources. Really no state or territory can show a record of growth in the past decade that compares with that of Oklahoma. The territory has a population of 308,245, which is more than eight of the states have, and this population is of the progressive kind, which goes in for public schools and banks and is industrious and thrifty.

The governor says there is an excellent public school system and that there are five higher institutions of learning which are not excelled by the similar institutions of any state. The assessed valuation of property is nearly \$50,000,000.

Its claims to statehood. The eight states in the union today with a smaller population than Oklahoma are: Delaware, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Vermont and Nevada. Most of the states were admitted with a smaller population than that territory now has.

THE ARMY BILL. The demerits of the house of representatives, with three honorable exceptions, voted against giving the government the military force required to suppress insurrection in the Philippines and establish law, order and good government in the islands. They did this upon the specious plea that the army bill provides for the permanent increase of the standing army. One republican, whom it is safe to assume does not represent the sentiment of a majority of his constituents, voted with the democrats.

In proposing an increase of the regular army the republicans are simply providing for existing conditions, which are believed to require such a force as the army bill authorizes. A succeeding congress may reduce the standing army to its former dimensions if circumstances shall warrant it being done or public sentiment demands it. There is consequently nothing in the talk about the increase being permanent. Republicans generally are as much opposed to a large standing army as are democrats, and it is not to be doubted that if before the end of the next congress the conditions shall be such as not to require so large a force as at present it will be reduced.

As to the professed fear of so-called militarism, it is so manifestly ridiculous that no one of ordinary intelligence will give it serious consideration. Seventy-six millions of people are in no danger from an army of 100,000, four-fifths of which will be employed thousands of miles away on the other side of the globe.

The determination of a republican administration and congress to suppress the insurrection in Luzon has been approved by a large majority of the people. As was said by Representative Hull in closing the general debate on the army bill, the president under the treaty of Paris must assert the sovereignty of the United States over the Philippine islands. "As long as the islands were ours, we must enforce our authority or disgrace ourselves in the eyes of the world." There is a responsibility and an obligation to be met and the republican party, having received the mandate of the nation, will not hesitate to provide the means for properly and fully meeting them.

A question which the taxpayers of Omaha should ask themselves is whether the experiment of a tax commissioner in its present form has proved a success. The original idea of creating a special tax department for the separate assessment of property for city taxation was that a more equitable valuation would be secured and property listed that had previously escaped taxation altogether.

The great complaint had always been that real estate was bearing almost the entire burden. Has the burden on real estate been lightened by the tax commissioner system? Have the inequalities of assessment been abolished? Is tax evasion and tax shirking any less prevalent than before? Satisfactory answers to the questions would afford desirable light upon a dubious subject.

An interesting contention is in progress in the Central Labor union in which the domination of the socialists has been manifested by proposing an amendment to the constitution of the American Federation of Labor making one of the objects of the organization the abolition of the wage system. This resolution has given the Omaha trade unionists the reputation throughout the country of being committed to socialistic schemes, whereas we are sure that nowhere in the country are the workmen better satisfied with conditions than they are right here in Omaha, where they are sharing in the general prosperity and making strides forward right along.

If we are to have competition between the school board and the city council in making tax levies for city and school district the competition ought to be to keep the levy of each at the lowest possible point consistent with efficient administration, rather than for the one to get ahead of the other. When two independent authorities are empowered to fix the tax rate the taxpayers usually get the worst of it.

The Indian supply depot at Chicago has been developed into a great institution, handling hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of goods every year. Omaha is better located than Chicago for the purpose of distributing Indian supplies and there is no good reason why the Omaha supply depot cannot be built up in the same way with equal benefits to the local jobbers and manufacturers.

We Can't Lose 'Em. Indianapolis Press. Nebraska's dream has been rudely shattered. The populists are not going to emigrate.

Our Wind-Swept Bah. Baltimore American. Guam wants a little of our overflow property. And whatever else may be said for us, it cannot be charged that we ever hesitated to give to our distressed neighbors out of our abundance. The relief vessel is a peculiarly American institution.

Conclusion Well Founded. Springfield Republican. Reports from Nebraska have it that the populists there are planning an extended migration to the Indian Territory. Some of the state officials retired at the recent election are prominent in the movement—evidently being convinced that Nebraska has returned to the republican fold to stay.

Keen Sense of Duty. Kansas City Star. It was noted at the opening of congress that the offerings of flowers were mostly on the republican side of the house. This incident does not argue, necessarily, a lack of friendly regard for the democratic members or a disposition to slight them. The more reasonable interpretation is that the failure to decorate their desks was prompted by a sense of delicacy and by the

thought that flowers under certain circumstances may be associated with bereavement and mourning as well as with victory and rejoicing. The condition of the democracy at this time is really such as to render floral attentions somewhat embarrassing.

Senator Charles A. Towne. This much at least may be said of Charles A. Towne's appointment to the United States senate: However objectionable his political views may be to republicans, it can be conceded that he is a man of ability. Hence, for a few weeks, there will be a break in the record Minnesota is acquiring for sending able men to Washington.

Election of Senators. J. Sterling Morton's Conservative. The conservative hopes that the election of the senators by the next legislature may be speedily and satisfactorily accomplished. There is no doubt that the corrupt bargain or personal pique postponing results, as in the legislature two years ago—when the lamented Hayward was elected. The state needs and demands the selection of two practical, reputable and able men to represent its commercial interests and the dignity and character of its public life.

A Revolutionary Heritage. Philadelphia Record. The government has shown a warrantable liberality in the expenditure of money to turn the battlefields of the civil war into public grounds set apart and beautified in honor of the nation's dead. It would be judicious to use this use of the public funds to pass Representative McKeen's bill appropriating \$300,000 to establish a military park at Valley Forge. The whole country has a revolutionary pride and a revolutionary heritage in that hallowed ground.

Dealing with the Philippines. San Francisco Chronicle. As soon as the Tagals cease to engage in hostile acts against the government and the Philippines permit the free import and export of their goods, the conclusion reached in the case of Porto Rico will be applied to our islands in the Pacific as well as those in the Atlantic. The creation of our institutions will not permit the making of a separate colony, but the territory and fowl of the other. No matter what the outcome may be—even if it is only good red herring—we will be sure as a people to insist on a square deal all around.

IRRIGATION AND FORESTRY. Twin Problems the Government Should Solve Together. Minneapolis Times.

In his annual report the secretary of the interior urges the importance of governmental aid in the reclamation of arid lands and in the preservation of forests. He does not go further in the line of practical suggestion than to recommend that a commission composed of experts now engaged in the examination of water and forest resources be formed to put the data acquired in connection with irrigation, reclamation and forestry into a form accessible to the public. The last congress appropriated \$100,000 to be used by the geological survey in its study of the problem of irrigation and the secretary advises a further increase.

If irrigation is to be prosecuted on a large scale in the west, the participation of the federal government in the work seems unavoidable. Private enterprise may reclaim comparatively small tracts of land, but it is not likely to take on the large-scale work of reclamation and forest preservation and the solution of one carries with it the consideration of the other. The co-operation of state and national governments in reclamation and forestry is a practical proposition now in progress in the most important.

A BRILLIANT RECORD. Deserved Compliment to a Pains-taking, Progressive Public Officer. Boston Transcript.

It was a gratifying evidence of harmony in the cabinet to find that the president should ask all the members of the present cabinet to remain in their several positions and continue to give him the benefit of their counsel. It has been hinted that Secretary Wilson in the agricultural department might wish to retire, but the president has hardly but we trust the hint is without authority or significance, for the reason that it would hardly be possible to fill his place as satisfactorily as he has been filling it, and the giving his colleagues due credit for their services is a duty which he has hardly but we trust the hint is without authority or significance, for the reason that it would hardly be possible to fill his place as satisfactorily as he has been filling it, and the giving his colleagues due credit for their services is a duty which he has hardly but we trust the hint is without authority or significance, for the reason that it would hardly be possible to fill his place as satisfactorily as he has been filling it, and the giving his colleagues due credit for their services is a duty which he has hardly but we trust the hint is without authority or significance, for the reason that it would 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