

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

E. ROSEWATER, Editor. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION. Daily Bee (without Sunday), One Year, \$5.00...

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THE TREATY AMENDED.

By a vote of 65 to 17 the United States senate adopted the amendment to the Hay-Pauncefote treaty offered by the committee on foreign relations, which provides that the United States may take such measures as it may find necessary for securing, by its own forces, the defense of the United States and the maintenance of public order. The language of the amendment is disingenuously vague. When it was under consideration a few days ago, in executive session, Senator Lodge, who is in charge of the treaty, expressed the opinion that it gave no authority to fortify the proposed canal permanently, but he believed that under the treaty, if amended as desired by the foreign relations committee, there would be ample provision for the defense of the canal by the American people. Doubtless the real object of the amendment is to reserve to the United States the right to close the canal to the warships of its enemies. Several other amendments were offered, intended to enlarge the privileges of the United States, some of which will probably be adopted.

As the vote by which the committee's amendment was adopted exceeded the two-thirds majority necessary to ratify the treaty, ratification seems to be assured. What, in that event, will be the action of the British government? Will it decline to accept the amended treaty, or will it, in the interest of international friendship, yield? The tone of the London press indicates that the government will not accept the changed treaty, and it must be presumed that the unqualified declarations of the leading newspapers were not made without a pretty accurate knowledge of the sentiment in official quarters. The rejection of the Hay-Pauncefote treaty by Great Britain would leave the Clayton-Bulwer convention in full force, since it has been admitted by the administration to be binding on this country. Moreover, this admission commits the administration against taking any step, in the way of canal building, in contravention of the old treaty, so that if the senate, after ratifying the pending treaty, should pass the Nicaragua canal bill, the president would very likely deem it to be his duty to veto that measure. This would mean the postponement for a year or two, and possibly longer, the beginning of work on an isthmian canal.

It is possible that the British government will deem it expedient to do nothing and await events, rather than enter into a controversy that might menace the good relations of the two countries. One of the London papers suggests that if the United States should determine to have a military canal and Nicaragua should consent, then it will be open to Great Britain alone or in conjunction with other maritime states to consider whether another canal, not under the control of the United States, may not be worth making. It is by no means improbable that if this country should go ahead and build a canal under military control, and it should be found to give us a decided military advantage, that the world would open the Panama route as checkmate. And to this we could make no valid objection.

Further action on this very important matter is awaited with great interest, but in any event we do not think there is likely to be any serious disturbance of friendly relations.

READY FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

A disposition has been shown by some of the powers to question whether Li Hung Chang and Prince Ching, the Chinese peace plenipotentiaries, had proper authority to carry on negotiations. Doubt on this score has been removed by the reception of the documents authorizing them to act and they have notified the foreign ministers that they are ready to proceed as soon as the latter desire.

It appears that the British government is the only one now obstructing negotiations, the latest advices being that its minister has not yet been instructed to sign the joint agreement. It seems that the government desires some amendment to the terms, understood to be merely as to form and not of material importance, but its halting course suggests that there is more than this, that there is an ulterior purpose which it hesitates to disclose.

Meanwhile the advices from the American minister, Mr. Conger, are reassuring. He is reported as being of the opinion that China will promptly accept the terms imposed by the powers and that it is able to comply with most of them before spring. This gives an improved aspect to the situation and promises a much earlier settlement than had been generally expected. Undoubtedly our minister is as well informed in regard to conditions as any of the foreign representatives and perhaps his opportunities for learning the feeling of the Chinese plenipotentiaries are better than those of some of the ministers.

REVERSES TO BRITISH ARMS.

Lord Kitchener is having some disagreeable experience at the outset of his campaign in South Africa and there is danger that the prestige he won as a commander in the Soudan will be impaired. The recent successes of the Boers and especially the one last reported, in which the British suffered a considerable loss, including four officers, not only show unexpected activity on the part of the burghers, but appear to indicate a lack of generalship on the British side. With an army more than twenty times as numerous as the estimated forces of the Boers, it is most remarkable that the British should have experienced the recent reverses, which certainly reflect unfavorably upon Kitchener's management of the campaign.

The fact that all the available mounted infantry at the military camp has been ordered to South Africa shows that the government realizes that there is still much work to be done before the Boers are subjugated, while at the same time demonstrating its determination to go on in pursuit of that end. The tenacity of the Boers, their extraordinary mobility and the generalship they display, all under the most adverse conditions, are indeed wonderful, but however much those qualities may be admired the certainty that they are engaged in a hopeless struggle, without the least prospect of assistance from any source, compels the thought that it would be the part of wisdom for them to lay down their arms and stop the work of bloodshed and devastation.

THE CHRISTMAS BEE.

The Bee next Sunday will be a special Christmas number, in every way up to the high standard already set for holiday issues of this paper.

The Illustrated Bee in particular, which goes to every subscriber and patron, is a veritable Yuletide magazine, replete with appropriate features for every member of the household. The beautiful colored cover presents a design in three characteristic panels illustrative of the occasion, made by the best artists and reproduced by the best workmanship. In addition is an ivory frontispiece grouping photographic views of the Christmas carols with which the day will be celebrated right here in Omaha churches.

The special illustrated Christmas articles cover a wide range, but most of them with direct local application. "Hanging in the Christmas Morn" has been the song of the Trinity churches ever since the belfry was completed—how it is done is told by pen and camera. "Cooking the Christmas Dinner" is another theme of savory interest, especially when, as in this instance, it is illustrated by snapshots at the chefs in Omaha's principal hostesses. More general is a group of striking churches in progressive Nebraska towns in which Christmas services will be held, and an interesting story explaining how Christmas toys are made, with pictures of the process. The Bee's staff photographer describes the work of news photography, with apt references to the pictures made for The Bee that have made hits all over the country. Carpenter's letter, as usual, is full of instructive material, spread out in the most attractive form, while Christmas stories, Christmas poems and the Christmas drama pervade the entire number. Watch for the forthcoming Christmas Bee, Sunday.

OTHER LANDS THAN OURS.

The Russian naval authorities are building what seems to be intended for a destroyer of the craft known as torpedo boat destroyers. At all events, she is to be a destroyer of quite abnormal proportions. She is to have a displacement of 1,000 tons and a speed of twenty-five knots. In a seaway she will be able to overhaul a flotilla of destroyers, such a tenth her size and much more fragile. She will have a turtle-back deck of two inches of Krupp armor rising from below her water line and completely protecting her vital organs by any light gun. Whereas an ordinary destroyer carries only a few twelve and three-pounders, this Russian ship has six 4.7 weapons, besides eight three-pounders and a couple of Maxims and she is fitted with no less than six torpedo tubes, all of them, however, above water. She will be able to discharge torpedoes ahead or astern and can use four tubes on a broadside. Even the Elswick constructors have never given a man-of-war, twice or three times her size, more than five tubes. The Novic, therefore, will be incomparably the most powerful of any vessel in her class if she fulfills expectations and there does not appear to be any reason why she should not. Particular care has been taken to give her good seagoing qualities. Several other vessels upon similar lines are to be built at St. Petersburg.

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SEED TIME IN CONGRESS.

Preparations for the Annual Distribution Now On. Philadelphia Ledger. The usual bill is before congress to appropriate a sum of money with which to purchase garden and flower seeds for free distribution to some of the constituents of the senators and representatives. The government annually gives away 24,000,000 packets of garden seeds and tens of thousands of dollars' worth of flower and field seeds. The specifications call for 24,000 pounds of lettuce, onion, cucumber, beet, radish and melon seeds and 15,000 bushels of corn, peas and beans, besides many thousand pounds and bushels of other products, some of which have a claim to value for food or ornamental purposes, and much of which can only be rightfully designated as trash. The money expended annually in seeds for distribution is thrown away as far as agricultural interests are concerned. This has been acknowledged by the Department of Agriculture and the heads thereof have regularly for several years back recommended that the distribution be discontinued. Congress has as regularly ignored the recommendations, for the seeds, paid for out of public funds, constitute in many instances a cheap but effective form of bribery, which some of the members are loath to part with. The seeds are sold by Burpee Landreth, secretary of the Wholesale Seedsmen's league, has issued a circular letter urging the members to work up public sentiment against the continuance of the practice, and to demand a more general distribution of seeds. He says: "If the government established a seed shop and sold its seeds it would certainly be a most active competitor in the seed business, but it does worse—it gives them away. It has established a seed shop larger, with two or three exceptions, than any of the fifty or sixty large seed establishments in this country. It runs against their most active competition. "For years the seed trade has been the only business that has been protected by the government, and the competition is annually getting worse, and can only have the one effect of driving some reputable dealers out of the business, and yet the government is not prepared to foster a specially selected business by dividing up among various firms the sum of ten million of government dollars annually (slip subsidy bill). The government takes care not to antagonize any other interest in the seed business, yet it might just as well present to the farmers' wives baking soda or soap or to the coal miner powder or dynamite."

Hill as a Leader.

Of all the grotesque propositions that were ever sprung in the history of American politics, the reorganization of the democracy, with Hill at the head of the party, would easily take the lead. With such a layout the republicans would have an easier walkway than they had this year, and the certainty of such a result,

POLITICAL DRIFT.

Eugene Debs has reached the solemn conclusion that he was counted out. Buffalo, N. Y., is so well satisfied with voting machines that it will use them in all polls in the future. Representative Union is rolling to the front as one of the strong men of the Illinois legislature. Indiana's kindly feeling toward voting machines encountered a frost when the price was found to be \$500 each. For the third time in a year Governor Pinckney of Michigan has a legislature on his hands. And yet he is not an ardent admirer of strenuous life. There are eighteen organized movements in New York arrayed against Tammany. As each body thinks it is the rightful heir to the leaves and fishes, Tammany has no cause for alarm. Senator Platt of New York has abandoned his state police scheme, out of respect to aroused public sentiment. Municipal home rule is still a firmly-rooted American institution. David Bennett Hill is circulating around Washington conferring with some fragments of his party. Mr. Hill frowns upon the proposition to reorganize immediately. Hasty jumping on the corpse he fears would hurt the feelings of the mourners. The esteemed Richard Croker realizes at his winter residence in England the hardship of not having a pull with the government. He is obliged to pay an income tax on \$25,000 a year. This will necessitate another Tenderloin "come-down," which will make the red lights blink. The republicans of Washington elected twenty-six of the thirty-four members of their state senate and sixty of the eighty members of the house of representatives. Thus they will have a two-thirds vote in each house, and will be able to pass any bill over the veto of the opposition governor. Senator Vest, who has long been a leader on the democratic side of the chamber, returns to Washington greatly improved in health. He was barely able to get about at the last session and accordingly an active contest was quietly developing in Missouri over the inheritance of his political estate. Without qualification or reservation, the Philadelphia Press admits that the Quaker is both in the army and the "foulness" of government. It urges a union of all decent people at the spring campaign to "put their condemnation upon official blackmail, police terrorism and official municipal administration Philadelphia has ever been afflicted with."

THE VANDERBILT ESTATE.

Schedule of the Property Filed in a New York Court. The schedule of the personal estate of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt were filed with the surrogate at New York yesterday. It appears from these that he left personal property of an appraised value at the time of his death, in September of last year, of \$2,959,000. The present value is about \$3,500,000. This vast property is made up of all sorts of stocks and bonds—railroad, to a large extent, naturally, but with a large mixture of bank, coal company, street traction, hotel, club and other shares. It is noted that the present value is about the controlling power in the New York Central Railroad company he held at the time of his death only 20,000 shares of Central stock, out of a present total of 1,150,000 shares. His holdings of New York and Harlem stock were 40,468 shares, of a present market value of \$4,498,250. Based upon current market values his other important holdings were: New York Central-Lake Shore collateral trust bonds, \$4,825,000; similar Michigan Central bonds, \$4,825,000; Beech Creek railway stock, \$2,000,000; West Shore railway 4s, \$1,150,000; Beech Creek railway 4s, \$1,090,000; Chicago & Northwestern railway stock, 16,256 shares, \$3,363,750; Wagner Palace Car company shares, 20,000, \$5,400,000; 7,507 shares of the New York, New Haven & Hartford company, \$1,513,470; 33,500 shares of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis company, \$2,227,750; 32,000 shares of the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad, \$1,235,813, and 1,372 shares of the Union Trust company, \$1,920,000. There are all the appraised holdings, aggregating over \$20,000,000 in value, aside from a cash item of \$1,213,571. Other items amounting to over \$100,000 and less than \$1,000,000 are quite too numerous to mention. It is calculated that the income from his personal property averaged less than 4 per cent, or less than \$2,000,000 annually. He carried only \$25,000 insurance on his life and for a man in his circumstances even this was a surprising amount. Mr. Vanderbilt's real estate is roughly estimated as worth \$20,000,000, bringing the total estate up to about \$72,000,000. Henry Clews writes in his book, "Twenty-eight Years in Wall Street," that Cornelius Vanderbilt's share in the estate of his father, William H. Vanderbilt, amounted to about \$2,000,000, the share of William K. Vanderbilt being the same. That was in 1885.

CHAFF THAT CHEERS.

Washington Star—"I suppose there is a great deal of suspense in a political career," answered Senator Sorghum. "But the suspense is not in the election of the voters." Detroit Journal: Here the king gave command for the instant decapitation of thirty conspirators. "And yet," observed his majesty, sadly, "there are those who insist that kincraft involves little or no headwork!" Indianapolis Press: "But, my you must admit that there is a necessity in the evaluation of the race." "Oh, if it comes to the question of the elevation of humanity," the congressman is as good as any of them in that line." Cleveland Plaindealer: "Oh, well, you pride, I don't care for your kisses." "You neither send me any over the telephone," said Mrs. Peppery. "Send 'em over the telephone." Detroit Free Press: "I shall order a model luncheon," said Tenapot, as he scanned the bill of fare. "What is your idea of a modest luncheon?" asked Burting. "Well, for example, I shall have dressed tomatoes." Brooklyn Life: "Punter—I tell you, doctor, old Castburn is business clear through." "How do you know that?" "The contrary, I know him to be a most charitable man. Punter—May be, but he would examine the balance sheet of all the directors, and see bishops and Providence in the chair." Indianapolis Journal: "We had a professional parlor oracle at our party." "He told me that the guests in the room were entertained by the guests." "They entertained her. She says nine out of ten asked her what we were going to give them to eat."

THE NEWSBOY.

Madeline S. Bridges. God's grace be with you, fearless elf! The city streets are strange and wild, And yet, quite by your dauntless self, You tell the tale of all that's new and old. The sea-breeze dream is in your eyes, Your blue cheek shows health's ruddy glow, And where the deepest crimson lies A baby dimple comes and goes. I watch you as you dive and dart Over the roadway's busy throng, Hanging on car and dodging cart— A gambol with a cherub's face, A gambol with a cherub's soul! 'Twas such a little time ago You balanced the angel's sweet control, Earth's fitful, wearying life to know, What is there in the years for you? The place of master or of slave? Good to attain, or to be true? Perchance, a tiny wasteful grave. Oh, small strong soul, yet life seems gay, You balance the angel's sweet control, Earth's fitful, wearying life to know, "God's grace be with you, fearless elf!"

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Carrying the Postoffice to the Homes of the Farmers. Portland Oregonian. The annual report of the postmaster general is always an interesting document. It reports that a few days ago he is to be expected to be the subject of a study which will be studied with additional interest, since it indicates a still closer relation between the people and this most democratic of all the departments of governmental service. It is safe to assume that a very large number of the 21,000,000 people scattered over 100,000 square miles of territory to whose doors it is the task of the government to arrange for free rural mail delivery, are still waiting for the day when the extent of wishing ardently for its early realization. We are assured that one-sixth of this vast number of people will be served by the government's carriers by the close of the present fiscal year, six months hence. The task is a most arduous one, and the forces that have addressed themselves to its completion are stupendous also. A little study of the matter in detail, as presented in this report, will enable the people to endorse the statement that rural free mail delivery is the greatest boon that the government has ever undertaken and as ultimately certain to be realized.

SEED TIME IN CONGRESS.

Preparations for the Annual Distribution Now On. Philadelphia Ledger. The usual bill is before congress to appropriate a sum of money with which to purchase garden and flower seeds for free distribution to some of the constituents of the senators and representatives. The government annually gives away 24,000,000 packets of garden seeds and tens of thousands of dollars' worth of flower and field seeds. The specifications call for 24,000 pounds of lettuce, onion, cucumber, beet, radish and melon seeds and 15,000 bushels of corn, peas and beans, besides many thousand pounds and bushels of other products, some of which have a claim to value for food or ornamental purposes, and much of which can only be rightfully designated as trash. The money expended annually in seeds for distribution is thrown away as far as agricultural interests are concerned. This has been acknowledged by the Department of Agriculture and the heads thereof have regularly for several years back recommended that the distribution be discontinued. Congress has as regularly ignored the recommendations, for the seeds, paid for out of public funds, constitute in many instances a cheap but effective form of bribery, which some of the members are loath to part with. The seeds are sold by Burpee Landreth, secretary of the Wholesale Seedsmen's league, has issued a circular letter urging the members to work up public sentiment against the continuance of the practice, and to demand a more general distribution of seeds. He says: "If the government established a seed shop and sold its seeds it would certainly be a most active competitor in the seed business, but it does worse—it gives them away. It has established a seed shop larger, with two or three exceptions, than any of the fifty or sixty large seed establishments in this country. It runs against their most active competition. "For years the seed trade has been the only business that has been protected by the government, and the competition is annually getting worse, and can only have the one effect of driving some reputable dealers out of the business, and yet the government is not prepared to foster a specially selected business by dividing up among various firms the sum of ten million of government dollars annually (slip subsidy bill). The government takes care not to antagonize any other interest in the seed business, yet it might just as well present to the farmers' wives baking soda or soap or to the coal miner powder or dynamite."

Hill as a Leader.

Of all the grotesque propositions that were ever sprung in the history of American politics, the reorganization of the democracy, with Hill at the head of the party, would easily take the lead. With such a layout the republicans would have an easier walkway than they had this year, and the certainty of such a result,

POLITICAL DRIFT.

Eugene Debs has reached the solemn conclusion that he was counted out. Buffalo, N. Y., is so well satisfied with voting machines that it will use them in all polls in the future. Representative Union is rolling to the front as one of the strong men of the Illinois legislature. Indiana's kindly feeling toward voting machines encountered a frost when the price was found to be \$500 each. For the third time in a year Governor Pinckney of Michigan has a legislature on his hands. And yet he is not an ardent admirer of strenuous life. There are eighteen organized movements in New York arrayed against Tammany. As each body thinks it is the rightful heir to the leaves and fishes, Tammany has no cause for alarm. Senator Platt of New York has abandoned his state police scheme, out of respect to aroused public sentiment. Municipal home rule is still a firmly-rooted American institution. David Bennett Hill is circulating around Washington conferring with some fragments of his party. Mr. Hill frowns upon the proposition to reorganize immediately. Hasty jumping on the corpse he fears would hurt the feelings of