

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION: Daily Bee (without Sunday), One Year, \$6.00; Daily Bee and Sunday, One Year, \$7.00; Illustrated Bee, One Year, \$8.00; Sunday Bee, One Year, \$2.00; Saturday Bee, One Year, \$1.00; Twentieth Century Farm, One Year, \$1.00.

DELIVERED BY CARRIER: Daily Bee (without Sunday), per copy, 10c; Daily Bee (with Sunday), per copy, 15c; Sunday Bee (with Sunday), per copy, 15c; Evening Bee (without Sunday), per week, 30c; Evening Bee (with Sunday), per week, 35c.

ADVERTISING: Omaha—The Bee Building, South Omaha—City Hall Building, Twelfth and M Streets, Council Bluffs—10 Pearl Street, Chicago—190 Unity Building, New York—Temple Court, Washington—40 Fourteenth Street.

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION: State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss: I, George B. Tschuck, secretary of The Bee Publishing Company, being duly sworn, depose that the actual number of full and complete copies of The Daily, Morning, Evening and Sunday Bee printed during the month of December, 1901, was as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Circulation category and Number of copies. Includes categories like 'Total', 'Net total sales', and 'Net daily average'.

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 8th day of December, A. D. 1901. M. B. HUNGATE, Notary Public.

Omaha seems to be again afflicted with the malady of too much police judge.

It is up to the Board of County Commissioners for the next move for the abolition of pay roll sinecures.

Eleventh hour jobs presented to a body like the county board in its expiring moments will bear watching.

We feel confident Andrew Jackson could prove an alibi if he were alive on many of the doctrines credited to him by present-day democracy.

After all its activity before the Board of Review the Real Estate exchange must not go to sleep when the Board of Equalization gets down to work.

The promoters of the suburban electric railroad system have struck another snag and the project will probably have to be postponed until the flowers bloom in the spring.

The canal race is off in congress, with the Nicaragua route in the lead, going around the first turn. People who desire only to see the finish need be in no hurry to buy tickets.

Ohio is consoling itself that if it has been forced to take a seat back of Iowa at Washington it has a second mortgage on several of Iowa's favorites by virtue of their having been born in the Buckeye state.

That farce comedy in the police court ought to have been good enough to have justified charging admission at the door, the proceeds to be used to fill the hole created by the vanishing lines under the Gordon era.

A bill has been introduced in the New York legislature making it a misdemeanor for women to flirt in public places. What are the parks and boulevards for, anyhow, if flirting is not to be permitted?

A Chicago professor has delivered himself of the opinion that it is impossible to make a physician out of a woman. By the time the women get through with him the professor will need the services of a nerve specialist.

If the tourist committee of the city council could manage to bring home a market house the people would feel grateful for its efforts, but the best that can be hoped for is a bundle of photographs of ideal market houses.

Perry Belmont has discovered that it is one thing to beat the Tammany machine out for the democratic congressional nomination and another to secure an election. Tammany never worries about the defeat of men who refuse to knuckle under.

The governor of Kentucky announces in his annual message that peace has been restored in that state. This may be true, but no wise Kentuckian is likely to let his hand stray too far from the vicinity of his hip pocket with or without the governor's assurance.

Oriental correspondents fall to state whether the emperor of China rode on a pass when he took his first trip on a railway in returning to Peking. If the conductor made him pay fare he will probably know better after he gets a few more lessons from the "foreign devils."

Railroad men appear to have turned a trick on the packing house managers who have secured reduced rates from the roads. By freely confessing that rates have been cut, or, in other words, that special rates have been granted, the railroad managers have absolved themselves from liability under the law and left the packers to hold the sack.

PUBLICITY AND SUPERVISION.

Public sentiment is rapidly crystallizing in favor of the supervision of corporations engaged in interstate commerce. The demand of the hour is for the fullest publicity in corporate management, and especially in the management of colossal corporations, whether organized as trusts or under cooperative control.

The governors of several of the great states in which trusts have been entrenched in power, notably those of New York, Massachusetts and Ohio, advocate extensive publicity and supervision as paramount safeguards against the worst abuses of the trust system. Governor Nash of Ohio not only reiterates the demand embodied in his inaugural address, delivered two years ago, in which he called attention to the necessity for corporate supervision, but supplements it by the following succinct declaration:

The publicity which would be given by annual reports, made through some competent and responsible officer, could not, by any possibility, injure a really worthy and sound corporation, but would protect the public against unworthy and failing corporations.

As matters now stand, the secretary of state knows nothing about a corporation after it leaves his office with a charter from the state. He cannot even tell how many of the 40,000 or more corporations chartered by the state during the last fifty years are now dead, nor how many are still living. The state creates the thing, authorizes it to do business, sends it out into the cold, and knows nothing more about it forever. It is high time that a change should be made.

The demand for publicity is no longer confined to the press and public officers holding executive position in the state and nation. It has at last dawned upon the corporation managers and trust attorneys that the well-defined business sentiment against everything resembling a blind pool and in favor of the fullest publicity in corporate management must be respected and complied with.

Mr. James B. Dill, is one of the leading trust attorneys of New Jersey, has ventured to make the concession that stockholders are entitled to the fullest confidence of the corporation, which should be required to make periodic reports or exhibits showing first the amount of capital issued, amount paid thereon, distinguishing the amount of capital paid up in money and the amount paid up otherwise than in money, and the arrears, if any, of calls due; the amount of debts due by the company, distinguishing the amount of mortgages and lien charges upon the general assets of the company, the amount of debts due the company after making proper deduction for debts considered to be bad or doubtful; the actual amount of surplus, if any, and the nature and mode in which it is used and invested; lastly, the amount by which the gross value of the assets of the company has been increased since the last balance in consequence of any increase in the values of real or personal property belonging to the company.

This demand for corporate accountability to its stockholders is only the first step in the direction of publicity that will be found essential for the protection of the country from the abuses to which corporate overcapitalization—whether fictitious or based on estimated future profits—has exposed investors in corporate and trust securities. Publicity should not merely be required for the benefit of the stockholders, but for the benefit of all people. The inflation of corporate securities is recognized by all prudent financiers as the most eminent danger with which the country is now confronted.

In Pennsylvania, for example, the increase of corporate capital during the month of December, 1901, aggregated over \$30,000,000. Many of the corporations of that state have doubled their capital stock, but it is doubtful whether they could make a satisfactory exhibit of increased assets that would justify the apparent excessive issues of stocks and bonds. What is true of Pennsylvania is doubtless also true of almost every other state in the country.

Unless this stupendous inflation of corporate capital is arrested by rigid supervision and publicity the inevitable outcome must be a financial panic more disastrous than any that this country has yet experienced.

ANOTHER ENDLESS CHAIN.

Congressman Overstreet of Indiana is pressing his bill that makes it mandatory upon the secretary of the treasury to exchange gold for silver and the house committee on banking and currency is expected to report this measure favorably within the next ten days.

It is confidently predicted that the bill will meet with no serious opposition, inasmuch as the democrats in the house are in such a hopeless minority that the most they can do is to make speeches against it. We apprehend, however, that there will be several speeches made against this scheme on the republican side of the house before it is forced to final passage.

If we comprehend its purpose and effect, it is nothing more nor less than a new endless chain in which silver dollars are to take the place of greenback currency. While the stock of gold in the treasury at this time doubtless exceeds the stock of silver in active circulation and silver hoarded in the vaults of the banks, the fact that the market value of the silver dollar is less than 50 cents would be a powerful incentive for exchanging silver for gold whenever the balance of trade is against the United States and the difference has to be made good by foreign exchange or its equivalent in gold.

The theory of Mr. Overstreet evidently is that nobody will want to exchange silver for gold so long as he knows that he can get gold for silver at any time. But the same was true of the greenback, yet it did not prevent the holders of greenbacks from draining the treasury of gold and keeping up the process that finally forced the issue and sale of \$230,000,000 of bonds

in order to fortify the treasury against absolute failure to redeem outstanding currency exchangeable for gold.

As between the greenback endless chain and the silver endless chain there is little difference, excepting possibly in the transportation charges. The menace to financial stability is nearly as great in one case as in the other.

TWO KINDS OF STEADFASTNESS.

Colonel Bryan is holding up as the most notable characteristic of Andrew Jackson his steadfastness of purpose, the manifest impression to be conveyed being that the present day democracy should be equally steadfast in its devotion to the fallacies of the Chicago and Kansas City platforms.

Steadfastness is no doubt a praiseworthy trait necessary to the accomplishment of difficult tasks, but it must not be confounded with mere shortsighted stubbornness that refuses to correct a palpable mistake for fear of becoming tainted with inconsistency. No amount of bourbon steadfastness can move back the hands of time and subject the country again to the conditions that confronted it in 1800. The irresistible logic of events since that time has opened the eyes of the people to the false foundation upon which the whole free silver fabric rested. They have seen the silver and wheat argument burst like a bubble and the predictions of continued hard times so long as the gold standard prevailed proved absolutely false.

The same thing is true of the Bryanite position with reference to our new insular possessions. When Mr. Bryan threw up his military commission to go to Washington and turn the votes of enough democratic senators to ratify the treaty with Spain, the question of annexation was settled and the problem made simply one of the form of civil government to be accorded the inhabitants of Porto Rico and the Philippines. Steadfastness in denouncing the acquisition of these islands as imperialism and militarism can avail naught. Steadfastness in holding to false issues cannot contribute to the betterment of the Philippines or improve the relations of our own people with their new wards in the Orient.

The American people are a people of progress. They admire and applaud steadfastness when it is enlisted for the onward march, but it strikes no sympathetic chord when it is employed solely to obstruct.

LET THE TROUBLE BREW.

There is trouble on the minds of some of the members of the Board of Education who, Monday night, voted to reduce the salaries of high school teachers and principals of the grade schools. It is said on good authority that a large number of the teachers will take concerted action and will urge the majority of the board to reconsider. If this is not done, the same authority states that scores of the teachers will look elsewhere for employment next year.

Parties who are not content with the claim that already a number of the teachers have received flattering offers to go elsewhere and that a number of them are preparing to accept.

It was thought that the superintendent of the kindergarten department escaped, but she goes along with the others and her salary has been cut from \$120 to \$120 per month.—World-Herald.

The great majority of the people of Omaha favor retrenchment and economy in the management of the public schools. They want the pruning knife applied to the frills in the high school and the frills in the kindergarten. They want a stop put to extravagance and favoritism and will show no tears over the departure of discredited or disgruntled employees. It may be a great outrage to cut down the superintendent of the kindergartens from \$130 to \$120 a month, but we venture to assert that there are at least 500 competent teachers in Nebraska who would be glad to take his job at \$100 a month.

Let the trouble brew and keep on brewing. The men who have inaugurated the reform know that they have the backing of the taxpayers and they will not likely be frightened by the threatened exodus of teachers who can get better places. There certainly is no injustice done to anybody at present employed. Teachers have ample notice and opportunity to better their condition if they are not satisfied with the new salary scale, which does not take effect until the end of the present school year.

Let the trouble brew. Omaha is not the only city in which just such trouble is brewing for school boards that are trying to lop off sinecures and cut their garments according to the cloth. Just such trouble is brewing in Chicago, in Philadelphia and in a dozen other cities larger than Omaha, and it is brewing with the full approval of the best citizenship and the most pronounced friends of the public school system.

IF BUSINESS WAS GOOD.

In cutting the salaries of high school teachers and principals the majority members have hardly pursued the policy that they would adopt in their own business affairs. Not one member of this majority would think of reducing the salary of an old and trusted employe if business was good and that employe was rendering good service. Instead, undoubtedly, the policy would be to increase the salaries of such employe, with the hope that thereby better service would be given.—World-Herald.

There is no doubt that the hard-headed and close-fisted majority of the new Board of Education would not think of reducing the salary of an old and trusted employe on the public school pay roll if business was good.

But, unfortunately, business is not good and has not been good for several years. Last year, for example, business was simply execrable. With an enormous increase in the tax levy and an income that yielded nearly \$100,000 more than the tax levy of the preceding year, business was so bad that the outstanding floating debt was only reduced a fraction over \$3,000 in the past twelve months. With the demands for a lower tax levy and a heavier pay roll staring the board in the face, it had only one thing to do, and that was to use the

pruning knife or plunge the school district into greater debt.

Business is not good, but even if it was good and a constant stream of gold was pouring into the treasury the policy of dispensing with frills and frills and equalizing salaries in proportion to capacity and character of service would have commended itself to a great majority of the people.

The grade teachers constitute the backbone of the public school system and the Board of Education has properly given the grade teachers first consideration. In all previous plans for economizing the grade teachers have been the foot ball for the benefit of the high priced specialists and faddists who never shed any tears over their troubles. When the salaries of the grade teachers were cut \$5 a month all around a few years ago to make up for the \$900 added to the superintendent's salary they had no alternative but to grin and bear it.

Washington society is said to be much incensed because Mrs. Roosevelt sees fit to entertain whom she pleases and when she pleases instead of recognizing the social distinctions which society at the capital has drawn. Washington society will probably learn that Mrs. Roosevelt is like her husband in one respect—that she has a decidedly unconventional way of doing things and will not permit any clique of self-constituted factotums to dictate what she shall and shall not do.

Our amiable democratic contemporary will presently discover that it sadly misconceives the temper of the people who opposed the so-called machine school board ticket in the late election. In voting for four democrats these gentlemen did not contemplate their preference as candidates on the ground that they were expected to oppose retrenchment and favor extravagance in the disbursement of the public school funds.

The management of the Commercial club will this year increase the number of names on the official ballot for members of the executive committee, so as to give a greater range of choice. Why not confine the membership in the executive committee to men directly identified with the commercial interests of the city and let the lawyers, doctors, preachers and educators play their part at receptions and banquets?

The cat is out of the bag now. All the howl of our democratic friends for reform and retrenchment in local government is a sham and a fraud, begotten for purely political purposes. At the first move for retrenchment by the new school board the democratic organ sets up a howl against it. The democrats always want what they think they can't get and when they get it they don't want it.

If the Interstate Commerce commission is unable to secure the attendance of J. Pierpont Morgan at the present hearing it might induce some of the Omaha yellow journal reporters to testify as to what the railroad magnate told them when he passed through here on his way to California a few months ago.

The Shouting Warrior.

Detroit Free Press. This is how it is, unless we misapprehend: Captain Mahan broke forth in clamorous shouting and mowed down columns of magazine text, but said nothing. The rules for fighting within the navy permit this.

A Continuous Performance.

Indianapolis Journal. The monthly reduction of the public debt is now so natural an occurrence that papers forget to mention it. The reduction during December was \$2,000,000. A similar reduction the next two months will reduce the aggregate below \$2,000,000,000. More than \$600,000,000 of this represents treasury notes and gold and silver certificates.

Chasing the Tax Dodgers.

Cleveland Leader. The big corporations in New York are fighting the collection of franchise taxes. They take the position, according to the president of the state tax commission, that it is cheaper to fight than to pay. That is often the way in New York, as in other states, the disposition to make the corporations pay more of the taxes than they have done is growing.

Great Show of Wrath.

Baltimore American. Thoroughly angered, the railway magnate stood glowering at the governor. "Oppose me and my traffic combination will you?" he thundered. "Why, I've got a good notion to buy your blamed little state for freight rates." "You're kidding," said the governor. "When the state is so rapidly that the kodaks were snapped in vain."

A Hitch in the Deal.

New York Evening Post. There seems to be a hitch in the negotiations between our government and that of Denmark respecting the purchase of the Danish islands. The hitch is fortunate for both ourselves and the islanders. If we should buy them we should lose the purchase money and add to our responsibility and expenses for all future time. We should not attend to our responsibilities, or should attend to them only by fits and starts. The islanders have been close observers of our methods of dealing with colonies and have not been favorably impressed. Their original desire for annexation has accordingly cooled. They find themselves much more attached to their mother country than they supposed they were. They do not want a change until they can better themselves.

Rulers of Allen Races.

St. Louis Republic. The British flag is an emblem of sovereignty over nearly 9,000,000 square miles of land inhabited by almost 400,000,000 people. Of these scarcely one-eighth are of British birth or descent and the black and yellow subjects of his majesty, Edward VII. are increasing much faster than are the palefaces. Recognizing this, it is not to be wondered at that the prince of Wales urged the necessity for more Britons in the colonial possessions of the empire. Of the 86,000,000 people under the American flag 20,000,000 are black, brown or yellow and 10,000,000 of the whites are of foreign birth. As there are nearly two native born Americans to every one of the colored or of foreign descent, our situation differs materially from that of the United Kingdom, where the population is eight to one in favor of the colored.

Reform in Taxation

Chicago Chronicle.

The legislature of New York, now in session, will enact a law for the taxation of mortgages, the tax to be paid when the mortgage is offered for record. The tax will be 5 mills on the \$100 of the amount of the mortgage.

Under the present laws of that state mortgages are taxable and are required to be assessed for the amount of the loan for which they stand as security. But the law is evaded in all except a few instances. Where a mortgage is caught by the tax collector it is found that the tax eats up half of the interest which the mortgage holder receives.

The plan to tax the mortgage at the recorder's office appears more like a license fee than a direct property tax. At one-half of 1 cent on \$100 it is but a small proportion of the tax of 2 per cent, which is about the usual tax rate. It will be a tax for state revenue in lieu of all other mortgage taxation.

The late policy of New York has been to drift away from methods of direct taxation. Following a little farther, all the state revenue will be derived from excises and similar sources. Yet these indirect taxes will not be like the government's indirect taxation by the tariff. Tariff taxation collects on the average \$5 on the value of imports, the government getting \$1 as revenue while the protected manufacturing trust and monopolist get \$4. By the New York system all the money from indirect taxation except the small cost of collection—say 1 or 2 per cent—will go into the state treasury.

The state expenses of New York are about \$22,000,000 a year. The indirect taxes now collected or that will be provided amount in round numbers to a large part of this sum, as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Tax type and Amount. Includes Corporation tax, Excise (Raines law) tax, Inheritance tax, Mortgage tax, Franchise tax, and Total.

The question of franchise taxes is yet in litigation. No doubt in the end a method will be found to levy a valid tax. When that is brought about taxes on real property for state expenses will be abolished. Taxes for local purposes and schools will be levied by some plan of local option. This will be a great change in American method to direct taxation by the vote of the voter from the changes advocated by advanced tax reformers. The progress of the experiment will be watched with interest.

ROUND ABOUT NEW YORK.

Ripples on the Current of Life in the Metropolis.

Among its other distinctions New York is pre-eminently the land of city of the United States. There are fewer homes in proportion to population, more people crowded into a given space and the per cent of actual home owners is far below the average of other cities. These conditions, usually considered a detriment, seem to please the Gothamites, and they are proud of the term of apartment houses, more extensively and elaborately than at any time in the city's history. "The year of greatest activity in the building of houses for single families," says the New York Times, "was 1890, when plans for 832 were filed. Since then the number has steadily declined until in the first ten months of 1901 the number of such plans approved was only ninety-seven, and the number for the whole year will not much exceed 100. As the rule, they represent costly dwellings intended for the occupancy of the very wealthy. The middle class three or four-story dwelling, with its notorious front of brick or brown sandstone, is passing away, for the reason that the rentals which must be charged for such houses, to be compensatory to owners, are higher than people content with that kind of accommodations are able or willing to pay. Land is worth too much on Manhattan island for that sort of employment. The modern apartment house has taken the place of the second and third class dwelling, offering the tenant more comfortable and generally more convenient accommodations for less money, and with an important incidental economy in servants and general expenses other than those devolving on the landlord.

"What effect this may have upon the social life of New York," continues the Times, "is a matter of speculation. That people do not entertain much in apartments as they used to in dwellings in which the main floor was devoted to parlors is due to the fact that they lack the room to do it. This tends to unsocialness. Probably the young people do not care for the life under such conditions. It has been said that apartments 'are suitable for all the purposes of living except dying,' but that they are ill-adapted to funerals. However, people do not hire them for that purpose, and they have to be so employed in emergency, the surviving occupants make shift somehow to respect the conventions. That life in apartments destroys the true family relation and forbids the development of home ties sounds very much like nonsense to those who have never known the needed attachments of home life under any conditions. 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