

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

E. ROBEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION. Daily Bee (without Sunday), One Year, \$3.00. Daily Bee and Sunday, One Year, \$3.50.

DELIVERED BY CARRIER. Daily Bee (without Sunday), per copy, 2c. Daily Bee (including Sunday), per week, 12c.

OFFICES. Omaha—The Bee Building, Twelfth and M Streets. Council Bluffs—10th Street.

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

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, 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 January, 1902, was as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Number of copies and Total. Rows include various editions like Daily Bee, Sunday Bee, etc.

Net daily sales, \$2,937. Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 1st day of February, 1902.

THE ICE MAN HAS BEEN SATISFIED. If the ice man has been satisfied the rest of the community is ready to welcome a warm wave.

Superintendent of Schools Pearce seems at last to have struck his natural gait. He would shine anywhere as a theatrical manager.

The crown prince of Japan is the latest royal passenger to announce his intention of visiting the United States. Let him come, the more the merrier.

According to the decision of a Virginia court the manuscript of 202 sermons is worth \$250. At that rate it would keep an industrious preacher busy to make a living.

Between mandamus and injunctions no public officer in this neck-of-woods is safe in performing any official act without first ascertaining the pleasure of our real rulers—the judges.

The recent explosion in New York is said to have destroyed \$10,000 worth of wine in the cellars of a neighboring hotel. As a smasher the hatchet is not in the same class with dynamite.

Minnesota is having a special session of the legislature to revise its revenue laws and so is Colorado. If either of these states is in greater need of revenue law revision than Nebraska it is to be pitted.

St. Louis is having the largest washing of municipal dry lines of any city in the country. It will be a good thing if the people manage to have it all laundered before the date of the forthcoming world's fair.

The Briton will have to take a back seat as a beef eater now that the statistics show that the American people consume an average of two-thirds of a beef per year for each man, woman and child in the country.

Ransom and Gurley, those Siamese twins of different political complexion, whose hearts beat as one, have again projected themselves in front of the police commission fight that has been such a source of profit, if not pleasure, for them for so many years.

Democratic editors have entered in earnest upon the task of swallowing populism in Nebraska in behalf of the democratic party. According to estimates the assimilation will require several years, but Nebraska democratic editors long ago learned to be patient.

At a social function given at Washington by ex-Senator Thurston in honor of Senator Dietrich irrigation is said to have been the only topic discussed. What conclusions were reached have not been divulged, but we take it that if there was any difference of opinion it was not on the irrigation of the inner mail.

The attention of our watchful contemporary, the Lincoln Journal, is respectfully called to the work of the councilmanic gang in its own town, indiscriminately raising salaries of city officers and employes amid charges of bad faith and violated pledges. If it will take care of the dirt on its own doorstep it will not have time to worry about the troubles of Omaha.

If Governor Savage's plan for state-built power and irrigation canals is as good a thing as he is convinced it is, why should it be delayed a moment longer than necessary? The cost of an extra session of the legislature to submit the prerequisites constitutional amendments would be mere bagatelle compared with the incalculable value of water and power for the upbuilding of the state.

THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION.

The most trustworthy information in regard to the position of President Roosevelt on the question of tariff concessions to Cuban sugar and tobacco states that he is not in favor of granting the demand for a reduction of from 50 to 100 per cent, but he believes there should be a moderate concession, perhaps to the extent of 25 per cent. It is said that the statements which Cuba have been sending to Washington to the effect that if there is not at least a 50 per cent reduction in the duty on their sugar they cannot make it a profitable crop does not seem to impress the president, who, it is asserted, does not regard it as the business of this government to make sugar growing profitable in Cuba. This is the feeling also of most of the republicans in congress. The prevailing view appears to be that perhaps some advantage should be given to Cuba's staple products over those coming from other foreign countries, but that there is no obligation to make such a reduction of rates as the Cubans urge to be necessary in order to render their industries profitable.

It is reported to be probable, in view of statements of members of the ways and means committee, that they propose to give fair consideration to the Cuban question, that a bill for a reciprocal agreement that will provide for a 20 or 25 per cent reduction on Cuban sugar will become a law. The Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Press says: "President Roosevelt does not conceal his anxiety to secure the adoption of such legislation and he so informed Speaker Henderson and Representative Dalzell. The president wants the house to have a chance to pass on the matter and does not think that the ways and means committee should take the responsibility of refusing to report a bill, or that anything should be done that would prevent the subject from expressing its view on the subject. All the president asks is that the case be decided by the house and not by any single committee or set of leaders." Undoubtedly the influence of the administration counts for a great deal in this matter. It is safe to assume that the republican leaders in congress will not be disposed to antagonize the president if he shall insist that there should be a moderate reduction of the tariff in favor of Cuban sugar and tobacco. But it is perhaps equally safe to assume that congress will not agree to any concession that would seriously endanger the American industries and that consequently the demand of the Cubans for at least a 50 per cent reduction of the sugar duty will not be heeded. That, at all events, may be regarded as certain.

A STEAMSHIP COMBINE.

The producers of the country will be required to pay tribute to an Atlantic steamship trust and the indications are that they will have to pay liberally. A pooling agreement has been entered into by Atlantic steamship companies, which is said to embrace practically every American and English company operating between the United States and Europe, the declared purpose of which is to make profitable the carrying of freight to British ports. In pursuance of this purpose ocean freight rates have been increased on grain, flour and provisions. The rate on grain has been advanced 50 per cent, that on flour 20 per cent and that on provisions 13 1/3 per cent. The German companies are not in the arrangement, but will probably be forced to enter it. It is one of the objects of the combine to suppress the competition of smaller freight carriers and thus obtain exclusive control of the Atlantic traffic with British ports.

It is stated that the freight rates will be maintained between American and British ports partly through the utilization of the chief railroads of the United States, controlled by the Morgan-Hill and other interests, so that it appears the railroads are parties to the scheme. It is a plan which, if successful in its objects, will pay rich profits to those engaged in it and these will be contributed mainly by the producers of the west. This new development in the community-of-interest system has attracted less attention than its importance deserves, but it will not be long until the grain, flour and provision interests of the country realize what it means for them; if this international steamship trust shall prove successful we may be sure that American producers will be plucked for all that the traffic will bear.

INTERSTATE LAW AMENDMENT.

Senator Elkins, chairman of the committee on interstate commerce, has introduced a bill amending the interstate commerce law which if passed will materially strengthen that act and give to the commission the authority which it has repeatedly asked for congress. Early in the session the West Virginia senator announced his conviction that the law ought to be strengthened and the powers of the commission increased, which in view of the fact that he had not previously been counted among the friends of the interstate commerce act was regarded as particularly significant.

The amendments proposed in this measure are for the most part such as have been recommended by the commission and it is to be presumed that body has been consulted in the framing of the bill. At all events there is no doubt that the proposed changes have received very careful consideration and while some of them may not be approved by all the supporters of the law, they will doubtless be generally regarded as meeting the requirements which experience has shown are necessary to render the act effective. Under these amendments the authority of the commission would be enlarged to a considerable extent, particularly in the matter of fixing and regulating railroad rates. This provision will doubtless encounter opposition from the railroads,

while the pooling amendment will meet with more or less objection on the part of the public, there still being a strong sentiment against allowing pooling contracts. The bill, however, gives the commission authority to hear complaints against the fairness of pooling arrangements and to annul unjust and unlawful contracts.

Senator Elkins will probably urge consideration of the bill at the present session and as the necessity for legislation to strengthen the law and the powers of the commission is generally recognized, there is reason for expecting action by congress. Certainly no fresh arguments can be needed to demonstrate that the law as it stands is practically valueless. The latest investigations by the commission, disclosing general and persistent violations of the law which the commission is powerless to prevent, should be quite sufficient to convince congress that if the law is to be made effective and is to accomplish the purpose for which it was intended, it must be amended. There is a very keen public interest in this matter which the republican majority in congress cannot safely disregard.

ATTACKING THE GRAND JURY.

According to the World-Herald the work of the late grand jury has been attacked by a large number of persons indicted for violations of the criminal code. The great majority of these assailants of the late grand jury are slot machinists, gamblers and other law breakers whose attorneys have appealed to the court to quash the indictments because they were loosely drawn and defective on vital points.

It strikes us that this is not an attack on the grand jury, but an attack on the county attorney. The grand jury discharged its duty when it presented these indictments, but the grand jury is not presumed to be sufficiently versed in law to draw the indictments presented to the court. That duty devolved upon the county attorney, who is presumed and expected to prepare the indictment papers in conformity with the requirements of the criminal code.

If the indictments as drawn are defective and the parties against whom bills have been presented for law breaking are discharged by reason of these defective indictments, the county attorney is either incompetent, irrelevant or immaterial in drawing up indictments, or inexcusably careless in making out the indictments and complaints. In the now famous Callahan case he had to prepare and present three successive complaints before one would stick. That disgraceful experience may have to be repeated in the present instance in case the indictments are dismissed by the court because defective.

In any event, the work of the grand jury should not be made a costly farce because of the incompetency or negligence of the county attorney. If any of the indictments offered by the grand jury are thrown out because they are imperfectly or improperly drawn it would be the duty of the county attorney not only to file new complaints that would stand the most severe test, but also to follow up his action by an efficient and vigorous prosecution.

KNOCKING DOWN'S STRAW MEN.

And now it transpires that the soul-stirring and marrow-freezing debate over the Declaration of Independence which has occupied exclusive space in the hyphenated popocratic organ of these parts for the last thirty days is expected to have a far-reaching effect upon the future political destiny of Nebraska. The contention over this all-absorbing topic is in reality only an attempt to put up a straw man and then knock him down. What John L. Webster and Father Williams say, think or write about any question may interest many people, but it has no binding force on any political party, nor does it in any way change either the past or the present position of either political party.

Political parties speak through conventions and cannot be held responsible for the utterances of individual members. John L. Webster's version of the Declaration of Independence has no greater binding force upon the rank and file of republicans than Father Williams' version of the thirty-nine articles of faith has on the Church of England.

The whole controversy which has monopolized the editorial page of the World-Herald for months to cover up its significant silence on matters that have agitated the whole state is a mere tempest in a teapot. The natural rights of man can be discussed all the year round and every year in the century without coming nearer to agreement or definite conclusions than a discussion over the immortality of the soul, on which mankind has differed since the dawn of civilization.

The republicans of Nebraska certainly will not allow the World-Herald to choose expounders for their creed or to charge up to them individual expressions of opinion on obsolete issues.

If we remember correctly, it was but a year or so back that our supreme court announced with widespread publicity that it would no longer bother with cases brought before it under its original jurisdiction, except in most extraordinary emergencies, but would pass only on questions raised by appeal or writ of error from the lower courts. The reason given for the enforcement of this rule was that the issue of writs by virtue of the court's original jurisdiction not only interferes with the regular proceedings, but necessarily calls for hasty action that hardly comports with the careful and fully considered decisions expected of a supreme court. If the court is to exercise its original jurisdiction it cannot with propriety discriminate between its petitioners, but must grant each and all the same hearing irrespective of whether they could not secure the same remedy from inferior

tribunals. With the supreme court taking up mandamus and similar cases direct it would be foolish for any litigant to waste time on the lower courts and pay the extra costs of appeal unless he wants simply to delay and obstruct.

We are glad to learn that Congressman Mercer is not dismayed by the adverse action of the subcommittee on Indian affairs on the appropriation for the maintenance of the Omaha Indian supply depot. Evidently our Dave is preparing for another spectacular performance by which he will manage to save the appropriation by rushing upon the scene just as the heavy villain is about to carry off the damsel. Possibly, also, he may have whispered to the members of the subcommittee that he needed their assistance to make himself stronger with his constituents. That has been our Dave's way. On several former occasions bills in which Omaha was interested which encountered deadly opposition were rescued and saved by his timely and heroic intervention at the last moment when the grandstand was full of spectators.

The announcement wired from Washington by the special correspondent of the Bee that the subcommittee on Indian affairs had declined to insert an appropriation for the maintenance of the Omaha Indian supply depot into the Indian appropriation bill has been promptly interpreted as one of those malicious attacks of the Bee on Omaha and cited as a striking proof that the congressional fight is on in the Second Nebraska district. There doubtless will be some people in Omaha credulous enough to circulate this well-defined rumor. If all of the enemies of Omaha could be persuaded to emulate The Bee Omaha would gain more from its deadly enemies than from its pretended friends.

In recent elections in the Philippines natives have been chosen to office in a majority of instances over American candidates. The fact that these natives are permitted to take and hold the offices to which they have been chosen should go a long way toward convincing the Filipinos that the United States proposes to do what it has said—give them as large a measure of local self-government as the conditions warrant.

Venezuela persists in its refusal to pay the German and French claims. The various South American countries are all entitled to a large measure of sympathy in these matters. They have been deceived by foreign promoters much after the manner of the chattel loan shark. There is far more might than equity behind a majority of this class of claims.

Statistics show that the percentage of illiteracy among the white population of the south is as high as it was thirty years ago, while the colored race has been improving in that respect. At this rate the democratic politicians will be forced to change their disfranchisement plans again in a few years.

A number of democrats are to have a meeting in New York on February 22 to discuss methods of pulling the remnants of the party together. But if Doctors Hill and Bryan are called into the consultation room the chances are slight that the two schools of political medicine will be able to agree.

The mayor and council are going right ahead redeeming their promise to the Commercial club to strengthen and enlarge the fire fighting force. Now the question is, Will the insurance rate makers come to town with the corresponding reductions in the charges for fire risks?

Or for the Coal Pile. Chicago Tribune. We refuse to believe that such weather as we have had for the last few days is good for the wheat.

Who Said Reciprocity? Indianapolis News. Reciprocity treaties? Who said anything about reciprocity? There is just about as much chance for any reciprocity treaty to be adopted by the present congress as there is for Prince Henry to be invited to remain in this country as emperor of the Americans.

A Popular Measure. New York Press. The sweeping cut of nearly \$90,000,000 in the internal revenues of the government and the abolition of practically all the war taxes as recommended by the ways and means committee will be reckoned at the session's end as the most popular legislation of the session.

Where the Ice is Thin. Kansas City Star. A London paper deprecates the fact that the women of the diplomatic contingent in Peñia shook hands with the notorious empress dowager. But, if diplomatic intercourse were restricted by moral exactions, a good many rulers would have to be treated with embarrassing aloofness.

Rather a Large Order. Philadelphia Times. The story that the Kaiser will buy the Philippines is interesting even though palpably untrue. We paid Spain \$20,000,000 for the islands and we have since spent \$200,000,000 upon them. Just now the Kaiser's budget is showing no surplus and it would be hard to figure out how he could make the deal without serious financial embarrassment.

Improving the Ohio Notion. Philadelphia Record. With Senator Allison controlling the senate appropriations committee, Speaker Henderson aucaerat of the house of representatives and Secretary Shaw in charge of the Treasury department, the Iowa idea should cut a noteworthy figure in contemporary federal politics. The Ohio notion of going after everything in sight has been improved upon further west.

A Mixed Situation. Indianapolis News. General Chaffee and Governor Tully both deny that there is any friction in the Philippines. The civil and military rule are necessary to each other's existence. The civil government proclaims laws and the military is necessary to enforce them. It is a mixed situation and it is doubtful if anybody, even on the ground, has any clear idea of what is really taking place.

More Treason to Jefferson

Edward Everett Hale in the Outlook.

I have already quoted from my grandfather's diary the words which seemed to him big with fate. Mr. Jefferson, chosen president U. S., and big with fate they were. My grandfather, a fine leader of the people in the fashion of his time, thought that dangers untold began for the United States in that moment. He was right enough in thinking so. But he did not understand, and it seems to me that for five and twenty years nobody understood, that this country governs itself, and that the backward and forward moves of cabinets and congresses have not, in general, a critical importance in the history of the country, or by no means that critical importance which the Hivied servants of the country think they have.

The men who made the constitution builded better than they knew, perhaps. Whether they knew it or not, they made much arrangements with the American people governs America. True, the people of America are constantly harking back to the supposed analogy between their president and the sovereign king, between their cabinet and an English cabinet. Now, let us suppose to undo Europe on this subject. Every writer on the continent of Europe says that Mr. McKinley was a king, or that Martin Van Buren was a king. But on this side of the ocean we ought to know that every one of the presidents has been the servant of the American people.

Undoubtedly Thomas Jefferson, without meaning to inflict a serious injury on the fortunes of the young nation, really thought he was to be a sort of king. But the young nation was so much stronger than he was that, after he became president, he really fills the place in history which a fussy and foolish nurse fills in the biography of a man like Franklin, or Washington, or Goethe, or Julius Caesar, of whom the

AMERICAN CONCEIT.

Not as Dangerous as It Looks, When Analyzed. Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale is one of the venerated prophets of a passing generation. His well-stored mind, devoted piety and patriotism give peculiar weight and significance to everything he says. In an address delivered in Boston recently at the request of the Boston Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of the crowning weaknesses of American character was its intolerable self-conceit. In arrogating to ourselves superior power and constantly repeating our own praises, Dr. Hale declares we have become the posteriors of the kind of pride that goeth before a fall. The distinguished Bostonian's caution is not without timeliness, but we fear Dr. Hale has made the weaknesses of the few representative of the many. Vain laudation of our material and social greatness has come to be a sort of fad in our two eastern centers of population. It is manifest to a high degree in Dr. Hale's own city of Boston, and, along different lines, is even worse in New York. The Bostonian believes that his city is the home of the only simple, unadulterated culture and learning in the world. New York, on the other hand, believes that in wealth and progressiveness every other city is only a sleepy village compared to the town on Manhattan island. In Washington the people believe that political eminence is so great and powerful that all the forces of earth, sea and air must be subservient to it. But the types of conceit are not representative. They are provincial and stand for certain oddly developed germs of self-contemplation. The great masses of the American people need rather to be inspired to greater national pride and more patriotic optimism. Boston, New York and Washington conceit is in each instance noisy and insistent, but it will not do permanent injury to the national character.

WORKING A ROYAL GRAFT.

Minnesota Times: England faces an army beef scandal now and it is said that there has been as great a discrepancy between the price the government paid for its meat supplies for South Africa and the real cost as there was in the purchase of horses. The nation's British taxpayers must be very red in the face by this time.

Philadelphia Ledger: Powerful political pulls are not confined to this country, if we may judge by the proceedings in the British Parliament on Friday night, when there was some very plain talk in connection with the matter of army expenditures. It was shown that one contract for horses, amounting to \$11,000, the contractor's profit was \$4,000, and there was a strong intimation that similar profits were made on the whole sum of \$18,000,000 expended for remounts. It was admitted on the part of the War office that the government had been swindled, but it distinctly refused to dismiss the head of the remount department and practically admitted that nothing could be done to correct the evil. Comment seems to be superfluous.

Philadelphia Record: One might be moved by the exposure in the House of Commons the other day of frauds in the purchase of mounts for the British army to hurl back some of the pleasantness of the London journals agent the "embalmed beef" scandals during the Spanish war. The irregularities of our own supply department seem petty beside the reported expenditures of \$40,000,000 in connection with the horse deals of the British army. Instead of flinging about to quogue arguments, however, let us rather bear with the British secretary of war in the hope that some of the intermediaries to have been less deep and the virtue of British officers implicated in the transaction less easy than would appear from the earlier revelations. The betrayal of a trust is a thing to evoke regrets rather than to call for amazement; anyhow, international sentiments are not furthered by recrimination.

PERSONAL NOTES.

It would be an innovation, but perhaps a pleasing as well as an appropriate one, if the proposed national monument at Appomattox should take the shape of a perpetual apple orchard.

An Iowa woman has used a dead man for breach of promise of marriage and recovered \$4,000 damages. The poor fellow is left with only a small figure of \$20 to go on housekeeping in his present location.

The construction of the first of the giant exhibit buildings for the world's fair, the varied industries, was awarded last Monday to a St. Louis firm of contractors at a price far below the estimates placed upon the plans.

Representative W. H. L. Hayes of Lowell is preparing a bill to ask the Massachusetts legislature to provide for the erection of an equestrian or military statue of Governor Benjamin F. Butler, to be placed in the state grounds.

One of the most expert chauffeurs in Washington is Representative Joseph Shelby of Pennsylvania. He has an automobile and each morning when congress is in session takes it up the avenue to the east front of the capitol, and then turns it over to an attendant. Mr. Shelby is so expert that he can out-figure eight and do other fancy stunts in steering the machine.

Bits of Washington Life.

Etchings of People and Events at the National Capital.

The head and staff of one of the bureaus of the Postoffice department are slowly recovering from an enervating shock, the like of which has never been experienced in the department before. The innocent cause of the shock was a letter from an antique and unique patriot who is postmaster of a western city, the name of which is too great a treasure to reveal. The postmaster, actually protesting against increasing his office force, an incident so rare in official life that the department took a bracer forthwith. "Trust," said he himself, "nothing will do me to disturb the present arrangement of clerks in this office. They are all satisfied the way it is. We keep our office open after the usual supper time here until 7:30. The clerks, however, divide up the time on duty in the evening between them so that some of them are off duty when the mails are light. I really do not know how we could use any more clerks in this office. We certainly do not need them. It would be impossible to find work for them in the dull season. It would divide the responsibility and be demoralizing to the service."

No one would accuse Senator Warren of possessing a vivid imagination, says the Washington Post, and yet his description yesterday of the cold which has kept him in his Wyoming home for the past three weeks shows that he is clever enough in having commonplace things with a tinge of romance.

"My cold," said Senator Warren, "settled in my head. The first day I imagined that enormous steamboats were plowing through my temples. On the second day I thought some one was dragging a log chain over my head. On the third day I experienced the sensation of conical shells whizzing from one side of my head to the other and, finally, it seemed to me that my head was being stamped upon by a giant who wore hobnailed shoes. The first day I was awake twenty-two hours. Then I got down to the point where the hobnailed monster did his deadly work I was awake twenty-three hours and fifty-nine minutes out of the twenty-four."

If anybody can present a more picturesque description of the pain which Senator Warren suffered, let him speak now or forever hold his peace.

The death of Architect Clark, under whom the capitol has assumed its present magnificent proportions, relates the Washington Star, calls to mind the splendid historical work he did in gathering into a number of bound volumes every scrap of written or printed record he could get regarding the building and decorating of the capitol. Unfortunately much of the decorative material was "jumped" in the bills and it never will be known just what it cost. A curious fact concerning the clock in the hall of the house of representatives came to light during the summer. The cleaners tackled the clock, supposing it to be of some ordinary hard wood and cast iron, bedded under varnish. It looked ordinary enough, anyhow.

The cleaners scratched and jabbed and scrubbed till nearly an inch of varnish had been removed, when it was found that the clock is encased in bronze. Beautiful bronze, too. About the face is a wreath of fruit, oak leaves and acorns. The chief beauty of the clock, however, is the hall of the house of representatives came to light during the summer. The cleaners tackled the clock, supposing it to be of some ordinary hard wood and cast iron, bedded under varnish. It looked ordinary enough, anyhow.

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