

### NEBRASKA LIBRARIANS MEET

Association Holds Eighth Annual Convention and Has Large Attendance.

### MANY FROM OTHER STATES PRESENT

President J. K. Hoemer of American Library Association Delivers a Lecture on "Books Dead and Books Alive."

The Nebraska Library association, comprising in its membership those who are connected with the direction or operation of the public libraries throughout the state, but made up chiefly of library employees, entered upon its eighth annual meeting yesterday at the library building in this city. This is the first time the association has convened in Omaha, its previous gatherings having been held at Lincoln. The present membership of the association is twenty-five and there are in attendance at this convention about thirty or thirty-five persons, among whom are several from other states who are prominent throughout the entire country in library work. The more remote portions of this state are better represented than usual and it is regarded by the members as an evidence of greater interest in this important work.

No formal program had been arranged for the morning, that portion of the day being left for the registration of the visitors and inspection of the Omaha library and its museum of curious and archaeological exhibits.

### Take Up Regular Business.

The convention took up its business regularly in the afternoon at 1:30. The first subject for consideration being: "How to Establish a Library in a Small Town." Under that head were presented papers as follows: "The Nebraska Library Law," by J. Amos Barrett, librarian Nebraska State Historical society; "Report of Library Work Accomplished Through the Aid of the Public Library Commission," Miss Edna D. Bullock, secretary public library commission; "Accounts of the Establishment of Libraries in the Following Towns": Fremont, Ross L. Hammond; Grand Island, Mrs. O. A. Abbott; Valley, Mrs. W. G. Whitmore; South Omaha, W. C. King; "Library Plans From a Librarian's Standpoint," Mrs. John Reed, former librarian Lincoln city clerk. As a special order of business for 4:30 p. m. Miss Laura Pfeiffer of the department of history of the Omaha High school presented a paper on the subject, "The Use of the Library by the Schools," in which she described the method employed in the circulation of books among the schools of this city.

### Dr. Hoemer's Address.

Mr. Lewis S. Reed, president of the board of directors of the Omaha Library, presided at last evening's meeting and gave a brief review of the growth of the library interest in Omaha from the organizing of the Omaha Library association in 1871 up to the present time. He introduced the speaker of the evening, Dr. J. K. Hoemer, librarian of the Minneapolis Public Library, and president of the American Library association. Dr. Hoemer took as his subject "Books Living and Books Dead."

He spoke of the recommendations of President Elliot of Harvard college, to the recent meeting of the American Library association, of libraries increasing their room by occasionally diminishing their number of books, those books that had not been used for a certain number of years to be taken out of circulation and placed in a receptacle. While he agreed with Dr. Elliot that the dead books should be disposed of, he questioned his method of determining them and held that the frequency of the demand for a book is no test of its utility.

In the various classes of literature he spoke of "Mr. Dooley" and Mark Twain as positively useful in helping people to a hearty laugh, and said that the novel was too generally considered the disreputable member of the family of literature. "A great novel," he said, "is a great epic and only the presentation, in concrete form, of some great truth." Fiction, as a class, does not deserve such condemnation simply because it abused. He spoke of the libraries of the ancient and medieval times, of their preservation and their present interest.

### Amusements.

"It is a waste of labor to shaven an ass," says the old Spanish proverb. It would be equally wasteful to undertake a serious discussion of the drama which is being served at the Boyd under the general designation of "McFadden's Row of Flats." It is merely the pioneer attempt to embody on the stage the wildly absurd fold-out of the original effort and that has been named as a distinct type of modern newspaper and magazine, the "yellow kids" that yellow journalism was baptised, and around the journals of Alexander George Gresham "McFadden's Row of Flats." That much for the intellectual aspect of the show. Were it for one feature the physical phase of the affair might be disposed of in even fewer words. In an aggregation whose personal attractions and accomplishments are quite in keeping with the literary and musical charms of the piece, Mr. Bobby Ralston looms up as would a six-foot giant in a community where all men were of Ralston's inches, which are very few, indeed. Mr. Ralston is not only a clever comedian, but has a good singing voice and does a really entertaining serenade with his violin. He is easily the hit of the combination and it is noticeable in advance how far he outranges his larger associates. A special matinee will be given today and a performance this evening closes the engagement.

### GOOD NIGHT FOR LUNAR SHOW

Clear Skies Give Excellent Opportunity to Observe Eclipse of the Moon.

Last night's total eclipse of the moon was of the dull, copper-glowing variety rather than of the invisible sort, which shows that there were no clouds on the sunrise and sunset circles of the earth to interfere with the reflection of the sun's rays into the shadow so as to illuminate the moon. The eclipse was on schedule time. According to Arles Placed and others in the know, Luna entered the penumbra at 8:17 p. m. and met the shadow one hour later. Penumbra is itself a shadow, but of an illusive character that does not dash itself upon the eye of the layman. At 10:45 the moon put out a slender crescent from the cold shadow of the earth, and at 1:50 o'clock was entirely free from darkness.

### Last night was entirely clear and the eclipse could be observed to advantage.

Scientists, however, pay no particular attention to these phenomena, and while their telescopes are trained on the moon during the hours of eclipse they expect to discover nothing new.

In ancient times, when the causes which lead to the darkening of the moon were not understood, an eclipse caused much excitement and superstitious dread. It was thought to cause an unusual chill in the air and to make people nervous and excitable. Beasts of prey are said to become ferocious and the ordinary sounds of nature to grow strangely loud and alarming. Barbarous peoples have thought that some calamity had befallen the moon god—that it was being swallowed by some fish of remarkable size, and have tried to save it by making loud noises and by prayer and offerings. In a South sea island an eclipse once caused a political upheaval. There had been civil war among factions and the one numerically the stronger had won. The defeated side had retired in sullen humiliation to a rough and difficult part of the island, where it defied the government. By a treacherous ruse the greatest chief among these was lured among his enemies and killed. That night came the eclipse. The chiefs held together the different districts in common were not strong, and the leaders of one of these, taking the darkening of the moon as a sign of the displeasure of the deity at the death of the high chief, deserted their former comrades and joined forces with those who had lately been defeated. With this accession these came down from the mountains and conquered the late victors.

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Building for Future.

I would not that you should infer from what has been said that our conception of the duties and responsibilities of life is confined alone to the material welfare of the state and its citizens. The great problem of life is not how to get on as an struggling humanity generally. We are endeavoring to build not only for the present but for the future as well. Our idea of life and life's work, our relation to the Divine Creator and our relation to our fellow men, should not permit us to gauge our action to the restricted and limited scope of material success and the large productions of the necessities of life which administer to the comfort and well being of the body. We are seeking a nobler and higher conception of man's destiny on earth. We are seeking a religion of morality and knowledge, essential to good government and have an equal right to share in the benefits of the law of the state. Especial pride is taken in the educational system which has been outlined by the people of this state, and the joy that opportunity is afforded to its 8,000 children of school age to receive a liberal education in free institutions of learning whose doors swing freely to those who avail themselves of the opportunity.

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