

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

E. ROBEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION...

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

OFFICES. Omaha—The Bee Building, South Omaha—City Hill Building, Twentieth and M Streets...

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

Table with 3 columns: Circulation category, Circulation amount, and Total. Includes categories like 'Total', 'Less unsold and returned copies', 'Net total sales', etc.

Subscribed in full for 1903 by M. B. HUNTING, Notary Public. We never put much reliance in that ground hog, anyway.

Let the coal man rejoice. The groundhog saw his shadow without half looking.

According to the groundhog's calendar we are to have six weeks more of real winter.

Having been specially received by King Edward, General Miles can console himself for not hitching on to the special coronation embassy.

The democrats of the legislature seem to have dumped home rule for a mess of pottage. The nonpartisan water commissioner bait was altogether too many for them.

New York will celebrate its 250th anniversary in May. For a youngster, as compared with the older cities of Europe, the American metropolis has been doing quite well.

When the legislature reconvenes its first business should be a rigid investigation into the manipulation of the corporation lobby and the operations of the railroad literary bureau.

New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma may have no representation in the United States senate, but they are running the business of that body for the time being just the same.

The sultan of Morocco has scored a signal victory over the pretender, but the pretender seems to be one of those pretentious fellows who do not know enough to know when he is licked.

A Chicago grand jury filed 121 indictments against owners and operators of slot machines in the downtown district Saturday. How many of these slot machine owners will be prosecuted remains to be seen.

Secretary Root says another war is sure to come, no matter how much we may long for peace. So is another cyclone and another famine and another pestilence and another volcanic eruption. But we will cross all those bridges when we get to them.

From the list of officers of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial association the conclusion is inevitable that the democracy of the sage of Monticello was in such a nebulous condition that it covers professed democrats in public life today who could get together on no other common ground.

An Omaha pastor is trying to impress the congregation with the wickedness of avoiding the paying of car fare just because the conductor forgets to demand the fare. As an effective means of enforcement we suggest that he put an embargo on his contribution box against tickets that in right belong to the street railway company.

Governor Cummins is up against a queer proposition as a result of the death of Congressman Rumpke. Strict compliance with the law requiring a special election to fill the vacancy, with only two weeks of the term unexpired, would be a costly luxury for the people of the district.

Whatever plans the present Nebraska legislature may adopt for rebuilding or enlarging state institutions, it should not forget the forcible arguments in favor of fireproof construction presented by recent burning of state buildings. It is not the loss of property, so much as the loss of life, that is to be avoided.

The destroyed property can be replaced, fatal or permanent injury of the state's wards leaves no way to restitution. The fire trap public building, especially when designed for the accommodation of dependent inmates, should be tabooed.

ADVERSE TO AMERICAN TRADE.

A report of the American consul general at Berlin points out that the German tariff will be to a serious extent adverse to our trade with that country, unless modified by a reciprocity treaty. He notes as especially significant the largely increased duties on grain and cereal products, which are more than doubled, while on flour there is placed a practically prohibitory duty.

On other important staple exports from the United States, in the line of manufactures, duties are largely increased. A similar policy is being pursued by Austria in the rearrangement of her tariff and Russia has also adopted a new general customs tariff that considerably increases duties, which will unfavorably affect American trade with very extensive.

A short time ago the Prussian finance minister made the significant declaration that in his opinion "America is the dark spot in the heavens of our industry. Our internal market must be greatly strengthened, for our market is today dependent upon America and England. Agriculture must be our special concern." This undoubtedly very well represents the general feeling in Europe toward this country. The American invasion must somehow be checked, but the statesmen of the European countries are finding this a most difficult problem.

In most of those countries there can be no great improvement in agricultural conditions and therefore they must continue to draw more or less of their food supplies from the United States. This is particularly the case with Germany. It cannot produce sufficient to supply the home demands for foodstuffs and in placing higher duties on these it is injuring the masses of its own people.

The chief part of what Germany buys from us it must import and it can get it to better advantage from us than from anybody else. So far as manufacturers are concerned, possibly it would be to its advantage to shut out American competition, but in doing this it must count upon some loss of exports to this country. Much of what we import from Germany we can get with equal advantage elsewhere in case our export trade to it should be curtailed.

We cannot fairly complain of the higher tariffs of European countries, framed with reference to protecting their industries, so long as they do not distinctly discriminate against our products. This we object to. As a matter of fact the United States has submitted for years to the most unjust discriminations on the part of Germany, France and some other European countries, the representations of our government in regard to this and the requests for fair and just treatment being disregarded. It can be confidently expected that the policy of discrimination will become more pronounced than it is if the United States does not take steps to counteract it.

The resolution of Senator Lodge, providing for an inquiry in regard to tariff discriminations against the United States, should be favorably acted upon, and if discrimination is shown something decisive should be done for putting an end to it. The American farmer and manufacturer want only fair treatment in the world's markets and it is the duty of the government to use every effort to secure this for them.

INCORPORATED MANAGEMENT. "No Excuses for the Slaughter of Which Railroads are Guilty." Indianapolis News.

When we think that during one year in Great Britain there was not one railway passenger killed, and then read of the slaughter of scores of people on the Central Railroad of New Jersey and the Southern Pacific in two days, it is hard to believe that there is not something wrong with our way of conducting railroads.

The New Jersey disaster was the result of the gross carelessness of whom? The officers of the road say that the engineer of the express was at fault, inasmuch as he ran by a danger signal. He himself is said to have declared when he was taken from his engine that he paid no attention to the green and red signals, as he thought they would turn white. Later in his delirium he said that he saw no signals.

The station agent at Cranford says that "a minute before the accident" he received orders to hold the express at Cranford. Even then he could hear the train coming, and without waiting to answer that he understood the instructions, he grabbed his lantern and rushed out on the platform. Just as he reached the platform the train flashed by and Engineer Davis was leaning out of the engine cab looking straight ahead, and "apparently attending to his duty." Then the agent cried, "The train has stopped, but before he could do so the train had passed it, going at the rate of more than sixty miles an hour. Certainly this was a narrow and dangerous margin on which to run such a train on such a road as this, especially if the road, as W. D. Hessler, declares, is that the accident was due to the "element of human fallibility."

It is so with practically all our accidents. And the question is whether a few convictions and executions of some of these fallible men, no matter how high their position, would not prevent "the element of human fallibility."

The frightful accident on the Southern Pacific also seems to have been due to human "fallibility." The story is that an operator failed to deliver orders to the water-bound express allowing it to pass another train to pass. Whether the operator had his orders or not is yet to be proved. But it does not matter. For if he did not have them the responsibility is merely that of the man who should have given them to him. If he did have them, of course, he is to blame. But no explanation can bring to life the dozens of people who were killed in these two accidents, or help the scores who were injured. What we all want is not explanations, but fewer murderous accidents. We talk about them when they happen, and demand that the guilty be punished, and that some steps be taken to make their recurrence less frequent. But we soon forget all about it. Rarely do we concern our grand juries do their duty in such cases. Neither one of these accidents should have happened. Both were entirely avoidable. So there is criminal negligence in both cases that should be severely punished.

The same is true of the great slaughter of which the railroads are guilty. There were a half dozen or more wrecks recently in all of which people were killed or seriously injured. It is certainly true that something was done.

Interchangeable steamship tickets are announced, good on all vessels operated by the Morgan lines. This is no doubt an outgrowth of the interchangeable mileage system adopted by American railroads. We have not, however, yet reached the interchangeable meal ticket nor the interchangeable theater ticket, though they, too, may be brought out before long.

The city council rests temporarily under a judicial ban that prevents it from making the annual tax levy, but that does not stand in the way of the school board revising its estimates to conform to actual requirements, which do not justify a school tax for 1903 of more than 2 mills.

Of course the railroads are always ready to spend good money for the benefit of the rural counties, but only

TALK OF THE STATE PRESS.

Rushville Recorder: When the present legislature commenced its work some of the "I told you so's" predicted introduction of a lot of fool measures; but the fact has come out that the freak legislator was never so conspicuous for his absence, as he is in this session of the Nebraska legislature.

Atkinson Graphic: The west end of the state has an excellent delegation in the legislature. This is the honor of the Cols, Hanns, Currie and Heron, with Douglas as spokesman, constitute a group which commands the attention and respect of all members, and have been instrumental in framing many of the most important measures now under consideration.

Blair Republican: The legislature is against the land-leasing bill of Senator Dietrich, and it is probable the fences will have to go—so that Colonel Mosby will score at last. Yet there are two sides to the controversy. The cattlemen have an interest, and unless these lands can be irrigated no one would accept a homestead for farming purposes alone. It is a big question.

Wausau Gazette: Fifty-five of the one hundred members in the lower house of the present legislature are representative farmers. They prove the absurdity of the howl about railroad domination. Grant that every mother's son, who is not an actual tiller of the soil, is a "railroad tool," it is yet in the power of the farmers to inflict every measure that would tend to infringe upon their rights—and we are sure they will.

O'Neill Frontier: It appears that the people of Nebraska do not want a public land-leasing bill. There has perhaps never been a measure up for consideration that has been so generally condemned by the people of this state as the proposition to lease out the remainder of the public domain. Wherever there has been any sentiment expressed at all it has been in opposition to the proposed law. It has also developed that there is a general sentiment in favor of 640 acres for a homestead.

Cretia Vidette-Herald: When Nebraska has another United States senator to elect the legislature would receive the praise of the whole state if that body followed the example of the Kansas legislature, which passed resolutions last week, asking the voters for senatorial honors, who were congressmen, to go back to Washington and go to work, and allow them to choose a senator without being delated. To the scene at Nebraska's last senatorial battle was enough to sicken even a dyed-in-the-wool politician. The legislature is to be the advocates of the plan of election of United States senators by popular vote. Until this sensible idea is adopted a floor of the Kansas plan would be decidedly beneficial, undoubtedly a saving to the state of a considerable sum during such sessions.

PERSONAL NOTES. Ex-Governor George S. Boutwell of Massachusetts observed his 55th birthday anniversary on Wednesday.

Down in Mississippi five negro murderers have been tried and sentenced in the regular way since 1903 came in. Civilization moves on apace.

In crowded New York all shades of life may be witnessed in a day. One day last week there was a wedding, a fire and a funeral in the same flat in the East Side.

Senator Thomas Patterson of Colorado says that one of the most enjoyable periods of his life was the two weeks he spent traveling with a circus in southern Michigan.

Naval Constructor Richmond Pearson Hobson, the hero of the Merrimack episode, has tendered his resignation to President Roosevelt through the secretary of the navy.

The members of the foreign legations in Peking are again embarrassed by lavish gifts of game, plants and trinkets from the dowager empress on the occasion of the Chinese New Year.

Joshua G. Dodge, who was an associate of William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and other leaders of the anti-slavery movement, has just celebrated his 90th birthday at Arlington, Mass.

The Leslier bribery charges reminded older congressmen of the time Representative "Birdie" Adams of Pennsylvania went up to Speaker Reed to ask about a bill he wanted passed. Adams took some change from his pocket and rattled it in his hand while he talked. As it happened he had five quarters. "Hold on, Birdie," said Reed, "even in these hard times you can't pass a bill in this house for a dollar and a quarter."

REGULATING IMMIGRATION. Views of an Expert on Existing Restrictions. Philadelphia Public Ledger.

In view of the possible amendment of the immigration laws during the present or the next session of congress, the opinion of an expert as to the desirability of suggested changes in said laws is worthy of respectful consideration. Dr. A. J. McLaughlin of the United States Health and Marine Hospital Service, in a conservative contribution to the January number of the popular Science Monthly, takes a position with respect to one of the proposed changes which may not be in harmony with popular opinion on the subject. The writer observes that the percentage of undesirable immigrants is growing higher at present than it was in former years, but restrictions have been growing more stringent, so that now the system in operation at Ellis Island is sufficiently effective to keep out the diseased, the pauper and the criminal, while admitting the immigrant "with two strong arms, a sound body and a stout heart." He is opposed to the educational test, which seems to be gaining favor in the country, for the reason that it would exclude many thousands of desirable immigrants, thus supplying with nearly all of the unskilled labor needed for our industrial progress. The educational test, according to Dr. McLaughlin, would not keep out some of the least desirable arrivals, but it would have one good result—the reduction of the total number of immigrants—and thus permit of a more rigid examination of foreigners who seek admission here.

The contributor thinks that a head tax as low as \$5 or \$10—the tax is now only \$1—would materially reduce the number of arrivals. This would result from the fact that large families, including aged dependents, would be obliged to remain in Europe, but it would not deter single unskilled laborers. In the case of large families even a \$5 tax would be prohibitive. One of the most valuable restrictive regulations would be the extension of government jurisdiction over arrivals until they become citizens. The writer of the article favors such a regulation, inasmuch as it would give the authorities an opportunity to deport criminals and others whose disability was not discovered when they landed or within a year after landing. Dr. McLaughlin makes a strong point for such a regulation in the statement that the friends of detained aliens would be disinclined to guarantee that they would not become public charges if the guarantee covered five years instead of one. The flood of immigration is beginning to tax the assimilative power of the republic, and the time has arrived when more restrictive regulations are desirable and necessary.

ROUND ABOUT NEW YORK.

Hipples on the Current of Life in the Metropolis.

Unable to expand his talents in the envying environments of St. Joe, a Missouri lad of 15, answering to the name of Richard Murphy, blew into the big city and cut a large swath until the police took him in. The special talent of the young Missourian was showing worthless checks for cash, a business in which he displayed the nerve of a Missouri train robber. Murphy is a penman. His signature to a check is a business looking one, and written in an easy and apparently quick flowing hand. The writing in the body of the check is more in keeping with that of a boy of 15. This difference in writing led to the belief that the certificate contained the writings of two persons. On the other hand, it is said that Murphy writes "three hands."

Murphy was asked who originated his check scheme. "Oh, I guess I'll say nothing about that," he replied, with a wave of his gloved right hand. "We'll meet things as they come. Keep still and then there's no explaining afterward is the wisest way, isn't it, now, truly?"

When all the worthless checks that "Little Dick" has left in his trail are gathered they will make a formidable pile for a lengthy spindle. A bank official said that he had heard of several being held in New York City, while there are a few in Philadelphia and additional ones in Washington.

The manner in which the people of New York have fallen back upon gas as a fuel because of the scarcity of coal, is shown in the annual report of the Consolidated Gas company. The consumption of gas ran at times up to 80,000,000 cubic feet per day. The sales in the year amounted to 18,328,478,000 cubic feet, or increase of 1,915,000,000 cubic feet, or 11.65 per cent over the previous year. The increase during the last three months of 1902 was as high as 20 per cent, and in some districts to 30 per cent over the corresponding period of the previous year. The company sold in the twelve months 42,632 gas ranges, stoves and heaters.

Forty-five million dollars of Uncle Sam's gold was in danger of being melted down in one solid lump by a fire in the United States assay office, next door to the treasury, last Thursday. It came from a slight explosion of gases used in the laboratory and created dense and suffocating smoke, but the firemen got the blaze under control in a short time.

The damage was small, mostly to the furniture and fittings of the office. The \$45,000,000 was in gold bars. The building being old and largely of wood, was at one time in danger of destruction. The second floor of the building and the attic above were entirely burned out. An entire new roof will have to be put on, and it is estimated \$5,000 will hardly cover the damage.

Secretary Shaw a week ago recommended to congress that \$750,000 be appropriated to build a new assay office, as the building was old and unfit for the use it was put to.

Mrs. Theresa Lynch, "the queen of diamonds," is dead at her home, 48 Central park, west, having succumbed to a stroke. Her jewelry store at 1 Union square has become famous.

Mrs. Lynch was a thorough business woman and died wealthy. It is said that there was not better judge of precious stones in America. She was the daughter of an old and largely of wood, was at one time in danger of destruction. The second floor of the building and the attic above were entirely burned out. An entire new roof will have to be put on, and it is estimated \$5,000 will hardly cover the damage.

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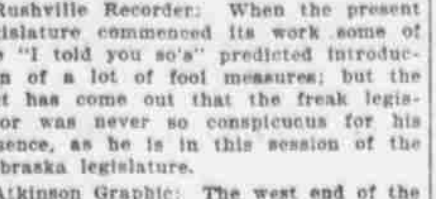
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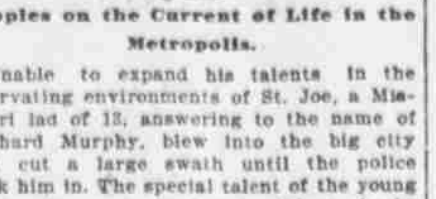
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