

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING.

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STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION. State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss. I, George B. Schuch, 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, 1903, was as follows:

Table with 3 columns: Copy number, Circulation, Total. Rows include numbers 1 through 16, with circulation figures ranging from 30,220 to 30,580.

Net total sales, 343,354. Less unsold and returned copies, 10,421. Net average sale, 30,220.

Water is making a strenuous effort to keep even with the record of fire in the destruction of human life.

Governor Herrick of Ohio enters the office backed by a bigger popular majority than any of his illustrious predecessors.

Omaha property owners cannot expect a city tax rate this year as small as the last, but they do not want it a bit bigger than absolutely necessary.

It is intimated that the Omaha post-office plum will drop in Washington the coming week. Only one out of a dozen and more applicants can escape disappointment.

Omaha business men report that, comparatively speaking, the year 1904 has started out under favorable auspices. If it will only keep the pace, 1904 will be another record-breaker.

And now it is said that Pope Pius was only joking when he expressed his disapproval of the low-cut gowns for receptions attended by church dignitaries. The fashionable dressmakers will breathe easier.

It is certainly a poor town in which a local theater has not been ordered closed for inspection. And the inspected building is yet to be reported which did not need improvement in the way of devices for the protection of life.

Prof. Willis Moore wants an extra appropriation for his weather bureau service, but he does not give any assurance that the improvement of his forecasting machinery will improve the brand of weather forecasted.

If Japan and Russia do not hurry up they may be crowded from the first page by Bulgaria and Turkey. The Macedonian situation begins to show signs of life, and this, too, in the absence of the professional war correspondents.

An Omaha minister boasts that he was the first person to teach the doctrine of evolution from the pulpit. It is not so long ago that a preacher openly subscribing to the doctrine of evolution would have been subject to immediate trial for heresy.

District Attorney Summers now sees no reason why he should not have a life tenure of the office he holds and he stands ready at any time in the future that his grip on the emoluments is threatened to secure the indictment of anyone who tries to procure his removal.

The death of General John B. Gordon, following so fast after that of General Longstreet, takes away two shining lights among the survivors of the warriors of the confederacy. General Joe Wheeler will now have to be the lone star until the curtain is rung down on him.

There's no difficulty in telling the man for whom Nebraska's delegation will be for president in the republican national convention, but the only thing about Nebraska's delegation in the democratic national convention that can be foretold with certainty is the one man it is sure to vote against.

Not a single city of metropolitan pretensions depends upon incandescent electric lamps for street illumination. The incandescent electric lamps have been repeatedly tried, but never given satisfactory service because the illuminating power diminishes steadily as the carbons become exhausted.

The sheepsman of the west true to their instinct to be the first on the field have decided at the last hour to call their convention twenty-four hours ahead of the convention in which the cattlemen will have a voice. It is probable that the noise of oratory and not of guns will be heard in protest.

THE PEOPLE NOT DISTURBED.

The New York Journal of Commerce remarks that the probable candidacy of Mr. Roosevelt will be regarded as a disturbing element in the general financial situation by men who favor monopolistic methods in the conduct of industry and in the management of railroads, and who resent the rigid application of the laws of the United States to the execution of their favorite projects, but it brings with it no thought of apprehension regarding the future of the material development of the country to the great body of the American people.

This correctly states the situation. The people are not at all disturbed regarding the probable candidacy of President Roosevelt, because the great majority of them have implicit confidence that if continued in the presidency his best efforts would be directed to promoting the material development of the country and thus benefiting all the people. He has shown a most earnest interest in whatever would contribute to our material development and there is not the least reason to suppose that he would be less devoted to this if re-elected. Rather may it be assumed that he would, if possible, be more solicitous for the industrial and commercial advancement of the nation. As to the opposition of men who favor monopolistic methods, it will perhaps amount to less than some apprehend, but in any event it should operate to strengthen Mr. Roosevelt with the people. The fact that he has insisted upon the application of laws enacted in the interest of the people is his strongest claim to popular support.

AGAIN RUSSIA HAS GIVEN ASSURANCE TO THE POWERS THAT SHE WILL RESPECT THE RIGHTS ANY NATION HAS IN MANCHURIA UNDER TREATY WITH CHINA. This, it is said, removes from the negotiations one of the points upon which Japan had insisted and on which she counted for the moral support of other nations, particularly the United States and Great Britain. Will Russia adhere to the promise, in the event that she fastens her grip so firmly upon Manchuria as to be in a position to completely dominate that territory? This is a question that naturally arises in view of the failure of other promises, given with apparently as much sincerity as the present one.

The issue between Russia and Japan is due to the failure of the Russian government to fulfill the promise it gave the powers to evacuate Manchuria. It fixed a date at which the evacuation should begin, but when the time arrived an excuse was made for retaining its troops in Manchuria, it having in the meantime increased its military force there and its naval power in contiguous waters. The Russian pretext for remaining in Manchuria was that the Chinese population could not be trusted to maintain order. There has not appeared to be any substantial ground for such a fear, though had it been necessary to Russia's purpose her representatives in Manchuria could easily have stirred up trouble and probably would not have hesitated to do so. Of course the powers must accept the latest Russian promise as being in good faith, but it is doubtful if any of them will feel confident of its being kept any longer than Russia is in a position where she thinks herself able to renounce it. The reported acknowledgment that Manchuria is Chinese territory is really of no great value in face of the fact that Russia is persistently strengthening her hold upon that territory and it is plainly seen to be her purpose to take complete possession of it. If permitted to accomplish this she will then take steps, it is not to be doubted, to absorb the trade of the territory, which is one of the richest portions of the Chinese empire.

Possibly this last assurance to the powers will have a favorable effect upon the pending negotiations, but it will not affect the nearly universal sympathy with Japan, in the sincerity of whose contention and aims all nations have entire confidence.

THE LATEST INFORMATION REGARDING THE ATTITUDE OF DEMOCRATIC SENATORS TOWARD THE CANAL TREATY IS THAT AT LEAST FIFTEEN OF THEM WILL VOTE FOR ITS RATIFICATION. It is stated that there will be no democratic caucuses on the subject, every senator being left free to vote as he pleases. In this matter Mr. Gorman's leadership has failed completely and the failure has damaged his prestige to no small extent. The first announcement of his Panama policy brought a chorus of disapproval from the south and it has grown stronger every day. Some of the southern legislatures have passed resolutions directing their senators to vote for the treaty, while in other states public sentiment has manifested itself in other ways. The Atlanta Constitution voices the general feeling in the south when it says that the "material interests of this section are to be more directly benefited by an isthmian canal than are those of any other part of the union, and it is eminently appropriate that southern legislatures and southern commercial organizations should lead the way in official expression favoring prompt and positive action by congress."

That paper declares that if the Panama treaty is not ratified, throwing the whole problem again into the uncertain sea of negotiation, "the youngest man now alive will perhaps not live to see the waters of the two oceans linked by an isthmian connection between North and South America."

It is utterances of this character from their southern constituents that have caused a number of senators from that section to decide upon voting for the ratification of the treaty. As to those who, like Gorman and Morgan, are laboring to keep alive Colombia's resentment and make it harder to reconcile her to the inevitable, they are gaining nothing but odium for themselves

by fanning enmity to their own country and playing into the hands of the secret influences which doubtless are co-operating against the treaty. The sole encouragement of Colombia in keeping up its futile demonstrations comes from the democratic senators who are opposing the treaty. As an eastern paper remarks, the same spirit that encouraged the Filipinos to keep up their resistance, which cost so many lives and so much treasure, delayed the pacification of the islands so long and increased the difficulties of the task of setting them in the way of progress, is now at work making as much trouble for the government as possible.

Had the senate democrats taken the common sense view of the Panama matter that the leader of the house democrats expressed, that being an accomplished fact it must be treated as such, the treaty would have been promptly ratified and very likely the threats from Colombia would have ceased. At all events the question of constructing the canal would be settled and the government could proceed with the great enterprise. If the democratic senators who are delaying action on the treaty imagine that they are doing their party any good by such a course they are woefully mistaken. On the contrary they could do hardly anything more certain to injure the party.

AN UNNECESSARY DEMAND. The Water board has passed a formal resolution making requisition upon the city council for a water tax for the coming year that will produce \$25,000. Most careful inquiry into the conditions surrounding the pending proceedings to acquire the water works fails to show any necessity for this demand.

The ostensible reason for asking for \$25,000 for the water fund at this time is that the board expects the water plant will have been acquired before the year has ended and that this money would be handy for use in carrying along the current expenses until the revenues from water rentals accrue. It is plain that some such fictitious argument is needed to support the requisition because the combined salaries and other expenses of the six members of the Water board and its paid secretary do not exceed \$4,000, and there is no possibility under the law of using the surplus to pay the accumulating hydrant rentals for which the water company is securing judgments against the city.

As a matter of fact, if there were any reasonable expectation that the receipts from the water works would not counterbalance the current expenses for maintenance and interest and also contribute something to be laid aside as a sinking fund, its purchase would certainly be a bad financial investment. The pretense that money is needed to anticipate revenue from water rentals after the plant is acquired is not borne out by the facts, as the water rentals are constantly coming due and are subject to monthly collection, while the bills incurred in connection with the plant's operation are also rendered only monthly. The moment the city should acquire the plant it should at the same time have acquired a source of revenue certainly sufficient to meet all running expenses and to provide for the interest fund, upon which demands are made only at long periods of six months in the year.

It is true that the law passed by the last legislature, creating the Water board undertakes to vest that body with absolute power over the water fund levied limited to \$100,000 per year and making the formal request mandatory upon the council when it comes to enact its annual tax levy ordinance. We doubt very much, however, whether it was intended that the powers thus conferred should begin until after the water works should have been acquired and believe no court would construe it to be unconditional.

Why, then, should the property owners of Omaha be required to submit to a needless tax to the extent of at least \$20,000 on the contingency that the water plant may become municipal property within the year and the revenue from the plant may fall short of its expenses? The levy of a \$25,000 water tax for the coming year means the addition of a half mill to the tax rate, which is sure to be large enough without it; and further than that, that the money will either be dissipated on unnecessary expenditures or \$20,000 of the \$25,000 will be idle in the banks drawing a petty 2 per cent interest. It is sincerely to be hoped the members of the Water board will see their mistake and reconvene at once and revise their requisition.

The bunco game which the local hyphenated paper has been playing on liquor dealers and druggists is strikingly illustrated by the fact that it is still publishing the announcements of its blackmailed victims after their licenses or permits have been granted by the police board on certificates of publication in The Bee. Not a single liquor dealer or druggist who published his notice in The Bee this year or any previous year has ever been refused his license on account of defective publication. The law requires publication in the paper of largest circulation, to which The Bee has always made good its claim. The payment of money for the publication of license applications in other papers is nothing but the payment of "hush" money.

Postmaster General Payne urges upon congress the enactment of an early day of some system of postal checks for facilitating the transmission by mail of small sums which now go in the form of postage stamps, to the great annoyance and inconvenience both of the senders and the receivers. The growth of purchases by mail has been so tremendous in the last few years that the postoffice is an indispensable agency for the sale of large quantities of goods. This being the case, it ought to be made to perform the function in the most efficient manner possible.

The truth is, thoughtful people of Nebraska have cause to regret that Senator Dietrich did not continue to act as governor to the end of his gubernatorial term after he had been elected to the United States senate. Had he not resigned the governorship we would have saved the reign of Savagery in the executive office, the Bartley pardon scandal and a lot of other things discreditable to the state.

If anything turns up in congress that can be turned to political account in the great game of president making, we may be sure the opportunity will not be lost on one side or the other. The legislation that runs the congressional gauntlet in the face of the presidential campaign without partisan opposition must be meritorious indeed.

The Bricklayers' union is the latest organization to attempt to do away with strikes. The bricklayers practically control the building trades and all people hope that they may find a way to avoid the periodical suspension of work. The labor strike, like wars between nations, is viewed most lightly by those having the least to lose.

The postal deficit for the year reported by Postmaster General Payne ran a trifle over \$4,500,000. To Uncle Sam this is a mere bagatelle, but we do not know any other government that could look upon a deficit of that size in a single branch of the service with equanimity.

If the refusal of the railroads to grant passes to shippers of live stock would result in a corresponding decrease in the charge for shipment few stock shippers would object. The present rule practically results in adding the price of the fare to the cost of transportation.

Why Russia Hesitates. Philadelphia North American. If Russia really wants to grab everything in sight she will find it profitable to retain the services of two or three ex-officers in Philadelphia.

An Annoying Discovery. St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Congress complains that government is carried on without it. It saves time, Congress may yet become as useless as the British House of Lords.

Watch and Wait. St. Louis Globe-Democrat. In the event of a prolonged war in the Orient the fact may be demonstrated that Uncle Sam made a very judicious investment when he hooked on to the Philippines.

An Old Sore Nankles. Indianapolis News. President Baer of the coal trust is, of course, opposed to the nomination of Roosevelt; but he considers him "a dangerous man." He actually talked back to the coal barons and hammered the table with his fist!

An Old Sore Revamped. New York Tribune. Gentlemen who talk about America's "race" into what politics would do well to refresh their memories of our history of a hundred years ago. If we were not in world politics then, it would be interesting to know why not.

How China Must Feel. Detroit Free Press. With Great Britain trying to steal Tibet, Japan trying to steal Korea, Russia trying to steal Manchuria and Germany trying to steal anything that is not stalked down, China must feel like a minority stockholder in the United States Shipbuilding company.

Overworked Government Clerks. Chicago Record-Herald. There is consternation among government clerks at Washington because they will in future be required to work seven hours a day, with only two months' leave on full pay per annum. As a taskmaster Uncle Sam is getting to be just too horrid for anything.

Prince or Pauper. Springfield Republican. Under concentrated monopolistic operation the iron and steel industry shows no abatement of the extraordinary fluctuations in activity which were characteristic of it in the days before the trust. It is now, as then, either prince or pauper, either way up or way down; and thus it exploded another cherished theory in regard to the trust organization of industry. This huge corporation, the wonder and inspiration of the later trust period, is now among its most bitter disappointments.

FOREST PRESERVATION. Will the West Heed the Lessons of Eastern Forestry? Boston Transcript. Reports of the lumber cut in the west show that the paper making concerns of the country are turning their attention to Wisconsin in this country, notwithstanding the enormous quantity used by the paper mills, to maintain a pulp supply indefinitely, provided proper reforestation is carried out. Here, however, is the rub. The customary method of the pulp mill owner who is seeking a supply of spruce is to buy the stumpage and cut off the timber indiscriminately, allowing the denuded land to grow up with any species of wood that happens to be left. Hard woods commonly succeed soft woods on deforested areas, and vice versa, and therefore a spruce forest cut down is not naturally renewed for many years. The experience of the eastern paper mills, which have cut over most of the available area of spruce forest, is likely to be that of Wisconsin, where the system of reforestation has been insignificant compared with the tremendous slaughter of the forests.

The west should take time by the forelock and insist, by legislation if necessary, upon proper methods of cutting and reforestation. The state has an interest in the preservation of its forests which is paramount to the right of the private land holder. Here in the east what is being done is largely in the way of locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. With the great forest areas in Minnesota and Wisconsin yet untouched these states should adopt a forest policy before it is too late to make it of any value. Denudation should be made impossible without some reforestation. The greatest benefit, however, will be derived from the cutting in such a manner as to make denudation impossible, and the state can do this now better than later.

ARMY GOSSIP AT WASHINGTON.

Current Events Gleaned from the Army and Navy Register. Secretary Root has renewed his circular imposing restrictions upon officers and employes in the matter of publicity. It is simply a repetition of provisions of similar circulars of 1894 and 1895, with this additional paragraph: "Chiefs of bureaus are primarily responsible for the official records of the War Department pertaining to their respective bureaus and under their immediate control, and no information specially prepared from the records of any bureau should be furnished to any person not connected with the department without the antecedent authority of the secretary of war."

In the list of army promotions which result in the retirement of Lieutenant General Young, there would have been a third brigadier general had General G. M. Randall consented to retire as a major general, and in that event Colonel E. H. Crowder, a legal advocate, would have been advanced. He will warrant the payment of a pension, however, being assured of advancement to the higher grade on the retirement of General Gillespie, the latter reaching the age limit on October 7, 1905, one day before General Randall.

The changes add to existing vacancies on the general staff, so as to make details necessary in the case of two colonels, one lieutenant colonel, one major and one captain. The new vacancies are created by the promotion of Colonel MacKenzie and Major Knight of the engineers and Captain Gibson of the ordnance department. This is assuming the detail of General Gillespie to the place of assistant chief of staff.

It is interesting to know in connection that the appointment of Colonel J. P. Story to be chief of artillery, that he takes a former lineal position in relation to the two senior colonels, Charles Morris and S. M. Mills. These three officers were graduates of the military academy in the class of 1881. At that time the order of graduation placed Story first, Mills second and Morris third. The system of regimental promotion in the old days operated to reverse the list, placing Morris first, Mills second and Story third. There is not likely to be much change in policy by reason of the suggestion in the position of chief of artillery. Colonel Story has been in close touch with artillery corps matters and the virtue of his position as commander of the Artillery school and president of the artillery board, he has been frequently consulted by the Washington authorities. He therefore comes to his duties in the War Department with an unusual familiarity with the tasks devolving upon him and the projects of his arm of the service.

Two brigadier generals had the opportunity to go on the retired list as major generals and declined the offer. They are General John F. Weston, commissary general, and General A. W. Greely, chief signal officer. Both officers chose to discharge their duties at the head of their respective corps in preference to going on the retired list with added rank.

The promotion of Colonel F. S. Dodge to be paymaster general was at the instance of Secretary Root. General Young and General Chaffee, all of whom thought he should discharge the duties of head of the department, inasmuch as he has until September 11, 1906, to serve before retirement for age. The most formidable candidate senior to Colonel Dodge was Colonel C. C. Johnston, who has been on duty in Washington and who will undoubtedly become paymaster general on the retirement of Dodge. Colonel Johnston does not retire until January 1, 1908. Colonel Dodge's promotion is a recognition of a long and faithful service which has been marked by notable gallantry in the field. He has received the Order of the Medal of Honor and the Medal of Merit, and has been commended for his gallant and intrepid conduct in the rescue of Major Thornburgh's command in 1879 under circumstances which displayed the alertness and intrepidity of the officer.

Vacancies in the staff corps are created by virtue of the promotions to the extent of three in the infantry, one in the general department and two in the adjutant general department, the officers to be transferred back to line duty being Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Williams and F. A. Smith and Majors A. C. Sharpe and Edward Davis.

A tentative revision of the Articles of War has been prepared by the general staff and issued for further amendment. The authors of the revision are General G. B. Davis, judge advocate general of the army, and Colonel E. H. Crowder, judge advocate, member of the general staff.

An interesting chapter of the history of the campaign in China against the Boxers in 1900 is disclosed in the case before the accounting officers of the Treasury of Brigadier General Charles F. Humphrey, quartermaster general, United States army, who has been relieved of his duties as quartermaster of our troops in China. It appears that on July 12, 1900, certain houses in Tientsin were occupied by United States marines as headquarters and as barracks. These houses had been deserted by the owners or occupants by reason of the fire started by the Chinese, and, according to the endorsement of Colonel Meade, who was at that time in command of the marines, were tendered to him for the use of himself and his command free of rent on condition that the houses should be protected by them against theft and damage.

After the capture of the walled city, Colonel Meade was approached by a man who asked him to affix his signature to some paper in order that the owners and former occupants of said houses might recover the same. The man stated that he was Colonel Meade declined to do so, in view of the agreement. On July 27, 1900, Colonel Meade was relieved of the command of the marines at Tientsin and ordered home. Subsequent to his departure the matter of the houses was again taken up and it having been shown to the satisfaction of General Chaffee, who was in command of our forces before Tientsin, that the offer made to Colonel Meade of the houses free of rent was made without proper authority, General Chaffee ordered Colonel Humphrey to make an equitable settlement of the claim. The payment thus made by Colonel Humphrey, amounting to \$81.32, was disallowed by the auditor of the War Department on the ground that it was not a proper charge against the army appropriation. "Barracks and quarters," and because the secretary of the navy in view of the statement of Colonel Meade declined to approve the payment or allow it to be charged to the appropriations for the marine corps. The comptroller says: "If it be true, as stated by Colonel Meade, that the consideration for the occupancy of said houses was the protection to be given them, the record and the facts in the case show that the agreement was not carried out in good faith by the United States. According to a joint proclamation issued by the officers of the allied forces before Tientsin, there was no warfare existing between this country and the empire of China. Our troops were there merely to aid in the suppression of an insurrection and to afford protection to the lives and property rights of our citizens residing there. Under such circumstances it can not be contended that the agreement was not carried out in good faith by the United States. 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