

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

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LO, THE POOR HOMESTEADER. There is altogether too much solicitude in the congressional lobby and in congress for the poor homesteader. Not many years ago the Burlington railroad was reminded that it had over-reached itself by more than 200,000 acres in the selection of its land grant in Nebraska, and as the road had given warranty deeds to the purchasers, it became responsible for making good the titles. In due time the Burlington lobby invaded congress and secured the introduction of a bill for the relief of the poor homesteaders who had bought its lands, and congress, in its proverbial generosity to the poor homesteader, passed the bill, and the Burlington was relieved from paying back more than \$2,000,000 to the poor homesteader.

The same solicitude for the poor homesteader has been manifested within the past few weeks in the congressional lobby. These friends of the homesteaders, paying their own hotel bills and incidental expenses, express grave fears lest the poor homesteader who wants to take advantage of the proposed opening of the Rosebud and Crow Indian reservations to settlement should be crowded out by the land seeker who is able and willing to pay more than the average price if these lands are disposed of at public sale to the highest bidder.

These disinterested friends of the poor homesteader feel sure that the interests of the moneyless homesteader would be served much better if lands worth \$20 an acre were distributed by lot for \$3 an acre, without favor or discrimination. This sounds very plausible and appeals very strongly to popular sympathy, but there must be a darky hidden in that woodland somewhere.

The distribution of public lands without favor or discrimination for the benefit of the poor homesteader is something unheard of in these western parts. When it comes to distributing lands by lot the chances are that somebody with a big pull will pull out the capital prizes, while lo, the poor homesteader will draw the blanks. The argument that moneyless homesteaders will make better settlers than men who have means to pay for their land may draw tears from the eyes of some, but it would draw broad smiles from the mouths of others. It is an iridescent dream, if not a delusion, and that is why President Roosevelt has not been converted to the full advantage of the "without favor" distribution plan.

RURAL DELIVERY EXPANSION.

Rural free delivery was inaugurated under republican administration and has proved a decided success. The system has had a rapid expansion and is still being extended. Three years ago the pay roll of the rural delivery service was \$3,500,000. The postoffice appropriation bill now provides for \$21,000,000 and it is stated that the pay of carriers for the coming year, which is to be increased, will be \$3,300,000 more than that of the current year.

There are men in congress and perhaps some outside who are disposed to object to the expansion and necessarily the increasing expense of the rural delivery service. They are not in sympathy with popular sentiments, at least in those sections of the country where the service is in operation and its advantages and benefits are experienced and appreciated. There is no question that the rural communities are deriving great good from this service and the fact that it costs something more than is received from it will not be permitted to interfere with its further extension. It is a branch of our postal system the establishment of which has been amply justified by the results and it is the belief of those who know most about it that it will in time be self-sustaining.

JAPAN'S REPLY TO RUSSIA.

The reply of the Japanese government to the charge of Russia that it had violated international law and consequently should be subjected to the condemnation of the civilized world, will command universal attention and we think will be very generally regarded as eminently judicious, fair and altogether adequate.

The statement begins with the assertion that Russia's own actions answers her charges and proceeds to point out, what is familiar to all who have kept track of events in the far east, the course pursued by Russia in strengthening her position in Manchuria and preparing for possible military resistance to her perfectly evident purpose to maintain, at every hazard, her hold upon the Chinese territory of which she had taken possession. The Japanese government points out that by reason of Russia's warlike preparations it was made evident that that power never entertained any sincere desire for peace, unless, indeed, it was permitted to have its own way regardless of the interests of other powers. This is a fact that is capable of the most complete and conclusive demonstration. The unqualified promise of Russia to evacuate Manchuria was utterly disregarded and Russian military power in that region was steadily augmented. Every effort was made by the czar's government to defeat the policy regarding the open door in Manchuria. Russian intrigue was constantly active in Korea with a view to inducing that country to take sides against Japan. Dilatory tactics were employed in diplomacy to enable Russia to strengthen her position in the far east, so as to dictate terms or be ready for war if her conditions were not accepted.

All the world is familiar with this. For months and months, while professing to desire peace, the Russian preparations for war went on. She steadily fortified her posts in Manchuria and added to her naval and military forces there. She repeated assurances that were never made with any sincerity or intended to be fulfilled and went on with her warlike operations. Her every action for months was a virtual challenge. It was unmistakable notice to

Japan and to the world that Russia had no intention to relinquish her hold upon Manchuria, that she was willing to fight to maintain her position there, and that she was really indifferent to the interests of Japan or any other power in that region.

It was this conduct and unmistakable policy on the part of Russia that forced Japan to terminate futile negotiations and inaugurate a conflict in which her very existence is involved. As to the course of Japan in beginning hostilities in advance of a declaration of war, her defense is ample and we think will not be questioned by any government. There are precedents for it, even Russia furnishing one, and it is now generally recognized, as the Japanese statement sets forth, "that a declaration of war is not an indispensable prerequisite to the opening of hostilities." On the whole the Japanese reply to the Russian arraignment is clear and convincing and we believe will be so regarded by the civilized world.

BETWEEN DEVIL AND DEEP SEA.

The wisdom of purchasing the water works of Omaha was the text of a recent address delivered by State Senator Howell before the Orchard Hill Improvement club. While nobody questions the wisdom of acquiring the water works of Omaha, a great many clear-headed business men and taxpayers seriously question the wisdom of the compulsory water works purchase bill, fathered and championed by Mr. Howell.

The municipal ownership and operation of the water works was contemplated by the city government of 1881 that made the original contract for the erection of the water works, when it inserted into the contract the provision that the city reserved to itself the privilege of taking the works at the end of twenty years by an arbitration appraisal without allowing the company anything for the franchise. The framers of the charter for cities of the metropolitan class also reserved to the city the right to acquire the water works by purchase under condemnation process, in the exercise of which the city would have enjoyed the right to reject the appraisal, if deemed excessive.

But in the sublime wisdom of Mr. Howell and the Douglas delegation to the late legislature these several processes for acquiring the works were irrelevant and immaterial. In their wisdom they proposed to solve the problem spontaneously by clothing the governor with power to appoint a water board without the aid or consent of the taxpayers or water consumers of Omaha and regardless of cost or consequences. And here is precisely where Mr. Howell fell down.

Instead of expediting the purchase of the works he has managed to delay it. Instead of placing Omaha in position to get the best terms he has managed to put Omaha at the mercy of the water company. Instead of leaving Omaha in position to reject the appraisal, if deemed too high, he has placed the water works company in position to collect by judgment in the federal courts the upset price awarded by the appraisers, even if it shall be \$6,000,000 or \$7,000,000, just as it has succeeded in forcing the payment of last year's by-drant by an order of the court levying a 1-mill water tax.

According to Mr. Howell, the water works plant in Omaha and Florence is not worth much more than \$3,000,000. Mr. Howell's estimate may be correct, but he does not tell us how the city is to get from under should the arbitrators appraise it for \$6,000,000 or \$7,000,000. How can the city have a judgment to pay the appraisers' award except by going into court and staying in court for several years? In the meantime the water works company will remain in full possession with all its contract rights to collect exorbitant hydrant rental and exact its schedule of private rates as fixed by the original ordinance of 1881.

For all this Omaha has to thank Mr. Howell and his sagacious associates on the legislative delegation. To the Orchard Hill Improvement club Mr. Howell's explanation must have seemed eminently satisfactory or its members would not have applauded him to the echo, but upon reflection the club may conclude that Mr. Howell's compulsory water works purchase bill is liable to cost Omaha hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars. It has left the city between devil and deep sea with the water-logged sea dog playing the old man of the sea.

Retail merchants from several Nebraska towns are sending in protests to Washington against the extension of the postal service to include a parcels post. They have an idea, no doubt, that the establishment of a parcels post would operate against them by encouraging purchases from the mail order houses in the larger cities. Whether this be true or not, the refusal of the government to handle packages which would come within the scope of parcels post results simply in turning the business over to the express companies, who are the main opponents of the proposed legislation. There is no good reason why our government should not do a parcels post business the same as the governments of the different European countries. The country retailers would share in the benefit and certainly be in no worse position for competition with the catalogue concerns than they now are.

The South Omaha Fire and Police board has saved up \$5,000 for a rainy day and just as soon as the surplus to its credit will warrant it proposes to erect a fireman's hall creditable to the town and sufficiently commodious to meet the wants of the fire department. In Omaha the police commission and the council are not barred by such trifles as a want of money or a charter prohibition of overlaps. They plunge

right ahead in spite of treasury deficits and trust to their ability to levy more taxes next year to make it up.

The position of chairman of the republican national committee is one of both honor and responsibility, but the influence it commands depends largely upon the character of the man who occupies it. It is safe to say that no one who has previously held this chairmanship was able to make himself as much of a factor in public affairs as the late Senator Hanna. No matter who may be his successor, he will encounter difficulty in measuring up to the standard of Chairman Hanna.

The fight for lower gas for Lincoln has received somewhat of a setback at the council meeting. That was to have been expected. In explanation of the backdown announcement is made that the company would reduce the price of gas if it could be done without it appearing that the company had been forced to make the reduction. The public lighting corporations in Lincoln as well as in Omaha have tender sensibilities that must not be shocked.

Really there is no more reason why the government should utilize the occasion of opening an Indian reservation to settlement to run a land lottery than that it should institute a bond lottery every time it wants to borrow money or operate an ordinary everyday lottery with cash prizes just to give the populace an exciting amusement.

A Farewell Pointer.

Just before washing his hands of all responsibility for the democratic party, Colonel Waterston threw open the door of the slaughter house and pointed sternly to the open grave beyond.

Value of Small Parks.

Small parks have a value not merely as business centers, but as spots of beauty, but as checks to fire. A square or so of open ground in Baltimore would have arrested the march of the flames and saved property worth millions.

Too Much of a Job.

An Iowa man is reported to have lost his mind for no other reason save his inability to reform the world. It is not a flattering commentary on his own community that he did not get beyond his native heat in his effort at world redemption.

Displaying Prosperity.

France is asking the United States government to reduce the tariff on champagne. Not much of champagne were as cheap as California port, who would want to drink it? Some method must be left us by which we can display our prosperity.

The Past—Forget It.

It seldom makes a woman happy to have a gray-haired man come up to her at a party and greet her warmly as an old acquaintance and then start in on a pleasant reminiscence conversation about how he and she used to play together when they were boy and girl.

Theme for Comic Opera.

Here's a conceit that makes a business of insuring employers against robbery by employees. If champagne were as cheap as California port, who would want to drink it? Some method must be left us by which we can display our prosperity.

An Army Without Swear Words.

It is said that the Japanese language is absolutely free from any form of profanity. If so, it disposes of the popular idea that the practice of swearing and the art of good fighting are intimately associated, for the non-swearing Japanese have given the world proof that they are good fighters.

The Good Have Troubles, Too.

D. M. Parry, the pronounced foe of organized labor, has found that even the non-swearing Japanese have given the world proof that they are good fighters. D. M. Parry, the pronounced foe of organized labor, has found that even the non-swearing Japanese have given the world proof that they are good fighters.

A CONTRIBUTION TO HISTORY.

Mark Hanna and the First McKinley. In view of the fact that both President McKinley and Senator Hanna are no longer numbered with the living, it will not be improper to mention a fact, not widely known, which came under the observation of the editor of the Tribune in January, 1897. Mr. McKinley was the president-elect of the United States, but had not been inaugurated.

During a brief visit to Senator Hanna's house in Cleveland Mr. McKinley took occasion to speak of his relations to the manager of his campaign. He saw that the manager of the campaign was "Mark," as he familiarly called Mr. Hanna, whose constant friendship and unwavering loyalty to his political fortunes he could never forget. Mr. McKinley went on to say that he was perplexed in passing upon the question of whether he wished to call into his cabinet the man who had been so long and so faithfully a secretary of the treasury, but that in the opinion of the president-elect that office called for a different order of ability from that which Mr. Hanna possessed. While that gentleman had had long business experience and a knowledge of the world, he lacked practice and readiness in public speaking. A secretary of the treasury, said Mr. McKinley, was continually being called on to address public bodies, such as chambers of commerce, boards of trade, and industrial and other organizations, and he thought Mr. Hanna was a great advantage on such occasions because he was not a public speaker.

Mr. McKinley said further that he had proposed to take Mr. Hanna into the cabinet as postmaster general, but that the offer had been declined. The understanding of the promotion in another direction than accept any cabinet position, except that of secretary of the treasury. The difference of opinion between the two men was not followed by any impairment of good feeling on either side. Mr. Hanna was the more disturbed. Each had perfect confidence in the judgment and good will of the other, and up to the day of McKinley's death their warm friendship was never interrupted.

NATION'S BATTLE ARRAY.

People and Places Forced to the Front by War.

In his "Handbook of Modern Japan," Clements says: "On the seventeenth day of the first month if a male swallows seven and a female fourteen red beans they will be free from sickness all their lives; if one bathes at the hour of the dog on the tenth day, his teeth will become hard. A child begotten in the father's 4th year is supposed to be possessed of the devil. When such a child is about one month old it is, therefore, exposed for about three hours in some sacred place. Some member of the family then goes to get it and bringing it to the parents, says: 'This is a child whom I have found and whom you had better take and bring up.' Thus having fooled the devil, the parents receive their own child back."

"Away back in the early '80's," says a prominent electrician of Pittsburgh, "there came to me with introduction from the president of the company, a young Jap, and the note directed that he be given every opportunity to work in all the departments of the factory, so that he might be proficient in every branch. It was not a selling, always wore a grin and remained at the place about two years."

The teller of the story found out during these two years that the boy had been working as a lineman before he appeared at the factory. His name was O. He went back to his school only at Christmas time, by a present, was the electrical engineer reminded of him. Many years later the engineer was walled upon by three Japanese who wanted to know all about the very latest devices for telephones and telegraphs. They were electrical engineers and had been taught all they knew at the Imperial university in Tokio by Prof. OI, from whom they carried a letter of introduction to the engineer. They were imperial commissioners, and the engineer took all over this country explaining things. The brightest of the three was called Wachi and the others were Nakayama and Okonoto. They told their mentor that OI was now minister of posts and telegraphs in Japan, and this important position he now holds during war times.

"Phalax fancy pictures, the czar as one never seen by his people embedded in a platoon of guards, thus protected from the bullets of would-be-killers. To show how easily any king-killer could accomplish dastardly mission in St. Petersburg today," writes Gilsion Willets in Leslie's Weekly, "I may state that on Tuesday night I been a 'candidate' to the job, I could have shot his Imperial Majesty Nicholas II. The first such opportunity presented itself one evening as I drove in a drosky sled past the Winter Palace. In a second-story, corner window, directly over the guard stations below, in a room which at Petersburg is known as the czar's study, the monarch sat in a green-shaded lamp, reading. Some palace servant had neglected to lower the blinds, and there sat the master of 100,000,000 subjects in full view of the hundreds of drosky sleds that were passing and repassing in the quay, an easy mark for a snaphooter."

"The second opportunity was in the Nevski Prospekt, the widest street in the world, compared to which Broadway is an alley. Suddenly I saw every man in uniform—half the men in Petersburg wear uniforms—step to the edge of the sidewalk, face the roadway, and hold his hand to his cap in salute. The czar was coming. He was a bundle of furs in a troika, and an official who sat beside him was simply another bundle of furs. His troika, drawn by three magnificent work-horses, galloped at a rapid pace in true troika fashion, passing so close to my own drosky sled that I could see the smile lurking in his young, and by no means careworn, face. I even perceived that his beard was cut closer than appears in his photographs. Quickly I ordered my drosky driver to alight and to follow the troika. He shook his head and I insisted, 'Da, da!' (Yes, yes!) and flashed a gold piece. He then turned round and made the horse trot as only a Russian drosky horse can trot. I wanted another look at the most powerful human being before he disappeared. But I did not have time. An officer of some sort raised his hand to indicate that my driver was to stop."

Americanized Japs in New York City profess to discover a good many resemblances between their own language and English. The forty-seven sound elements of the Japanese tongue are about the same as the number recognized in English. The genders of Japanese nouns are three, and the numbers two, as in English. There are also three cases of nouns and three degrees of adjectives. Verbs are active, passive, and neuter, and they have five moods, as in English. If it does take five syllables to say "he" in Japanese, and if the language is pretty rich in polysyllables, Japanese numerals seem simple enough to an English-speaking person, and any one who has learned the numbers in the Japanese language will find simplicity itself. In fact, the Japs say that any industrious American of average ability ought to acquire a pretty good knowledge of the spoken Japanese tongue in about a year, and might do it in a good deal less time by an intensive method of study to acquire an oral reading knowledge of the language, with its immense vocabulary, in part borrowed from the Chinese, is a much more serious matter.

It is an instinct with the Japs to imitate everything they see that seems worth reproducing. A missionary a few years ago introduced a baby carriage, and let the "rickshaws"—an enlargement of the idea, adapted for pulling by a man—come into being. There are now 28,000 rickshaws in Tokio alone. The name signifies "man-power vehicle"—or, as a witty American suggested, "it might be translated 'polluted vehicle.'" It is the first step away from the carrying-litter into the epoch of the wheel. The dancers of Japan illustrated the graceful postures of Delaunay centuries before they were ever thought of on this side of the world. Another art for which the Asiatics are remarkable is tattooing, at which they are extremely expert, executing artistic and elaborate patterns with steel needles in sepi and vermilion. They even apply cocaine to prevent pain.

General Alexei Nicholavitch Kouropatkin, who is to be commander in chief of the Russian army in the east, has been minister of war since 1897. He is a man with a remarkable military record, having fought in the Pamirs in Turkestan, in Africa and in the war with Turkey, distinguishing himself especially at Plevna, where he was chief of staff under the renowned Skobeleff. He is now 55 years of age and comes of a noble family. At Paris, in 1874, he won the Legion of Honor for assisting in reorganizing the French cavalry, being the first Russian officer to gain that prize.

Advertisement for Royal Baking Powder. Text: THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR ROYAL BAKING POWDER. Absolutely Pure. IT IS A MATTER OF HEALTH.

John Stark won at least a certain kind of celebrity at Bennington, Vt., in revolutionary times.

SPIRIT OF THE STATE PRESS.

Norfolk News: It begins to appear that the World-Herald is not so much opposed to the Rockefeller contribution to the State university as it is to Chancellor Calkins.

Chicago Tribune: James A. Garfield and others. Nebraska Pioneer: Judge Munger is sending the Indian whisky booties to serve jail sentences in Knox county. If this county has to bear the burden it may be more ready to assist in breaking up this sort of traffic.

Lynch Herald: It looks to us like the World-Herald must hold an advertising contract with John D. Rockefeller. At least it is giving him more free advertising than the building he wishes to help build at the State university will do for some time.

Beaver City Tribune: Fourteen years ago the virtuous World-Herald and its proprietor were shouting against the prohibition amendment and advocating high license. The license money goes to the school fund, doesn't it? Whisky money for educational purposes any worse than coal oil money for educational purposes? And if taking Rockefeller's money for the university will impel people to apologize for Rockefeller and his methods, does not taking saloon money follow the troika. He shook his head and I insisted, 'Da, da!' (Yes, yes!) and flashed a gold piece.

Papillon Times: Several Omaha preachers are endeavoring to make the people believe there is more social vice and wickedness within the city of Omaha than in any other city in America. 'Tis true that Omaha has a dark side, but we doubt very much if this city's dark side is any larger or darker than the shady places in any other cities we might name.

PERSONAL NOTES.

Many Massachusetts farmers have gone in for skunk farming for the sake of the valuable fur worn by the critics. Take care of the agents and the dollars will come quite natural.

The New York freeman who carried a 300-pound woman down a tall ladder from a burning building performed a more difficult feat than the soldiers who were first over the walls at Peking.

Baron Sternberg, the German ambassador, and Sir Mortimer Durand, the British representative, are regarded as the best after-dinner talkers among the foreign diplomats in Washington.

Senator Knute Nelson says that practically all the Norwegians in his state sympathize with Japan in its present oriental struggle. When Mr. Nelson was home not long ago a Scandinavian sage said to him: 'Well, Knute, we honor you for it. Washington I hope you will try to have President Roosevelt snuggle up to those little

Japs." The senator does not say whether he has done as requested, but it is to be inferred from what he says that he at least has snuggled.

Dr. Charles J. Chamberlain of the department of botany of the University of Chicago, has received from the Botanical Society of America a grant to defray the expenses of a trip to Jalapa, Mexico, for the purpose of studying cacti.

Commander Booth Tucker of the Salvation Army is trying to induce Senator Patterson to introduce in congress a bill providing for the colonization of arid sections of the southwest, after their irrigation, where immigrants may settle and be assisted by the national government to take up homesteads.

Edward H. Lenox, who as a boy of 16 drove the first ox team that ever reached the Columbia river from across the plains, has just celebrated his seventy-seventh birthday at his home at 88 East Eighth street, Oakland, Cal. In spite of his age and the many hardships he has passed through, Lenox is well preserved and still earns his bread by his own labor. Lenox was one of 230 men, women and children who started from Prattville, Cal., April 4, 1861, for the long journey across the plains. They had 12 wagons drawn by oxen. They reached the Dalles in October. Young Lenox drove the leading team and in that way was first to arrive at the Columbia river.

A SMILE OR TWO.

"When a man is willing to go 'round town' to give suckin' advice, said Uncle Jerry, 'let 'em stick it in! Much account that's why 'ere good advice is so scarce.'"—Washington Star.

"It is claimed that vodka will fill a Russian with courage when all else fails. 'These must be busy days for the vodka factories,'—Chicago Record-Herald.

The average man wonders why a hen always cackles when she has laid an egg, but whenever he does anything himself he always goes and tells everyone he meets about it. —Somerville Journal.

Mrs. (Japhin)—Which side does your husband take in this war? Mrs. (Highmore)—He doesn't tell me anything about it, but I suspect he's on the side of the Japanese. He is trying to break himself of saying "Great Peter!" —Chicago Tribune.

Mrs. (Tutty)—Dada! Mrs. Green leave her card! The New Mail—Yes, you left it, and I had to chase her. I must get it back to her. —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Harry—Were you born with a silver spoon in your mouth? Jerry—No, but I stumly recollect that I often got the handle of one stuck in my eye. —Detroit Free Press.

Jimmy—Ma, what is an archangel? Mother—An arch-angel, Jimmy, is a man who never hitches his coat. —Chicago Tribune.

"What is the best you can say of my book?" asked the author of a society novel. "Well, I might call it a bit of politeness," replied the conscientious reviewer. —Chicago Post.

A gentleman is never drunk unless he is staring eyes, the superstitious thinking it was the devil in disguise. He may be intoxicated, indeed, but if he is staring eyes, he is staring eyes. —Chicago Post.

"I will expel the sinful brute!" cried Brother Pettigrew, but in his hubbub the rambler's brow was buried in d. & g. A choir man threw a prayer stool to crush the warlike ram and landed it with vigor on poor Marvo's shins.

The parson said that kindness would subdue wild beasts and birds and moved toward the waiting pair with soft and delecting words.

Then came a dull and sickening thud! The pastor, whose hat had just been thrown off, was hat. Go ask the minister in whose lap he would be graciously.

Then sent they for the butcher man who slew the aged ram and fixed its meat with chemicals and found it for spring lamb. —Yale Record.

MARVO'S WICKED RAM.

James Barton Adams in Denver Post. Marvo had a hard-bored ram as black as an old crow and everywhere he went he would yell, 'Beware of Marvo's ram!' It was with her to Zion church one peaceful Sabbath day, and Marvo thought it would behave in a religious way. She wickedly counseled it on route and begged it to be good and rammy shook his whiskers as if to say he would obey. A deacon would them at the door and said 'Marvo, would be a sin to see a wicked beast at church, but rammy butted in! The deacon got a plexus punch that stretched him on the floor and the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

The congregation rubbernecked with widely staring eyes, the superstitious thinking it was the devil in disguise. A sister from her seat arose—she faint would hence depart—but got a clasp behind her back that almost broke her heart.

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Advertisement for Ayer's Sarsaparilla. Text: Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I am now past 74 years of age, and I know from experience that Ayer's Sarsaparilla is the best family medicine in the world.—T. S. ARMSTRONG, Kokomo, Ind. Always keep it in the house. That is what the doctors say, too. They know it is the best family medicine in the world. Sooner or later some one in the house will surely need it. It has such wonderful strengthening power. Ask your doctor what he thinks about this. \$1.00 a bottle. All druggists. J. C. Ayer Co., Lowell, Mass.