

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

E. ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

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THE GREAT WESTERN RAILROAD has been sold once more by Wall street gossip-mongers, but the deed of transfer has not yet been recorded.

Vanderbilt says he secured Morgan's horse by mistake. Such mistakes have been known to be fatal where horses were not worth nearly so much money.

Just wait till those Filipino natives return home from the St. Louis World's fair and won't they make the eyes of their friends and neighbors bulge with astonishment and incredulity.

Colorado's election contests in the courts promise to continue until the time for the next election, and the worst thing about it is that Sherman Bell's departure for Mexico is being delayed.

The St. Louis World's fair seems to have had as good luck with its president's day as did the Omaha exposition when it entertained the president—and that is saying the very best that could possibly be said.

The list of speakers candidates in Nebraska is steadily lengthening. As there are only ninety-one republicans in the house, however, we may be sure the number of candidates for speaker will not exceed that limit.

If that man alleged to have stolen \$50,000 from the Rothschilds can only arrange to be tried before the Des Moines judge who sentenced a man to three months in jail for defrauding people of \$250,000, he might make a good thing out of it.

A Russian editor says the statesmen of that country are not educated up to the point where constitutional government can successfully be adopted, but it is safe to say that when the time for constitutional government arrives the statesmen will appear.

President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor has been re-elected practically without dissent. Mr. Gompers is one of the few American labor leaders who has been able to retain the confidence of his people unshaken year in and year out.

The statue of Frederick the Great has been allowed to roam at large in the neighborhood of the White House now for over a week, but the liberties of the country have not yet been extinguished by either the bogie of militarism or the spirit of imperialism.

Ghosts have at last received official recognition in Scotland, a purchaser being released from his bargain because the house purchased was said to be haunted. Fortune tellers should fight shy of Scotland, as its many laws against witchcraft are only sleeping.

The business interests of the country will refuse to be stampeded by all this talk of tariff revision. They know that if the tariff is revised during President Roosevelt's administration it will be revised by its friends without sacrifice of the protective principle or ruthless injury to the country's industries.

The Washington correspondents are busy once more reconstructing President Roosevelt's cabinet for him. If the self-appointed cabinet builders could only agree among themselves the president might delegate the appointing power to them, but as it is he may have to constitute himself the court of final arbitration.

The manufacturers of Victoria have declared in favor of a preferential tariff between Great Britain and its colonies, but British manufacturers seem to have developed little since the days of George III, when it was considered almost criminal for the colonies to want to make for themselves anything they could buy in England.

THE LAND FRAUD CASES.

The government's prosecution of the land fraud cases is being vigorously carried on before the federal court at Portland, Ore., and the evidence thus far brought out shows that there has been enormous corruption in that branch of the public service. The statement of the United States district attorney involved women as well as men in the frauds charged and this was sustained in the testimony given on Saturday. The prosecuting attorney stated that he would prove that the accused had been guilty of conspiracy to defraud, of fraud and of forgery. Thus far he has made a very strong case.

The defense has taken the position, or rather raised the point, that if it be true that the accused had forged affidavits, the land titles issued in consequence were voidable at the discretion of the government; that if the titles were void the government had lost no land and that if no land had been stolen, no offense had been committed which the courts could punish. While the acts might have been improper and even immoral, they were not crimes defined by any statute. While this appears ingenious, it is not likely to receive judicial recognition. In referring to it the San Francisco Chronicle remarks that it suggests one good remedy for land frauds and that is the voiding of land titles fraudulently obtained. "This would put purchasers on inquiry. It may be assumed that the original purchasers know all the facts. In most cases the final purchasers have no doubt about the matter. The lumber companies and cattle companies who buy these lands from the land sharks are as sharp as anybody and if it were once made clear that no fraudulent title would ever be recognized by the government in the hands of alleged innocent third parties, the business of the land thieves would receive an immediate and salutary check."

Most interesting disclosures will undoubtedly be made as the trial of these land fraud cases progresses and it will be surprising if some of the accused do not find their way into the penitentiary. It is certain that no effort will be spared on the part of the government to send them there.

CHANGES IN PUBLIC SERVICE.

It is to be expected that there will be numerous changes in the public service at the beginning of the next administration, but that the president contemplates making a "new deal" all around, as intimated by some of the correspondents at the national capital is altogether improbable. It is easy to see that a policy of this kind would be very likely to have a disturbing effect upon the public business and it can be safely assumed that Mr. Roosevelt will do nothing that might bring this about, his desire being rather to improve the civil service of the government in all departments. In order to do this incumbents who have not a good record for efficiency will doubtless be replaced, but those who have performed their duties faithfully and well are not likely to be removed from their positions.

It is pointed out that the president's theory has always been that the offices of the public service divided themselves automatically into two or three classes. In the first stand those which require talents of a particular order, or learning or experience in certain definite lines. In a second class are positions which require only fair ability, ordinary education and good repute. It is thought that the diplomatic service is more likely than any other to undergo changes, though no satisfactory explanation is offered why this should be. It is the common understanding that this service is at present capable and efficient. Undoubtedly for some of the more prominent embassies and missions new men will be appointed, but it seems improbable that sweeping changes will be made. So with regard to the consular service those in it who have not proved faithful and efficient will be removed, but it is not at all likely that the president has any intention of replacing any one in this service who has a satisfactory record.

There is no question as to the purpose of Mr. Roosevelt to give the country a thoroughly clean, competent and honest public service. This he has amply and conclusively shown and it is needless to say that he will not be less solicitous and earnest in this direction during his next administration than he has been in the present one. To this end only capable and efficient officials will be retained in the public service and the number of those who do not meet this requirement cannot be very large.

ARGUMENT FOR THE CANTEN.

No more convincing argument for the restoration of the army canteen has been presented than is contained in the report of the paymaster general of the army. This shows the statistical side of the question, as exhibited in the reduced deposits of the soldiers, the reduction being unmistakably due to the extent of dissipation which has taken place since the post canteen was abolished. It appears that there was a steady increase in the soldiers' deposits up to July 1, 1901, at which time the statute abolishing the canteen went into effect. Deprived of this feature of the post exchange, the soldiers sought entertainment in drinking resorts outside the posts, where they squandered their money in riotous dissipation, to their physical and moral injury and necessarily to the impairment of discipline. Every post commander has borne testimony to this, most of them vigorously urging the restoration of the canteen.

Referring to the statistics presented by the paymaster general of the army the Army and Navy Register remarks that there is nothing to stand against this conspicuous and convincing record. "The only explanation which can be made of the falling off in the amounts entrusted to the pay department by the enlisted force is that the soldiers do not save their money as carefully as when the canteen was in full operation. This record is one of the numerous examples of the disasters which have followed the abandonment of the canteen." In view of the overwhelming evidence as to the unwisdom of that action, it would seem that there could be no hesitation on the part of congress in restoring the canteen feature of the post exchange.

DOING TOLERABLY WELL.

Notwithstanding occasional setbacks and periodic events that operate to discredit it, Omaha is still, to use a borrowed expression, "doing tolerably well."

Omaha is after all a pretty good place to live in and its population is steadily increasing instead of moving away. As compared with other cities of its size and class, Omaha will measure up well above the average and to the unbiassed observer intending to make his home in one of the half-dozen mid-western cities that are commonly supposed to be on a competitive plane Omaha will present the most irresistible attractions.

Omaha is made up of law-abiding citizens. They are law-abiding, but not puritanic. Occasionally a member of the community will go wrong and once in a while a professional criminal will invade its boundaries, but these are the exception and not the rule. Omaha takes pride in its homes, in its churches, in its public schools, in its clubs, in its places of wholesome amusement and in its public enterprises of all sorts. In all these lines of substantial progress Omaha is doing tolerably well.

There are many places where there is room for improvement. The regulation of the liquor traffic and the restriction of the social evil are two of them. The editor of The Bee several weeks ago, in a signed open letter, offered some pertinent suggestions on this score in the interest of practical reform. These suggestions embrace a more stringent enforcement of the provisions of the Stocumb law relating to the closing of saloons at midnight and on Sundays and the exclusion of the liquor traffic from the proscribed district. If these suggestions should be carried out Omaha, although doing tolerably well, would do still better.

The tax agents of the different Nebraska railroads continue to enjoy themselves by traveling from one county seat to another tendering the county treasurers 20 per cent less than the taxes levied against their roads and demanding receipts in full. Does anyone wonder what would happen if a passenger should present himself at one of the railroad ticket offices with a demand for a \$10 ticket for \$8 in cash, or if a shipper on having his freight bill presented by the collector should express an unwillingness to settle for more than 80 cents on the dollar? The traveler would be told to walk and the shipper would be advised that if he did not pay up before storage charges began to accumulate his goods would be put up at auction within a stipulated period and sold to the highest bidder to defray the cost of carriage. Yet these railroads have the audacity to profess disappointment that their efforts to scale down their taxes are not accepted.

What about an ordinance regulating the storage and sale of explosives in the city of Omaha, subjecting the traffic in such articles to inspection and requiring a public record of the parties buying the same and the amounts purchased? Such an ordinance would operate as a preventive upon bomb-throwing and at the same time as a safeguard for the lives of workmen employed in close proximity to dangerous combustibles, to say nothing of the protection it would be to firemen trying to put down conflagrations.

The announced intention of Governor Mickey to retain most of his appointees and to make changes only where he is satisfied he can make distinct improvements in the service will have a bearish effect on the enthusiasm of applicants for places under the state administration. But it will create no disaffection among taxpaying citizens who are satisfied that with perhaps a few exceptions the state institutions are pretty well managed.

Over in Chicago the police and detectives are all at sea over the murder of an automobile driver, evidently shot and killed by the man who hired the vehicle for a presumable outing. The newspapers of Chicago are certainly derelict in not charging the police of that city with gross incompetency because they did not bring the murderer in promptly within twenty-four hours after the crime was committed.

In the interval the fact should not be overlooked that the Board of Review is now in session, going over the city assessment roll upon which the tax burdens of our municipal government are to be apportioned for the coming year. No ground must be lost that has been gained in the fight for tax reform.

Omaha shows up in the weekly bank clearings statement with a nice record percentage of increase over the comparative figures of the corresponding week of last year. Omaha is going constantly forward in a business way.

The Lincoln Journal has now waked up to the fact that "that which detracts from the fair name of Omaha is an injury to us all." Then why does it strain itself to detract from Omaha's fair name at every opportunity?

The postscript to the autumn season may not be unwelcome to builders and public works contractors, but it does not set well with the merchants who would like to sell heavy ulsters and felt-lined boots.

Sir Gobbler has gotten past Thanksgiving, but he will not score safely until he survives the Christmas holidays.

Locating the Emphasis. Chicago Record-Herald. TEGGARTT writes to declare that he is a democrat still. We would respectfully suggest that the accent belongs on the still.

A MILLIONAIRE IN POLITICS.

Striking Example of What the Right Man Can Do When Moved to It. Philadelphia Record.

Among the popular democrats throughout the country who here and there survived the republican landslide, is one whose triumph has been almost completely overlooked, but whose case is none the less worthy of consideration. Thomas M. Osborne, the millionaire mayor of Auburn, N. Y., was re-elected on November 8 by a majority of about 100, though the city gave over 2,000 majority to Roosevelt.

The mention of a millionaire in politics usually turns the current of thought to the United States senate or to the class of wealthy contractors who have enriched themselves by intimate connection with active politicians. Outside of these two circles the millionaire is a rare avist in our political life, for when an office-holding freebooter has accumulated his pile he retires to enjoy it, leaving the field to be filled by some one more needy. But the man who has made his money before he entered politics, as the head of a well-known reaper company, and to him office holding is a financial loss rather than a gain.

During his two-year administration Mayor Osborne has brought to the direction of the city's affairs the same executive skill and acute business instinct that aid him in the conduct of his private business interests. His first act was to cut off extravagant expenditures and abolish sinecures. He furnished his pocket and engaged the services of a stenographer and clerk out of his own pocket, and supervised every detail of the city business with a watchful eye. As a result the tax rate has been reduced, notwithstanding an increase in the city's population. The man who can make money for himself from his private business operations at a natural angle he would seize a voter's hand, pull it to the region of his chin, give it a dainty little shake and then drop it.

When Dawson's managers observed this ceremony once or twice they took alarm. "Here they said to Dawson, 'don't you know how to shake hands in the good American way? If you want to get out on election day just keep up that idiotic handshake and you won't get as many votes in this district as Tom Watson will. You have got to shake hands with Dawson, pull your arm down to the level of your waistband and don't be afraid of hurting the other fellow's fat. That Washington handshake won't get you here on the plains.'"

Dawson had an awfully hard time getting rid of the fashionable form of greeting. In spite of the instructions of his managers he would find himself waving his hands in the neighborhood of his necktie. It finally got so bad that Dawson was obliged to resign with Dawson to see that he performed the operation in the true western style. If the watcher found the candidate getting his hand up in the air he would deliver a suggestive poke in the latter's ribs, whereupon the arm would come down to the proper place. Notwithstanding this handicap Dawson managed to overcome the 1902 majority of his opponent and won out by a small margin. He defeated Martin J. Wade, the lone democrat from Iowa.

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The worst feature of American government is not better or worse than other. And the people know it, too. The worst feature of the thing is that it is regarded, popularly, as inevitable and regular—that is to say, the people don't know any way to get honest legislatures and expect exactly what they get.

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MINOR SCENES AND INCIDENTS SKETCHED ON THE SPOT.

The case against Lieutenant Colonel William L. Pitzer, Twenty-eighth Infantry, who was charged with "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" in having killed Miss Caroline Harold, a clerk in the War department, has been closed with a sharp reprimand from Lieutenant General Chaffee.

The case aroused deep interest in and out of the army, not only on account of its unique features, but because of the precedent it would establish through the threatened court-martial. If Colonel Pitzer was court-martialed and dismissed the result would prove to army officers that the man who kills twice the man in their love making that is required of the civilian citizen. Failure to keep their plighted troth will expose them not only to a breach of promise suit, but to dishonorable dismissal from the army besides.

The man who shows good reasons for breaking their sacred word of honor. Court-martial proceedings were averted by Miss Harold's request for the dismissal of the case, as she wished to avoid further notoriety.

In his letter to Colonel Pitzer, General Chaffee stated that in deference to Miss Harold's request no further action would be taken. He concluded with a sharp reprimand for the language used by Colonel Pitzer in his reply to an inquiry from Inspector General Burton. The letter was dictated by Secretary Taft and a copy of it will be filed with Colonel Pitzer's efficiency record.

Iowa republicans in Washington tell what a narrow escape Albert L. Dawson, private secretary to Senator Allison, had in his campaign for congress in the Second district. Dawson, from a long residence in Washington, had acquired a fashionable handshake. Instead of the good-old-time handshake made with a whiskey pull to the region of his chin, give it a dainty little shake and then drop it.

When Dawson's managers observed this ceremony once or twice they took alarm. "Here they said to Dawson, 'don't you know how to shake hands in the good American way? If you want to get out on election day just keep up that idiotic handshake and you won't get as many votes in this district as Tom Watson will. You have got to shake hands with Dawson, pull your arm down to the level of your waistband and don't be afraid of hurting the other fellow's fat. That Washington handshake won't get you here on the plains.'"

Dawson had an awfully hard time getting rid of the fashionable form of greeting. In spite of the instructions of his managers he would find himself waving his hands in the neighborhood of his necktie. It finally got so bad that Dawson was obliged to resign with Dawson to see that he performed the operation in the true western style. If the watcher found the candidate getting his hand up in the air he would deliver a suggestive poke in the latter's ribs, whereupon the arm would come down to the proper place. Notwithstanding this handicap Dawson managed to overcome the 1902 majority of his opponent and won out by a small margin. He defeated Martin J. Wade, the lone democrat from Iowa.

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