

Red Tape at Panama is Making Uncle Sam Lose \$20,000 a Day

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PANAMA, April 28.—The editorial correspondence of The Bee—Uncle Sam is like to lose millions through the Miss Nancys of congress before the canal is completed. They have already begun their investigations of the petty emergency purchases made by the canal commission, and they insist that everything shall be done by slow government methods backed by congressional action. Such methods are all right in ordinary government business but, just now, they are like great iron balls chained to the legs of the engineers retarding their work at an enormous cost in money and, I might say, in life as well. Further on in this letter I shall show how such delays have affected the hospitals and how they are retarding the actual work of the canal. At this initial stage the government cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish. The work is already started, and the high-priced men are on the ground. There is an immediate need for all sorts of supplies, and emergencies are bound to come from time to time which will demand the immediate expenditure of comparatively large sums at a moment's notice. On such occasions minor mistakes may occur, a few men may make more than an ordinary profit, but the saving in money and health will be enormous.

Loss of \$20,000 a Day.

The parents who have boys on the isthmus will be interested in the matter of health. The taxpayers are interested in pushing the work on the canal; for every day of delay will cost them at least \$20,000. We are to spend on the canal, including the money we have already given the French, about \$200,000,000, and it is estimated that it will take from ten to twelve years to build it. At 3 per cent the annual interest cost on that sum will be equal to \$6,000,000, but as the money will be gradually invested the interest should be averaged from beginning to end, and it will be only half the above sum or \$3,000,000 a year. The engineers tell me that the cost of the engineering, administration, sanitation and general expenses, which will be about the same throughout the work, will approximate \$2,000,000 a year, which, added to the \$4,000,000, makes \$6,000,000 for these two elements, for each year it is building. This is the value of the work. The moment the canal is done this expense stops and the canal becomes a permanent asset instead of a dead one on our national ledger.

Now \$6,000,000, dividing by 300, means \$20,000 for each working day, and that is what the delay will cost us year in and year out. For every day that congress haggles over the price we shall have to spend \$20,000. Every working hour will cost us \$2,000, and every working minute means a loss of more than \$30, that loss going on at the rate of 60 cents per second at every watch tick the working day through. Is this the time to haggle about the cost of waffle irons, muffin tins, hospital supplies and blue print paper for the use of the engineers?

Red Tape at Panama.

Indeed, congress is making such a fuss about the petty items of expense at Panama that both the commission and the engineers are afraid to buy the actual necessities without a lot of red tape that makes their actual cost ten times as great as though they were bought at double prices. We are building and repairing something like 3,000 houses here. The other day an order was sent to Washington for 12,000 nails to be forwarded immediately. The Panama department of material and supplies advised that they be purchased in the open market, but one of the commissioners tells me that they would not dare do so, for congress would surely investigate such an outrageous action. Other orders have been made for picks and shovels, others for water pipe machinery, large and small, and for a hundred other things which the

work imperatively needs; but ships come and ships go, and the supplies are not here. I understand that orders were sent in for blue print paper months ago. All drawings and engineering reports are copied on this paper and it is almost a necessity to the furtherance of the work. I suppose it will come in time. As to the waffle irons and muffin tins, made much of in the congressional investigation, they were probably part of a furniture order. The United States gives quarters to its American employees. It has already bought 400 or more sets of furniture for this purpose. It will need all sorts of ranges and kitchen supplies and I suppose the Miss Nancys of congress will demand that each stove lid and stove holder be duly advertised for competitive bids, while in the meantime our good American laborers may do their cooking on spits.

Twelve Whitewash Brushes.

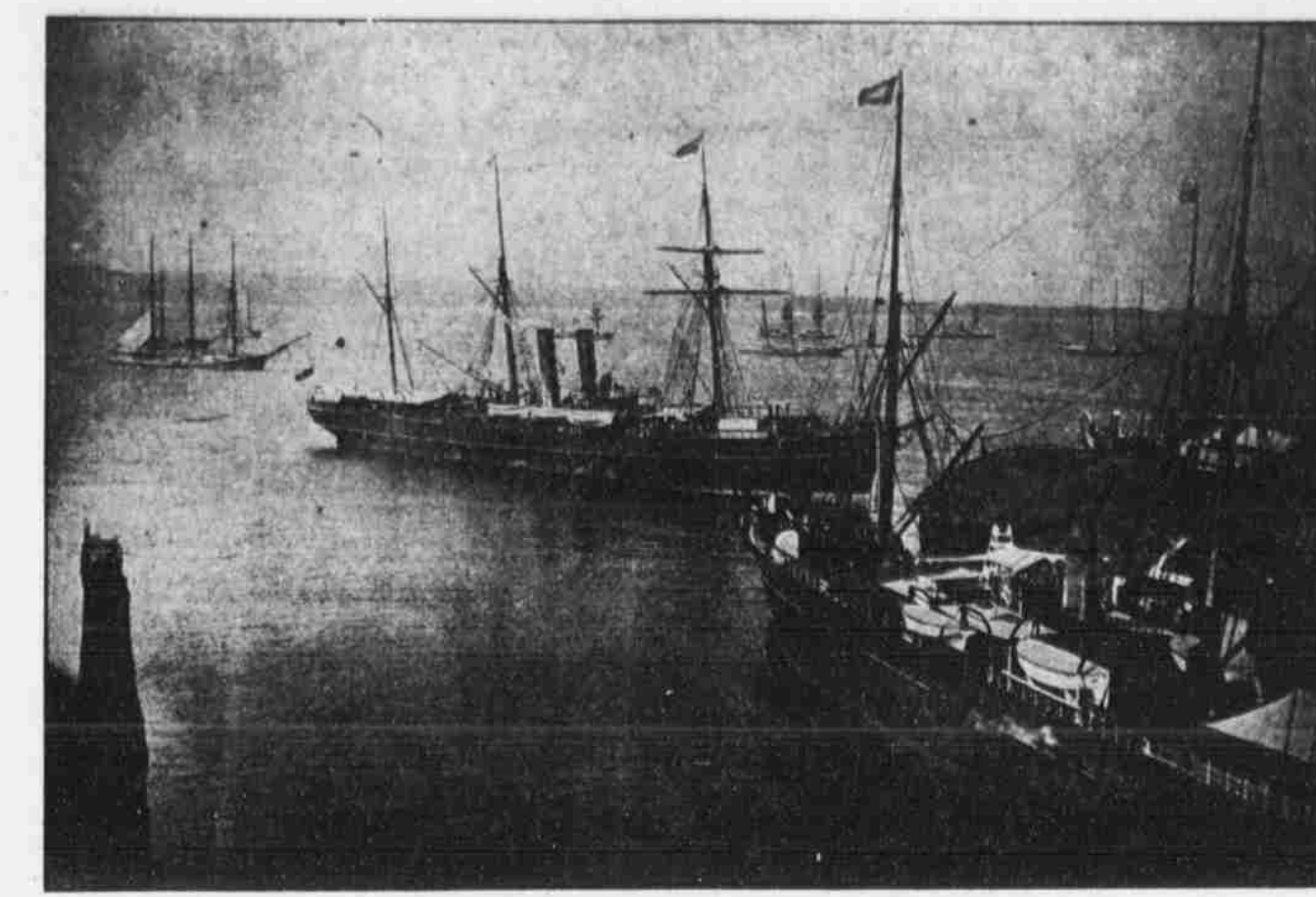
Indeed all sorts of stories are told here at Panama as to how red tape works in the government service. A very pertinent one, which, however, I do not believe, is the story of the twelve whitewash brushes. According to this one of the sanitary officers in the middle of the zone had sent in an order for twelve men to come to his station to do some whitewashing to make the place sanitary, and at the same time he sent in a requisition for twelve whitewash brushes. The men came all right, but the order for the whitewash brushes had to pass through the government mills and the clerks in charge first mailed a query to the sanitary agent as to whether nine whitewash brushes would not do quite as well. He replied that they would not and in the course of two days the extra three brushes arrived. Meanwhile three men had been waiting for a chance to get in their work, and their wages footed up many times the cost of the brushes.

I might also tell the story of a feather duster upon which bids are alleged to have been gotten at the Panama shops and other stories, but such things are only illustrative of government methods which are better understood in Washington than here. The truth is the men at Panama use every means possible to get what they want for their work. Some of the employees even take money out of their own pockets and buy at the stores, trusting to be paid back in the future. The French supplies and machinery on hand have been of enormous value, and the French warehouses are ransacked to supply many deficiencies.

A Business Administration.

Indeed the enormous interest and working cost of building the canal demands that it should be pushed to completion as rapidly as possible. We need a modern business administration, with modern business methods. We need men who will look at the commercial side of every proposition, as well as the technical and political sides. In order to shorten the time we should first adopt a careful, well considered and comprehensive general scheme of work and then have an administration which will see that the labor, material and machinery necessary to vigorously prosecute that work are promptly furnished.

This means that we must have a one-man power at the head of all things connected with the construction of the canal, and that this power must be on the ground with the ability to meet emergencies and with authority to act without the delay incident to making reports to some other authority 3,000 miles away and without waiting one or two months of waiting before any important individual move can be made. It means that the ordinary restrictions of our routine government work should be modified, and that those which prevail in



HARBOR AT COLON, WHERE SUPPLIES ARE LANDED.

our great railroads and other business institutions should take their place. It means the abolition of the red tape which now holds us as such work, and that everything should be done to hurry on the completion of the canal at the earliest possible moment. It means that we should have the best and the most improved machinery, that no time should be wasted in experimenting, and that only machinery which has been in actual use and has stood the test of actual service should be employed.

This is the idea of the engineers here, and as I have shown, in describing the handling of the Culebra cut, it will make possible the completion of the canal in a comparatively short time. It seems to me that if a man like the chief engineer were given entire charge of the work at Panama, with a large enough contingent fund to meet every possible emergency and with the authority to act in emergencies, as far as the isthmus is concerned, and if at the same time

a man of similar ability and training could be placed under the secretary of war and the president at the Washington end of the line the canal would go jumping from new on to the finish. This, of course, means consulting and advisory engineers for Mr. Wallace, and it also means plenty of assistance for the men at the other end, with the president at the head as boss of the whole. Some of the most serious delays, caused, I suppose, by advertisements for bids, have

been in supplying the hospitals. Several of the doctors have told me that they have been out of important drugs for a considerable time, but it was not until this morning that I had a detailed statement as to the lack of medical and surgical necessities. My informant is one of the American trained nurses who has been employed at Ancon for several months. Her story is:

"We have had great trouble in getting things of all kinds on time. When the Americans took hold supplies were sent down for a hospital of 100 beds. We have now 300 beds in use and no proportionate increase of supplies. This means a lack of basins, rubber sheeting, lamps and lanterns. We have had only a few temperature thermometers. In my ward I had twenty-three patients and in order to get a thermometer to take their temperature I had to go to another ward to borrow one. This was the case in other wards, and it so resulted that in one ward no temperature was taken from 1 p. m. until 9 a. m. the next day. The nurse in charge of that ward would have to go on in the day, down the hill, through the trees to another ward to borrow a thermometer. She was afraid and did not go, and I don't blame her. Such thermometers cannot cost more than 50 cents apiece at wholesale.

"Another thing we needed but could not get," the nurse went on, "was absorbent cotton and gauze. We ordered it from the United States, but it takes a month to get an ordinary purchase through, and for weeks we lacked this material to dress wounds and drain them. We used old mosquito netting for a time, and also bought cheese cloth of the Panama stores and tried that. The cheese cloth contained starch, and when it became dry it would make a covering over the wound standing out from it. I do not know that any injury resulted from this, but it was certainly a great annoyance to the doctors and nurses."

"How about drug supplies?"

"We have been short of a number of important medicines at times. We have been entirely out of arsenic, strychnine, potash and digitalis, and also of iron, iodine and similar drugs. One of the medicines we use is the elixir of quinine, iron and strychnine. We were once out of that for weeks, and it was the same with Fowler's solution of arsenic."

Nurses at Panama.

"What kind of a position is that of trained nurse at Panama?"

"It is not an easy one and it is poorly paid," was the reply. "The nurses came here on the understanding that we should have all our expenses and \$50 a month. We get \$50 but there are so many incidental things that there is very little of our pay left at the end of the month. We live at Ancon and have to have a cab every time we go to Panama to shop. This costs us about \$1 each time, and the result is from \$8 to \$10 a month goes in cab fares. And then the washing. Only the uniforms can be done up at the hospital laundry, and all the small articles the woman must have, such as handkerchiefs, lace, fine dresses, etc., must be washed outside. This costs on the average about \$5 per month. In addition there are many other expenses, so that all told, one makes much less here than at home.

"The truth is, the salary of a trained nurse at Panama, should be \$75 or \$100 per month, everything included. I think the nurses would be satisfied with \$75, but considering the work, the risk to health and the distance from home, \$100 a month is little enough. Such a salary would raise the standard of the nurses here, and would bring the best. As it is now we are paid too little. Indeed, we get \$25 per week when we nurse in private families in the United States, and these are the rich families where the comforts are far greater than here."

"How many nurses are there at Panama?"

"I should say about forty, and of these two-thirds are Americans and the rest Canadians. They are all fairly good, but it

is claimed that the salary is so low that the very best American training nurses will not come. We have no nurses from Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania or the Blockley Training School of Philadelphia. We have some from Bellevue hospital, New York, but none from the other large and well known hospitals of this city or Washington. Some of our nurses have served in China and the Philippines and we have one who went with Dr. Anita McGee to Japan and nursed in the hospitals there. The nurses are all conscientious and they all earn their salaries several times over."

Januina Negroes as Patients.

"Give me some idea of the character of your patients."

"I don't like to speak about that," said the nurse. "That is a sore subject with us. I am a southern woman, and while I might possibly object to seeing negroes with Booker T. Washington, I would object to nursing the black servant who dug ditches in Booker T. Washington's back yard. Most of the wards here are filled with the ordinary canal laborers, men who receive from 75 cents to \$1 a day. They are largely Jamaican negroes, as black as a stove, and native Panamanians, many of whom are mulattoes. We have ten wards here, and of these only one is devoted to the American employes on the canal; the other nine are occupied by the people I have described. They are of a lower class than can be found in the charity wards of our city hospitals. Some of them have diseases which are loathsome to an extreme. The patients are almost all men, and many of them are such that a woman should not be asked to touch them."

More Money Needed for Sanitation.

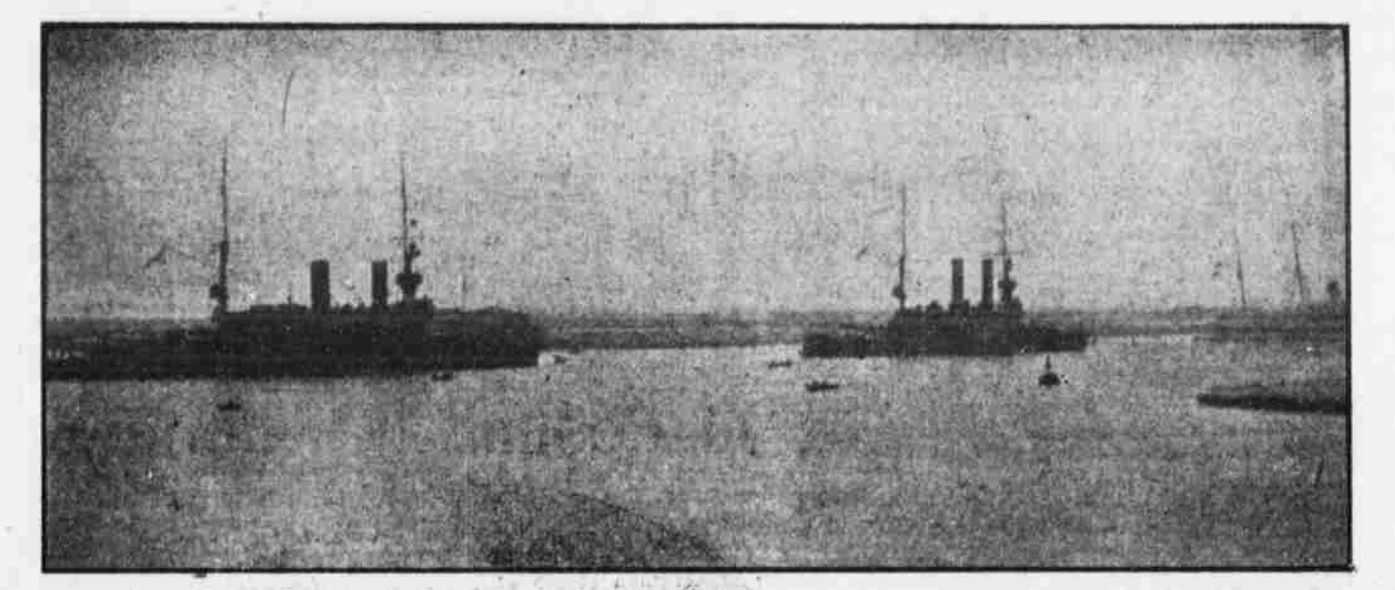
I understand that more money is needed here for sanitation. The sanitary officers asked for \$2,000,000 to clean up the isthmus, but they were given only one-fourth that amount. They estimated that it would take \$5,000 to clean Panama, and about one-third that sum was allowed. The supplies needed have been promptly ordered, but the necessity of advertising for bids has caused a delay in the orders being filled, and in the meantime the hospitals have gotten along as well as they could, patronizing to some extent the Panama drug stores at considerably higher prices than similar orders would have cost in the United States.

It seems to me that the sanitary force here is excellent. The corps of doctors embraces some of the best men of their profession, and both doctors and nurses are doing earnest and conscientious work. I understand that a sanitary commission of the United States is now at work here. As to the matter of supplies, the doctors recommend that a medical purveyor be put at the head of the medical supply department for Panama at New York, and that he be paid \$5,000 a year. This man would be in close connection with the hospitals here, and would keep in touch with the markets at home. He would see that Panama has always a full month's hospital supplies in advance, and a large enough reserve supply to meet any emergency. Indeed, some such provision would seem to be almost a necessity in the present condition of the isthmus.

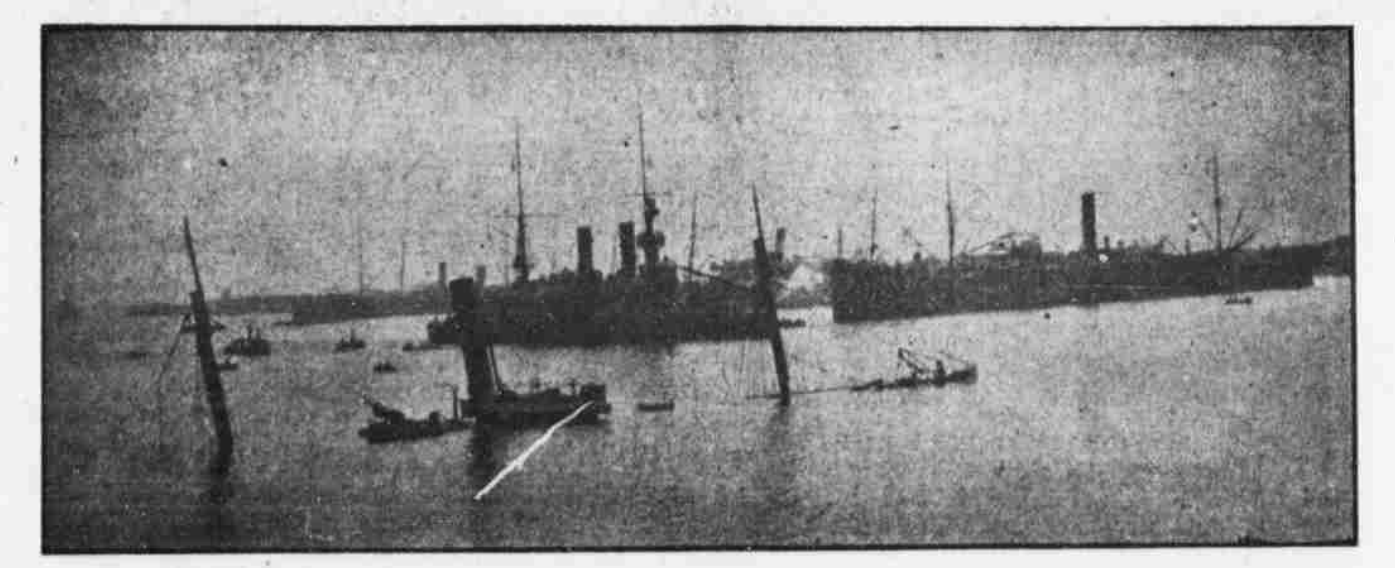
Since writing the above, the news has come that President Roosevelt has reorganized the canal commission, and that the chief engineer will be given full authority at this end of the matter. Mr. Commissioner Rhotta, a practical railroad man, will have charge of ordering supplies and all other work in the United States. This means a business administration throughout and that the canal building will from now on be practically relieved of red tape which so clogged the undertaking up to this time. If congress will now but do its duty, the work of canal digging will soon be in full away and we shall have a union of the oceans in advance of the wildest dreams of the French engineers.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Nebraskan Photographs Third Baltic Fleet



RUSSIAN BATTLESHIPS ENTERING SUEZ CANAL, FOLLOWING A RED CROSS HOSPITAL SHIP, SHOWN AT EXTREME RIGHT OF PICTURE.



RUSSIAN BATTLESHIPS APPROACHING ENTRANCE TO SUEZ CANAL—SUNKEN RUSSIAN COLLIER IN FOREGROUND.

TIN the morning of March 24 last, at Port Said, the third Russian Baltic fleet was approaching the entrance to the Suez canal and a Nebraska boy, returning from the Philippines, trained his camera on the vessels. He sends prints of two of the pictures to The Bee, with the following letter:

ALEXANDRIA, March 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: I am inclosing herewith two kodak pictures which I took at Port Said on March 24 of the Third Russian Baltic

fleet as it was about to enter the Suez canal, bound for the war zone. These pictures were taken just as sunrise with results better than could have been anticipated under the circumstances, the sky being cloudy.

No. 1 is a Russian battleship approaching the entrance to the canal, followed by others of the fleet. The sunken vessel in the foreground is a loaded Russian collier, which collided with a Norwegian merchantman.

No. 2 shows the entrance to the canal,

with two Russian battleships entering the white vessel preceding being a Red Cross hospital ship, which is accompanying the fleet. The fleet consisted of fourteen vessels, nine men-of-war and five colliers.

I am on my way home from Manila, P. I., on a six month's vacation. I am connected with the Bureau of Public Printing at Manila in the capacity of foreman of printing. Mr. John S. Leach of Bloomington, Ill., is chief of the bureau.

J. A. HOGSETTE,
Wahoo, Neb.

Loses a Fortune by Marriage

THROUGH the recent marriage of Helen Morton of Philadelphia, a beneficiary under the will of Margaret R. Holbrook, deceased, the girl will lose the benefit of a trust fund of \$20,000 created by the decedent for the girl's benefit.

Under the will of the decedent it was provided that the niece should receive the interest on the sum of \$20,000 held in trust for her use "during the term of her natural life, or as long as she remains unmarried." In case of her death it was directed that the principal should be divided between the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty.

Miss Morton became the wife of Theodore Bunker on August 1, 1904. The accountant in a petition recently filed in the orphan's court averred that under the terms of the will the trust terminated, and asked that the principal be awarded to the institutions named by the testatrix.

Judge Penrose, the auditing judge, however, held that in his opinion the trust must continue during the life of the young woman, notwithstanding her marriage, and so ruled.

Immediately after this decision counsel

for the charitable institutions filed exceptions to Judge Penrose's finding. Judge Hanna in an opinion finding the exceptions and awards the fund to the above charities. The judge says:

"What was the intention of this testatrix when she executed her will? Her evident intention was to provide for the comfort and maintenance of her niece during her lifetime, if she so long remained unmarried. She also contemplated the probable marriage of her niece, when she would not need the payment to her of the income of the fund set apart for her use, but be supported by her husband, in which case testatrix intended to benefit the two worthy charities she mentioned in her will and directed the division of the trust fund between them.

"She did not intend to prevent or condemn the marriage of her niece. The question here presented is considered with great care. We think the sole inquiry is, what was the intention of the testatrix? As we fail to discover any intent by her to restrain or forbid the marriage of her niece, but merely to limit the payment of her bounty to the occurrence of such event, the limitation is valid and should be recognized."

University of Nebraska is Justly Proud of Its Victorious Debaters

VICTORY in debating with the Nebraska university teams has become a fixed habit. Ever since Prof. Miller M. Fogk came to the university from Harvard three years ago and worked a revolution in the methods of the debating classes in the English department, the students have been engaged. Nebraska has gained an enviable reputation in debate and to defeat it is the ambition of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and other teams which have been worsted.

Get an Early Start.

This year the Cornhusker boys have

started off with the usual string of victories. They have met Iowa and Washington university of St. Louis and have won in each event. In both cases the question was, "Resolved, That the second sentence of the second section of the fourteenth amendment to the constitution should be repealed." The section in question refers to the apportionment of a state's representatives in congress. Nebraska had the affirmative in both debates.

There is an enthusiasm over debating at the university which is hardly second to that engendered by a big foot ball game. The victorious teams are praised and feted to their hearts' content. There is never a thought of losing among the

debaters and the students in general are just as confident of success.

Members of the Team.

Nebraska team against Iowa: Earl M. Marvin, 1906, Beatrice. A native of Beatrice, who prepared for college at the Beatrice High school. At the high school he was twice a member of the school's debating team.

Charles A. Sawyer, 1906, Lincoln. A native of Lincoln; prepared for college at the Lincoln High school, where he was a prominent debater. He entered the university in 1903 and was president of the freshman class. Last year he opened Nebraska's case against Kansas when the

Jayhawkers went down for the third successive year.

Charles A. Sunderland, 1905, Tekamah, Neb. Born at Tekamah (Neb.) and Clinton (Ia.) High schools. In high school he made a reputation as a public speaker, representing the Clinton High school on its debating team. He was city editor of the Clinton (Ia.) Daily Age in 1901 and 1902. He entered college in 1902, and made the University Debating squad in 1904. He was chairman of the sophomore hop committee.

Frank A. Peterson, 1905, Omaha, alternate. Born at Omaha; prepared for college at the Omaha High school; entered the university in 1903. He has taken high

rank as a scholar. He passed the Rhodes scholarship examination last spring, and is a candidate this year for appointment to the Oxford honor.

Also Victorious.

Nebraska team against Washington university of St. Louis, Mo.: Albert M. Levy, 1907, Lincoln. Born at Buffalo, N. Y.; prepared for college at the Lincoln High school. While in the high school he was on five victorious debating teams. In 1902 he won the Nebraska interscholastic debate championship for Lincoln, while studying under Charles M. Braesem of Omaha, now teacher of history and debate at the Omaha High school; entered the university in 1904. He has taken high

whipped Kansas last year.

John Dean Ringet, Lincoln. Born at Lincoln; prepared for college at the Lincoln High school. He will graduate from the College of Law this year. In the Lincoln High school he was twice chosen as its representative in the interscholastic debate, was president of his class the first and fourth years, and was prominent in athletics. In college he has played football five years and base ball one year. He was president of the Young Men's Christian association for two years, and has been the general secretary of the association last year and this year.

Joseph M. Swenson, 1908, Omaha. A native of Sweden; prepared for college at the Omaha High school in the high school

he won first place in the senior oratorical contest, was editor of the paper in 1903-1904, and made a reputation as a debater. He was in teams twice that debated with the Chicago high schools, twice against Beatrice, twice against Lincoln, the last time against Lincoln being in 1904. Once he was Omaha's representative and once its alternative in the Nebraska interscholastic debate.

Morton Leroy, Corey law, 1907, alternate—Lincoln. Born at Blue Vale, Neb.; prepared for college at the Lincoln High school. In high school he was prominent in athletics and was one of the class orators. He taught three years, was last as principal of the Ong (Neb.) High school. He entered college in 1904.



ALBERT M. LEVY, '07, Law, Lincoln. CHARLES A. SAWYER, '06, Lincoln. EARL M. MARVIN, '06, Beatrice. NEWTON L. COREY, '06, Law, Lincoln (Alternate). CHARLES A. SUNDERLAND, '05, Tekamah. JOHN DEAN RINGET, '08, Law, Lincoln. FRANK A. PETERSON, '05, Omaha (Alternate). JOSEPH M. SWENSON, '08, Omaha.