

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

ROSEWATER, EDITOR. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION. Daily (without Sunday), one year, \$4.00. Daily and Sunday, one year, \$6.00. Sunday only, one year, \$2.50. Saturday only, one year, \$1.50. DELIVERED BY CARRIER. Daily (including Sunday), one year, \$4.00. Daily (without Sunday), per week, 70c. Evening (without Sunday), per week, 50c. Evening (with Sunday), per week, 65c. Sunday, per copy, 10c. Address complaints of irregularities in delivery to City Circulation Department.

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION. State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss: C. C. Rosewater, secretary of The Bee Publishing Company, deposes and says that the actual number of full and complete copies of the Daily Morning, Evening and Sunday Bee, printed during the month of February, 1906, was as follows: 1. 31,630 15. 31,300 2. 31,550 16. 33,040 3. 32,200 17. 32,300 4. 29,280 18. 29,250 5. 31,780 19. 31,250 6. 31,710 20. 31,370 7. 31,550 21. 31,320 8. 31,450 22. 31,250 9. 31,490 23. 31,430 10. 32,720 24. 32,050 11. 29,000 25. 29,250 12. 31,250 26. 31,300 13. 31,320 27. 31,430 14. 31,200 28. 31,380 Total 878,210 Less unsold copies 9,102 Net total sales 869,108 Daily average 31,374 C. C. ROSEWATER, Secretary.

WHEN OUT OF TOWN. Subscribers leaving the city temporarily should have the Bee mailed to them. Address will be changed as often as requested.

"Make Omaha too hot for criminals." But you cannot do it by electing Walter Mose's man for mayor. The greatest shortcoming of the impending democratic love feast, we fear, will be the dearth of pie to pass around among the Nebraska faithful.

If John D. Rockefeller does not do something to stop this decline in prices on Wall street he may find his vocation costing him more than he expected.

Now that the house of representatives is short of work the members of congress might get rid of their stock campaign speeches before the busy season begins again.

Justice Gildersleeve has again postponed the oil hearing in New York. This should give H. H. Rogers time to become "wise" to the situation and to run while he has a chance.

The Russian labor leader who committed suicide to prove his honesty may have conformed to Russian standards, but in America self-destruction is more usually taken as an admission of guilt.

"Make Omaha too hot for criminals," is a good slogan, but in the interval it would be a good idea to put the brakes on the daily police gazettes that are breeding new criminals among us every day.

It is hardly belittling for any newspaper published at Hastings to berate Omaha as a hot bed of lawlessness before the shrieks of the poor Chinaman recently tortured by Hastings hoodlums have died away.

It remained for a German scholar to discover an official phase to the trip of Miss Roosevelt to the far east. In America the belief has been that it proved to be more a matter of sentiment than of statecraft.

The czar has decided that hereafter Vladivostok shall be a port of entry. His proclamation may be more effective than the effort of the mikado, who attempted to make it a port of entry for his warships not so long ago.

A Russian "blue" cross society has been organized to care for persons affected by present trouble in that land. Apparently the word "red" has a meaning to Russians not generally recognized in other lands.

If the telephone situation in Omaha has been simplified into a demand for an additional telephone franchise, pure and simple, and an abandonment of the compulsory connection foolishness, one step in advance has been taken.

The generous concession of the railroads in granting a special rate of a fare and a third to Lincoln for the gathering of the leaders of the democratic class insures attendance of every self-important democrat who can scrape up a free pass.

Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis has taken up the cry of, Bishop Scannell against the demoralizing influences of the yellow play. The objectionable theater is not confined to any one city nor is the problem presented by it in any way a local one.

The Railway Age calls upon President Roosevelt to take a decided stand on the railway rate bill. If the special plunders of the railway interests have not been doing a lot of unnecessary shouting, the Railway Age is about the only railway concern which has not found out that the president has not only taken a position, but that the post box is well defined.

The president is commander-in-chief of the army and navy. If we suppose him to take command in person and military necessity to require him to cross the boundary there would result this absurdity, from the familiar error as to the constitution, that that act ipso facto would work temporary forfeiture of office and he would cease to be commander-in-chief.

But such views belong to the realm of speculation and have no practical bearing whatever.

WILL THEY MAKE GOOD?

A pow-wow of so-called democratic leaders is about to be held at Lincoln to outline the party policy in Nebraska and discuss plans for the coming campaign. This meeting will give the democrats an opportunity to make good, if they are so disposed, on some of the promises made to the people in their last state platform. Among the resolutions promulgated by the democratic convention last fall were the following: We favor the passage at the next session of Nebraska's legislature of a law providing for the nomination of candidates for public office by the direct primary system. We favor the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people as the only means of bringing that body into harmony with the voters.

At the coming election the people of Nebraska will choose a candidate for United States senator, as well as candidates for other state offices. In making their selection they will, in all probability, have to choose between nominees of the two great parties—the republican and the democratic. If the democrats mean what they say in their platform they will let the rank and file of their party have something to say as to who shall be their nominees for these offices. True, their platform declaration relates to a law providing for nominations by direct primary, but there is nothing whatever to hinder the present party organization putting into effect at once a reasonably efficient direct primary system.

The democratic organizations in the southern states have worked out and put into operation direct primary systems of their own by which democratic candidates for United States senator, as well as for state offices, are regularly chosen without any legal legislative enactment on the subject. What has been done by the democratic organizations in Arkansas, Virginia, Mississippi and Georgia can be done in Nebraska. If the democrats sincerely favor the election of United States senators by direct vote, how can they oppose the nomination of their own candidates for United States senator by direct vote, and how can they escape the charge of indulging in political claptrap if they nullify their own convention declarations?

Nebraska democrats have the chance to make the first move. Will they take it, or will they, as usual, dodge behind some frivolous pretext?

FRANCHISE VALUATIONS.

The illusory and protean character of a franchise is freshly illustrated by the valuations insisted upon by a proprietary corporation for the very different purposes of selling and of listing for taxation. The New York Central Railroad company officially demands the sum of \$100,000,000 as the price of legal condemnation of its franchise for the use of certain important streets of New York City as right-of-way, and stands in open court with drawn sword to resist any lesser compensation. Last year the state board assessed the same franchise at \$1,480,000, in spite of the company's vehement protestation that such assessment is excessive and confiscatory, and the company is today in court resisting the enforcement of valuation at that figure, for taxation as strenuously as it is at the same time insisting as a seller upon the higher price.

The New York case is notable, but not unique. It by no means surpasses the preposterous feat of the Nebraska railroads which on a notorious occasion established in court by their own witnesses the fact that the total value of their terminals and rights-of-way in Omaha was in excess of \$26,000,000 and later caused the same value to vanish utterly from the assessment roll under pretense of distributing it on a mileage basis throughout the state.

Perhaps some day a rule may be found good enough to work both ways on the franchise chameleon.

NO TERRITORIAL LIMIT.

The assumption that a president of the United States is not permitted by the constitution to go outside of the national jurisdiction, although entertained quite commonly, is not well founded. There is nothing whatsoever in the supreme law to prevent President Roosevelt from visiting Emperor William on German soil, or in fact from passing our own frontier into foreign parts whenever he may have occasion or desire so to do.

The only constitutional provision bearing even remotely on this question is the one which specifies that in case of the president's "inability to discharge the powers and duties of said office the same shall devolve on the vice president." There has been speculation, for the most part of a far-fetched and hair-splitting character, on the point whether absence of the president from his country constitutes "inability" to discharge the duties of his office. But obviously and by agreement of competent minds mere absence by itself would not create the condition that would devolve the presidential powers on the vice president. The president might be abroad under conditions which would constitute disability, and those conditions were incomparably more conceivable in 1787 than they are in the present state of communications and international comity.

Indeed, disability might then easily have arisen from an absence which did not take the president out of territory now included in our country.

The president is commander-in-chief of the army and navy. If we suppose him to take command in person and military necessity to require him to cross the boundary there would result this absurdity, from the familiar error as to the constitution, that that act ipso facto would work temporary forfeiture of office and he would cease to be commander-in-chief.

LETTERS FOR A PURPOSE.

Chicago Chronicle. And now comes our old and excellent friend James Bryce of the new British cabinet with the highly flattering assurance that Uncle Sam is just the person to deal with the sick man and "do something for the Armenians." It is the fashion these days for European statesmen who have hot jobs to do and would rather not burn their own fingers to pass them along to the "new world power" with some complimentary remarks to the effect that it is just the sort to do them all with heat and dispatch. But it was hardly to be expected that Mr. Bryce would turn the sick man over to us in this smiling fashion.

Sensible and Sound.

Springfield (Mass.) Republican. What Senator Tillman, the new manager of the president's race measure, says of the Interstate Commerce commission is worth considering: "But, for one, I am not inclined to accord to the members of the Interstate Commerce commission any less patriotism or good judgment than is accorded to the judges on the bench. They, in both instances, are appointed by the president and confirmed by the senate, and I think can be trusted as well as the other. I do not believe that this commission is going to establish rates that will be confiscatory, and I think we will be able to trust the commission."

RAILROAD MOTOR CARS.

Progress of Experiments with Substitutes for Steam Power. New York Tribune. Railway managers in this country and Europe have for several years been wrestling with the question how to transport passenger trains on branch roads where the traffic is not light that the use of the ordinary locomotive is a piece of extravagance. On such lines it evidently would pay to run electric cars, operated from a distant station by means of a third rail or overhead wire. For more reasons than one it would not pay to run electric cars operated from a distant station by means of a third rail or overhead wire. For more reasons than one it would not pay to run electric cars operated from a distant station by means of a third rail or overhead wire.

MINOR SCENES AND INCIDENTS SKETCHED ON THE SPOT.

Persistent agitation and insistent public sentiment travels a rocky road before it is crystallized in legislation at Washington. The atmosphere at the national capital is so thick with the air of the country. The element of its mark-up is contentment with what is. But chances are brought about which startle and amaze the special interests entrenched in Washington. The greatest change wrought in recent years concerns the regulation of railroad rates. Three years ago, when I first came here, says Congressman Townsend of Michigan, "my views on the railroad question were jeered at. This winter the whole country has seen a scramble for the honor of being known as the author of a rate bill that has even the smallest chance of passage. Three years ago, when I first came here, says Congressman Townsend of Michigan, "my views on the railroad question were jeered at. 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