

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER

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Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 1st day of December, 1906. (Seal) M. B. HUNGATE, Notary Public.

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

Now that Malaya has started a campaign against the opium habit the "little brown brother" may also become dangerous.

The street railway company's no-pass order should prove a great stimulus in recruiting membership for the Pedestrian club.

President Anador of Panama will probably reach Washington in time to see an exhibition of strength of congressional "insurgents."

If the Sioux Indians will investigate more fully they will find that the safest place to keep their money is in Uncle Sam's strong-box.

Secretary Shaw is having the experience usual to the public man who acts regardless of special interests and must be his own defender or have none.

Milwaukee railroad stockholders who insist on a "square deal" may find that, under proper conditions, "high finance" is susceptible of court review.

In confabulating the history of the Russo-Japanese war written by General Kouropatkin the Russian government is evidently resolved to keep the disgrace of that war from spreading.

When it is so easy to get out of our penitentiary by the aid of the governor's pardoning power, is it any wonder that crooks and criminals take desperate chances on getting into the penitentiary?

Iowa pedagogues have recorded themselves for simplified spelling. The agents of the Book trust who would like to supply the schools with new sets of text books must have been busy over in the Hawkeye state.

The appalling list of pardons, commutations and paroles issued under the name of Governor Mickey may afford a further explanation of the rampant carnival of crime from which people all over Nebraska have been suffering for some time.

The Nebraska State Teachers' association has complimented Omaha by selecting Principal Waterhouse of the Omaha High school to be its president. Omaha will expect the new president to bring another meeting of the association to this city.

If an active anarchistic party is really at work among the Japanese in America it will do the Asiatic little good in their campaign for equal rights with native Americans. Anarchism, coupled with Asiatic indifference to death would be doubly dangerous.

It is not fair to assume that the speaker and presidency of the senate cannot both come to Douglas county. In the legislature of eight years ago Lancaster county had both of these places at one and the same time, and it is possible for history to repeat with variations.

The suggestion of Congressman Bartholdt that Uncle Sam issue half a billion dollars of bonds and spend the money for internal improvements will meet with heartier acclaim than a proposition to spend a like amount in some other ways. But the time is scarcely ripe to take up the proposition seriously.

SPECULATION AND THE TREASURY

Secretary Shaw does not much emphasize the fact that the purpose of treasury operations with surplus funds is not speculative, although they may indirectly and incidentally affect speculation. It so happens that during precisely the period when currency is most needed in the movement of crops, especially during a time like the present, of extraordinary commercial and industrial activity, the withdrawal of money from circulation through taxation is usually very large, so that scores of millions more than is immediately needed for government expenses may accumulate in the treasury as an idle hoard.

The legitimate need of business in the pinch has for decades been regarded as warrant for placing the superfluous treasury hoard at the disposal of the community by deposit with national banks on indubitable security, usually government bonds.

Obviously such deposit or refusal to deposit will be a factor in speculation, the same as the question of the enactment and provisions of a tariff measure or any other capital government action, or any non-government contingency affecting industrial undertakings. The memorable "Black Friday," when Gold Room speculation so disastrously collapsed, was precipitated by General Grant's refusal to order the treasury action hoped for by the "bull" operators, but his refusal was determined by general business considerations.

The point of substantial criticism formerly was that the treasury operations, although sincerely aiming at the good of general business, were too much influenced by the special sectional view of eastern financial interest. Whatever ground there may have been for such criticism it has been disappearing, and never so rapidly as under the present administration, which has taken elaborate precautions to secure the widest possible distribution of treasury funds on deposit. Its success has been signalled by complaints latterly by the New York and eastern banks, that they are unable to get their fair share, and by speculative factions according as their schemes would be promoted by liberal or restricted deposits.

The essence of objections to the administration deposit record really attacks the subtreasury policy, with which the administration has nothing to do, the same having been established by law for more than a half century. But with a system that creates a large treasury hoard at the time when the cash is most needed in business, public sentiment now conclusively favors its restoration to circulation within bounds of discretion.

DENATURED ALCOHOL MANUFACTURE.

Department of Agriculture bulletins indicate that under the initial regulations manufacture of denatured alcohol by individual farmers will not be practical, at least as a general practice. The regulations have, of course, been drawn with chief attention to prevention of frauds on the revenue of which much has been made in discussion of tax-free alcohol for the arts and which naturally would be prominent in the minds of the revenue authorities in early experience under the law.

How far manufacture can be localized, even if not yet practical at small farm stills, can only be determined experimentally, but particular pains have been taken so far to draft the rules as, while protecting revenue, to favor distilleries at the smaller towns, near the sources of raw materials. But manufacture of this as of other articles, is likely to be determined by general industrial forces.

The chief public interest in which farmers, both as consumers of denatured alcohol and as producers of the raw materials for it especially share, is that this new substitute for agents of light, heat and power already monopolized, shall not itself fall under control of monopolizing combinations and trusts. Such a result, if it should happen, would infallibly and swiftly cause the same irresistible demand for relaxed revenue regulations as has just caused tax exemption of denatured alcohol. And in any event the government upon its own motion may be expected to modify them as rapidly as practical experience in administering the system shows it to be safe from the revenue point of view.

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT BONDS.

The scheme of a colossal government bond issue, the proceeds to be devoted vaguely to "internal improvements and especially the waterways," will not make much headway as a business proposition. The idea of thus promoting internal improvements on a grand scale, including deep water in the main rivers, roads and highways, and even public buildings, may be suitable for rhetorical flourish, but cannot survive the tests of cold commercial calculation and public policy, which require certainty and consistency as the basis for any such measure.

Unquestionably the attention of the business community has lately been turning more seriously than ever to the question of improving the navigation of the Mississippi and its main tributaries, and it is a subject the importance of which, under existing and prospective conditions of transportation in a broad view, must rapidly grow. But even navigation alone is not at present in shape for practical dealing on a grand scale. To couple it with a half dozen other phases of internal improvements, all of them also vague, and all involving conflicting interests, under a general bonding

scheme, would not be business, but folly, probably imperiling rather than advancing any one of them.

A point has already been reached at which a rational scheme of interior water transportation, no matter how extensive, would be earnestly and favorably considered, and provision for it through bonding operations might even be made. Indeed, to be rational such a scheme would, from the nature of things, have to be comprehensive, and possibly might require apportionment of the cost through bonds to another generation, to whom most of the benefits would inure.

The practical difficulty in the way of efficient government agency at this time is the lack of a consistent plan for river improvement, upon which the principal interests involved are substantially agreed. An enormous sum in the aggregate has actually been expended by the government upon this and cognate objects, but in a sporadic, piecemeal way which has been notoriously wasteful and inefficient. The first indispensable step must be crystallization of public sentiment, at least of the great interior region, upon a feasible, thorough plan of river transportation, whereupon financing provision, whether by bonds or otherwise would become neither difficult nor illogical. The present agitation for bonds, while it may usefully serve to concentrate attention upon the subject, is not likely to promote it in any other way.

OMAHA'S POLICE PROBLEM.

That Omaha's police department is deficient in point of numbers, rendering it inadequate to cover the territory that requires police protection, is not to be gainsaid. This is more particularly true of late in view of the spreading out of our population over a wider and wider area. While the personnel of the force might perhaps be improved in certain directions, Omaha's police problem is to get more policemen. At the same time, with the laws governing the police fund and its expenditure as they are now, it is difficult to see how this problem can be solved at any very early day.

It is reported sub rosa that the police board is contemplating taking the bull by the horns and appointing thirty-five more policemen, leaving it to the future to find the means of enlarging the police fund to meet such an increased demand upon it. Such procedure on the part of the police board would, in our opinion, be not only illegal, but inexcusable. The charter specifically holds the police board to the employment of police officers within the limits of the revenue at its disposal, and it likewise limits unconditionally the amount of money which may be levied for the police fund.

While the council has in times past been known to stretch a point or two by transferring an appropriation from the general fund to the police fund, for the coming year the general fund has been so skimmed that it will hardly meet the ordinary drafts upon it and would be utterly depleted by such a transfer to the police fund were it to be attempted. More than this, under our present arrangements for municipal tax levy the municipal tax rate is fixed practically a year in advance, and there is no way, even with legislative sanction, to reopen the tax levy and increase or decrease the rate. The amount available for the police force during the year 1907 is, therefore, irrevocably determined so far as it is to be raised by taxation and will produce no more than enough to maintain the department in its present condition.

It may be possible later to procure a temporary addition to the police fund from some other source of revenue, but until the funds are actually at the disposal of the police board it will have no right to increase the payroll charges by the appointment of additional officers. The Bee's advice to the police board is to keep strictly within the law and not to load the city up with any obligations to defray which there is no money in sight.

The telegraphic item from Ithaca, N. Y., about the city losing to the water company in the award decision of a disputed appraisal under which the city bought the works is calculated to attract attention here in Omaha. The conditions of water works purchase at Ithaca are doubtless very different from those at Omaha, but the decision serves to remind us that there is no sure thing for either side when a case of this kind goes into court. Until our citizens and the owners of the Omaha Water company get together the whole situation is bound to be hazardous and our water service shadowed with stagnation, while the cry of a growing population for enlarged mains and extended service pipes and fire protection must remain unanswered.

A sidelight is thrown on the proposed Union Pacific bridge embargo on Iowa shipments to the Omaha grain market by the recent acquisition of the Illinois Central by the Harriman interests, which are also supreme in the Union Pacific. Two railroad bridges span the Missouri at Omaha, the second one belonging to the Illinois Central. It is a reasonable proposition that so long as Mr. Harriman controls the destinies of both of these railroads neither of these bridges will make any trouble for the other by cutting bridge tolls in competition for the business.

Now that John Bull has been officially notified of Uncle Sam's willingness, James Bryce may consider his call an invitation to study the American commonwealth at closer range. The World-Herald says it is against government ownership of railroads. Suppose Colonel Bryan should be nominated as the democratic presidential candidate on a public-ownership-of-railroads platform? would the World-Herald support him?

NEW LAWS FOR NEW YEAR.

Pure Food, Denatured Alcohol and Anti-Railroad Pass. Two of the four so-called reform measures enacted by congress last spring go into effect on New Year's day. These are the pure food law and the denatured alcohol law. The anti-pass provision of the railroad law becomes effective on the same day. Technically the pure food law goes into effect on Tuesday; morally it has been in effect two or three months, says the Washington correspondent of the Boston Transcript. It will be the first of February, and perhaps later, before the machinery that is to be used in enforcing the food law will be in running order. This delay is the result of congress failing to make an appropriation for carrying out the provision of the act at the time the legislation was enacted. As has been noted in the dispatches, congress only last week appropriated the money to be used in enforcing the legislation up to the first of July, when the present fiscal year will end.

In the estimation of Dr. Wiley it is unimportant that the pure food machinery will not be in operation for a month or two after the law becomes effective. "All over this country," said he, "the law is now generally in force. About 98 per cent of the persons affected by this legislation are honest. The other 2 per cent now have to be, and are anxious to be. Many persons who were putting impure food before the public before this legislation was enacted hastened to make a change in their business. They welcomed the law in many instances because competition forced them to do things, they did not wish to do before the law was passed. The prospect is that it will be an easy law to enforce; it will almost enforce itself. Of course there will be those who will attempt to evade it, and these are the men, our countrymen in fact, who get after us."

The manufacturers and dealers of the country have had the department's rules and regulations under the law before them since October 16, and this has given them ample time to arrange to conform to the law. According to the government's view, the manufacturers who engaged in adulterating have arranged to stop the practice. The question of labels has worried the manufacturers and dealers a good deal. The order of the department is that: "The regulation regarding the principal label will not be enforced until October 1, 1907, or until the date when the principal label will be enforced. In the meantime, whenever any statement therein contained which is contrary to the food or drug act of June 30, 1906, as to character of contents, shall be corrected by a supplemental label, stamp or pastar. All other labels now printed and on hand may be used without change until the start in enforcing the law. In any event, we officials if there is not a distinct improvement in the foods and drugs on the market after next Tuesday."

The denatured alcohol act does not come as close to the people as the food law. The day the law goes into effect some of the large distilleries, notably those connected with the Whisky trust, will begin the making of denatured alcohol. It is the expectation of the government that the business of making the new fuel will gradually grow. The distilleries will have to be guided by the demand for the new product. The prospect that the Whisky trust will absolutely control the output of the denatured alcohol, in any event, we officials if there is not a distinct improvement in the foods and drugs on the market after next Tuesday.

The going into effect of the anti-pass provision of the railroad rate law marks another important step in the reforms of the day. Most of the railroads of the country have anticipated the provision of the rate law by cutting off free transportation, but a few of the old systems have continued to follow the old policy. At next Wednesday it will be unlawful for any common carrier engaged in interstate commerce directly or indirectly "to issue or give any interstate free tickets, free pass, or free transportation for passengers, except to its employees, families, its officers, agents, surgeons, physicians and attorneys at law; to ministers of religion, traveling secretaries of railroad Young Men's Christian associations, inmates of hospitals and charitable and eleemosynary institutions and persons exclusively engaged in charitable and eleemosynary work to indigent, destitute and homeless persons, and to such persons when transported by charitable societies or hospitals, and the necessary agents employed in such transportation; to inmates of the national homes for the aged, and to such as are volunteers and soldiers and sailors and seamen including those about to enter and those returning home after discharge and boards of managers of such homes; to necessary caretakers of livestock, poultry and fruit; 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