

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER.

VICTOR ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

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

Hurry up, girls! There are still a few eligible bachelors in Omaha.

The consumer will have difficulty in discovering any grounds for a coffee tax.

Pittsburg is apparently the center of the American steel and steel industries.

It is no wonder that Pittsburg politicians are anxious to get into the city haul.

Castro has been divorced from Venezuela, but he collected his alimony in advance.

The trouble with Mr. Harriman just now is plain indigestion and not indigestible securities.

There's a hearsay report to the effect that a dangerous counterfeit \$200-bill is in circulation.

Which reminds us that reducing telephone rates also reduces the city's income from the 2 per cent royalty.

Nebraska is a pretty good place to live in. It is free from earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves and mousoons.

General Bell declares that the American army is antiquated, but it is pretty certain that no other nation will attempt to prove it.

Senator Elkins has bought a Washington bank, evidently considering it a better investment than the purchase of an Italian duke.

It is but fair to state that there are other people in Pittsburg besides millionaires, grafters and candidates for the United States senate.

Mr. Gmelch still insists that he has been elected lieutenant governor of Missouri, but the courts will have to decide whether he has or not.

Prof. Ferrero says that President Roosevelt is a dual personality, but some congressmen are certain that there are more than two of him.

There are said to be 17,000 vacant houses in Glasgow. The owners ought to move them to Omaha, where they would have little trouble in renting them.

The Porto Ricans want a tax of 5 cents a pound on all coffee except that raised in Porto Rico. It is always the other fellow's business that should be taxed.

Doubtless congress would be willing to remove the tariff on the made-in-Germany muzzles for chief executives if it thought they could be used in this country.

Cuba's new president does not understand English, so he will probably have an excuse ready at hand when he violates the provisions of the Platt amendment.

Champ Clark says that the democratic members of the house are not agreed upon their plans for tariff revision. It is natural for democrats to be unentitled.

When it comes down to business, those boastful Jacksonians will be like the man who rolls his fat in his pocket. They will not even have a candidate to contest with Mayor Jim for his second term nomination.

ITALY'S GREAT CALAMITY.

The whole civilized world is appalled at the great calamity which has been brought upon southern Italy by a destructive earthquake.

Instead of showing that the loss of life and property indicated by the first reports were exaggerated, later information seems to disclose additional devastation and greater fatalities than originally estimated.

In the face of such an awful visitation of nature no human preventives or precautions can avail to ward off the death-dealing blow, but relief and rescue from further danger or exposure become the immediate and pressing task.

This work of relief and rescue is already under way and, so far as outside help may be required, the philanthropic and humanitarian spirit of the more favored people of the United States may be counted on to assist.

The American National Red Cross society has already opened subscription lists, for the contributions to which we bespeak liberal response.

CHEAP TALK.

Talk has always been proverbially cheap, but the prospects are that in Omaha talk will be cheaper yet. This line of cheap talk is not to be confined to the hot air variety, nor yet to the political oratory which on occasions is to be had without price of admission, nor yet to the curtain lecture, ordinarily pulled off behind closed family doors, but it is to be provided by a January clearance sale at 50 per cent off for telephone communication by the automatic route.

In this particular instance talk is becoming cheaper because the State Railway commission, which has been given jurisdiction over voice traffic as well as passenger traffic, insists that the free pass must go, whether in the form of free trial telephone service or free corporeal transportation. In vindication of Nebraska's motto, "Equality before the law," if anyone is to talk for nothing, everyone must talk for nothing, and if anyone must pay to talk, everyone must pay on the same scale.

The only question yet to develop is whether the reduced tariff on talk is to be general or merely local, and whether the people who would not talk for nothing when trial telephone service was offered will now pay for the privilege under the allotment of bargain figures.

TO PREVENT IMITATIONS.

Congressman Hull of Iowa has offered a bill in congress making it a misdemeanor to manufacture for sale or transportation in this country "imitated articles of commerce unless such articles are so made as to show the exact materials used in making." The bill is a lengthy one and so broad in its scope as to apply to every article of commerce recognized as a subject of transportation and sale under the rules of the Interstate Commerce commission. Foods, clothing, furniture and all articles of domestic use would come under the provisions of the measure.

The bill furnishes another illustration of the distorted ideas of enforcing pure food and anti-imitation laws, by confounding trademarks with terms that have become recognized as standards. The best French peas in the world are raised in this country, just as the richest English mutton chops are furnished by Montana-grown sheep and the finest Scotch whisky is made at Peoria. Pittsburg makes a French plate glass that is admittedly superior to the imported article and the New England woolen mills turn out English, Scotch and Canadian tweeds that can not be equalled anywhere. The Turks are said to get most of their Turkish cigarettes from this country and the finest Havana cigars are made in New York.

The consumer is entitled to protection against fraudulent attempts at trafficking upon an established reputation and is assured of this protection under the trademark and copyright laws, but there is no occasion for attempting to punish manufacturers for putting articles on the market under a designation that simply insures its standard, so long as the article carries full value and no deception is practiced in its sale.

THE NATION'S NAVAL RATING.

"The Navy Year Book," compiled by the clerk of the senate committee on naval affairs, gives the United States second place among sea powers, being second only to Great Britain. The classification will cause much discussion, as the author of the book makes the rating by considering only the number and displacement of armored ships, and it may be argued with much force that many other elements enter into the power of a navy which, if considered, would probably rank the United States third or even fourth in the list of naval powers.

The strength of the navy does not depend upon the number of battleships nor the amount of armor carried, but must be based on the ships, their guns, coalers, number of men and their experience, together with definite adherence to a program of development and a fixed policy of naval construction. On this score the rating of the United States is far from high, as each congress makes or mars the plans of the naval chiefs and may at any time adopt a course that would reduce the American navy down the list.

As it stands today, our navy is doubtless equipped to meet any emergency that may arise requiring its service in actual war. What is yet required is that congress should establish a fixed program of appropriations from year to year that will maintain the present standard and efficiency. There should be no extravagance at one session to be offset by parsimony at the next.

REAL REFORMERS AT WORK.

The Young Turks, who are back of the administrative revolution in Turkey, have already started upon the consummation of a program of real reform that must occasion surprise among the statesmen of other countries. As a rule outsiders have been discounting the promises made and have expected the change in the government to result chiefly in a transfer of the graft from the sultan to those who have succeeded in getting control away from him. The Young Turks have evidently been considering their plans for years and are now proceeding to put them into effect with a vigor and promptness that are rare in the lazy east.

Under the old regime the sultan grew rich year by year, spent millions and hoarded others, while the resources of the empire were neglected. The Young Turks have already inaugurated an immense scheme for the irrigation of the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. These vast plains, with an area five times as great as the fertile valley of the Nile, have lain waste for centuries, although there are still traces of the irrigation ditches used in biblical days. It is estimated that the region may be brought under cultivation and made fertile again at a very small expense, bringing prosperity to a section of the empire whose residents are now miserably poor.

The funds of the empire are at low ebb and the Young Turks have determined not only to reduce expenses, but to also ascertain where the sultan got his millions and how much of this saving belongs to the people. The sultan is credited with having a fortune of \$370,000,000, and the reformers are asking how he got it and want it restored if found to have been diverted from the public treasury to the sultan's private purse, as is generally believed. The new leaders have already begun lopping off expenditures by reducing the sultan's list of personal physicians from 380 to eight and by cutting his staff of colonels from 800 to thirty. The sultan also maintained at government expense an army of spies, almost as costly as the support of the Turkish army. These have been dismissed from the service, and it is estimated that the changes already made will result in a saving of several millions annually to the government and the taxpayers.

The discharged officials, thousands in number, are naturally talking of a counter-revolution, but the taxpayers are lending such loyal support to the plans of the Young Turks that the outlook is for permanency in the reforms, with the consequent introduction of Turkey into the list of modern, progressive nations.

WHERE HAVOC REIGNS.

Some Facts About the Region Devastated by Earthquake.

The city of Reggio, where such fearful destruction was wrought by the earthquake, lies in a region spoken of by travelers as the "fairest land in all Italy," picturesque villages crown every hilltop, while across the blue straits of Messina rises a vision of Sicily and the snowy heights of Etna. The country round Reggio is one great orange plantation, and everywhere the perfume of the blossoms and the fragrance of the fruit fill the air. Carls constantly pass through the streets bearing the golden crop to the warehouses, whence it is passed on to the sailing vessels that carry it to the nearest large port, where regular lines of steamers distribute it all over Europe. Formerly this region was as celebrated for its palms as now for its oranges; but that was during the Saracenic occupation, and after the Saracens were driven out the populace so hated anything that reminded them of the defeated Moors that all the palms were cut down, and now they are almost as much of a curiosity in Reggio as in Paris.

Has He the Goods?

At least, concerning the proposition to raise the vice president's salary to \$25,000, it will be enthusiastically supported if its author will point out some way to get \$25,000 worth of work from that official.

Where Liberators Come and Go.

These South American "liberators" often like to see their countries liberated by a successor. Gomez has liberated Venezuela from Castro. How many pages forward in the book of destiny is the liberator from Gomez?

Safety in Shaving.

If that crank who tried to pull President Felt's beard has any imitators in this country there are two distinguished Americans who may have to keep their faces shaved clean or maintain a bodyguard until the craze is over.

When the Boss Speaks.

Senator Aldrich says the country is not ready for postal savings banks, and when Aldrich says the country isn't ready for anything the most dignified deliberative body on earth may generally be expected to decide that the country isn't, no matter what the country itself may think.

Our Pacific Naval Base.

Four hundred marines are going as a garrison to Hawaii, where extensive work in building fortifications and creating a great dry dock and supply station is under way. The government seems at length to be waking up to the fact that this archipelago needs development and protection. Five per cent of the money that has been spent on the Philippines would have made Hawaii an impregnable naval base, whose value to the Pacific coast would have been enormous for many generations.

Upholding the Country's Faith.

Roosevelt shows one of his many sides in his attitude toward the Hawaiian-Salton Sea claim. When the Southern Pacific and the government agreed upon a plan to divert the Colorado river back to its old course, it was understood that the nation would pay a share of the cost. A hitch has occurred. Now comes the president with threats of another message on the claim is settled. The fact that he and Harriman are not on writing terms has nothing to do with it; the president is standing by his word and the country's faith.

Extraordinary Backing.

There can be no long-felt or deeply serious depression from financial panic in a country whose agricultural production is increasing at the rate of \$300,000,000 a year. Nearly \$6,000,000,000 of new wealth was brought up out of the ground in the year 1907, and the population is increasing more than a third of a billion over the soil production of 1907. These are farm values based on prices paid the producer, and the increase has come despite the fact that cotton and hay, the second and third crops in importance, measured by aggregate value, have experienced a heavy slump in price compared with the prices prevalent a year ago.

Cabinet Puzzles.

Almost anybody who reads the newspapers can sit down with a paper and pencil and build a cabinet for the new president of the United States. All that is required is a knowledge of people who bulk large in their various professions and consideration of those who, like F. H. Hitchcock, have performed notable services for the party, such as running a steam roller. Cabinet making for persons who have nothing else to do is almost a sure thing. The cabinet puzzle, among the nine cabinet offices it is almost impossible not to guess at least one, and so every person who has nothing else to do is making his little guess. Quite a harmless occupation, assuredly.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF EMPLOYEES

The Human Factor in the Movement of Trains.

That no amount of care on the part of the officials of any transportation company can obviate the risk of accident without the co-operation of employes is apparent. The best rules possible for human ingenuity to devise are of no value if they are not followed, and there is no reason to question the accuracy of the deduction of the Public Service commission, Second district, that of all the causes of accidents reported to that body "a large proportion of those investigated have been caused by the failure of employes to obey standard operating rules or special instructions which were in force for the safe movement of trains. The outcry now being made for the active manager of a transportation line after an exceptionally distressing accident would therefore seem infrequently to have little behind it.

It is a fact too well known for dispute that constant association with any danger tends to lessen one's sense of responsibility in connection with it. The workman at the lever whose action at the proper moment is necessary to preserve the lives of passengers becomes in time so accustomed to his work that his movements are largely mechanical, and the task becomes little more to him than the mere shifting of rails. The engineer, although he knows that in case of accident he will be the one most likely to suffer fatal injury, may take chances which would be too hazardous for contemplation by the ordinary man, and the same condition operates equally in every occupation involving danger either to the person himself or to those who are dependent upon him.

Among railroad men it is frequently remarked that it is not the new employee who is killed, but the one who has become working long enough to take chances. The chauffeur is more likely to run risks in speeding than the one unfamiliar with his car. It is the old story of familiarity breeding contempt, and with nature as it is constituted, in face of the constant demand for speed, not only on the highways but on the railways and the sea, there must inevitably be the element of danger in any means of transportation. This necessitates the greatest vigilance on the part of the operating officials, and there is every reason to believe that an overwhelming majority of cases of the men in authority are keenly alive to their responsibilities. The difficulty, as would be indicated by the report of the commission, is in the thousands of less intelligent employes who must be picked up wherever they may be found, and instructed with duties involving mental alertness to which they have not been trained.

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Commonwealths that Have Not Mortgaged the Future.

Pennsylvania enjoys the distinction of being out of debt. Although not standing alone in this respect among the states, it is worthy of mention in an era when public indebtedness in national and municipal lines is piling up at a rate which creates a sense of misgiving in the minds of many conservative people. There are ten or more states whose records show an absence of bonded debt. These include Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon and West Virginia. The last named state has, however, outstanding against it undervalued claims of some millions of dollars in connection with the Virginia debt. There are fifteen other states which, according to the latest available figures, have a bonded debt of less than \$1,000,000.

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SAFETY is desired by all of us, whether it be in the matter of money, valuables or ourselves. If it is a question of money, can you do better than DEPOSIT your money in a bank of the known strength and stability of the First National Bank of Omaha? If it is a question of your valuables, why not use the Safety Deposit VAULTS of this bank? Three hundred new boxes have just been added to the already large equipment, 100 of them rent for \$3.00 a year each. Larger ones in proportion. First National Bank of Omaha Thirteenth and Farnam Sts. Entrance to Safety Deposit Vaults is on 13th street.

THE CLOSING YEAR.

George D. Prentice. 'Tis midnight's holy hour, and silence now is brooding like a gentle spirit o'er the still and pulseless world. Hark! on the winds the bell's deep tones are swelling; 'tis the Of the departed year.

No funeral train is sweeping past; yet on the stream and With melancholy light, the