

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE

FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER

VICTOR ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

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The Harmon Boom.

Governor Harmon is the first of the four already mentioned democratic candidates for the presidency formally to organize his campaign. This may or may not have its advantages to him. The old rule of the early bird and the worm is not infallible in politics, and yet it might be applied with good effect. It is more than a year before the national conventions will nominate the candidates, so that there is time enough for other aspirants to shy their castors into the ring. Governor Harmon evidently considered that by beginning his boom in Washington while congress was in session he would be able to accomplish a quiet missionary work toward a strong nucleus for his organization, and he may have reckoned not in vain. He is an old hand at politics and a very resourceful one. Moreover, he has associated with him men who are also highly instructed in the arts of the game.

It may be supposed that the Harmon forces chose this time of making their announcement because of the recently proclaimed alliance of Hearst and Bryan as the original Champ Clark boomers. Whether Mr. Bryan ultimately lines up for the speaker for his successor as the party's standard-bearer or not, Governor Harmon will remain the essential anti-Harmon man. Should Clark prove unavailable it might easily be convenient for Bryan to adopt Dr. Wilson, or in an emergency he might even persuade himself to try it for just once more.

Surely it is significant that the Harmon crowd, while heeding the present manifestation of the Clark aspirations, are not indifferent to the ever-present possibility of Bryan as a presidential candidate. "Don't overlook Bryan," says Congressman Cox, a Harmon booster, at the very outset. And no wise councillor of the Ohio governor or he himself will. Mr. Bryan did not serve notice on Governor Harmon to "prepare to stand aside" just to be talking. If he can beat him with another man doubtless he would prefer to, but if he feels that to defeat him he must himself get into the race he would undoubtedly do that.

Kansas City's Municipal Wharve.

Not content to rest its river navigation schemes with mere agitation, Kansas City has already placed two steamers in operation between that city and New Orleans. This is a big start toward a bigger end. Her citizens have contributed more than \$1,000,000 toward the navigation proposition and propose to carry it through so that it will work out some tangible and permanent improvements in the great problem of transportation. But now still another advanced step has been taken by this live lot of waterway boosters on the Kaw. The city has secured a site for municipal wharves and has set about to build them. All this construction work has been and is being done by Kansas City "without waiting for the aid or consent" of any other river town. Doubtless the people down there came to the conclusion that if they ever got anywhere with their waterway scheme they could not afford to wait for action or co-operation from other cities.

Some two and three years ago a big burrah was made up and down the Missouri about restoring navigation. Meetings were held, speeches were made, experts were summoned, keen-witted scribe writers were sent up and down the Great Muddy to pick out the points of chief interest bearing upon the demands and opportunities for navigation to compile them for exploitation purposes, before congress and abroad. Then delegations set out for Washington to plead for appropriations. Kansas City's delegation outnumbered all the others put together and Kansas City got the funds, but it also put up its share of the cash itself. Now it is doing things and will have navigation whether other towns and cities do or not.

Two steamboats in action, municipal wharves under construction, the channel being dredged and deepened—this looks like business. The example of the Missouri city may quicken interest elsewhere and lead to something else besides just talk. Other Missouri river points need improved transportation rates and facilities even more than does Kansas City. Perhaps they could get them the same way Kansas City has if they went at them the same way.

Carrie Nation Redivivus.

Some of the big daily papers of England have announced the death of Mrs. Carrie Nation with appropriate obituaries. Evidently for once the faultlessly accurate Britons have gone astray. For Mrs. Nation not only is not a lifeless corpse, but is reported to be daily improving. We hope our British brethren did not make the gross mistake of imagining they could kill off a great issue that way. Couched in their announcement is a subtle sense of irony that might suggest this. Mrs. Nation, it is true, moderated some of her methods for annihilating Demon Rum before her late illness, but up to last accounts she had not given up the old ship. She will probably resume business as soon as her physical condition will permit. She may not go in so strong for muscular teetotalism as before and may discard her little hatchet, except for publicity purposes, but no one who knows Mrs. Nation and the Sunflower state from which she hails, would ever think of saying that she had quit. Presumably our friends over the sea will seek to throw the blame of their inaccuracy upon

some irresponsible American news gathering agency, but the interesting answer to that is that the item was not unloaded on the American public prints.

Elections Galore.

In the language of the street, the good people of Omaha are in a fair way this year to have elections to burn. The possibilities already in sight are quite sufficient to give us an election each month for six consecutive months, although, of course, they may be bunched instead of being strung out at regular intervals. Here is the list:

First—The Water board has given notice that it will ask the people to vote authority to issue \$5,250,000 of water bonds at a special election. The date was originally fixed for May 10, but it has been postponed, and presumably will not come off before June at the earliest.

Second—The county commissioners have been figuring on a special election to vote additional bonds for equipment and furniture for the new court house. Neither date nor amount has been fixed, although the provisional estimates indicate \$250,000.

Third—The electric lighting company is about to present a new franchise for submission to the city council, which, if the council accedes, will go to popular vote at a special and separate election.

Fourth—The commission form of government law will become operative in July, after which a 25 per cent petition will force its submission for popular ratification within sixty days.

Fifth—The regular primary election to nominate candidates for state, county and school district offices is scheduled for the third Tuesday in August, which is a fixed and immovable date.

Sixth—The general election to choose between the candidates nominated at the primary will take place on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

That is all the elections for which claims have already been filed, but the entry list is not yet closed and there is no time limit.

The Truth About Brownville.

Every little while a new version of the Brownville affair comes out, and the latest is always vouched for as the real truth. That this Texas border town was shot up by persons who have never been brought to account for their wild exploit is about all that has been established and admitted beyond question, although the facts have been investigated officially five times, and the testimony taken would fill many volumes. And now the authentic inside truth about Brownville is again promulgated by William E. Curfin, the well known newspaper correspondent, who has been visiting in the neighborhood, and who says:

It was a night raid made by eleven enlisted men of the Twenty-fifth Infantry, which was the garrison at Fort Brown, upon saloons in the neighborhood which refused to sell drinks to colored soldiers. It is asserted here that the eleven men who participated were positively identified and warrants were issued in their names. If the commandant had permitted them to be arrested and punished that would have been the end of it, but the officers of the regiment, who knew the men that did the shooting just as well as the culprits themselves, not only encouraged, but enjoined them to hold their peace, and it soon became a question of honor for them to do so. No secret was ever better kept, and it is a remarkable illustration of the fidelity of the colored race. There is no doubt that the whole affair was due to lax discipline on the part of the officers, who should have been punished instead of the men.

If this is the truth about Brownville it leads a different shade of color to it and lends support to the conspiracy of silence theory, but puts the blame for concealing the culprits on the officers instead of on the men. Indeed, this is a very plausible explanation, yet it will not terminate the dispute nor clear the records of the innocents who suffered discharge on that account.

Our amiable hyphenated contemporary, declares that "the telephone business may be, as claimed, a natural monopoly," but insists that competitive dual systems are needed to secure good service. But suppose we had a municipal or state-owned telephone, would we have to have two or three competing private telephone systems to insure good service? Everyone agrees that two telephones are a costly nuisance. Efficient and satisfactory service should be obtainable in some other way.

The distinguished citizen who receives a threatening letter demanding a few thousand dollars forthwith under penalty of some dire doings should not feel too highly complimented. It may be only a belated April fool joke.

A watchman to see that the city rock pile does not run away is now urgently called for. Just divide the rock-pounders into three eight-hour shifts and the watchman will be eliminated.

Surely This is the Limit.

The Bathing trust claims it was organized to protect the public from the rapacity of the lumber. In the matter of downright ingenuity this defense is well up to the front.

A Courtous Jolly.

Twenty-five railroads have been granted permission by the Interstate Commerce commission to reduce their ex-ante grain rates. Presidents of the roads should not take a day off to thank the commission in person.

Doing Quite Well, Thank You.

According to the attorney who represented the Pullman company before the

tax board, the net earnings of the sleeping car and parlor car service during the fiscal year were \$1,300,000 out of gross earnings of \$5,000,000, which might be regarded as a fairly satisfactory profit even in this day of large things.

An Example Worth Following.

The statistician at Omaha, Neb., W. W. Keen, who has been 44 years a railroad man, has won the gold medal given by the Union Pacific railroad for the best kept of the 26 stations on that line. Mr. Keen says much credit for this honor belongs to all the railroad men who use the Omaha station, for all take great pride in having well kept that spirit ought to be catching, the country over.

A Dangerous Precedent.

Senator Kenyon of Iowa has made up his mind to the Lott case. He holds that "knowingly or not Lorimer" got his seat through a general scheme of fraud and corruption, and should be turned out. If this seems like a declaration of a jurymen's opinion in advance of the trial, it should be borne in mind that the trial is now on the minds of public opinion. The Iowa senator noted the danger of the Lorimer precedent fairly when he says the beneficiary of fraud should go even if not personally participating in the corruption.

LEGISLATIVE AFTERMATH.

Plattsmouth Journal: We do not think there is any more harm in playing base ball on Sunday than there is in running an automobile on that day. Now, honestly, do you?

Keary Times: It is to be borne in mind that the principal kick the Lincoln papers have on the legislature is because it cut the appropriation of money that Lincoln wanted and expended some on things of no interest to Lincoln.

Grand Island Independent: There is neither the time, nor the place, nor the occasion for the democracy of the state to make any great pretensions as to economy. The legislature of 1907 appropriated \$3,300,000; that of 1908 appropriated \$3,000,000; and that of this year \$4,700,000.

Premont Tribune: A new law provides that no one may hunt or fish anywhere in the state, unless there is a license held by someone in the family. The law should go a little further and provide that at least two members of every family holding license shall be willing to clean the fish or game.

Stanton Register: Governor Aldrich vetoed the Sunday base ball bill because it did not give the cities and county boards the right to control the game as the majority of the people saw fit. We didn't need any legislation along those lines. When public sentiment in any town wants Sunday base ball there is seldom anyone to make objection.

Bloomington Advocate: Governor Aldrich has to his credit more vetoes than any other former governor for many years. He had most excellent ground for these vetoes and is now receiving the congratulations of many people for his good judgment. Some of the bills killed were political measures and others were purely economic and provided for the benefit of the corporations had succeeded in having their bills passed.

Ord Quis: With prices going down on account of the recent successes of the democratic party, here comes our democratic legislature with appropriations for the biennial amounting to nearly \$1,000,000 more than that of two years ago and the greatest in the history of the state. What do you think of it, Mr. Taxpayer? Did you get your money's worth in the lot of insignificant bills passed by this legislature?

Blair Pilot: The passage of a bill to prohibit the hauling of indifferent voters to the polls on election day is another step in the right direction. It was always a heavy expense to the party or the candidate and has been an indirect form of bribe that should have been stopped long ago. The end of the "free pass" to the polls gives no undue advantage to either side and measures and men must hereafter stand more on their merits and less on getting out the largest per cent of the indifferent or uncommitted voters.

Terre Haute Chief: Right you are, more than that of two years ago and the greatest in the history of the state. What do you think of it, Mr. Taxpayer? Did you get your money's worth in the lot of insignificant bills passed by this legislature?

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Washington Life

Some Interesting Phases and Conditions Observed at the Nation's Capital.

Old Opportunity comes some merry capers in Washington. To statesmen retired by ungrateful constituents he shows how their hooks may be clinched at the public crib without the aid or consent of the voters. As soon as the hook is securely fastened the jolly old sport knocks at the door of the hammer artist and screams an invitation to work. The past master of politico-suggestion whispered temptingly to the "lame ducks" of congress how to banish the pain of separation, and forthwith or later a number of commissions were authorized, carrying the regulation congress salary and incidentals, and such matters as were not at home but in the deal, were named for the pleasant duties of investigators and junketers. Probably half a score of these commissions are in full blast at the cashier's wicket. Generally speaking, they are endowed with perpetual life. If any member resigns, the fact escapes notice. Only a few days ago Washington paragraph mentioned the completion of an index to the old files of congress by former Senator Peffer of Kansas, the once famous populist, who dropped out of sight years ago. How long he has been on the job only the cashier knows and the chances are his grip is good for a lifetime.

The last flock of "lame ducks" provided for in advance have scarcely become acquainted with their jobs before they are assailed as drones in the public hive, eating up as much honey as they can put their paws on. Senator Cummins of Iowa is trying his hammer on the monetary commission, in which a fine bunch of retired senators and a few defeated representatives are sheltered from the wolf at \$12,000 per. The Iowa senator unfeelingly insists on the commission finishing its job this year, and then let the members go without a rain check. A resolution to effect that end has been introduced and the debate on it will turn the light on this and many other matters for the retired and hungry patriot. In three years the monetary commission has drawn over \$1,000,000 from the public treasury. There is no restriction on its treasury pull. The money comes on the proper voucher. Originally composed of active members of the two houses, serving on the regular salary, twelve of the eighteen are now ex-members, but the majority are on just the same. Not only are the members comfortably fixed financially, but the commission occupies the swellest suite of rooms in the senate office building and sooties at the suggestions of regulars to pack up and move on to the back benches.

Speaker Champ Clark intends to maintain order in the house of representatives. Probably twenty times a day he brings down his gavel five or six times and declaims:

"The house will be in order. Gentlemen in the aisles will take their seats." The words "house" and "order" are especially emphasized. Such interruptions will frequently occur in the midst of a speech, and always precede the reading of a resolution or the taking of a vote. To a person 1,000 miles from Washington a reading of the proceedings of the house in the Congressional Record might well convey the impression that the democratic party is in a state of confusion and chaos. As a matter of fact Mr. Clark is preserving the most perfect order seen in the house in many a day, and is being obeyed by the members with alacrity. He merely gets wrought up on slighter provocation than did Speaker Cannon.

The house employs two reading clerks at \$4,000 a year each. Seventeen democrats have applied for the places, which require unusual physical endowments and a knowledge of parliamentary custom. All of the voices tested so far lack strength, carrying quality and clearness. Apparently the reading clerks will be tried out the other day during the regular proceedings of the house, but all failed to come up to the standard of E. J. Lamson of Ohio and Dennis E. Alward, republicans, who have held the places more than fifteen years.

Minority Leader Mann, who occupies a seat about the middle of the house, complained of not being able to hear what the speaker said, and so confused him that he could not regain his composure or voice and had to retire in disorder.

A thing that strikes a close observer of Mr. Taft, relates Leslie's Weekly, is the attitude he takes in the matter of personal deference to himself. When he was approaching his train in the Grand Central station on his way to be notified of the presidential nomination, Henry W. Taft, with him, stopped short in the concourse with, "Well, I'll have to leave you here." "Cannot you accompany me to the train?" Mr. Taft asked.

"No; I'm afraid the station rules would not permit of my going through the gates." The presidential nominee stopped a minute and was plainly disappointed. "Henry, you come along, anyway," was his answer. "Maybe I can get you through."

Needless to remark, he succeeded. So great an ovation did the station officials and train crew give him that Mr. Taft could have had the locomotive for the asking. Another incident is reported between Mr. Norton, then the president's secretary, and Mr. Taft.

"Mr. Norton, have you heard from those fellows in Australia about our accommodations?" Mr. Taft asked. "No," replied Secretary Norton. "Well, do you suppose they'll have a room for us?" "Yes, Mr. President, I think your chances are pretty good," Mr. Norton laughed and so did everybody else.

Madero is Marching On.

St. Louis Republic. With poignant emotion we note the fact that Madero-Franco I. Madero to be precise—is marching upon Juarez with an army. There is no other example in history, he says, of a grown-up nation being compelled to wear the swaddling clothes of childhood. If the constitution lies between us and socialism, it is a pretty good document and will be preserved for some time.

Loved for Its Enemies.

Philadelphia Record. Congressman Berger, socialist, wants a new constitution of the United States. "There is no other example in history," he says, "of a grown-up nation being compelled to wear the swaddling clothes of childhood." If the constitution lies between us and socialism, it is a pretty good document and will be preserved for some time.

A Dead Give-Away.

Cleveland Plain Dealer. One of the funniest things in modern politics is how the public pays \$100,000 for a senator, whom it offers for a nickel to anyone foolish enough to bid.

The Bee's Letter Box

Contributions on timely subjects not exceeding two hundred words are invited from our readers.

Compulsory Vaccination Again. OMAHA, April 23.—To the Editor of The Bee: Our ancestors burned heretics, and hanged Quakers, and "witches," believing it to be for the benefit of the commonwealth, just as some would do today if they had the power, and with as little sense and judgment would those who cling to the superstitions of the past, insist upon this free America, forcibly inoculate the bodies of healthy children with the beastly virus of disease, to induce a pathological condition of blood poisoning that neither the tenets of modern science, nor the experience in practical life can justify.

It does not seem possible that people of ordinary common sense, can for a moment believe that a healthy child can be a menace to the public health. That medical men of presumed intelligence, integrity and learning should asseverate, repeat and reiterate an assertion so preposterous and erroneous proves their ignorance of the very elements of the subjects whereon their professed science, in the name of the ophiath in a Spanish church yard which runs thus, "I was well, would be better; took physic and died." If the vaccinated majority are really protected, as they loudly proclaim they are, how can they be endangered, by the presence of the unvaccinated minority, who are, as we are told, the only people who are susceptible to smallpox infection.

Smallpox is a filthy disease, and people who have a pure blood stream, and cleanly body within, as well as without, with healthful, sanitary surroundings have no need to fear smallpox under modern, up-to-date treatment, even if they have never been vaccinated. Now since vaccination neither protects you from taking smallpox, nor mitigates its severity when you have taken it, and correct living and sanitary measures do, then vaccination ought not to be enforced by law, but sanitary measures should be. Neither the analyst, the bacteriologist, the microscopist, nor the pathologist, has ever given us any definite information as to the specific constitution of the disease—products erroneously styled "pure calf-lymph."

Compulsory vaccination law, has no analogy in the whole domain of legislative enactment. It is the only instance in this country of the statutory enforcement of a surgical operation. It is the only instance on record in this nation of a surgical operation being forcibly foisted upon the public by legislative enactment.

Compulsory vaccination invades the integrity of the healthy body. It attacks the very citadel of life. It commands that a wound, however slight, be inflicted upon every pupil in our public schools, and that these wounds be inflicted with a diseased matter, of undefined and unascertained composition, and of admittedly unknown nature and origin. Between compulsory sanitation and compulsory vaccination there is a difference as antipodal as that between health and disease.

Compulsory sanitation promotes health, while compulsory