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FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER.
VICTOR ROSEWATER, EDITOR.

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"Freedom of the seas" holds a conspicuous place among modern myths.

General Carranza promises to observe strict neutrality. For small favors, thanks!

Please note that by the weather chart we still have a staggering excess of temperature for the year.

It's a reckless railroad man these days who boasts of a wreckless road without knocking on wood.

A literacy test restriction on immigration from state to state would be unconstitutional, but it would be just as logical.

With hogs netting 12 cents on the hoof, nothing short of a limousine upholds the luxury of "bringing home the bacon."

"The end of the war is now in sight" so the president of the Russian Duma is quoted. Well, it can't come too soon to suit us!

Paradoxical as it appears, the colder the weather the hotter the jobs put up to the fire department. High pressure heat multiplies the runs.

War talk boosts prices, while peace talk punctures the balloon. Destruction, distress, disaster, offerings of war, are unsurpassed as speculative aids.

After that offer to the government of his plan for war purposes, how can Henry Ford again hope to travel on the same peace ship with "Brother" Bryan?

Things have certainly come to a pretty pass when our "peerless leader" and "world-famed Nebraskan" has to depend upon republicans to defend him from attack.

Still, if Kaiser Wilhelm will keep his submarines off unarmed ships carrying American passengers the call for us to sail in "in the name of humanity" will not be so loud.

A host of refugees trailed the American army to the border, seeking food, shelter and the privilege of living. Every turn of the Mexican problem makes it look more complicated.

The official showing of the whole world being in debt to the United States stimulates the sympathetic fellow feeling. We owe little abroad, but the home debts will hold us for a while.

When leaders of American industries promptly put their establishments at the service of the government, there is no reason for doubting that all needed resources would be quickly mobilized as necessities arise.

Anyone who pretends to know anything about money payments for police protection in Omaha is in duty bound to tell it to the grand jury. If he isn't sworn and doesn't tell it, put it down that he doesn't know it.

A roster of 238 bills fathered by the Douglas county delegation presents an example of thrift peculiarly suited to the season. Thrift is not confined to volume. It animates the pores here and there and promises compensation for the drain of perspiration and politics.

The passage by the French Parliament of a bill summoning to the colors men once rejected as unfit clearly maps the drain of war on the man-power of the country. France is not alone in this regard. Germany has taken similar action. Austria has reached the bottom of its resources and Great Britain has been combed for men physically fit to do their bit. These are conspicuous signs pointing to an early glimpse of the last ditch.

American Isles

The extremely slight knowledge which many Americans have of what their country has been doing outside of its immediate and older boundaries is indicated by the great number of communications that are sent to the papers urging that the (late) Danish West Indies shall henceforth be known as "the American West Indies." This suggestion involves the notion that there are no other American West Indies than the islands which have been purchased from Denmark, which is not the case. The problem to be solved is that of the name by which the islands of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix shall henceforth be known. To denominate them as "the American West Indies" would be absurd. As a matter of fact, there is no particular necessity for any other name for these islands except the names which they now individually bear. All the West Indies are, of course, in the broad sense, American West Indies, and the time may come when they will all be American in the national sense. To bestow the name upon any restricted group of them would be to imply that our progress in the Caribbean had come to a full stop. It is quite possible, however, that there are some Americans, capable of writing letters to the papers, who have never heard of Porto Rico, never of Culebra, never of Vieques; who never have heard that the Isle of Pines is principally inhabited by Americans; who do not know that we have a protectorate over Cuba which is recognized by all the nations of the world, and that we have assumed responsibilities in Hayti and San Domingo, which are about as likely to come to an end as those republics are to sink into the sea. We have a very large class of "insular" people in this country, but the existence of this class does not argue very much knowledge of insular affairs. Quite the contrary.

Neutrals and the United States.

President Wilson's note of invitation to the other neutral nations of the world to make common cause with the United States is receiving much attention from foreign governments. Its reception from the countries that have been heard from since its promulgation is indicative of approval, if not of actual co-operation. Neutral nations everywhere are in the same predicament as to the war. Belligerents have shown no intent to discriminate between them, but have indifferently ignored the rights of non-combatants in the application of their own rules. The same ruthlessness at sea applies to one and all. Submission or resistance has been the choice open for months, and it is still the only course. The earnest desire of all nations not now involved in the conflict to avoid being sucked into the vortex is manifest in many ways, but in none so strongly as in the patience with which unwarranted interference with commerce has been supported. Whether the action of the United States in breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany is, or is not, immediately followed by other neutrals, they will share any beneficial results, and it may produce a change of policy for all. At any rate, it is encouraging to know that the course of our government strikes a sympathetic chord with all the neutral nations so far heard from.

Literacy Test Now a Law.

By substantial votes in each branch of congress the literacy test has been given the force of law, the president's veto notwithstanding. This means that we have now adopted a wholly new policy with respect to admitting foreign-born immigrants to our country. Up to this time we have held out an invitation to every able-bodied, mentally-sound man and woman promising to become a useful, self-supporting addition to our population to come and help us develop our vast natural resources and share in the liberty and opportunity of our great republic. We have shut the doors against the physically unfit, the defectives, the criminals and the anarchists, the paupers and the assisted immigrants likely to become public charges, but now, for the first time, we will insist upon ability to read and write as a prerequisite to admission. How many this literacy test will exclude no one can tell, but we do know that had such a test been applied in the past many thousands of men who have made good, and the parents of many thousands more who have made good in a still more conspicuous degree, would have been excluded. The fact that congress has overridden the veto in no way makes less cogent the reasons the president gave, repeated from veto messages of previous presidents, against the enactment of the law.

Though The Bee believes the literacy test ill-advised and wrong in principle, we do not expect it to have serious effect nor even to satisfy the extreme restrictionists. Old world educational opportunities have improved wonderfully and are bound to continue to improve, so that fewer and fewer of their youth, ambitious enough to learn to read and write, will be denied the chance.

Again, the whole status of population movement and transfer of allegiance is likely to be readjusted as a consequence of the present war—we hope in the direction of greater facility and greater recognition of individual freedom. In the play of these new forces our immigration policy will have to be made to fit.

Well, Now You're Talking!

In creating the Water Board the legislature originally made provisions for keeping it out of party politics. If the legislature believes these provisions need strengthening and clarifying we can see no injustice nor impropriety in appropriate action to that end.—World-Herald.

Well, now you're talking and coming around to the invulnerable position The Bee has steadfastly maintained from the start. It is not a question so much of maintaining or discontinuing the Water Board (except that a board of six is needlessly expensive and entirely superfluous when one does the whole business), but of enforcing divorce of its management from politics. If it would be putting the Water Board into politics by turning its supervision over to the city commission, the answer that it has been in politics all the time can be met only by making enforceable the prohibitions in the present law against active participation in politics by the officers and employees of the water department.

Let it be understood that, with The Bee, this is not personal to the present general manager any more than it would be to anyone else in that place—for he may resign, or have to go off to war, or be lured away from us by a better job somewhere else—but the water plant we will have with us forever, and municipal water and politics simply will not mix without making trouble.

Speeding Up Defense Plans.

One of the impressive developments incident to the break with Germany is the speeding up of defense plans. Congress is taking the view of the situation that comes with "better late than never" resolves, and is making liberal provision for purchases that must be made. The Navy department has trotted out some plans that may astonish the public, but showing that lessons of the war have not all been lost and is arranging to guard the harbors of the country securely. In the War department similar activity is noted, the army especially profiting by its experience of last summer. Orders for the immediate purchase of supplies have been issued and, should the call for troops come, the quartermaster's department will be much nearer ready than it was a year ago. Of course, this speed is commendable and rests on wisdom under conditions; but it is also a belated acknowledgement of the soundness of advice given many months ago and disdained by the wisacres who could see no good reason why the United States should make any preparation in expectancy of trouble. It is just another demonstration of the superiority of the hindsight over the foresight of the democratic party.

The stepfather of the election-by-wards school board bill says there is no intention of legislating the present board members out, but merely to provide for choosing their successors by wards. It amounts to the same thing, however, because several who reside in the same wards could not be re-elected except by beating one another. As for The Bee, we would have no compunction whatever about legislating half the present membership out, if the board were thereby reduced from twelve to five, which would necessitate their choice at large.

The Douglas legislative delegation this time is made up from top to bottom of democrats. As they were elected with the unstinted support of the local democratic organ, it will have to share responsibility for what it sponsored.

Washington "Characters"

C. W. Thompson, in New York Times

The old Washington is no more. It may have seemed an insignificant thing when Shoemaker's disappeared from Pennsylvania avenue, and Hancock's closed its doors, but those things were symbols, like craps on the floor. Washington has changed its character, which is to say that the old Washington is dead and a new one begun. "The new deal," as Mr. Daley said of a world without alcohol, "may be better; but it'll be different, an' th' wurruld will be a sadder an' a safer wurruld to live in."

The last of the "characters" of Washington died a few days ago, and with the passing of that famous tribe the metamorphosis becomes complete. There is no room for them in the Washington of today, but they have flourished there since the presidency of Jefferson, and were a feature of its life duplicated nowhere—the men who were pointed out to you on the street under that title, just as were the monument and the capitol. For a hundred years, if a "character" died there were always plenty more, for it was a self-renewing institution; but they have been dying off with no successors for the last few years, and when Charley Edwards "of Texas"—the name was never pronounced without the suffix—died last week, a chapter in the development of Washington was closed.

"When Bill Sterrett went to Washington," said Colonel R. M. Johnston once, "he made a great stir as the typical wild and woolly westerner, and made what seemed a granite reputation. But when Charley Edwards arrived, he hadn't more than got off the train and hung up his hat before everybody was calling Bill effeminate." He had helped Brann make the Iconoclast; he had imbibed his philosophy of life under the tutelage of Eugene Field. He wore an immense black sombrero and a sweeping black moustache, and, in the senate gallery, when he whispered, as he thought, to a neighbor, a capitol attendant came down and touched him on the shoulder, saying, "Shouting is not permitted in the gallery, sir."

It was a sight for the gods to see him and that other famous "character," Dr. Bedloe, when Greek met Greek; Edwards and Bedloe, storm and sunshine, a cyclone and a summer day, with a rapturous crowd instantly congregating for the collision of fun and wit. "Coarse humor, sir, coarse humor," was always Bedloe's final and conclusive retort as he walked sunnily away. Tom Ochiltree belonged to the era of both, was a friend of Bedloe's; he died in eclipse, long removed from Washington, but he outlived old John Chamberlain.

Congress contributed its quota to the same era of "characters." Private John Allen, Belford, the Red-headed Rooster of the Rockies, and many others. But these congressional characters were not quite the same as the unofficial characters. There was one who, by peering down the avenue, all staidness and touch-me-nottishness, who won fame by peppering the queen of Madagascar with birdshot when he was consul at Mozambique and wished to emphasize his disapproval of her taste in bathing costumes. Colonel John A. Joyce, with his military soft hat and his mane of white hair rolling down his shoulders, he who used to beguile his leisure by driving Ella Wheeler Wilcox into spasms of indignation at stated times by asserting with solemnity that he had written her poem, "Laugh and the World Laughs With You." The outraged poet has never seen any fun in the situation to this day, and perhaps Joyce himself did not.

Some of the lost tribe of "characters" are remembered with nothing but amusement, some with tenderness and the mirth whose fountains lie close to those of tears. Edwards and Bedloe were of these last. Stricken down five years ago with a frightful malady whose issue was sure and painful death, Edwards faced it with a laugh, and for five years he died laughingly. He had laughed all his life, and he laughed to the last; he went to the Dark Tower like Childe Roland. It was a gallant death, a fitting one for the man who was to end the century-old book of the "characters" of Washington.

Saving the Indian

Harvey D. Jacob, in Case and Comment

Have you heard that the Indian is a vanishing race? If so, forget it. "Lo, the poor Indian is fast passing from our midst" is but a dream of yesterday, since statistics show that in 1916 there were more births than deaths among our Indian population! The government has for a long time maintained medical corps and hospitals wherever the Indian might be, and it has been the endeavor of these forces to keep the population as healthy as possible; but the task has never been an easy one, first, because of insufficient appropriations and forces, and second, because the Indian does not readily swallow the white man's medicine, preferring instead his own "medicine man." Educating the Indian to the point of reasoning in the pale face way has been conducted in a limited sense to the success of these scientific efforts, but it remained for the present commissioner of Indian affairs to inaugurate such a systematic and vigorous campaign in behalf of the Indian's health as to finally make statistics show a greater number of births than deaths in a single year. His method was very simple, but curiously no one had ever before thought of starting a "better babies campaign" with Indians. Not only did he assume the role of the Great White Father, but he likewise became the Great White Mother. He wrote a "baby book" which he sent to all the Indian mothers and mothers-to-be. Following up the "baby book" all those 6,000 federal employees engaged exclusively in Indian service were politely requested, suavely commanded by a "Save-the-Baby" letter to direct their utmost endeavors to the success of the new campaign. The force of medical experts, physicians, surgeons, dentists, nurses and field matrons was increased and they worked in harmony with other field employees of the service to better sanitary conditions, until all became enlisted in the vigorous campaign to restore to health a race thought to be dying. The activities in this direction have been so enormous that it has been necessary for congress to increase the appropriation for "Relieving Distress and Preventing Disease among Indians" from \$40,000 in 1911 to \$350,000 in 1917.

People and Events

The board of school superintendents of New York state is considering a rule requiring teachers in the public schools to furnish proof of American citizenship. Many persons teaching Americanism to alien youth are not Americans themselves, even to the extent of "first papers."

An irate husband whose wife was bumped by the automobile was \$1 Minneapolis attached the machine for damages, won the case by default, and was joyfully shaking hands with himself on his victory when he discovered the car was a 1910 model. The glow of hope dropped to zero instantly.

New York City's board of child welfare reports gratifying results from its policy of aiding widows to support their offspring at home in preference to sending them to state institutions. The cost is one-third less, besides home surroundings and mother attention are more desirable than institutional care. The city's appropriation for widows' pensions this year is \$1,250,000.

TODAY

Health Hint for the Day.

If you have repeated attacks of acute tonsillitis or quincy the wisest thing to do is to consult a physician as you are almost sure to have chronically diseased tonsils.

One Year Ago Today in the War.

Prince Oscar of Prussia, fifth son of the kaiser, reported wounded in battle in the eastern war theater. French artillery effectually bombarded Vauban fort near Hat Sas and trenches at Steenstraete.

In Omaha Thirty Years Ago.

Judge Savage, W. V. Morse, H. W. Yates and C. W. Hamilton, who went to Lincoln to consult with the Douglas county delegation relative to the new charter, have returned in high spirits, announcing that an understanding had been arrived at which insures the passage of the charter.



Prof. Steinhilber, with his magnificent orchestra, gave a family concert in Germania hall. The soloists were Miss Bertha Steinhilber, soprano; B. Buchanan, violinist, and H. Lotz, cornetist.

N. J. Edholm of the firm of Edholm & Alken, jeweler, is confined to his home on the corner of Twenty-fifth and Davenport with nervous prostration.

Hon. D. D. Wead and wife of Vermont are visiting at the residence of their nephew, D. W. Saxe, 2209 Parman.

W. P. Hudson, better known as "Our Heedy," has again resumed his reliable position at the Miffitt parlors.

William Gladish, the well-known druggist, has returned from a pleasant visit to relatives in Toronto. He is in much better health and heartier than when he left here and is much pleased with the result of his trip.

This Day in History.

1800—Millard Fillmore, thirteenth president of the United States, born in Cayuga county, New York. Died in Buffalo, N. Y., 1874.

1812—Charles Dickens, the novelist, born at Portsmouth, England. Died at Gad's Hill, June 9, 1870.

1853—Robert Lucas, first territorial governor of Iowa, died at Iowa City. Born at Shepherdstown, Va., April 1, 1781.

1887—An act for the union of the Canadian provinces was introduced in the British parliament.

1878—British fleet ordered to Constantinople in consequence of Russian advance.

1892—Many lives lost in a fire that destroyed the Hotel Royal in New York City.

1893—Nebraska legislature elected William V. Allen United States senator by a coalition of populists and democrats.

1896—William H. English, democratic candidate for vice president in 1896, died at Indianapolis. Born at Lexington, Ind., August 27, 1822.

1901—Marriage of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and Duke Henry of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

1904—Start of the great Baltimore fire, which in two days burned over 140 acres and destroyed property of an estimated value of \$70,000,000.

1907—John D. Rockefeller gave \$2,000,000 to the general education board.

The Day We Celebrate.

Abraham L. Patrick was born in Illinois just thirty-one years ago today. He is now dealing in gravel, being president of the Platte Gravel company of this city.

Alexandre F. Ribot, French minister of finance (whose wife was Miss Minnie Burch of Chicago) born at St. Omar, France, seventy-five years ago today.

Robert B. Mantell, one of the noted veterans of the American stage, born at Irvine, Scotland, sixty-three years ago today.

Francis Wilson, popular actor, who was married a few days ago to a young woman of Missouri, born in Philadelphia, sixty-three years ago today.

Patrick J. Moran, manager of the Philadelphia National league baseball team, born at Fitchburg, Mass., forty-one years ago today.

George (Habe) Ruth, pitcher of the Boston American league baseball team, born in Baltimore twenty-three years ago today.

Timely Jottings and Reminders.

The British parliament will be reopened today by the king and queen. The dominion parliament is to adjourn today to enable Prime Minister Borden to attend the imperial war conference in London.

The Bee's Letter Box

Why Only Fallen Women?

Sutton, Neb., Feb. 6.—To the Editor of The Bee: A traveling man says "that fallen women lead the life because they prefer it." In the first place, why "fallen women" and not "a fallen man?"

Why forever damn the woman for once going wrong, while the man, who frequents and patronizes fallen women, is perfectly respectable? Were it not for men equally guilty there would be no fallen women. Why saddle all the guilt and inflict the punishment, by social ostracism, on one sex, while the other equally guilty goes free?

But there is another phase to this question: Success is measured by the size of one's income. Why should a girl slave for a bare existence while she can make from \$20 to \$50 a week and wear fine clothes. I knew girls right in Omaha working for \$6 and \$8 a week, while room and board alone cost at least \$5.

Recently 500 girls of the underworld marched in a body to Rev. Paul Smith's church in San Francisco. He had dreamed, like other light-headed people, that girls enter the underworld because of moral depravity. Madame Gamble, a keeper for eight years and leader of the women, propounded some questions to this man of Greek and Hebrew learning that made him stand aghast.

Some years ago a commission appointed by Roosevelt to investigate the social evil found that less than 25 per cent became prostitutes from inclination. This is probably far too high.

Of the 54,000,000 men and women of marriageable age 18,000,000, or one in every three, are unmarried. Is this because they prefer such a life? Has this fact any bearing on the social evil?

The social evil is closely interwoven with our economic system. One of the principal causes is the double standard of morality.

In some European countries the girl that goes wrong does not suffer social ostracism, but is provided for in a respectable manner. A. G. G.

One Question Calls Out Another.

Omaha, Feb. 6.—To the Editor of The Bee: I read in the papers that Judge Foster told a certain club how protection money is collected in cities the size of Omaha. Will he now explain how certain straw bonds were accepted by a police judge from certain bartenders who did not own any property and always through one certain attorney? MAC LANG.

Stand by His Guns.

Omaha, Feb. 6.—To the Editor of The Bee: Permit me to take a final slam at Mr. Weybright, who does not know when he is beaten, by telling him that he has not yet made a hit showing that I have in any way been unpatriotic in denouncing the election system of nearly every southern state. He is the one who lacks patriotism is not denouncing what really means a nullification of what the union soldiers fought for from 1861 to 1865. I still insist that it is not just to the rest of the country that men who fought to destroy our national union for four years should now control the destinies of the country that they sought to destroy.

Of course, the men who sympathize with them call it stirring up sectional strife to denounce the fraud and force that is used to control a large number of states. I do not think we would permit such a condition in Nebraska. Nor should it be permitted in any part of the union, and in the case the republican party is restored to power in 1920, as I think it will be, I want to see congress pass laws cutting down the representation in congress of every state that will not permit every legal voter to cast his vote and to allow that vote to be counted as cast.

AS MR. WEYBRIGHT SAW FIT TO DODGE

the question and accuse me of disloyalty to our country because I denounced fraud and force in elections. I gave him some pointers as to the source of my patriotism to this country. I did not do it to brag about my ancestry, but to show him that I can trace my loyalty to the flag back for a great many years. There is a saying about training a child 100 years before it is born and I simply showed that my patriotism dated back many years before I was born. I do not claim to be any better on account of my ancestry, but I am sure to get back at anybody who accuses me of disloyalty.

FRANK A. AGNEW

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