

THE OMAHA BEE

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FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER
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M. Kerensky comes back. Will the bear? Wait and watch.

Death penalty for armed slackers hardly fits the offense. Better a life sentence at hard labor.

A four-million-dollar tax roll puts Omaha right in the front rank among taxpayers, if nothing else.

Viewed from any angle, going where duty calls and glory waits, spells hard work from start to finish.

Nebraska's wheat fields are coming back, if care and preparation can achieve the reward deserved.

Last fall's prophets of reduced taxes have discredited themselves as thoroughly as prophets of the war's finish.

Military authorities have only themselves to blame if they permit precipitate marriages to expand the yellow streak.

Jupiter Pluvius put the finishing touches on Nebraska's bumper crop. Jup may name his terms for a permanent regulated job hereabouts.

The slacker who had his teeth extracted to escape the draft may live a long time to use false teeth and ruminate over the odium he has invited.

So far none of the exemption claims enumerated "cold feet" as an obstacle to draft. The affliction assumed aliases less odious to disguise the truth.

Merely as a reminder of bygone pledges, a sample of November banners promising lower taxes would lend artistic merit to the decorations of the city hall.

Senator Reed from Kansas City has added another chapter to his serial concerning Herbert Hoover, but the public has ceased to care what the senator thinks of anybody.

A Chicago firm which denounced an egg order as a gambling deal, won quick expulsion from the egg board. The crime is not so much in the offense as in giving the snap away.

Speeding up the railroads seems to have been accomplished in good order and with little friction, just reasonable co-operation and watchful management being all that was required.

The protest against inequality and discrimination in state taxes merely underscores a fact of general knowledge. The revenue law was designed that way and the result comes up to the specifications.

Where some of the money is spent by the government since the war move started is shown at the naval station, whose "rookies" now weigh fifteen pounds apiece more than when they started. If nothing else, this is a good advertisement for the naval cookery.

Herr Wilhelm Thompson, mayor of Chicago, is on the job once more. Returning from a brief vacation, he switched the lever of his political machine and the Board of Education saved the face of the kaiser in the school books. If Herr Thompson does not get the iron cross in due time Potsdam must be classed as ungrateful.

Western coal operators defy federal and state authorities striving for moderation in prices. Concessions secure in eastern fields have been turned down in the middle west and last winter's squeeze with some additions still prevail at the pits. The issue deeply concerns the public and the authorities cannot ignore the defy.

America Physically Fit

Louisville Courier-Journal

That young Americans of the twentieth century were physically inferior to their forefathers, as a result of the flabbiness of peace was asserted pretty generally before the beginning of the present war. A Washington report says that of 72,914 men who offered for the officers' reserve, 91,838 were found on preliminary examination by civilian physicians physically satisfactory. A higher percentage of physical fitness probably never was shown by an equal number of applicants for military service. A few centuries ago, when any able-bodied man was considered fit to bear arms, the entire 72,914 would have been physically acceptable. Less than 51,838 would have been physically sound. As late as the civil war, when confederate officers made the requirements for the cavalry service "ability to ride a horse and fire a gun" and the standard of eligibility for infantry service "ability to march and carry a gun" more than 51,838 of these men would have been acceptable, but that five-sevenths of them can pass up-to-date preliminary examinations, shows that the blood, the bone and the brawn of the breed have not run down during a period of peace.

That the American people, admittedly peace loving, would not be united in willingness to fight in defense of liberty was asserted, and believed apparently in Germany six months ago. Many Americans of limited vision believed it. Let anyone who doubts that sentiment is more united in favor of war in 1917 than it was at the beginning of any previous war, including the revolution, re-read the history of the United States.

That America, despite its ample financial resources and manufacturing facilities and supplies of materials for a great air fleet, will be at a disadvantage in the drive against Germany, because of the efficiency of the seasoned German aviator is an opinion frequently expressed, yet some of the most brilliant military aviators are men in their early twenties and some of those fighting on the side of the allies are eager Americans who would not wait to follow the flag to France, but preceded it.

Postage and Revenue.

The Lincoln Journal takes The Bee to task for its news story about the arrival at the Omaha postoffice of 3,000,000 3-cent postage stamps as the advance agents of an increased letter postage rate and particularly this estimate of the reporter: "Three million stamps at 2 cents each bring \$60,000; 3,000,000 stamps at 3 cents each bring \$90,000—a gain of an actual \$30,000 for Uncle Sam's war chest."

The Journal rightly, we believe, questions this conclusion. "It cannot be so," it says, "if the higher rate causes people to reduce their letter writing. Should only two-thirds as many letters be mailed under the new rate Uncle Sam would gain practically nothing from the increase and the public would lose one-third of the service." For this reason a proposal to raise war funds by increasing the postage rates is pronounced of doubtful wisdom.

If higher letter postage may be expected to reduce the number of letters written and mailed, without corresponding reduction in postal expense, the same tendency will be observed all along the line, should postage rates be increased for transmitting newspapers, circulars, books or parcels; that is to say, the profit computed on paper is not likely to materialize in fact, because of the disturbing effect on the demand for and use of the service.

The widest use of the postal facilities at compensatory rates, or at even less than compensatory rates, is worth more to the people than any questionable revenue that might be squeezed out through higher charges and limited use. That is the traditional policy of the Postoffice department and it is its justification in a democracy.

Seed Wheat for Nebraskans.

The Nebraska State Council of Defense is in its most important work just now, that of making sure that an ample acreage is seeded to wheat in this state this fall. It has been found impossible to greatly increase the acreage for several reasons. One of the principal of these is that fully two-thirds of the wheat land was plowed up and seeded to corn last spring and it will be covered by this crop until long after the winter wheat is sown. Oats and similar crops were grown on other abandoned wheat land and this will soon be available for the new planting. New land and fallow ground will be utilized to bring the fall wheat acreage up to the normal, which means at least three million acres will be sown.

One of the encouraging features of the situation is the spirit of mutual helpfulness shown by the farmers themselves. Instead of those who have a surplus of wheat endeavoring to practice a holdup on their less fortunate fellows, an ample supply of seed is being furnished at market prices and cases are reported where neighbors are giving assistance to one another, leaving the price for future adjustment. This is the spirit that means success as far as it can be controlled. Barring the possibility of another unfavorable winter, Nebraska will wheel into line in 1918 with a bumper crop and take its place again as the second winter wheat state of the union.

Some Gould Family Affairs.

George J. Gould, titular head of the Gould family, has had some experience with other folks' marriages, having had to straighten out tangles involving brothers or sisters on several occasions, and it is possible he is "fed up" on this. Therefore when his sons contracted alliances against his wishes he showed quite a bit of temper. This, too, is quite his own affair, just as it was when he himself married Edith Kingdon, who was earning her living as an actress before he met her. What he overlooks is that his sons seem to have some of their father's spirit, and feel quite competent to pick their own wives. They think very likely, that Lady Decies is quite enough of nobility for their own branch, not taking into consideration the adventures of an aunt among the aristocracy of France. At any rate, the boys wed without regard to their father's wishes; and promptly were cut off the family pay roll. It does not appear that even this proceeding has made much difference to them, for both have gone to work to earn the wherewithal to pay household expenses. In this they also show something of the grit that enabled their grandfather to rise from obscurity to his ultimate place in the financial world. In good time they may come into possession of some of the Gould millions, but meanwhile they will command a lot of respect from the American people they might otherwise have forfeited. At all events, if they really settle down to work for their own, just as millions of other lusty young Americans have to do, they will be proving themselves worthy of their name.

Cur Dog or Woolly Sheep—Which?

County fairs are being held all over Nebraska at this season and two great gatherings of farmers are at hand—one at Fremont, where the tractor show is being held; the other at Lincoln, where the Nebraska state fair shortly opens. To these The Bee commends for some consideration the question: Which crop means most to Nebraska the cur dog or the woolly sheep? The Bee has published lately some very comprehensive articles on this topic, written by G. W. Hervey, a recognized authority on the sheep industry, in which the potential value of the sheep and the actual danger of the dog were made very clear. If Nebraska is to take its proper place among the sheep raising states of the union it will be when the farmers have been awakened to the importance of the proposition to eliminate the cur dog as a factor of the problem. Only the farmers can do it and it is worth their while to give the question consideration.

Uncle Sam's uniform nowadays carries the wearer to the pinnacle of public favor. Beside him the stay-at-home tags himself as a back number. His needs are anticipated. Mothers and grandmothers do their devoted bit in his behalf and Sisters of Cheer promise to make complete the happiness of national service. With such a wealth of consideration showered upon the coming heroes of the nation the stay-at-home becomes the loneliest object on the highways.

When men of high repute disagree on war mortality, who will decide? Former Ambassador Gerard estimates Germany's losses in man power at 3,000,000. Colonel Repington, military critic of the London Times, is equally positive in placing Germany's losses in three years at 4,500,000 men. The wide margin leaves ample room for amateur guessers.

Omaha, Minneapolis and New Orleans continue week after week a lively neck-and-neck race for primacy in bank clearings. While they shift from twelfth to fourteenth place, the margin of gain is small. Considering the greater population of the others, Omaha's position clearly marks a larger relative volume of business.

Fighting New York's Fires

By Fredric J. Haskin

New York, Aug. 5.—The recent national embargo on exports has thrown New York harbor into unkept disorder. Long rows of tramp steamers, freighters and ocean liners crowd the docks and block the channel. The wharves are piled with idle cargoes; the city warehouses are bulging with merchandise that was to have gone to Europe and every hour or two another line of freight cars arrives, bringing many more tons of goods.

This crowding of the harbor has increased the city's fire risk about 75 per cent. Much of the cargo is extremely inflammable stuff, some of it is munitions, and shipments are arriving so fast that there is no time to sort the goods. Furthermore several small fires have occurred on the upper river as the result of collisions, it being difficult to navigate through the mass of craft.

The city has nine fire boats for the control of fires in the harbor, but these are how inadequate, and the railroad and steamship companies have had to form their own fire brigades along the wharves as well as appropriate tugboats to guard their cargoes. New York itself, of course, also shares this new fire risk. Its safety depends more or less upon the wind. If a large fire broke out upon the wharves and the wind happened to be blowing landward the hazard would be great, especially since numerous munition plants and high explosives factories would lie in its path.

In normal times New York is one of the greatest fire risks in the world. On an average of three fires a day, or 12,700 fires a year, occur. The greatest accumulation of wealth in the world must be protected, the highest skyscrapers and the lowest slums. Hence the New York fire department is one of the most efficient, in spite of being the most overworked fire department in existence.

There are 310 fire companies, employing 5,000 men. They are distributed through thirteen fire districts, with a chief at the head of each district, who is responsible to one chief executive in charge of the whole organization. Fire fighting is a different problem in each district, some of which lie in suburbs of clean detached houses, others in crowded business districts and congested foreign quarters. The new physically fit recruit, after sufficient training, is placed in a company in the worst section of the city, for here the work is so strenuous that only the men in best physical trim and with the greatest enthusiasm for their work can make good. And even these cannot stand the pace very long. After three or four years they have to be removed to easier districts.

New York has recently made some important improvements in its fire equipment. It is replacing its horses with motor apparatus for one thing, a change that has brought benefit not only to the city but to the firemen themselves. Housing conditions are much better. The fireman no longer has to live in a stable and spend the greater part of his time in performing the duties of a groom. A garage does not require nearly so much room and in all the stations having the new apparatus the extra space has been used for a handball court. Firemen are required to do a certain amount of gymnasium work every day.

Every day certain firemen are relieved of their duty in answering fire calls to make fire inspections; that is, they make the rounds of all the stores, theaters, garages, factories and public buildings in their district to inspect their qualifications for resisting fire. There are certain laws concerning fire escapes, doors leading to the outside and the storing of inflammable goods as well as very stringent regulations regarding smoking in garages and factories and it is up to the firemen to see that they are complied with. This inspection serves a double purpose. It not only educates the fireman with respect to the city's requirement, but it makes him familiar with the physical features of his district. He knows the exits, trapdoors and stairways of every building, the residences, excepted, of course, he knows where there are pitfalls that would prove dangerous at a night fire; he knows how many occupants are in each building and where the chemical sprinklers and other fire apparatus are located.

All of this is very important, for fire fighting is not an unskilled profession, but a very scientific one. A fire is a disaster which requires just as much cool-headed thinking, courage and executive ability as a battle and perhaps even more technique. For example, there is a fire in a tenement house. The first response to the alarm is a hook-and-ladder company, which finds the building filled with smoke from a fire which is raging in the cellar. Now the first order of the chief of this company, before the ladder apparatus has been touched at all, is to open the scuttle on the roof of the tenement. This allows the fire to go up instead of spreading out like a mushroom and imperiling the buildings on each side.

Or suppose the fire is one of those innumerable stores which have side stairways that lead to apartments above. Instead of attacking from the front or back entrance of the store the firemen start their fire fighting from this side hallway in order that the fire may be kept from ascending to the apartments above.

Various factors such as these must be taken into account. A fire chief has the lives of his men to think of as well as the course of the fire and his position is not always enviable, as for instance, when it is the life of a trapped child against the life of one of his lieutenants. So far as courage is concerned, however, it must be said with all possible due credit to New York firemen that they usually do not have to be urged to endanger their lives for others. In the fire training school the recruit is taught how to save his own life and he is taught many other things besides which would astonish the average layman. He must know building construction and he must learn certain special things about chemicals. Some fires are only made worse by the application of water and instead must be chemically treated.

To this technique of fire-fighting the fireman also adds his physical strength, mental agility and courage. Sometimes a life may be saved by the fraction of a second, so that it is absolutely essential that the fireman should think quickly. Now that the harbor has been added to the list of bad fire risks in New York the number of volunteer firemen has increased enormously. They train just as the others do and perform the same sort of work, but they receive no remuneration and if they are killed their families inherit nothing but honor. It is rumored, however, that the New York philanthropists—of which there are an overwhelming number—are at the trail of these volunteers with additional medals of honor.

Income Tax in Canada

New York Post.

Canada, expecting to call 100,000 men to the army under the conscription act, has had to turn to further taxation measures: the income tax bill introduced by Sir Thomas White this week is the resulting innovation. The Dominion has been shunned an income tax, for the reasons that it has been feared that it would be expensive to administer among a sparse population and would discourage immigration. Inasmuch as the provinces are restricted by the British North America act to direct taxation, the federal government has preferred to resort to indirect. Since the war taken its place, but has proved too narrow. It left untouched large incomes in the form of salaries or of interest and dividends derived from bonds, mortgages, and other investments. The increase in imports has thrown a disproportionate burden upon the masses, resulting in the recent cry for the "cooperation of wealth." The new measure, which begins with a levy of 4 per cent upon unmarried men with an income of \$2,000 and married men with an income of \$4,000, is expected to yield up to \$20,000,000 a year; super-taxes begin when the income exceeds \$6,000. The bill appears to have the support of both Liberals and Conservatives.

OMAHA

Proverb for the Day.

In multitudes of counsellors there is wisdom.

One Year Ago Today in the War.

Italians captured the city of Gorizia, the supposed key to Trieste. German airships bombed the east coast of England. Russian drive up the Danube valley continued unchecked. At Verdun the Germans gained more ground at Thiaumont work.

In Omaha Thirty Years Ago Today.

While Vincent Burkley, the genial and pleasant inspector of customs, and his wife were sitting in their cozy home on Jones street they were suddenly surprised by the arrival of the families of their two daughters, Mrs. C. A. Leary and Mrs. A. F. Bethge, who informed them that it was their forty-fifth wedding anniversary and properly congratulated them.

The morning train through Omaha over the Union Pacific had on board the smallest man ever seen in Omaha; namely, Anastasius Cardens, thirty-one



inches in height and weighing fifty-five pounds, who was on his way home from a visit to his favorite brother, who lives in Los Angeles—this same brother being over six feet tall. A pleasant event was spent at the Omaha division story of the Knights of Pythias, the occasion being the presentation of a handsome sword to Colonel Grager, aide de camp on the staff of Major General Carnahan, after which an election took place, the result of which was the selection of G. W. Plummer to the position of sovereign knight herald, vice James Donnelly, raised to adjutant since the establishment of the regiment.

Harry Walker and family have arrived from Chicago and it is stated that Mr. Walker will have charge of the Armour Packing company in South Omaha.

The many friends of the genial Colonel Frank Hanson were surprised to learn that he had become a musical composer of note. His latest and most creditable effort which has come to the attention of the people hereabouts is "Tell Me the Old, Old Story," which is dedicated to Mr. O. M. Hall.

Contractor Cook is considering the feasibility of cutting an entrance to the court house under the steps on Farnam.

This Day in History.

1780—Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star Spangled Banner," born in Frederick county, Maryland. Died in Baltimore January 11, 1843.

1787—South Carolina ceded its western lands to the federal government.

1805—Exploring expedition left St. Louis to trace the source of the Mississippi.

1814—Indians by treaty ceded to the United States nearly half the present state of Alabama.

1817—General Charles A. May, who commanded the United States cavalry in several of the chief battles of the Mexican war, born in Washington, D. C. Died in New York City December 24, 1884.

1842—Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton signed the treaty of Washington for the settlement of the Maine boundary dispute.

1862—Battle of Cedar Mountain between the federal army under Banks and the confederates under Jackson.

1880—William Bigler, governor of Pennsylvania and United States senator, died at Clearfield, Pa. Born at Shermansburg, Pa. in 1814.

1894—The United States public was officially recognized by the United States.

1914—Serbia declared war on Germany.

The Day We Celebrate.

Albert Cahn has reached his fifty-seventh mile anniversary today. He was born in Omaha and is well known as a shirt manufacturer, billiard champion and trophy golfer.

Rt. Rev. William T. Capers, Episcopal bishop of west Texas, born at Greenville, S. C., fifty years ago today.

Louis B. Hunt, former governor of North Dakota, born at New Brighton, Pa., fifty-six years ago today.

Charles Nagel, former secretary of commerce and labor, born in Colorado county, Texas, sixty-eight years ago today.

Blair Lee, former United States senator from Maryland, born in Montgomery county, Maryland, sixty years ago today.

Timely Jottings and Reminders.

Harvard college held its first commencement 275 years ago today. American angling club are to celebrate today as the birthday anniversary of Isak Walton, author of the classic, "The Compleat Angler."

Injunction proceedings are to be heard in court at Minneapolis today to test the validity of the new local ordinance requiring all bread sold in the city to be in half pound or pound loaves or in multiples of one pound.

Story of the Day.

One of the attractions of the church fete was a fortune teller's tent. A woman took her 10-year-old red-headed, freckled son inside. The woman of wisdom bent over the crystal ball.

"Your son will be a very distinguished man in his long enough," she murmured in deep, mysterious tones.

"Oh, how nice!" gushed the proud mother. "And what will he be distinguished for?"

"For old age," replied the fortune teller slowly.—Knoxville Sentinel.

BEGINNING OF THINGS.

In 1869 the albrake was invented. The trade name Kodak was coined in 1888. The first linotype machine was operated in 1884.

The first electric locomotive dates as far back as 1851. Cocaine was discovered in 1855.

The Kinetoscope was invented in 1893. In 1861 the first elevator was operated. The automobile industry dates back to 1855.

The Gatling gun has been in use since 1862. In 1861 the breech-loading rifle was demonstrated. The sewing machine was given to the country in 1846.

The first airship made a successful flight in 1901 and the first airplane four years later. The first western sovereign to adopt a flag was Clovis, king of the Franks. The first charge of dynamite, as the explosive is now known, was prepared in 1868.

The Bee's Letter Box

Saunders County Corn.

Wahoon, Neb., Aug. 7.—To the Editor of The Bee: Practically the corn crop is assured in Saunders county Saturday with a rain of 1.32 inches and followed by one and a half inches Monday evening. The corn should make an average yield of thirty bushels to the acre. The total acreage in the county is 199,248 acres. The farmers report extraordinary yield of oats and spring wheat.

Frank Klotz of Memphis has sixty acres of spring wheat averaging thirty-four bushels to the acre. The lowest report has been twenty-eight bushels to the acre. Oats are fine and are yielding from thirty-two to 130 bushels per acre.

Lou Rasmussen of Colon has twenty-seven acres of oats yielding eighty-three bushels per acre. Thomas Blair of Cedar Bluffs has twenty-two acres yielding 112 bushels per acre. Roy Benson of Wahoon reports a yield of 100 bushels per acre. Henry Mayes of Memphis reports ninety bushels per acre to cap the climax. Ralph W. Woodworth of Wahoon had twelve acres yielding 130 bushels per acre. The total acreage of oats in the county is 75,541 acres and will yield on an average of fifty bushels to the acre. BEN D. RUPP.

Our Commission Government.

Omaha, Aug. 8.—To the Editor of The Bee: I wonder if those who are talking of submitting to the people a petition for the repeal of our commission form of government have really stopped to think what it would mean. I am willing to recognize the deficiencies of our present plan, but I do not assert that it has never yet had a fair trial. Our elections have been dominated by the liquor crowd. That is now a thing of the past. Let not the form itself be blamed for the poor material we secured for the city administration. Let us try again.

Entirely aside from these considerations, however, let us stop to examine for a moment what a repeal of this form would mean. It would, by such repeal, result in the election of a regulating election in Omaha. That would mean a return to the old party plan of choosing candidates. It would bring issues into the local situation that have no business in it. It would mean increase in the size of the ballot, already too cumbersome. More city officials would have to be chosen. It would mean a repeal of the initiative and referendum and recall. In short, it would mean a return to all the old-fashioned methods of government, none of the compensating benefits of the new.

I have not time nor space here to go further into details as to what this return to the old system would mean. A slight reflection upon the above stated facts should be enough to give pause to any such movement. Let every voter who is asked to sign such a petition stop to consider these things and the chances are that he will not sign it and thereby he will save the community the expense of such an election.

There is nothing to show that a return to the old plan would contribute anything to the elimination of undesirable officials. It might even perpetuate them, as they were before.

SOLDIER AND TEMPTER.

Under the azure sky of night,
Touched by the moon's caressing light,
Ploated the pride of land and sea,
Old Glory, the proud flag of the free;
And, gazing at it, hat in hand,
Stood a fair son of our native land.

While standing there in the moonlight dim,
He wondered softly our country's hymn;
And in his eyes burned the vision of love
And reverence for the flag above:
The flag that waved in the silver light
For our country, and the cause of Right.

Long he mused while standing there,
In the moonlight pale and the cool night air,
How that flag was to lead him on and on
Into struggles fierce to be fought and won.
And a spirit born of the evening breeze
Came tripping to tempt the son of ease.

First she told of a mother dear,
Of a silent prayer, and a falling tear,
"Your mother needs your supporting hand,
Why go to defend your native land?"
"My mother is proud that her son may fight
For his country and the cause of Right."

But still the spirit whispered low:
"Your sweetheart is weeping to see you go,
Will you miss the future her love would light?
For this thing you call the cause of Right?"
"She could love but a man, of willing hand,
A man who defends his native land."

The test of the man was almost through,
Would he prove a coward, a false, a true?
The spirit born of the evening breeze,
And the dancing moonbeams on the trees
Had yet one test, e'er her time would fall:
The test that was hardest of them all.

"Oh heart, that was made to roam the sea,
And tame the uncharted waters of the deep,
Why must you die in an unknown land,
And rest in an unmarked grave?"
"I have given my all—heart, mind and hand—
To the cause of Right, and my native land."

He had not paused. Not one instant's doubt
Had shadowed the answer his soul flashed out.
He had stood the test. He was free from blame,
The spirit vanished from whence it came,
And the pale moonlight and the cool night air
Touched Old Glory smiling on him there.

THE GENUS HOBO.

Brooklyn Eagle.
He pays no rent, he pays no tax,
He buys no coal or ice;
He doesn't worry about it,
He hasn't got the price.
He doesn't lie awake at night
And try to figure out
A way to meet the grocery bill,
And never has the gout.

He doesn't have to entertain
Or go to parties;
He doesn't care a snap about it,
In some kind neighbor's flat.

He doesn't have to worry lest
His clothes are not in style;
The weather is a question that
He doesn't think worth while.
He simply seeks another when
A climate doesn't suit.
He isn't interested in
A single blamed dispute.

He doesn't have to work at all
And is a happy hob.
To lead the genus hobo's life
Can't be so very bad.

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