

THE OMAHA BEE

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FOUNDED BY EDWARD ROSEWATER

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Will He Do His Duty?

Lucky is the belated shopper who escapes with her coat buttons.

Reports from Petrograd leave no doubt of the reds painting the town in their own colors.

The Red Cross membership drive has gone gloriously "over the top" in Omaha—and then some.

In home waters as in the war zone the submarine pulls down the blue ribbon as a marine coffin.

Notice posted in Chicago, "market glutted with hogs," suggests a give-away on the profiteers.

The first big mistake, however, was made by the folks who selected the locations of some of these cantonments.

Increasing reports of bank robberies in big and little cities reminds us that the Bolsheviks of Petrograd are not the only experts in that line.

The challenge of Lieutenant Governor Howard to the pie counter managers remains unanswered. Has the blow paralyzed their organs of speech?

Uncle Sam's loans to his Allies now total \$3,887,900,000. The mobilization of our dollars has plainly proceeded faster than the mobilization of our men.

Premier Lloyd George easily holds the floor as the champion optimist of Europe. Confidence, grit and fearlessness make him an ideal advance agent of victory.

Autos are told how little gasoline they need save each day to insure Uncle Sam a full supply. At present prices it ought not to need a patriotic incentive to save on gasoline.

No, war is not a pink tea. But still there will be plenty of hardships for the boys to endure when they get over to the war zone without subjecting them to privation and exposure in the training camps.

Though he failed in his pet project to put his embargo on supplying munitions to our Allies, Senator Hitchcock seems to have been more successful in keeping an embargo on the Seventh Nebraska regiment.

That the big packers control the Chicago stock yards is nothing new, Mr. Heney. It is notorious that they also control nearly all the other stock yards of any size and importance in the country and no one suspects that they are running them as philanthropic institutions.

It is no surprise to the country that the "goulash barons" of Sweden improved every chance to forward American food stocks into Germany. All the neutral profiteers played the game, but less openly than Sweden. The capture in Brooklyn of a German forwarding agent gives the embargo managers a line on clamping the lid.

Some Pleasant Foresights

The annual report of Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane gives a glance ahead to that supposedly happy time known as "after the war."

His eleven pages on the interior resources of America, material, human and even spiritual, make suggestive reading. He says:

"Men are already thinking of the greater America that they believe to be coming when the war is done. * * * This greater America is not to be the filmy product of a nation's fancy, a day-dream of a monumental ego. It is to be as substantial as hard thought and hard work can make it, a thing of good roads, ships and railroads, well fertilized farms and well-organized industry, regulated rivers put to use, and schools and schools and schools, and laboratories and more laboratories."

Secretary Lane speaks of the country's strength, "the strength that comes from the vital dynamic force released under free institutions where personal initiative has free play."

Mr. Lane has been mentioned for head of the governmental railroad administration during the war, but, in that last instance, there is no suggestion of anything like pure government ownership, in which personal initiative has not free play.

Mr. Lane tells how America has been rising to meet the problems of the war, and how the lessons being learned will be carried forward into the times of peace. We have not been working together. The war is to teach that the benefit of all is better than the good of any group. The nation's problems in peace to come, as in the war that now is, are going to be met and solved by the best brains of the country working for one end. This will furnish a much needed lesson.

The actualities of the present as Mr. Lane points them out are inspiring. The war has brought its blessings with its evils and we may believe, as Mr. Lane does, that "somehow good" is in the long run to come out of it. His report looks far enough forward to forecast some of the possibilities.

More About Fuel Conservation.

The common sense of fuel conservation through the development of water power as urged by The Bee, received forceful presentation in the house of representatives at Washington a week ago during a debate over coal lands in Oklahoma, the most pointed contribution coming from "Uncle Joe" Cannon.

"The conservationists," he declared, "these 'high brows,' say, 'My God, the coal will all be gone! I heard it time and time again. They say in 50 years we will be coalless. The country will not be coalless in 50,000 years. There is more danger of your suffering as to this coal from the development of electricity and the improvement and distribution of electricity than there is from anything else.'"

And then "Uncle Joe" goes one better by insisting that the final step in fuel conservation will be the direct conversion of the heat of the sun. "I have an impression of my own mind," he exclaimed in response to an inquiry, "that the energy will be gathered hereafter from the sun, the great center of energy of our solar system, and utilized for power. It may not come in my time nor your time, but I think it will come in the not distant future. I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet, so far as that is concerned, but there is the water power that has been running to waste for unnumbered millions of years. Before we develop the energy from the sun I apprehend that the water power will be used."

We agree with "Uncle Joe" that the final solution of our fuel problem lies in harnessing the energy of the solar energy. American inventive genius has done so much that this feat does not look half so improbable as it once did and its achievement, though no one can tell how much longer it may be deferred, will not be as startling as many of the scientific discoveries that have already been made.

Snobocracy Not Necessary to Discipline.

The secretary of war has gone to the trouble in answer to complaints to announce publicly that there are no social distinctions in the army and that whatever rules of conduct are enforced upon the men to show deference to the officers are prompted solely by requirements of discipline to maintain the respect and obedience necessary to military efficiency.

It goes without saying that in an army fighting for democracy under the flag of the foremost republic of the world there can be no room for invidious military caste or for arbitrary or humiliating subversion of the enlisted men, even though discipline and efficiency are the all-important considerations. The officers must have implicit obedience and they must command the respect of their men, which, however, they can have only by themselves having respect for their men.

What all must remember is that there are and always will be snobs, both in and out of the army, and that putting shoulder straps on a snob does not change his demeanor or character. The officer who parades his importance just to show off or imposes on his men for his own vain-glorious, or acts the martinet, is soon found out and defeats the very object of strengthening discipline. The greatest military leaders have always been the ones who have put on the least "logs," although never stopping short of maintaining discipline in its true sense, as witness the illustrious examples of Grant and Sherman and Sheridan. And we may safely predict that the commanders who carry the most prestige out of the present war will be officers respected and loved by their men because they treat them as fellow men, and have a constant care to their well-being.

Our Problem of School Management.

Our attention is called to the fact that the two members of the school board who have just resigned have served longer than the period for which they were originally elected, and for which they may have incurred a moral obligation to hold when they accepted the positions. This has been brought about through the rearrangement of our school elections to fit in with our biennial plan and the return to the system of ward representation. That is not in point, however. There is no disposition or intention to reflect upon the members who insist that they must retire for considerations of private business, but this very situation is an indictment of our system of school government. It is not fair, and is not necessary, to call upon busy men of affairs to neglect their own business for the public business. It is not fair to ask them to attend to the details of board and committee work that should be devolved upon a competent, experienced and adequately paid business manager just as the educational direction is given over to an expert superintendent. It is bad enough to lose the services of valued school board members, but it will be worse if we do not heed the lesson and remedy the system that brings about this condition.

Alarming Fire Hazard.

Warnings against the increased fire hazard of the holiday season have been issued by the National Board of Fire Underwriters and safety first agencies. The former body brands the candle as a veteran firebug, while the latter stigmatizes loose cotton as an accessory before and after. Candle and cotton separately possess little evil possibilities. Combined on the Christmas trees they invest the picture with a charm that fascinates the eyes of childhood and delight grownup of all ages. But the risk too often overshadows the charm. The slightest accident to the tree, a child's stumble against it, or insufficient support, may quickly transform a home of joy into one of grief, if not mourning. In an age of electricity the candle is out of place at all times and should be rigorously excluded from the festivities of the season.

Broad national interests support these seasonal warnings and press for increased precautions against fire every day in the year. An orgy of confagurations in the past 11 months dots the country with blackened ruins and enormous money loss. Statistics compiled by the New York Journal of Commerce show fire losses aggregating \$241,000,000 up to December 1. The losses for 12 months of 1916 were less by \$10,000,000 and in 1915 \$59,000,000 less. Most if not all the increase is chargeable to enemy firebugs. Allowing a liberal percentage for the increased hazard of war pressure on industries, enough remains to rear a monster ash-heaped monument to American carelessness.

"Closed by order of the government," read a sign on the door of an eastern wholesale house, whose owners imagined themselves above the law. The simple process of revoking licenses gives profiteers the choice of obedience or bankruptcy.

Views, Reviews and Interviews

By Victor Rosewater

NOT LONG AGO I referred to the increasing frequency with which Omaha has come to figure in books and magazines and other periodicals, indicating that our city is achieving recognition as a real metropolis and is more than a mere commercial way. I have another example to cite in support of this assertion in the article contributed by Meredith Nicholson to Scribner's magazine for January as the first of a series on the middle west. There are reasons why Mr. Nicholson should not slight Omaha, but at that he does us only justice. In his reference he dwells particularly upon the spirit of co-operation which is enabling cities of our size to enjoy advantages that would otherwise be beyond our reach, lectures, orchestras and traveling art exhibits, that formerly stopped at Chicago and jumped thence to California, "now finding a hearty welcome in Kansas City, Denver and Omaha," and he continues:

"If any one thing is quite definitely settled throughout this territory it is that yesterday's leaves have been plucked from the calendar; this verily is the land of tomorrow. One does not stand beside the Missouri at Omaha and judge of its meditations upon the turbulent history and waywardness of that tawny stream; the cattle receipts for the day may have broken all records, but there are schools that must be seen, a collection of pictures to visit, or lectures to attend. I unhesitatingly pronounce Omaha the lecture center of the world—reception committees flutter at the arrival of all trains. Man does not live by bread alone—not even in the heart of the corn belt in a city that haughtily heralds itself the largest primary butter market in the world!"

That certainly is gratifying commendation and ought to help us convince people that Omaha is a desirable place for cultured folks to live in as well as to earn a living in.

Many newspaper men besides myself will feel that American journalism has suffered a distinct loss by the recent death of Franklin Matthews, whose versatile career had taken him through all the stages of reporting, corresponding and editing for the big papers until he was settled in the faculty of Columbia University School of Journalism. I first met Mr. Matthews right here in Omaha, where he had come on a commission to write some articles for Harper's Weekly, and I later accepted his invitation to drop in on him at the New York Sun office, where I found him delightfully instructive. Only a few weeks ago I had a letter from him acknowledging an introduction I had given to the staff going to take a course in Columbia and it breathes such a lofty ideal for journalistic education that I feel it ought to be inspiring to all interested in that work. This is what he wrote:

"Our system here is so bound up with certain academic requirements in the way of cultural studies, history, economics, statistics, and things of that kind, that the practical work in journalism waits on them to a large extent. If these requirements were not insisted upon we could fill up our place with men and women seeking to learn the mere technique of the trade. They would skim the cream off the top of the way of getting hold of things that would help them to earn a living quickly and would have no background for the large vision of journalism which we try to show to our students. It is easy enough to teach a student how to report a dog fight, or the coronation of a king, but that man would be at a loss to dig up the real facts of the Balkan situation or to tell the significance of exports or imports of a given country, or any other intricate thing that requires some scholarship and knowledge of authorities, if he did not have the stuff."

One of his students has written this beautiful tribute to the man expressive of the sentiment of those in closest personal touch with him:

So you have gone, old friend? It is so strange, so queer To think this is the end. To think we shall not hear Again the kindly welcome you were wont to give; That when we seek the old, familiar place We shall not see your face Lighted by that dear smile, And pause to chat a while. And yet you live: Death cannot kill our friendship, too, Nor take the memory of you—Teacher and friend beside, You have not died!

Henry Clay Barnabee was in his day the king of comic opera comedians. What is more, his conception of comic opera permitted the singers to render real music, and, as has been said of him, made possession of a voice at least no disqualification for being a member of his organization. I remember during the Boston Ideals and the reorganization known as the Bostonians in light operas such as the "Daughter of the Regiment," "Bohemian Girl," the "Musketeers," not to mention the ever tuneful "Robin Hood." The melodious "Tinker's Song" never failed to call Barnabee before the curtain as often as he could be coaxed to respond. I remember him singing it special at a most unique session I attended once after the show at the old McTague restaurant, at which Barnabee and Henry Watterson were the particular stars of the occasion, participated in also by others of the company. There will never be another Sheriff of Nottingham like Barnabee.

People and Events

A general relaxation of rules and regulations hitherto observed by cafes and saloons in New York City forebodes the coming of Tammany control. Closing up at 1 o'clock in the morning was understood to continue during the war, but some of the free-for-all joints figure the hour too early and are working up an all-night session.

A subtle drive on golf links and golfers, projected for next summer, gathers publicity in public prints and support in quarters inclined to mock "the gentleman's game." It is a hunch to suspend the game for six months and devote the savings to workier objects. It is estimated there are millions in it—enough to pension the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs and the whole brood of autocrats out of a job. The proposition appeals strongly to golf patriotism.

Philadelphia last week staged the unique spectacle of policemen on duty dispersing a meeting of policemen off duty. The latter adjourned to a hall, took off their stars and settled down to a vocal part of the political bosses who make the police department a vital part of the machine. It is claimed that 4,000 members of the force are united in a fight against semi-annual shakedowns for political funds. Still Philadelphia professes to be a simple pure political balliwitz.

Vigorous lid nailing gains ground around the army camps. Back in Long Island the lid is so tight that "hair restoratives," "corn cures," "throat gargles" and other misnamed brands of forty-rod are unable to get across. Floating denizens from red light districts peddling bottled dope and worse are being rounded up at the Longmeadow camps by state and local authorities and are likely to be interned during the war. These are typical of improved conditions around all camps.

The Jersey girl who married into the Bernstorff family in Berlin the other day has shown considerable speed in her 28 years. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charlton Burton, born at Stroudsburg, Pa., she became the belle of Burlington, N. J. In less than seven years she married and divorced two husbands and takes on the third in fulfillment of a school girl's dream of becoming a countess. Young Bernstorff is her second German husband, the first having been divorced for cruelty.

TO DAY

One Year Ago Today in the War.

German peace note delivered to the American ambassador.

British captured Meadhana, near the Syrian border, with 1,350 prisoners, guns and stores.

In Omaha Thirty Years Ago.

Mr. A. W. Fairbanks and wife of Cleveland, O., are visiting Omaha as the guests of their son-in-law, Mr. Robinson & Gorman.

The thirteenth annual ball of the Iron Molders' union was held last evening at Exposition hall and was attended by over 200 persons.

Nat Brown of the Merchants hotel and Dennis Cunningham have outlined a trip to Ireland and the provinces, which will consume two or three months.

The board of public works granted permission to the Northwestern Street Railway company to conduct a horse railway on Davenport street between Thirtieth and Thirty-first streets.

Christmas in Other Lands.

One of the prettiest of Christmas customs is the Norwegian practice of giving, on Christmas day, a dinner to the birds.

In France, Austria, Italy and other Roman Catholic countries the mid-night mass on Christmas eve is one of the most impressive services of the year.

Among the rural folk in many parts of England it is a popular belief that persons who die on Christmas eve are certain of immediate and eternal happiness.

In Spain it has been the custom for ages to include in the Christmas celebration the giving of pardons to all prisoners who are serving sentences for offenses.

Many little Belgian boys and girls look under their pillows for the Engelsekook on Christmas morning, believing that the angel Gabriel himself will have placed the cake there.

Christmas day in Corsica is observed by the people as a religious festival, but not as a social one, and there are no family gatherings as in America, and in most of the countries of Europe.

A superstition of the Scotch is that it is very unlucky for any but a dark-haired person to first cross the threshold on Christmas morning, the reason assigned being that Judas had red hair.

The midnight mass in St. Mark's is the chief feature of the Christmas celebration in Venice. On this occasion the window church is lighted with hundreds of candles, each more than seven feet tall.

Among the Spanish peasants it is the popular belief that, on Christmas eve, ere the clock strikes 12, the virgin brings a present in her train, visits every home where she can find an image or portrait of the Babe new born.

In the Italian highlands for centuries the custom has been a quaint and pretty custom, at Christmas, of making votive offerings at the shrines of the Redeemer of fruit and flowers by the peasants, each garbed in the picturesque dress of his own district.

This Day in History.

1783—Commodore Thomas Macdonough, whose victory on Lake Champlain saved New York from invasion by the British, born at New-castle, Del., died at sea, November 14, 1825.

1783—Maryland voted to cede the District of Columbia to the national government.

1804—Flint gypsum deposits in the United States found in Sussex county, New Jersey.

1814—Congress passed an act increasing the postage rates of 1799 50 per cent.

1827—Free-state convention met at Lawrence, Kan.

1827—Cornerstone laid for the new city hall in Boston.

1828—Charles S. Morehead, twentieth governor of Kentucky, died at Greenville, Mass., in Nelson county, Kentucky, July 7, 1892.

1839—Henry W. Grady, celebrated orator and journalist, died in Atlanta, born at Athens, Ga., April 24, 1850.

1914—Benjamin Franklin Garrison, in fortress of Przemysl made an unsuccessful sortie against the Russians.

1915—Japanese passenger steamer Yasaki Maru sunk by submarine in Mediterranean without warning.

The Day We Celebrate.

John A. Rine, city attorney, was born at Fremont, December 23, 1878.

Jacob Marks, sales manager for the Eagle lye works, is 50 years old today.

E. F. Denison, director of the Young Men's Christian association work at Camp Cody, is celebrating his 41st birthday today.

Dr. A. J. Whitman was born December 23, 1859, at Center City, Minn.

Gustave Ador, who is regarded as Switzerland's foremost citizen and statesman, was born 72 years ago today.

Oscar S. Straus, eminent New York merchant, diplomatist and former cabinet officer, born in Georgia, 67 years ago today.

Giacomini Puccini, composer of "Madame Butterfly" and other popular operas, born in Lucca, Italy, 59 years ago today.

Edwin T. Meredith of Des Moines, a leading figure in the mid-western farming and financial world, born at Avoca, Ia., 41 years ago today.

Dr. John H. Worst, president emeritus of North Dakota College of Agriculture, born in Ashland county, Ohio, 87 years ago today.

Connie Mack, manager of the Philadelphia American league baseball club, born at East Brookfield, Mass., 55 years ago today.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR.

Ordinary toilet soap is now selling in Germany at \$1.35 a cake.

A single factory in Detroit is turning out more than 100 motor trucks every week for Uncle Sam.

The so-called poison gas was first used on April 22, 1915, when the Germans released it in the Ypres salient.

The British government proposes to utilize the surplus of this year's potato crop for the purpose of making alcohol.

The Lewis gun, the invention of Isaac Lewis of the United States army, is capable of firing 700 rounds per minute.

Some of the men employed by the British aeroplane factories to try out new machines are paid as much as \$2,500 a week.

The replacing of destroyed portions of skull with layers of cartilage taken from the patient's own ribs is one of the latest methods of healing war injuries.

If each of the 10,000 bottles of "soft drinks" in the United States can find a way to save just one ounce of sugar a day, it will mean a saving of nearly 200,000 pounds a year.

An American manufacturer has placed on the market a line of shoes for electrical workers which are made to withstand potentials up to 20,000 volts without harm to the wearer.

AROUND THE CITIES.

Bakers' bread is down to 7 cents a pound at Minneapolis.

Chief Sands of the drug division of the internal revenue bureau estimates that there are 300,000 drug users in New York City, many of them persons in "high social position."

There is still some living room in Washington, provided a pilgrim is satisfied with what he can get. War has boosted the capital's population at least 50,000, exclusive of the floaters.

Natural gas invariably peters out in Kansas City whenever a cold wave flag appears. Those who depend on it for heating purposes thereby gain a keener appreciation of old Boreas on a benedict.

The Young Ladies' Improvement club of Salt Lake City not only observe meekness and wheelless day, but go the whole Hoover family one better. They have added a manless day to the regular schedule of sacrifices.

Booters of Greater Philadelphia plan a vast increase of municipal territory, reaching into parts of four adjoining counties. The parts mapped for annexation have a population of 250,000, which would put the city in the 3,000,000 class.

St. Joe's gas company shows no desire to boost prices, but a heavy bill will be presented if it got its share of the city's cash at the end of the month. The solons however, hate to give up the money and forced the company to sue for three months' back bills. Have a heart, Joe.

Press and people of Sioux City denounce the assertions of a transient evangelist regarding the moral conditions of the city. These were painted in the usual sensational colors affected by floating pulpifiers. A subsequent investigation showed the evangelist to be a romancer of the first class.

CURIOUS BITS OF LIFE.

A brass band composed entirely of young women is one of the boasts of Ogden, Utah.

A Kansas woman last year caught more than 300 bushels of grasshoppers and by drying them and selling them for chicken feed cleared more than \$500.

Judge Charles W. Coleman of Goshen, N. Y., who was elected town judge of Goshen when he was 21, and who has been in continuous service for 46 years, resigned recently.

J. P. Andrews of Sutton, N. H., delivered two four-week-old pigs to Mr. Peters. The next day they escaped from their new quarters and returned to their old home.

George Willet of Saco, Me., has a cigar made 40 years ago by Cyrus King, who was a cigarmaker. The cigar contains twice as much tobacco as is used in a cigar today.

Mrs. J. A. Sullivan of Mountville, W. Va., has 23 relatives in the war. Twenty-one are brothers and nephews on the British front, and her two sons are in the American army.

The longest novel in the world belongs to Japan. Its author is Kiong Te Bakin. It was commenced in 1852 and published volume by volume, as it came out, over a period of 50 years. There are 106 volumes, 106,000 pages, 3,180,000 lines and about 38,000,000 words. A complete copy weighs 150 pounds.

OH, SWEET BELLS, RING!

Oh, bells of Christmas, ring! Oh, little children, sing! The Christ is here! Where shoppers, listening, stand, The Christ is here!

Oh, wise men, gather 'round, Bring gifts with joy profound! Lift up your anthem, choirs of earth, In hearts of men the Lord has birth! Oh, sweet bells, ring! Oh, children, sing! Rejoice, rejoice, lift up your voice, The Christ is here!

Oh, herald angels, sing! We crown the Lord our King! The Christ is here! We wandered from His side, He, who was crucified! Yet Christ is here!

The tides of war roll high, Its banners fill the sky! Oh, wise men, gather 'round and pray, We tread on holy ground today! For Christ is here!

Oh, sweet bells, ring! Oh, children, sing! Rejoice, rejoice, lift up your voice, For Christ is here! Yes, Christ is here! YENSHANDOH, IA.

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THE OMAHA BEE INFORMATION BUREAU

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