

President Wilson's Visit to Omaha For Nebraska's Semi-Centennial

Sidelights on the Celebration and the Personality of the Guests

Review of President's Day in Omaha Written by Victor Rosewater in The Bee October, 1916

Well, the president and the first lady of the land, with their official entourage, have come and gone, and at the same time the first part of the program for the celebration of Nebraska's semicentennial of statehood—the part that was assigned specially to Omaha—has been carried out as planned and the approving plaudits of success are universal.

It was the polite thing for the president to say that he was pleased with his reception and entertainment, but I can add, of personal knowledge, that the distinguished guests really and thoroughly enjoyed the visit and appreciated the attentions paid them, and that their expressions of satisfaction were not merely out of politeness, but manifested by word and act all the time from the arrival in Omaha to the departure on their return trip.

Repertee in the Reviewing Box. All the papers have been full of the incidents of the presidential visit and minute descriptions of appearance and doings, and whatever I might add would be only repetition from a possibly different viewpoint. I was one of a half dozen who, by special invitation of the president, sat in the presidential box during the hour-and-a-half review of the historical pageant, and the conversation and repertee that passed back and forth almost continuously was decidedly interesting.

Story of The Bee

(Continued from Preceding Page) still more than double the capacity. In 1900 a photographic department was added and the Bee began the illustration of news articles and special features by half-tone engravings. The few illustrations it had previously used were line etchings, save in the special illustrated editions published. At this time, too, was commenced the publication of The Illustrated Bee, a special Sunday supplement feature, which attracted much attention, because of its unusually high artistic appearance. This was continued for three years, finally being abandoned because of the fact that improved processes permitted incorporation of the special illustrated features in the regular Sunday paper.

Latest Machinery and Devices. In 1916 the original battery of linotype machines was replaced by an entirely new installation, the most recent models of the Mergenthaler factory being selected, each machine being fitted with devices unknown when the first lot were set up in The Bee office in 1893. All are multiple magazine machines, so that type of many different sizes and faces can be cast on them, and all changes are made speedily, giving great elasticity and utility to the plant. At the same time, a partial "nondistribution" system was adopted, which means that no small type of any kind, no rules, "leads" or slugs, are distributed back into the cases after being once used. To make this possible, two Lanston monotype casters have been installed, which produce the moveable types used.

One of the greatest improvements made at this time was the substitution of all steel non-combustible composing room equipment, so that The Bee composing room is looked upon as a model from the standpoint of safety and efficiency. Similarly The Bee has kept abreast of the times in the press room, and in the stereotyping room. By adopting the "dry mat" system, a speeding-up was effected, besides doing away with the heat and annoyances of the steam-tables on which the old "wet mats" had to be prepared for the casting box.

Growth in Every Way. Not alone in mechanical appliances has the paper grown. Its news connections are the most complete of any in the west. It covers the world every day, giving to its readers the daily story of human activity in all lines, the cream of the news, carefully written and presented attractively and accurately. Its editor long ago solved the question of what is fit to print, and his views on that point are fixed law in The Bee editorial rooms. No item is published in malice, nor to needlessly wound any, nor is ever an item to be published whose reading would offend good taste. In order to meet the requirements of the conditions that have sprung up through unusual hours of closing mails and the like, and to secure delivery of its papers promptly to its patrons, The Bee prints several editions daily, but these are so ordered that each subscriber gets the full news of the day.

Compare Bee Gains with Others

glacial period came up, with its huge papier-mache mammoth protruding in front, Senator Hitchcock remarked: "Look! That must be the G. O. P. elephant!"

"Yes," exclaimed the president, "see, he is all encased in ice and frozen solid."

A moment later came the outrider for Coronado, a strapping fellow dressed as a priest astride a forlorn-looking diminutive donkey.

"Never mind, Mr. President," I answered, "here comes the democratic donkey."

Mr. Wilson, laughed and retorted: "At any rate, he's alive."

Harks Back to Johns Hopkins. Talking to me, the president harked back to the time when we were together at Johns Hopkins university, I as a student listening to him as a

lecturer discoursing on administrative law. I told him that by peculiar coincidence I had afterward taken a course in administrative law at Columbus university under Prof. Goodnow, who is now the new president of Johns Hopkins, and that I had, a year or so ago, been present at the first Founders' day exercises presided over by President Goodnow. Mr. Wilson said:

"I have always maintained a deep interest in Johns Hopkins and I hope President Goodnow's administration will prove successful. In the last few years I have not been able to keep up my university contacts as much as I would like. When we were back there at Hopkins none of us could foresee what careers were in front of us."

Both the president and Mrs. Wilson were intensely impressed by the Indians in their gorgeous native regalia and in the incident which Mrs. Rosewater related about the difficulty of inducing them to come before it was known that the president was to be here. Those in charge of this feature of the parade had met with all sorts of obstacles in their efforts to get enough Indians to come down from the reservation to make the desired showing, but as soon as they were able to tell them that the reward of their coming would be to meet the "Great White Father," the trouble then was to keep them away.

Despite their aboriginal dress, the Indians showed their acquirement of civilized manners. One handsome fellow, as he strode past, realizing that, if otherwise costumed, he would take off his hat as he passed the nation's chief magistrate, lifted his beautiful feathered war bonnet as he would tip his sombrero, but it brought him a pleased smile.

Difficulties of the Dinner. The dinner to the president and Mrs. Wilson had to be a formal dinner to accord with the proprieties,

but the requirements of habitment were responsible for many of the regrets. Far be it from me to betray confidence, yet the humor of the situation must not be overlooked. One gentleman who occupies a high official position unbosomed himself in his letter to me as follows:

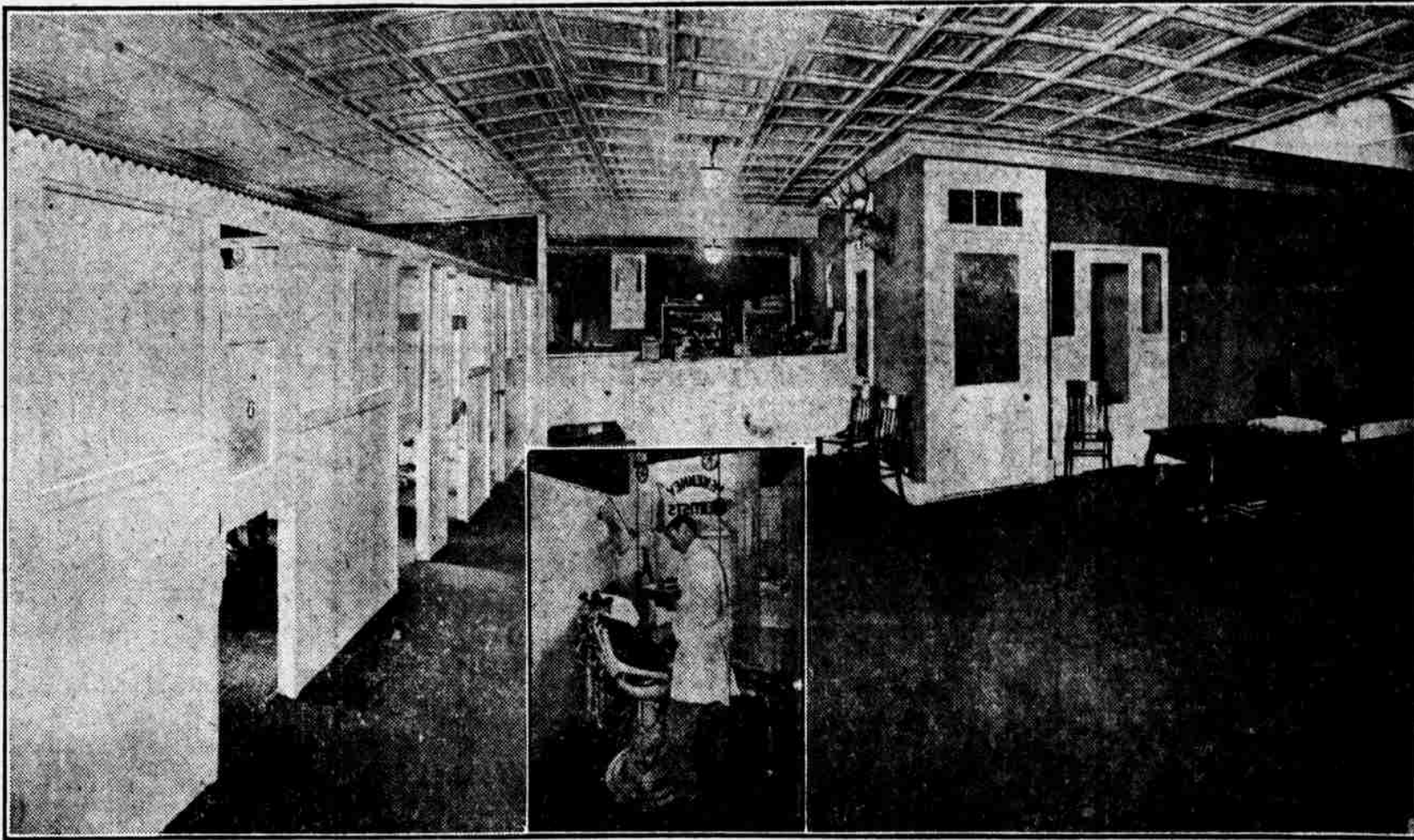
"How on earth am I to appear in full evening dress when I do not have any clothes of that sort, and there is no time to make them? In much embarrassment, etc."

Another esteemed friend, who hopes to occupy an official position soon, accompanied his regrets with this explanation:

"My reason for nonacceptance, while nameless to the world, must be apparent to one, who like yourself, has knowledge of a country editor's wardrobe."

I want, however, to assure Brother Mullen, who was so fearful lest hickory-shirted democrats alone would be shut out of the privilege of eating at the same table with the president, that the proportion of the regrets were about three republicans to one democrat.

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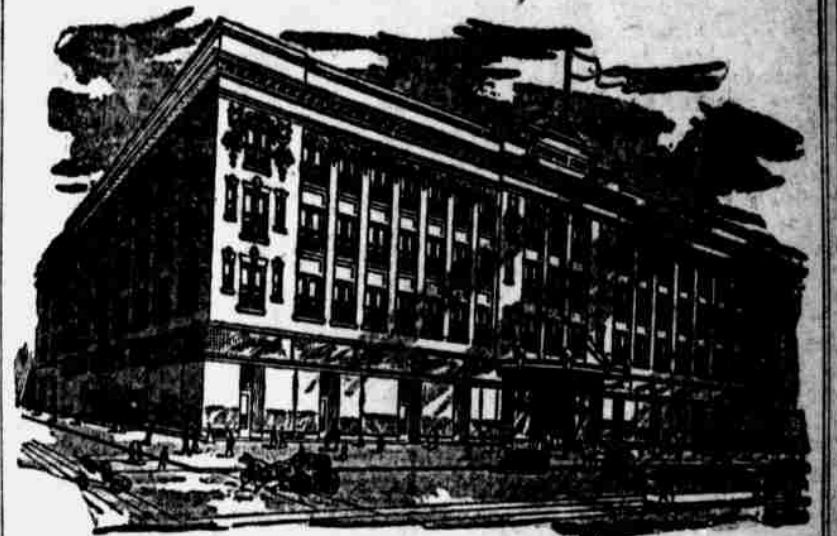
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