THE OMAHA BEE

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The Bee's Platform

1. New Union Passenger Station.
2. Continued improvement of the Nebraska Highways, including the pavement of Main Thoroughfares leading into Omaha with a Brick Surface.
3. A short, low-rate Waterway from the Corn Belt to the Atlantic Ocean.
4. Home Rule Charter for Omaha, with City Manager form of Government.

Federal Reserve Board Activities.

A request by Governor Harding of the Federal Reserve Board that a sweeping inquiry be made into all the activities of the board as well as the twelve banks organized under it will very likely get prompt response from congress. The action is taken because of the repeated and numerous charges made against the bank, especially the one that asserts that it is responsible for the direct loss of $31,000,000,000 suffered by American producers. Such an inquiry will be productive of good, if it is properly and unflinchingly carried to the bottom and all the facts given to the public.

A bank is either a beneficent agent of civilization and progress or it is an ogre too hideous and malevolent to be tolerated. Which depends on the point of view. As a matter of fact, it is neither, but is a very necessary element in the social organization of the world. Banks are not creators of credit or wealth, but are the depots where these are concentrated and from which they are distributed. The Federal Reserve bank was set up for the purpose of exercising helpful supervision over the operations of the banking institutions of the United States, that there might be an even flow of wealth as represented by money and that credit might be sustained equally throughout the land. At no time was it intended that this general supervision should be exercised either to create one or the other of the elements with which it deals.

Should it appear that the supervision has had the effect of favoring one or unduly restricting another class, then it has either transcended or fallen short of its object. Reason for thinking it has done both is plenty. This may not be supported by the actual facts. Chiefly farmers and stock raisers complain, because they felt most acutely the pressure when it was applied. Extension of their paper was denied under conditions that meant great loss to them, but it is also true that the banks demanded payment from others who had borrowed to the limit, so that the charge of favoritism here lacks support. As to the assertion that a loss of thirty-one billions was sustained because the Federal Reserve Board exercised its great power to end an era of extravagance, of mad speculation and wasteful expenditure, that rests on paper alone. To say that so many dollars were lost merely implies that inflated values collapsed to that extent.

The expected inquiry should make plain the function of the Federal Reserve Board, should disclose the weaknesses as well as the strength of the reserve banks, perhaps suggest some modifications in the existing law, and finally once more confute the false philosophy that mistakes the volume of circulating medium for genuine substance. If mere cash were wealth, Russia should be the happiest land on earth.

Bullying the Press.

Evidently Premier Lloyd George inclines to the notion that the privilege of newspapers to "cuss the government" should be modified. Refusal of facilities for interviews and news outside the bare statements contained in official communiques might be inflicted on less important journals than the Times, and be overlooked by the public, but the barring of the "Thunderer" has led to a demand for explanation in Parliament.

Because the London Times asserted that Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Curzon, the foreign minister, were not fitted to represent the British empire at the disarmament conference in Washington, the premier announced that this paper and the others owned by Lord Northcliffe would be denied the news, and has justified himself in the House of Commons by the statement that, "Courtesy should beget courtesy." Insofar as this may be taken to mean that only newspapers not making attacks on public men are entitled to full information on public affairs, it is a dangerous stand, furthermore throwing discredit on the reliability of papers favoring the administration, as perhaps being bludgeoned into witholding facts or honest opinions from their readers.

Omaha Should Welcome Its Team.

The Omaha Western league ball team is now engaged in a nip and tuck struggle with Wichita for top place in the standing table. The way up has been long and hard, but Barney Burch has proved a leader of courage and skill, and behind him his men have toiled with such zeal and energy that they have literally climbed from last to first place. Such persistence deserves recognition. A base ball team is an asset to any live community. That which represents Omaha carries with it the prestige of the city, and in its battle for the honors of the league it has fairly typified the spirit of the community.

The Buffaloes left home in the second division; they come back contenders for first, with only one rival. Thus they have established themselves as possessing the first quality requisite for championship honors, the ability to win games on the other fellow's ground. A "good road team" is the apple of the manager's eye, and the pride of the home fans. It is accepted that such a team will win at home; what gives real joy to its supporters is that it also chalks up victories abroad. That qualification marks the Omaha team as the prospective champions of the Western league, and it will be a mighty good organization that beats the Buffaloes.

For this reason the demonstration proposed for Friday afternoon, when Manager Burch and his heroes return from their successful trip around the circuit, is appropriate. A crowd should welcome them, and for the matter of that, every game from now on ought to be watched by such an assemblage as will make the boys glad they are wearing the name of the best town in the west on their uniforms.

Money Is Not Wealth.

To say that the dilemma in which the world finds itself today is largely a matter of bookkeeping gives an accurate summing up of the difficulty. A war has occurred with consequent destruction of a great accumulation of goods. It is these goods, and not the debt of gold, which represent the wealth lost in conflict. Looked at in this way, it is apparent that the cost of the war has actually been paid; it is from the pinch of this payment that suffering comes.

Immediately after the armistice, the view was rightly taken that only by increasing production could recovery come. Farmers and manufacturers alike extended themselves to fill the need. But goods began to pile up, prices fell and markets disappeared. What has happened was that the standard of living of millions of people in Europe which had been lowered during the war had failed to rise. Less food was eaten, less clothing worn, less of everything, including luxuries, was consumed.

The falling off of international markets struck hard at the prosperity of the nations which had seemed farthest on the way to recuperation. It began to be said that civilized man, aided by labor saving devices, had reached a stage where he could produce more than he could consume, and that consequently he was bringing ruin on himself, although it would indeed be difficult to explain how having too many shoes or too many of anything could be expected to impoverish the world.

Something is wrong with the world's bookkeeping. At a time when production ought to be stimulated beyond all past records, millions are idle, both in America and abroad. With bountiful supplies of food, millions go half-fed. Those who applied themselves to adding to the total stock of available goods are in many cases worse off for their industry. There is no rhyme or reason about this condition. Can it be that too much attention has been turned on the subsidiary question of pure finance—that when the people should have been thinking in terms of clothes and food and shelter they have turned aside from these and pondered over questions of gold, paper and foreign exchanges?

Solace of the Night-Cap.

Once more has the redoubtable and unflinching "Tom" Watson risen to defend the shrinking rights of American citizens. This time he tilts in behalf of "the mawnin's mawnin'," the midday toddy and the indispensable "niight-cap." All his fiery nature bursts forth in eloquent plea for these established institutions, disappearing before the slowly-spreading influence of the dry law. Which reminds us of a tale told of the late George Frisbie Hoar and John Tyler Morgan, one United States senator from Massachustts, the other from Alabama, but close personal friends despite political differences.

One morning Senator Hoar complained of insomnia. "I'll tell you how to cure it," said Morgan. "When bedtime comes tonight, turn down the covers, kneel down and say your prayers, and then pour into a tumbler a three-finger drink of good whisky and drink it. If you are not asleep within fifteen or twenty minutes, get up and take another. Keep that up, and in a little while you won't care whether you go to sleep or not."

The "night-cap" surely is a solace.

Owed to Democracy.

Five fathers who had failed to send their children to school have been fined $5 and costs for each child from whom they withheld education. Fourteen boys and girls in Valley county henceforth will be unobstructed in their right to attend school. It is possible that they did not desire to attend class, but still the blame is their parents, for not even in this advanced time is the complete right of the child to self-determination recognized.

Statistics are not yet available on the present standing of Nebraska in regard to literacy, but it is close to the top, or perhaps in the lead of all other states. In 1910 there was only 1.9 per cent of population of those 10 years and over in Nebraska who could not read and write; this is a remarkable showing compared with that of the supposedly cultured commonwealth of Massachusetts, where the percentage was 5.2. Still, there were 8,845 men of voting age here who were illiterate.

It is not only for the benefit of the children themselves, that they may increase their earning power and their enjoyment of life, but for the progress and safety of democracy that illiteracy must be abolished. In Omaha the Americanization schools and night classes are potent influences for good citizenship, and in the country districts the very least that can be expected is that children should attend the free schools that are provided for them.

A New Englander suspected of having illicit liquor broke his jug on the street when accosted by officers, who thereupon sopped up a few drops with blotting paper and saved evidence enough for conviction. Sherlock Holmes himself could not have done better.

Those enthusiasts who advise first achieving disarmament and postponing settlement of all points of international friction until later overlook the fact that some very bloody battles have been fought with knives and clubs.

Shoe manufacturers have raised a fund to instruct men in the art of wearing shoes, although the money might well be devoted to lowering prices, trusting to the consumers to get them on the right foot.

The agitation against the high cost of ice cream cones and soft drinks seems trivial until it is understood that the American people spend $350,000,000 at the soda fountains.

"Science Bans Powder Puff as Menace to Health."—Headline. So also did it ban corsets and high-heeled shoes, but to what end?

Cost of living came down three-tenths of 1 per cent in June, that is 1 cent saved on each $3 spent. Nothing to brag about.

Mastodon Bones in Plenty

Curator of American Museum Says Fossils of This Animal Are Common.

(From the New York Evening Post.)

"They are really very common creatures," said Dr. Frederic A. Lucas of the American Museum of Natural History, fastidiously. He referred to mastodons. "Another one has just been plowed up at Newburgh, where they had headquarters from ten to twenty thousand years ago. The mastodon used to be a pet of mine, but his remains have been pressed upon me so frequently that now I wish some one would produce the skeleton of a modern African elephant instead. There are at least eleven good mastodon skeletons in the country, and just one of the elephant—Jumbo's from the zoo. You can hardly spade up an asparagus bed in Ulster, Sullivan or Orange counties without disturbing the eternal repose of some mastodon.

"There is quite a plantation of them on Frederick W. Schaeffer's farm, near Newburgh, and when the first one was turned up the finder believed that his fortune was made. But they are no treasure. At the United States National Museum we had to address a special circular to owners of mastodon bones, making it plain that we did not wish to purchase any, for we were flooded with information about mastodons for sale. However, I myself was a bull in the mastodon market at the time of the Buffalo exposition, and it was then that I investigated the uniquely rich deposit at Kimmswick, Mo., where there were at least a thousand prehistoric bones and 350 teeth, representing perhaps 300 mastodons. It was there that Dr. Koch made up his fantastic monster, the "Missourium," out of an assortment of mastodon parts, put together picturesquely.

"Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties were the mastodon's last retreat, and he came back to that region after the great ice sheet which covered eastern North America withdrew. It was there that he made his final stand, only to become extinct, although he once ranged from Connecticut to California and from Florida to Alaska, boasting a wider distribution than any of our other animals except the buffalo.

"What could have killed off such a creature, with no natural enemies of which we know, excellently adapted to survive? Science is at a loss to answer. When the mastodon came back to New York he encountered broad tracts of bogs, meadow land, and pools, and he probably became mired in those and perished miserably, just as the elephant often mires himself today. On the site of that ancient swamp—a region west of the Catskills and parallel with the Hudson valley—you everywhere come across bones that are brown and rugged as roots, and doubtless are taken for such by many finders. The mastodon lived on trees and shrubs, but, like the elephant, he was very fond of water.

"We cannot prove that the early Indian and the mastodon lived on the earth together; but I believe they did, and I am always hopeful to hear of a mastodon skeleton with a stone arrowhead imbedded in the bone.

"The most nearly perfect mastodon found anywhere is the Warren specimen, which we have downstairs. The creature had slumped into the mud and been covered by water, which kept the bones in good condition. It was unearthed six miles west of Newburgh in 1845. Quite a good one was found on the Harriman estate at Arden.

"When mastodon remains were new and very popular a thrilling duel over one of them took place between professors of Princeton and Yale. I regret to say that unethical means were employed to obtain the victory. The representatives of the two universities raced for a mastodon which had been discovered in a dry pond bottom up in Sullivan county, and while the Princeton man induced the conductor of a freight train to drop him off at the nearest spot, Prof. Marsh of Yale persuaded the engineer of his express to get a hot box there, and by the time his rival arrived he had bought the mastodon. But he never got the hind legs.

"The earliest mention of our mastodons was made by Cotton Mather in 1712 in a letter to a friend abroad. He regarded some bones found 'in Albany, New England,' as proof that there were indeed giants in those days, for he believed them to be human! Probably the first of the numerous mastodons found near Newburgh was the one which they dug up in a marl pit in 1801, and ever since some trace of them appears in the course of ditching, draining, and well digging every season.

"A quantity of long, coarse, woolly hair, found in one swamp, has given us a sample of the mastodon's coat. Some of the bones are uncannily well preserved.

"The picture which many people have of the mastodon is that of a never-never monster compared with which the reality was almost delicate. The mastodon stood no more than ten feet, and seldom attained the height of a full-grown African elephant. The persistence of this unjust conception of his person and disposition (at first he was thought to be carnivorous) seems strange, when restorations are so easily to be seen."

Where the Shoe Pinches

Cotton prices are down to pre-war levels. Wages for cotton pickers this summer and fall will probably be in keeping with cotton prices. Farm labor has gotten back more nearly to normal wages than has any other class of labor. Nevertheless, the railroads will not grant any special rates to cotton pickers moving about the state to harvest the crop this season.

From the standpoint of the railroads, perhaps they are justified in declining to grant the reduction. To do so would be granting special privileges to one class, a proceeding which could be justified only in case of an emergency, affecting the whole people, and it cannot be argued that an emergency of that nature exists or is likely to exist this year. The mere fact that cotton pickers' wages are down does not justify special privileges for them.

At the same time, this incident does serve to emphasize the disparity between the level of railway charges and the level of prices the farmer receives for his labor and his products. While the one receives rates higher than ever before, the farm laborer gets just about what he got before the war, and the farmer gets prices equal to or below those prevailing in 1913. The contrast throws some light on what is the matter with the country.—Houston Post.

A Pointer for Harding.

We shall not make a habit of giving pointers to President Harding, for like a true democrat we must do all we can to wreck his administration so that our friends may get back into the offices. But this is in good faith. He may as well go ahead and act upon his best judgment, since there is little hope of pleasing anybody nowadays, anyway.—Houston Post.

Why Not Spank the Man?

An Omaha judge "said a mouthful" when he told a girl of 16 she deserved a spanking along with a divorce, and that no man who wants to marry a girl of 15 is of the slightest account.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Doctors to Cut Their Fees.

In addressing the Detroit College of Medicine and Surgery, Dr. J. B. Kennedy announced that Detroit and Michigan physicians were planning an agreement on easier fees for the sick.—Medical Record.

Caesar Conquered Gaul!

A great Latin dictionary started in Germany 20 years ago had been carried through the letter C when the war came. Things stopped just when the Germans found out all about Caesar.—New York Evening Post.

Carrying Coals to Newcastle.

There are said to be 30,000 poets in Japan. D'Annunzio was in the wrong pew when he was in Fiume.—Minneapolis Morning Tribune.

How to Keep Well

By DR. W. A. EVANS

Questions concerning hygiene, sanitation and prevention of disease, submitted to Dr. Evans by readers of The Bee, will be answered personally, subject to proper limitation, where a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. Dr. Evans will not make diagnosis or prescribe for individual diseases. Address letters in care of The Bee.

THE WAGES OF PROSPERITY.

On the broad street of a peaceful New England village there once stood three houses side by side, as commodious and attractive as any in the town. Into these three houses there moved in succession four men and three women—heads of families.

No, reader, this is not the beginning of a story of New England life by Hergesheimer or Ben Ames Williams. It is a story by a Harvard professor and about diabetes.

The story goes on to tell that of those seven rich, intelligent, good citizens, six died of diabetes.

Had these six deaths been due to smallpox, the health department would have become agitated. Had they died from tuberculosis the neighbors would have insisted that the houses be fumigated or even torn down. But, diabetes being the cause, nobody thought it more than a coincidence.

It may be that in those three houses tonight three families of fat people will sit down to a heavy dinner of seven courses from soup to pie, and then will sit idly around the house until bedtime. Dr. Joslin, who writes this novel, has blood in his eye. He finds that diabetes, as a cause of death, increased 8 per cent in the United States in 15 years, while the increase in Boston was almost 1 per cent. He would have the health department get busy.

Obesity is the forerunner of diabetes, and there is the place to strike. Prevention must begin with anti-fat procedures, just as prevention of consumption starts with anti-spitting campaigns and efforts to promote ventilation.

The Chicago health department has done a good deal to educate the people as to the harmfulness of obesity and how to attain the lissome.. That is wise. Every health department should follow Chicago's lead.

F. O. Brigham proposed to the Colgate alumni that they assess each member $5 for each inch of girth measure in excess of 36 inches. Other alumni ought to follow suit.

The life insurance companies are falling far short of what would be good business policy on their part.

Joslin suggests that all persons have their urine examined on their birthdays. If all will not accept this advice why not appeal to every fat person to make that a rule?

He calls on all diabetics to take up the campaign of education. Since there are five times as many diabetics as there are physicians they would make an effective body of educators. Louisa Drumm was 79 years and 4 months old when she discovered that she was a diabetic. She died a few days later, yet, in the meantime, she examined the urine of 10 people who thought themselves well, found one to be a diabetic, and put him in the way of getting proper attention.

As it is now, the only worth while campaign against obesity, and indirectly against diabetes, are the fashion plates and the theaters. To be fat is bad form among the women. Knee skirts have done much in the way of campaigning against obesity and diabetes.

Will some fashion fixer turn his guns on big bellied men?

If the women would refuse to marry them the campaign against diabetes would have a good beginning.

The Bee's Letter Box

Blames the Dry Law.

Omaha, July 18.—To the Editor of The Bee: It is very amusing to read the comments of the World-Herald, New York World and New York Times on the Harding administration. The World-Herald is being subjected to a series of nightmares concerning disarmament and the Versailles treaty. Its editorial of Thursday, July 14, entitled, "Tangling Up With Abroad," is nothing more than a rehearsal of the League of Nations accepted and adopted as new creed by the democratic party. That editorial is certainly an amusing comment on the present administration, but it must not be taken seriously for the democratic press has no responsibilities to maintain, only to play the role of critics and assist old democratic grandmas to nurse that incorrigible youngster, the League of Nations. Let us not forget that it is more easy to carry on the work of destruction than the work of reconstruction. The previous administration had the billions necessary to carry on its work, but what has it done in reconstruction since the armistice to March 1, 1921? It has unloaded a debt of over $20,000,000,000, millions of unemployed and thousands of overseas men that have been victims of the weapons of war, all these have been unloaded on the new administration. They are telling us that the country is going bankrupt, and the other statement is made, it can be heard every day: "What has Harding done?"

Well, a democrat will say he has done nothing and cannot do anything. Well, let us see. First, he has abolished despotism in our postal department by appointing Mr. Hays as postmaster general, a man that understands what democracy means and has made the postal department one of the most democratic institutions in the United States. What else has he done? He has kept his promises that America shall dictate its own foreign policy by preserving its national independence and it shall question the contents of the Versailles treaty to suit itself.

It was a God-send to be relieved of such despots as Burleson and Attorney General Palmer, who our good democratic party had imposed upon the American public. Prohibition, the handmaid of our previous administration, should be held responsible for 50 per cent of the cause of our present period of stagnation. I look upon the Volstead prohibition law as un-American, absolutely antagonistic to the Declaration of Independence and the constitution of the United States. I doubt very much if that law is 25 per cent American. The moonshine industry is prosperous, even in Omaha it is not sold secretly. Drunken men can be seen on Sixteenth street in the evening. The cost of enforcing the prohibition amendment is a heavy burden upon the government. Thousands of prohibition officers are appointed to enforce the law, but are they doing it? If they don't, why should Uncle Sam pay them.

As the churches are partly responsible for the Volstead act, they should be compelled to contribute for its maintenance. May those who are barking at Harding's administration remember that the mistakes and blunders of the previous administration are all stumbling blocks that will be removed through the efforts of our present president. Wisdom and love of liberty and nation will carry us through.

JESSE MARTEL.