

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

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Notary Public: Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this 21st day of October, 1898.

Run a few more railroads into Omaha and the old bridge arbitrary will be completely run out.

By another year the people of Omaha should be in position to give thanks for two new railway passenger stations instead of only one.

The election of 1898 was the first legislative election held under the new cartoon ballot law. No wonder, then, that a special crop of contested seats is in sight.

Let it be remembered that the boys in blue at the front are serving their country just as much now as they were when they were fighting its battles with the Spanish enemy.

Colonel Bryan must have secured an extension of that fifteen-day convalescent leave. But his friends will continue to insist he is being sadly abused by a cruel war department.

Compare the daily market reports in The Bee with those in other Nebraska papers that pretend to compete with The Bee. The Bee's market news stands alone for volume, accuracy and completeness.

Omaha claims highest award for the most variegated assortment of street cars that traverse the streets of any city in its size. The unsolved question is: Will the trailers ever catch up with the new palace motors?

The annexation enthusiasts have yet to point out a single product for which Nebraska will find a new market in the Philippines or a single Nebraska interest that will derive appreciable benefit from the extension of the United States boundary line to the Asiatic coast.

What a graceful thing it would be if the exposition board should put a stop to its \$10,000 history foolishness and order the repayment of the remaining 95 per cent of stock subscriptions in time for its circulation for the holiday trade.

Revenue law revision is a subject that should tax the brains of members of the legislature. Which one wants to have his name go down to fame as the author of a comprehensive tax law that will remove the many just complaints against the existing system?

The democrats who put up with the short end of the fusion agreement in Nebraska in state conventions do not propose to put up with the short end of it in the distribution of appointive offices. If anything in the shape of a place on the state payroll is allowed to get away from the democrats it will not be their fault.

An outspoken spokesman of the popocratic combine wants the fusion forces to be more outspoken against the business interests of the state. He seems to forget that all the business interests of the state are mutually dependent even though they are at variance at many points. No political party can be successful that does not while correcting abuses aim to build up and develop all the business interests of the people.

Another business-strengthening result of the recent election is seen in the renewed activity of the John L. Webster literary bureau whose stereotyped output is finding its way again into the columns of the subsidized country press. This periodic effervescence of the Webster huddler will so notoriously depend upon pushing the burton and greasing the wheels from the Omaha end of the circuit that such paid-for puffery deceives nobody.

The park board is to be reconstituted on the home rule principle along the lines laid down by the supreme court in its recent public commission decision. In the nature of things no good reason can be adduced why the park commissioners for the city of Omaha should derive their authority by appointment of judges elected by Washington, Burt and Barry counties. As well might the mayor of Omaha be vested with the appointment of the county boards of those respective counties.

NO MACHINE INTERFERENCE.

One of the principal points of attack upon the popocrats in the recent campaign of 1898 was the scandalous surrender of their legislature to the state-house machine which dominated its counsels and dictated its policy in the interest of corporate monopolies against which the members had been pledged. On that issue some of the most prominent popocratic leaders were candidly turned down by their constituents.

This lesson should be heeded by the republicans, who have the majority in the incoming legislature and are in a fair way of regaining the ground lost through incompetent leadership and dishonest officials.

If it be true as currently reported that the republican state committee is planning to maintain open headquarters at Lincoln during the session of the legislature with a view to steering the republican members in the right path, the plan should be abandoned. The republican members of the incoming legislature do not need a guardianship, that has less responsibility to the people and party than they have. They are not only capable of discharging their duties to their constituents, but also of carrying out the pledges of the party and conducting themselves in a manner that will not jeopardize its future success.

Judging by past experience, the open-house headquarters would be not so much a place where conscientious republican lawmakers could look for sound advice and sagacious counsel from leaders whose sole aim is to regenerate the party and strengthen it in public confidence as a base of operations for hired lobbyists and discredited barnacles who try to make a living out of the party by perverting its machinery to corrupt purposes. In the disgraceful disclosures made at the last session of the legislature the assistant secretary of the republican state committee admitted under oath that while ostensibly taking care of republican state headquarters he was in reality the paid lobbyist of a private corporation and incidentally trying to turn a few dollars as capper for the Omaha gamblers' combine.

Would a repetition of this kind of business be likely to promote republican supremacy in Nebraska?

If at any time during the progress of the session the state committee feels called on to intervene with advice for the good of the party it can be contented on short notice. Even then it should be cautious in attempting to interfere with legislation for which its members are not responsible, but should confine itself to recommendations and suggestions that have purely political bearings and have no relation to private interests.

CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW.

International law occupies a peculiar position in jurisprudence in that it differs from other rules and injunctions having the force of law in that it has no enforcing power behind it. While law in its ordinary sense can be changed only by a duly constituted law-making body, international law changes by custom and prescription as well as by formal declarations or agreements between different nations.

The events of the past year, in which the United States has figured so prominently as a world-power, cannot fail to leave an indelible imprint upon the body of usages known as international law. As nations are guided in their dealings with one another by the accepted precedents of previous action or negotiation, the doctrine deduced out of the war between the United States and Spain will at once acquire a standing among diplomats versed in international law and be constantly cited in support of or opposition to contentions arising in the future to which it may be applicable.

As the war with Spain was unique in its origin, its justification and its result, so the effect upon international law is bound to be more marked if not greater than any other international affair in which this country has engaged since it achieved its independence through the war of the revolution.

DEFINING THE "OPEN DOOR."

According to the American peace commissioners and also the secretary of state, the open door policy proposed for the Philippines does not mean free trade nor even low duties, but that whatever tariff rates shall be adopted for the islands will apply equally to the products of all countries imported, including those of the United States. As an eastern paper explains, it does not exclude tariff for revenue or protection which may be needed to make government self-supporting in the new dependencies and to develop their local industries. It only requires that this tariff shall be the same on all imports, not discriminating in favor of our imports, like the colonial tariffs of France and Spain in favor of those countries, or that of Canada in favor of Great Britain.

This is certainly not in accord with the British definition of the open door in trade, nor is it the meaning given the proposal when announced by American free traders, whose organs welcomed it as a distinct concession to their doctrine and predicted that it would prove to be the beginning of the downfall of the protective policy. We were told that the policy applied to the Philippines would also have to be applied to the Antilles and sooner or later to this country, which would be the end of protection. The president was congratulated by the free trade organs upon having come to a decision which struck a deathblow to the policy of which he is the most conspicuous representative. But it appears that Mr. McKinley has no such purpose. He simply proposes that if the Philippines come into possession of the United States the tariff policy there shall operate equally as to all countries trading with the islands, no discrimination being made in favor of the products of this country. And rates may be made high enough to afford protection to Philippine industries.

So far as the question of revenue is concerned, this definition of the open door policy is satisfactory, but it is no more favorable to American interests

which have expected great benefit from the acquisition of the Philippines than would be a policy of free trade applied to those islands. Our manufacturers will enjoy no advantage in that market over the manufacturers of England or Germany or any other country. While they may have to contribute to the support of government there they will get no commercial or trade advantage. They must compete for business on equal terms with commercial rivals, some of which have the advantage of an already established trade. Perhaps our proposed policy will be acceptable to other countries, but it can hardly be satisfactory to our own industrial and commercial interests.

THE SHORT SESSION OF CONGRESS.

The short session of congress will begin one week from today and will end March 4, 1899, a period of only thirteen weeks for legislative work. Usually a recess of a couple of weeks is taken for the Christmas holidays, but it is possible though not probable that this custom will not be observed this year, owing to the extraordinary matters of more or less urgency that will be presented for congressional consideration. As a rule general legislation does not receive very much attention at the short session of congress, the time being chiefly occupied with the consideration of appropriation bills and matters not of a general character.

The coming session, however, is expected to mark a departure from this rule. If a treaty of peace is signed and ratified the question of government for the new possessions will doubtless come up. It is understood to be the policy of the administration to continue military government for some time and its influence will probably be exerted for a postponement of action by congress until the requirements of the new possessions can be more carefully studied and their people are somewhat familiarized with American control. Very likely the desire of the president in this particular will be complied with, but members of both branches of congress will undoubtedly have plans of civil government for the new domain to propose which will lead to a more or less extended discussion of the subject. It is pretty well assured that the Nicaragua canal bill will be taken up and a very determined effort made to pass it. The supporters of that measure have been talking very confidently of its success and if it shall be found that they have the strength to pass it they will not be disposed to let it go over to the next congress, even if assured of an extra session. The fact that the concession to the Maritime Canal company expires next October will be urged as imperatively demanding action by this congress and there can be no doubt that this will have a good deal of weight. Besides it is probable that the administration will strongly recommend that the proposed legislation be enacted by the present congress. There is promised an earnest effort on the part of the currency reformers to secure currency legislation at the coming session, but it is already apparent that they will be unable to accomplish anything. Prominent republicans in the house who have expressed themselves on the subject have stated unqualifiedly that they are opposed to any attempt at currency legislation at the coming session and there is reason to believe that this view is quite general among republicans. If a measure of currency reform, such as that reported from the banking and currency committee, should pass the house, it is absolutely certain that it would fall in the senate. Why, then, waste any time in its consideration? The more extreme advocates of currency reform urge that the republicans of the house should put themselves on record on this question regardless of the senate, but we cannot regard this advice as judicious. The Fifty-sixth congress will have a republican majority in both branches and there is no valid reason why the currency question cannot wait for treatment by that congress.

The last session of the Fifty-fifth congress promises to be more interesting than short sessions usually are.

Nothing could better illustrate the triumph of modern science over nature than the efforts of the Russian government to keep the ports of the Baltic open during the winter months. Ever since Peter the Great built the capital of his empire on the northern sea the commerce of the city has been at a standstill for months at a time by the freezing of the ports, ice forming to the thickness of several feet. A monster ice-breaking boat has just been launched for the Russian government at an English shipyard which it is believed will be capable of plowing its way through the heaviest ice and leave shipping free to go and come at any season of the year. If the Russian experiment proves successful it will be followed in other countries whose ports are periodically blocked by ice.

We have now heard the reports of all the generals, all the admirals, all the commodores, captains and ensigns that participated in the war with Spain. These reports have been repeated and supplemented by the War and Navy department staffs and the secretaries of those departments, so that the country is fairly informed by this time concerning every phase of the conflict on land and sea. The average newspaper reader will henceforth hope and pray to be spared from the periodic repetition of the same story.

The council has properly taken the initiative toward a charter revision committee. While the charter is in the main working satisfactorily, there are certain provisions which hamper the economical administration of city affairs. No set of law-makers should ever be too old to learn.

There is a faint suggestion to the taxpayer on the ultimate result of the policy of territorial expansion in the reports of the various departmental officials. While the army and navy naturally come in for the larger share of the demand for increased appropriations there is not a department of the government which will not have additional bur-

dens laid upon it, and the present demand is but a forecast of what is to come when the machinery of government in far distant possessions is all organized and in operation.

Passing of Pipe Dreams.

In view of the streams of gold flowing to this country the idea of a financial declaration of independence is not as fascinating a topic as it used to be around the country grocery store.

Notable for Its Rarity.

This is a cold year for the railroads in the courts. The United States supreme court lately sat down upon the traffic associations and now the New York court of appeals has decided that the anti-scalpers' law is void.

Protection Policy in Peril.

The open-door policy in the Philippines means the relinquishment of a very valuable possession for worse than nothing with the privilege of buying that possession back in the future at an exorbitant price. It is the most fatuous surrender of American interests since the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was signed.

Senator Allen's Big Job.

Senator Allen promptly denies the rumor that he was about to engage in the service of one of the nations of the world. On the contrary, he purposes to remain at home for the next two years and try to hold Nebraska and Bryan together. Of course, having this task in view, it will be impossible for him to attend to any outside business.

Hard Man to Suit.

J. Sterling Morton thinks this country needs a new party. Mr. Morton looks for the person who would do it. He is surprised that he wants to add one more to the long list of parties asking the suffrages of a long suffering people. If Mr. Morton cannot cast a satisfactory vote with existing parties to choose from, he never will be suited.

Catching On Rapidly.

Three Porto Rican officials employed in the Department of Harbor Works at San Juan and who were hold-overs from the Spanish administration, have been detected in robbing the public by means of padded pay rolls. Our colonies may be behind us in other phases of civilization but they seem to have caught on pretty well in the matter of practical politics.

No Alliance with England.

San Francisco Chronicle. What the president wants is the power to step in between contending nations and compel them to cease fighting. More particularly, she desires to keep all Europe in subjection to her policy. She cannot do it alone, but she believes the feat possible with America's help. The alliance with England and America are their war-making facilities are not so great, either by land or sea, as those of combined Europe, and combined Europe would be the certain answer to an Anglo-American compact.

Taxation Without Representation.

J. Sterling Morton's Conservative. The legislature of Nebraska ought to repeal the present law which does not permit all the citizens of a county to vote for all its county commissioners. This law illustrates its own injustice with great clearness in Otoe county. Here the eastern commission district contains two-thirds of the county's real estate. But this district votes for only one commissioner. The two other districts outside of Nebraska City elect the other two. That is to say the two men who can fix values for taxation in Nebraska are not residents of Nebraska City, were not voted for in Nebraska City and do not represent Nebraska City. This is taxation without representation. It is a mean system. It overburdens town property with county taxes. The law should be repealed in toto and amended so that all the county can vote for all the commissioners.

Gunnery of the Navy.

Chicago Chronicle. Captain Crowninshield, chief of the bureau of navigation of the Navy department, speaks in terms of warranted praise of the gunnery of our sailors during the war with Spain. He notes, however, that the personnel of the navy was considerably smaller than in target practice and accounts for that fact by the higher range and the increased rate of fire in actual combat as against practice shooting. These circumstances undoubtedly had something to do with the decreased accuracy, but there is one other factor which Captain Crowninshield does not note, that had more to do with it. One of these was the use of the old-fashioned black powder, which enveloped our gunners in a cloud of their own making, and thus interfered with accuracy in the very last of the very best of our men in target practice and accounts for that fact by the higher range and the increased rate of fire in actual combat as against practice shooting. 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