

BRANDES BOSTON STORE & SONS

Today will be a special bargain day in our cloak and suit department—Some of our very swellest and highest grade modes will be offered at splendid bargains. The varieties are greater than ever in the history of the store.

BRANDES BOSTON STORE & SONS

Most Stunning Ideas in Cloaks, Suits and Furs, Specially Priced

Long Kersey Coats at 8.98. Long 42-inch kersey coats with good heavy satin lining, storm collars and half-fitted backs, very swell and attractive coats in every particular—you would expect to see them priced at \$15—Saturday at.....

Double Cape Box Coat 4.98 Made of good kersey with Military collar and splendid wearing lining, regular \$8.50 value—a special value for Saturday shop-pers at.....



New Model Suits at \$14.85 These are a number of new suits just received in the long skirt coat suits with the Norfolk pleats, loose and fitted effects, mixtures, English tweeds and chevots, silk and satin lined jackets, regular \$22.50

Special Suit Bargain 9.98 Collarless military styles with the new skirted coats, blouse effect, full pouch sleeves with fancy cuffs. Skirt is cut in 7-gore style, mat rials used are novelty mixtures and plain Venetians, worth regular \$15, special price.....

Great Values in Furs Fine appearing beaver tabs at 5.98 Squirrel tabs, in good style, at 4.98 Rich blended mink tabs, at 6.98 Long stylish sable fox box, at 8.98 Fine Scarfs. Long and medium lengths in Isabella, sable, fox, American stone marlen, etc.—many of them with some of the best cords, your choice..... 9.98

Special Box Coat at 6.98 Good kersey coat in box effect, jauntily fashioned, two ripple capes, new collar and sleeves, \$10 coat at..... High-Grade Coats. The swell long-coats and the most exclusive effects in box coats for winter wear. In the newest cloths and most elaborate designs. Every correct idea that is new and fashionable in the east, at 2250-3250-\$39

Exquisite Modes in Furs Coats Here are the highest grade and most elaborately finished fur coats to be found in Omaha. These are sealskin, otters, krimmer, near seal, astrakhan, etc., in the most charming designs at— \$24.50, \$49 and up to \$150 and \$198

Exclusive Suits at \$24.50 In street and dress styles. Many sample suits have no duplicates—in the new browns, gray mixtures, etc. Most fetching ideas—at..... \$15 Dress Skirts at 6.90 Here are the highest grade dress skirts that are worn this winter—made of broadcloths, chevots, Venetians, with taffeta and peau de soie fold trimming, all elegantly made, worth as high as \$15 each, at.....

Specials in CHILDREN'S CLOAKS Child's long coat at \$2.98—Of heavy meltons with large em-broidered cape with inlaid velvet trimming—reds, blues, greens and browns, at..... Heavy kersey boxjacket—Satin stitched strap trimmings—all the correct colors, at..... Children's high grade coats—A manufacturer's entire sample line, prettily ideas, many worth \$10, at..... High grade coats—For little misses and children, in the most attractive ideas, at 7.50, 8.98 and 9.98

Sale of "Joseph" Pattern Hats at \$10 Each

We purchased from Charles Joseph, 30th and 5th Ave., New York, about 400 hats. Some original French models, others his own creations. They embody the ideas of some of the most renowned French designers—on sale Saturday at the phenomenal low price of..... \$10

Trimmed Hats—In order to close out a large line of these hats, on Saturday we offer black turbans, draped with taffeta and trimmed with feathers, velvet dress shapes, etc., worth up to \$8.50, at..... 2.50

Trimmed Hats in the basement—Very handsome-ly designed hats, worth up to \$3.50, at, each..... 75c

\$1.50 Dress Shapes at 49c Mohair satin edge dress shapes and turbans, all colors 49c were \$1.50, at..... Children's Trimmed Hats High grade trimmed hats for children, in all the latest styles, with a dash of color, from our own workrooms, at..... 25c-\$1

Big Picture Sale

\$1.50 FRAMED PICTURES at 69c Here is another great picture event which offers exceptional bargains. A tremendous assortment of sample frames and pictures bought from Mueller Bros. Art and Mfg. Co., Chicago, at 50c on the dollar. Many of these framed pictures are worth \$1 and \$1.50. Special event for Saturday.... 69c



GREAT SALE OF BOOKS

Great new stock of books to be placed on sale Saturday—25c tables will be devoted to this extraordinary event. A splendid opportunity for buyers to secure books for Christmas. This stock includes copyright novels, gift books, books for boys and girls, etc. Very best cloth binding. All the Dodd, Mead & Co., Street & Smith and Scribners copyright novels, in one lot, at..... 25c Devotional and poetical works—handsomely bound, embossed cushion covers, richly colored pages, this is a gift book that always sells for \$1, during this big sale, each..... 25c Uncle Sam's Trustee and Around the Pan books, by John Kendrick Bangs, worth \$1.50, at..... 25c 1000 Story Books, Anderson's Fairy Tales, Mother Goose Rhymes, Pilgrim's Progress and hundreds of other books, good cloth covers, at, each..... 15c

3.50 Children's Dresses at 1.50

Cashmeres and storm serges in blues, reds and browns—dresses in Peter Thompsons, sailors and one-piece dresses. Handsomely trimmed and silk em-broidered, ages 4 to 14, on bargain square, main floor..... 1.50 WHITE MERCERIZED WAISTS Our entire stock of heavy mercerized waists in white, black and white and colors, all of them made for this fall's wear. Waists in this lot worth from \$2.50 to \$3.50 go in two lots in waist department, third floor, at..... 75c-\$1

RATHBONE FILES CHARGES

Accuses General Wood of Violating Law and Regulations of Army. SAYS HE TRIED TO OUST HIS SUPERIOR

Also Charges Him with Forcing the Auditor of Cuba to Violate Law in the Treatment of Accounts.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—Major Estes G. Rathbone, formerly director of posts in Cuba, was given a hearing by the senate committee on military affairs, which is investigating the charges against General Wood, in opposition to his confirmation as major general. The committee was in session about one hour. Nearly the entire time was given to Major Rathbone, who reiterated the charges made several times before to "the secretary of war, the senate committee on relations with Cuba and in public statements, following his trial in connection with Cuban postal frauds.

Major Rathbone filed specific written charges with the committee, stating that General Wood, while military governor of Cuba, had accepted money from the Jaisal, which was, he said, a gambling concern, asserted that he had made a personal friend and boon companion of an ex-convict. He also charged him with giving instructions of an entirely unconstitutional and un-American character to the courts. With reference to the charge that Governor General Wood had exceeded his authority in giving instructions to the court, Major Rathbone said that the general had pursued this course in the Cuban postal cases when, he (Rathbone) was under prosecution. This was, he said, in violation of an article of the penal code of Cuba and in a manner prejudicial to the rights and interests of those under trial. He also charged General Wood with authorizing the use of ex-parte depositions in the postal case, a proceeding which he asserted, is contrary to the principles of law and in this case, contrary to instructions given by the secretary of war.

Charges Violation of Law. Major Rathbone charged that in accepting gifts from the organization commonly known as Jaisal, to which Major Rathbone said, General Wood had granted a ten years' exclusive concession, General Wood violated the Foraker law, which prohibited the granting of franchises or concessions during the occupancy of the island by the American authorities. He also charged that the acceptance of these gifts constitutes a violation of an article of the penal code of Cuba. Other charges were made against General Wood as follows: With complicity with another army officer

in the preparation and publication of an article reflecting discreditably upon an officer who ranked both of them, in violation of an accepted canon of military service and constituting an offense commonly known as "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman." With directing and causing the auditor of Cuba, by a military order, to violate the law in the treatment of accounts, with utilizing the services of an ex-convict, with whom he was on intimate personal association, in an effort to displace his superior officer, and by such means to secure to himself the vacancy thus created. Incidental to these there were many minor charges. Major Rathbone also offered to produce evidence and testimony in support of these allegations. He submitted a number of documents to the committee, and gave the names of several witnesses, whom he asked the committee to summon. At the afternoon session of the committee Major Rathbone submitted a transcript of the records of the courts of Havana, showing that General Wood, as a military governor, gave orders to the courts as to what they should do in the matter of giving bail and the conduct of some other business. Committee Calls Witnesses. Summons issued by the senate military affairs committee were served tonight on Ernest Conant of the New York law firm of Page & Conant, citing him to appear before the committee tomorrow in connection with the investigations of charges against General Wood made in an effort to prevent his confirmation as major general. Mr. Conant has been in Washington several days prosecuting Cuban cases before the Spanish claims committee. It is understood the subpoena was issued at the request of Major Rathbone, who learned last today of Mr. Conant's presence in the city. Mr. Conant will be expected to give testimony as to the character of the Jaisal, the alleged gambling establishment which General Wood is charged with having given a ten-year concession to operate in Havana. Mr. Conant went to Cuba as an attaché of the evacuation committee, and while there he acted as legal adviser of General Ludlow in command at the Department of Havana. Later he served General Wood in the same capacity, and it is declared he was competent to give him advice relating to the manner in which the concession to the Jaisal was obtained. Another witness summoned tonight by the military affairs committee is Herbert J. Brown, a newspaper man who was in Cuba during American occupation and is said to have made an inquiry into the character of the Jaisal company. Major Bunnie, now practicing law in Havana, has sent a cablegram to a member of the committee stating that he will sail from Havana tomorrow and will be in Washington Tuesday. He will be examined by the committee in reference to a statement of General Wood in an article in the North American Review reflecting on the administration of Major General John R. Brooke, his predecessor as governor general.

extra session Wednesday, with an agreement to vote after a week of debate on the regular session if the republicans make the minority such a proposition. The democratic caucus today agreed on the following as the minority's representation on the senate committees: Agriculture and Forestry—Bate, Money, Simmons, Latimer. Appropriations—Cockrell, Teller, Berry, Foster (La.), Stone. Coast and Insular Survey—Morgan, Barry, Clay, Culbertson. Audit and Control of Contingent Expenses of the Senate—Money, Patterson, Blackburn, McPherson, Tulliver, Blackburn, Bailey. Civil Service and Retrenchment—Bate, Dubois, McPherson, Clark (Ark.), Lammie, Lammie—Marlin, Tallaferro, McLaurin, Foster (La.), Overman. Coast Defense—Coffey, Tallaferro, Clay, Simmons, Foster (La.). Commerce—Berry, Martin, Clay, Mallory, Foster (La.), Stone. On Corporations Organized in the District of Columbia—Mullin, Shalman, Lullmer, District of Columbia—Daniel, Gibson, Newlands, Stone. Engrossed Bills—Cockrell, chairman. Enrolled Bills—Coffey, Patterson. To Establish the University of the United States—Clay, Carmack, Blackburn, Foster (La.), Overman. To Examine the Several Branches of the Civil Service—Cullerson, Simmons, McCree, Finance—Daniel, Teller, Money, Bailey, Phelan—Mallory, McEnery, Bailey, Overman. Foreign Relations—Morgan, Bacon, Money, Clark (Mont.), McCree. National Reservations and the Protection of Game—Morgan, Tillman, Gibson, Overman. Geological Survey—Money, Cockrell, Newlands. Immigration—McLaurin, Patterson, Latimer, Clarke (Ark.), Gibbon, Blackburn, Stone. Improvement of the Mississippi River—Bate, McEnery, McLaurin. Indian Affairs—McPherson, Dubois, Clark (Mont.), Teller, Stone, Overman. Inter-oceanic Canals—Bacon, Martin, Tallaferro, Gibbon. Interoceanic Canals—Morgan, Carmack, Tallaferro, Gibbon. Interstate Commerce—Tillman, McLaurin, Clark (Ark.), Newlands. Legislation—Berry, Patterson, Gibbon, Gorman, Newlands. Judiciary—Bacon, Fetter, Culbertson, Blackburn, Patterson, Gorman. Library—Clark (Mont.), Gorman. Marine Affairs—Morgan, Latimer. Military Affairs—Bate, Cockrell, Pettus, Blackburn, and Minner—Tillman, Clark (Mont.), Clarke (Ark.), Newlands. Naval Affairs—Tillman, Martin, McEnery, Blackburn. Organization, Conduct and Expenditures of the Executive Departments—McLaurin, Blackburn, Stone. Public Lands and Porto Rico—Cockrell, Mallory, Blackburn, Clark (Mont.), Gibbon, Newlands. Pacific Railroads—Morgan, Tallaferro, McClary, Barrer. Panama—Baker, Foster (La.), Latimer, Patterson—Tallaferro, Pettus, Carmack, Gibbon, Blackburn, Dubois, Carmack, McCree, Stone, New Roads—Clay, Culbertson, Tallaferro, Simmons, Gorman. Private Land Claims—Teller, chairman; McEnery, Pettus. Public Health and Quarantine—Bacon, Dubois, Bailey, Overman, Clark (Ark.), Simmons, Clay, Stone, Latimer. Public Health and National Quarantine—Baker, chairman; McEnery, Mallory, Culbertson. Public Lands—Berry, McEnery, McLaurin, Gibbon and Tallaferro. Money and Carmack. Relations with Cuba—Tillman, Money, Tallaferro and Simmons. Relations with Canada—Tillman, Mallory, Clark (Mont.), Clarke (Ark.). Revision of the Laws—Daniel, Bailey, Berry and Gibbon. Revolutionary Claims—Tillman, Bate and Overman. Territories—Bate, Bailey, Patterson, Clarke (Ark.), Newlands. Transportation—Stone, Latimer, Pettus, Daniel, Dubois, Clarke (Ark.). The following on select committees: To Investigate the Condition of the Potomac River—Front at Washington—Marlin, Bacon, Clark (Mont.). Berry. On Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress—Berry, chairman, and Stone. On the Five Civilized Tribes of Indian—Bate and Teller. On Transportation and Sale of Meat Products—Daniel, chairman, and Stone. Industrial Exposition—Daniel, Cockrell, Carmack, Gibbon, McCree and Newlands. National Bank—McEnery and Gibbon. Investigate Trespassers upon Indian Lands—Morgan. Standard Weights and Measures—Clark (Mont.), Carmack, McCree. No provision is made for Senate Mor-

DEMOCRATS DECIDE POLICY

Will Discuss Cuban Bill on Meeting and Let Tariff Question Rest. WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—The democratic senators at a caucus held today, decided to consider the Cuban bill on its merits and confine the discussion to the bill itself, without bringing in collateral questions. This means that no tariff amendments will be offered, and that the tariff question will not be discussed. The conclusion was reached at the end of quite a long difference. The session was said to be quite harmonious, and the decision reached was practically unanimous. It was stated the conferees want it understood that in reaching this agreement they have not abandoned the fight on the tariff, but that they believe they can reach the tariff in some other way. The attitude of the democrats means early action on the Cuban bill, and the prospects are for final adjournment of the

DEATH RECORD.

Mrs. Susan Whitted. Burns caused by the ignition of her dress from an explosion occurring while melting lead to mix with turpentine were responsible for the death of Mrs. Susan Whitted at her home, Thirteenth and U streets, South Omaha, died Thursday. She was the wife of George Whitted, an employe of Swift's, and was 33 years old. Mrs. Whitted was melting the lead Wednesday evening in order to prepare a mixture to anoint her children, who had cuts. Without warning there was an explosion and the woman's gown burst into flames. Her husband, who was sitting in the room, was handicapped by a broken arm, but did his best to tear his wife's clothing from her body. She ran out of doors, however, where James Townsend, a neighbor, succeeded in dousing her of the burning garments. The burns were too severe to permit of recovery. The funeral will be held Saturday afternoon.

Henry Archer.

FREMONT, Neb., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—Henry Archer of this city died at his home on East Second street yesterday afternoon from paralysis, at the age of 61. He was born in England. When 8 years of age he came to Iowa with his parents and in 1859 to Fremont. He started the first bottling works in the city and was in that business for many years. Since retiring from that business he had been interested in Cripple Creek, Colo., mining properties. He leaves a widow and two children, Harry J. and Mary Archer, both of this city. He was a member of the Catholic church and a very liberal contributor to that organization.

Edgar J. Kingsbury.

SIOUX FALLS, S. D., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—Edgar J. Kingsbury, aged 72, a pioneer of this county and for many years one of its most highly respected citizens, died suddenly at his home from paralysis. Mr. Kingsbury received an injury five years ago from which he never fully recovered. It developed a case of paralysis, which is believed to have gone suddenly to his heart and caused death. He leaves two adult children.

War on Street Signs.

CRESTON, Ia., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—The city council and officers of Creston have given notice that they will begin a war on the street signs that do not comply with the city ordinance. The ordinance says no sign post shall be set outside the curb and no sign shall be suspended from the building without both sides are braced from the building and it is high enough not to interfere with foot passengers. The order is creating quite a commotion among the business men, but the officers say the illegal signs must be removed whether or no, and will begin action at once to compel that.

"I Can't Go"

I've such a terrible headache," said weevil he said again. Dr. Miles' Anti-Pain Pills quickly cure and positively prevent headache and all bodily pain. No opiate, non-injurious, never sold in bulk. DR. MILES' MEDICAL CO., Elkhart, Ind.

PANAMA MUST ACT FIRST

President and Cabinet Will Take No Chances with New Canal Treaty.

At Cabinet Meeting Secretary Wilson Presents Conference with Dates Given from African Palms in Arizona.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—Several subjects of interest and importance were considered at today's meeting of the cabinet, which was attended by every member. Matters relating to the situation in Panama were the most important topics discussed. The president and secretary have decided, and the decision meets the approval of the cabinet, that the existing government of Panama must ratify the canal treaty before action relating to ratification by the senate is taken. The administration has determined there shall be no repetition of the failure of Colombia to complete the ratification of the treaty after final action had been taken by the United States senate. The treaty will be placed in the hands of the Panama commissioners now in Washington and by them it will be taken to Panama. This government, it is anticipated, will ratify it promptly. It is expected that it will be returned to Washington bearing the seal of the Panama government early in December. President Roosevelt will then transmit the treaty to the senate with a request for its ratification. Secretary Wilson presented the cabinet some interesting details just received by him from Commander Hubbard of the cruiser Nashville at Panama concerning the early phases of the revolution. They came by mail and contain important details not heretofore known to the administration. They will be made public soon. Portions of the president's annual message to congress were read, but nothing concerning it was made public. Secretary Wilson presented to the president and members of the cabinet a special report of the dates given in Arizona. Four men of the dates of the scientists of the Department of Agriculture was sent several hundred miles into the interior of Africa. He discovered date palms growing luxuriantly. A year ago the department had several hundred of the trees brought out to the coast, through the desert of Sahara, and shipped to this country. They were transplanted in especially cultivated land in Arizona. Secretary Wilson pronounced the fruit from the transplanted trees the finest of its kind ever grown.

Fleet to Leave Beyroot.

Rear Admiral Cotton, commanding the European division, has been authorized to take with him the flagship Brooklyn and the cruiser San Francisco, and is expected to sail in a few days for a cruise in the Mediterranean, preparatory to coming to the United States to take part in the naval maneuvers in the Caribbean sea about the end of December. The withdrawal of the American fleet from Beyroot, after a stay of several months, is made with the consent of the secretary of state on the general ground that there is no longer any necessity for their retention in that quarter.

Machen Case Delayed.

The trial of the postal cases of August 1902, Machen former general superintendent of the free delivery system; Samuel A. and Diller Groff of this city, and Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz of Toledo, O., arranged to begin in the district criminal court here next Monday, has been postponed until January 11, when Charles A. Douglas, counsel for Machen, objected to the delay, but the court granted the request of District Attorney Beach on the ground that the latter was not ready to proceed with the cases.

Missionary Dies in China.

Consul General McWade, at Canton,

China, in a dispatch to the State Department announces the death at Takking of Ella Torrence Robb, a missionary of Denison, Kan.

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY HAS ISSUED A CALL FOR THE CONDITION OF NATIONAL BANKS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS NOVEMBER 17.

SENATOR NEWLANDS PROPOSES SUCH ACTION, BUT ONLY WITH CONSENT OF ISLANDERS.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—Senator Newlands, author of the resolution annexing Hawaii, today introduced a joint resolution inviting Cuba to become a state of the United States upon terms of equality of the states of the union. It provides that Porto Rico shall become a county, or province of Cuba; that all present officers of Cuba shall retain their positions until their terms expire; that the \$20,000,000 bonds of Cuba shall become the bonds of the state of Cuba with interest reduced to 3 per cent and 2 per cent to be applied to a sinking fund, that the present rural guard of Cuba shall be incorporated into the army of the United States; that the money in the Cuban treasury shall become the money of the state of Cuba. The resolution closes with the following declaration: "That the foregoing resolution is inspired not by a desire to annex forcibly, or to assert sovereignty over the island of Cuba, or to exercise any form of compulsion, but that it shall be proposed on equal terms and to be governed by equal and individual rights, and equality of right and privilege."

HYMENEAL.

Enyeart-Potts.

HAYES CENTER, Neb., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—Last evening at 8 o'clock at the home of the bride's parents in Hayes Center, Miss Georgiana Potts and Mr. Loren Enyeart were married by Rev. G. H. Pickett, one of the most intimate friends of the parties being present. A supper was served and today the newly wedded pair departed for Lincoln, Neb., and other points in the eastern part of the state, to visit relatives and friends until about December 7, when they will return and be at home to their friends in Hayes Center.

Townsend-Dixon.

FAIRMONT, Neb., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—Dr. O. S. Townsend of Fairmont and Miss Minnie L. Dixon were married at the home of the bride's parents, near Fairmont, by William E. Schell, D. D., president of York college.

Health at Small Cost.

A few doses of Dr. King's New Life Pills will cleanse, tone and invigorate the whole system. Try them. Only 25c. For sale by Kuhn & Co.

FIRE RECORD.

Livery Barn at Fairbury.

FAIRBURY, Neb., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—About 6 o'clock this morning a fire originating in the livery barn on Fifth street destroyed the barn and twelve horses and a number of adjoining buildings. The barn belonged to D. B. Croysey, president of the First National bank, and was valued at \$1,000, with \$300 insurance. The dwelling belonged to M. H. Weeks and was partially insured. The barn was occupied by Ed Ziegler, who owned six of the horses burned and a number of buggy, carriages and harness. The balance of the horses were owned by different parties who boarded them at the barn. Elsworth had \$1,000 insurance on his property. Perry & Bee's

lumber sheds were slightly damaged, but hard work on the part of the fire department saved their lumber yard as well as adjacent frame buildings.

Park Theater at Butler, Pa.

BUTLER, Pa., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—The Park theater building, the Central hotel, the Butler Business college and several adjoining buildings, were destroyed by fire early today. Loss, \$300,000. The falling walls buried a number of firemen under a mass of bricks and burning timbers and Chief Jacob Buckholder, Frank Zeigler, Charles Douglas and Albert Walters were seriously injured.

New Freedom Wire Cloth Works.

NEW YORK, Nov. 20.—The plant of the New Freedom Wire Cloth Co. pany, a short distance from here, was destroyed by fire today. Loss, \$75,000, partly insured.

Farmers Convened Together.

CRESTON, Ia., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—After a vacation of one year, in which no meeting was held, the Union County Farmers' institute resumed its meetings yesterday and the effort was very successful. Prominent farmers from all over the county and northern Missouri were in attendance and gave interesting and profitable talks on every phase of agriculture and stock raising. Prof. A. T. Irwin and J. W. Kennedy of the Iowa State Agricultural college at Ames were present and gave talks on "Fruit Raising" and "Weeds and Feeding." Much interest was taken in the talk on fruit raising from the fact that farmers are beginning to take more to orchards in this section than formerly.

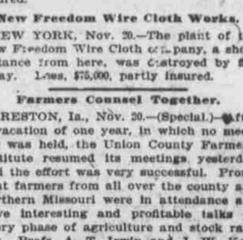
Tramp Can Tramp No More.

YANKTON, S. D., Nov. 20.—(Special.)—Robert Stanton, a tramp, was run over by a great Northern train last night at Irene while he was stealing a ride. He was brought to Yankton and taken to the Sacred Heart hospital, where it was found necessary to amputate both legs. He has chances of recovery.

ECONOMICAL HOUSEKEEPERS

USE Walter Baker's Cocoa and Chocolate.

Because they yield THE MOST and BEST FOR THE MONEY



The Finest Cocoa in the World Costs less than One Cent a Cup

Our Choice Recipe Book, sent free, will tell you how to make Fudge and a host variety of dainty dishes from our Cocoa and Chocolate.

Walter Baker & Co. Ltd. ESTABLISHED 1780 DORCHESTER, MASS.

40 HIGHEST AWARDS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA