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A. H. Fitch, Correspondent and Collector.

Thanksgiving Proclamation by the President.

It has long been the custom of our people, with the closing of the year, to look back upon the business of the year, and to make a record of the same.

The year 1881 has been a year of unusual prosperity, and we have much to be thankful for.

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AN EXPENSIVE EXPERIMENT.

There is no question in the minds of a great majority of Omaha taxpayers as to the urgent necessity of paving our principal streets. The meeting of our citizens at the board of trade rooms, the comments of every business man and the agitation of the topic by the press is proof of the interest which is taken in the subject by all classes. But there is a serious question as to the material which should be used in putting our thoroughfares in a condition to meet the demands of trade and the sanitary and individual requirements of our citizens. The pavements of the principal cities in this country are asphalt, concrete stone, wood and macadam. From the last three Omaha must select. It is complained of stone that its first cost is extravagant and of wood that it is unhealthy and lacking in durability, the additional charge may be brought against macadam that it has never proved a success in large cities in this country, that it is only a makeshift for a more compact paving material and under circumstances such as exist in Omaha it would be entirely unfit to meet the requirements of the city.

Mr. Henry Hickman has written a letter to the *Herald* giving his experience with macadam pavements in the city of Birmingham in England, where, as he states, every street is paved with broken stone, and the ratio of wear is less than three inches in eight years. Mr. Hickman's conclusions as to advantages of macadam pavement will not apply to Omaha, where the conditions are entirely different. In the first place, such a macadam pavement as is laid in Birmingham would cost more in this city than Belgian block stone. We have no granite, which, with trap volcanic rock, is the only durable material for a broken stone pavement. To transport to this city granite from Sherman or trap rock from the east would be little less expensive when all things are considered than to pave with stone blocks.

This city has made the experiment with limestone macadam on Farnham street and the experiment has proved a failure. If all the mud were cleaned from that street to-day the pavement under it would be found to be in a condition which it would cost hundreds of dollars to partially remedy. It is rutted in every direction, hollowed out by the crumbling of the stone and the wear of travel, scamed with gas and sewer trenches and little better than an average country road in a fair season. Limestone macadam has proved a failure in every city where it has been tried. The stone is particularly sensitive to the action of heat and water and no amount of repair can maintain it in a condition suitable for heavy trucking. St. Louis made the attempt and is now paying for her folly. Omaha, though smaller than St. Louis, has had the same experience.

But even with granite near at hand and delivered cheaply at our depot a granite macadam pavement would be a costly experiment for our city. No pavement suffers so badly from disturbance. Every gas trench cut, every additional water connection made, butting into the pavement, and the street car line, with its net work of track and switches does not enter as a disturbing element into the question. In Omaha it will be the height of folly to lay any pavement that cannot be taken up and replaced with little expense and without injury to the thoroughfare. This is one of the strongest objections to a wood pavement. It seems to us a fatal objection to macadam. It will be many years before Tenth, and Harney, and Farnham and Douglas streets will be built up compactly and permanently. Hundreds of wooden shells and unsightly brick veneers are yet to be torn down and replaced by larger and more imposing structures. Gas mains are to be enlarged and repaired, water connections must be made to numberless buildings. All these improvements will necessitate the tearing up of the street and the relaying of the pavement. Can a limestone macadam fill the bill? Will even a granite pavement of broken stone meet the requirements of our city.

The decrease in strikes in England has been commented upon lately by some of the eastern journals in connection with the ending of the great strike of the workmen in the Cincinnati rolling mills. The Springfield Republican, in an able article on the subject of the relations of capital and labor, makes the following comment: "A strike is a barbarous and terribly costly proceeding, and it happened that almost upon the day that the Cincinnati trouble was ended the English town of Darlington had a little ceremony which suggests a specially interesting lesson to both sides of the losing controversy. It was the presentation of a portrait to David Dill, founder and president of the board of arbitration of the northern iron trade, as an acknowledgment of his services in averting strikes and lock-outs, fifteen years ago the difficulties between workmen and employers in the great English iron district had produced a social war perhaps more bitter than that existing in Ireland at this moment. The trade was almost paralyzed, and the district was filled with idle, hungry, savage workmen. Finally the employers conquered, and the men went sullenly to work; but in 1869, when the iron trade began to recover, the old trouble again appeared; there was every indication that the old mischief would be repeated. Then the board of arbitration was established, elected in equal proportions by masters and men, and proved a wonderfully effective means of prevention. It completely ended strikes. The board, with its committees, amounts to a judicial system; its success led to the establishing of similar organizations in the various industries connected with iron production, and to-day no fewer than 100,000 workmen in the north of England are practically secured from irreconcilable disputes with their employers by the adoption of arbitration. Under ordinary circumstances a strike is a protest against some real or imagined wrong. In the latter case it arises from a misunderstanding between the employer and employee. In the former case it often needs only to be brought to the employers' knowledge in order to receive a remedy. If the method of arbitration which has been so successful in England were more generally adopted in this country we should have fewer lockouts and a cessation of those contests between capital and labor which result in so much loss to the producing interests of the country.

The next speakership is becoming the all-absorbing topic at Washington. The question who among all the republican competitors has the best chance to be speaker is a difficult one to answer. Dividing the country into three great sections—the east, west and south—the following is the republican strength in the house: east, 66; west, 71; south, 10. The leading candidate of the east is Mr. Hiseock, of New York; but he has some competitors. The strongest of these is Robinson, who will certainly take the New Jersey vote for a time, reducing the solid eastern vote to 62. Seventy-four votes will be a majority of the full caucus. The Hiseock vote will certainly be still further reduced by New England votes for Reed and Robinson. Delecting Maine and Massachusetts, and the result will be to make Hiseock's vote 49. Give him the southern vote, which he may get, and he will receive 59, or fifteen short of a majority. Hardly any one believes, however, that he will receive all of this vote. It is therefore almost certain that a western man will be the next speaker. The west has three prominent candidates. Keifer, of Ohio, represents the protectionists, and Kasson, of Iowa, the revenue reformers. Burrows, of Michigan, is also a protectionist. Michigan has certainly his nine Michigan votes, Keifer his fifteen Iowa votes, and Kasson his nine Iowa votes. Burrows will probably have no more at the outset, but Keifer may get the eight votes of Indiana and the six from Wisconsin. This would give him about thirty to start with. Kasson ought to get the most of the thirteen votes of Illinois, the three from Minnesota, one from Nebraska, three from Kansas, and one from Colorado, making thirty at all. Although it is impossible at this stage to predict with any degree of certainty, there is a fair prospect that the supporters of Keifer and Burrow will unite on Kasson, and that will very likely nominate him.

MANY of our tax-payers, who have been clamoring for a board of public works, will be shocked to learn that boards of public works do not always conduct public improvements in an efficient and economical manner. Cincinnati, for instance, has been blessed with a board of public works for many years, but the usefulness of the board is disputed by the Cincinnati papers. Here is what one of their dailies says about it: "Much has been said about the condition of our streets, and, although vigorous phrases have been used, the subject has really been treated lightly, as the English language does not contain words which will do the matter justice. Our streets are a shame and a disgrace, and that is saying it mildly. Can it be possible that a city with the intelligence, energy, and wealth to build such a magnificent highway of international commerce as the Southern railroad shall stick in the mud because a few worthless contractors, careless officials, and old horses and wagons are in the way? The cause of this condition of things can be told you in one word—mismanagement—mismanagement everywhere. The board of public works mismanaged five years ago in letting the contracts for street repairs to defraud the city—provided responsible bidders on bids arranged that the most of the money should be drawn during the first two or three years, preparatory to an-

document thereafter. The law provided that each member of the board of public works should supervise five districts, but here they mismanaged. They did not supervise. Once in a while they rode over their districts, and then did what? See that the contractors repaired the defects? Oh, no. Not at all. They did the laborious, tiresome, and patriotic work, the thing for which they are paid three thousand dollars per year each for doing, of going up to the office of that august board and firing a resolution at the derelict contractor. In all probability the contractor never heard of it; and if he did, he wondered what it was all about, and did nothing. The resolution fell far short of the mark, and the streets went from bad to worse. The same is true as to the street cleaning. Incompetency and mismanagement have been the rule, not the exception.

COLONEL JOHN FORNEY is by no means discouraged over the democratic defeats in the late election. He announces in a recent number of his paper, *The Progress*, that "the democrats are the natural governors of this country," and will certainly be recognized as such by the people. Mr. Forney's recent conversion to the democratic faith, no doubt, has made him unusually hopeful for the future of his party—a hopefulness which is not shared by the democratic leaders or warranted by the figures of recent contests. In New York city the falling off of the respectable element of the democracy is startling. Formerly the city below the Harlem river was depended upon to roll up 90,000 democratic majority in a vote of about four times that amount. Brooklyn has always been depended upon for an additional 12,000 majority. In 1876 New York and Kings county gave 72,459 majority; in 1877, 84,028; in 1878, 41,396; in 1879, aided by revolting republicans, 61,283; in 1880, 50,596, and this year a little more than 38,000. This indicates a loss of nearly half the effective strength of the party and the cutting down of a majority once one-fourth of the total vote to a figure less than one-sixth. If Col. Forney can find in these returns any indication that the people of New York hold a growing conviction that the democracy must continue to be the governing class he is more than usually sanguine. Let him add to this diminished majorities in New Jersey, Ohio, Maryland and the loss of Virginia and the confidence of the people in the democratic party as "the natural governors of the country" will be found to have very little foundation.

THE Century, which is the new name for what has been known to the American public as Scribner's Magazine, will publish in its January number an elaborate paper by Hon. E. B. Washburne on the late Adolph Thiers, the great French statesman and the first president of the French republic. Mr. Washburne became well acquainted with Mr. Thiers while he was our minister at Paris, having been in intimate relations with him personally and politically during the great convulsion of 1870-71, and previously. This memoir cannot fail to be full of interest and information. Mr. Washburne has also just completed and issued from the press his "Life and Times of Governor Colver," the second chief magistrate of Illinois, which is said to be a graphic yet faithful picture of life in the early settlement of that state.

Sidney Dillon, one of Jay Gould's partners, is about to build the costliest and most ornate private residence on this continent. It is to be erected at the corner of Fifth avenue and Seventy-sixth street, New York, and the house with the grounds surrounding it will cover thirteen full city lots, four of which will be on Fifth avenue. One of the men from whom Sidney Dillon's corporation draws its wealth has just built a neat and elegant house on the prairie out of the remnants of his harvest which has not been gobbled up by the railroads for freight rates.

WISCONSIN adopted the constitutional amendments at the last convention, which provided for biennial sessions of annual sessions of the legislature, and fixed the pay of members at \$500 each for the session, with mileage, but no stationery or perquisites of any sort. Hereafter the pay has been \$350 a year, with mileage, stationery and perquisites at the will of the legislature. Wisconsin's farmers mean economy, and their example could well be followed in other states to the benefit of all tax-payers.

GENERAL SHERMAN is marching through Georgia. He was heartily welcomed at Atlanta Tuesday, and while in the exposition buildings attended a meeting of the Georgia Mexican veterans. The old warrior made a speech that took his hearers by storm. Atlanta owes an everlasting debt to William Tecumseh. If he hadn't burned the old town on his "march to the sea" Atlanta would still be a conglomeration of rookeries and firetraps.

GENERAL SHERMAN doesn't want the signal service classed as a part of the army and its appropriations included in the expenses of the war department. It costs \$1,000,000 annually to conduct the signal service, and the most signal benefit derived therefrom is the revenue it affords to the telegraph companies.

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OCCIDENTAL JOTTINGS.

A late fire at Modesto destroyed \$100,000 worth of property.

The supreme court of California has decided the Sunday law constitutional.

Crops will in Vase valley. In some of the ore area a second crop of potatoes is being gathered, and a third crop of grapes is nearly ripe in the vineyards.

Shore the 20th of August there have been twelve earthquakes and violent storms in San Jose and vicinity. Four were cases of intentional killing, the others were accidental.

Chas. Crocker has donated \$20,000 in S. P. as a present to the academy of sciences, the first to be devoted to the investigation of the Pacific slope.

During the trial of William Schmeidler, for the murder of J. E. Miller last October, the testimony of the headless man's heart was produced in court, and it was evidence. The court, jury witnesses and lookers-on rose to their feet and testified to the fact that the man's heart was in the right place, and that the man's heart was in the right place, and that the man's heart was in the right place.

MONTANA.

It is reported that tin has been discovered up the Bitter Root.

The assessed roll of Chouteau county shows \$1,750,568 worth of property.

It is estimated that there were 85,000 bushels of wheat and 429,000 bushels of oats raised in Montana county in 1881.

It is estimated the cost of construction of the Bozzy M. main division of the Northern Pacific will be about \$1,000,000.

A strike of pickers has been made in the St. Mary mine.

The St. Mary mine is reported to be worth \$1,000,000.

A gold lead near Fort Maginn's is said to be one of the largest, as indicated by the outcroppings, yet discovered in Montana. The location is close to Ruby gulch, from which a gold nugget valued at \$80 was taken last summer.

A Chinaman at Butte who had sold his mistress for \$100,000, was found to be a fraud. He had sold her for \$100,000, but she was worth only \$100,000.

The military at White River have received instructions to remove the Utes there, and force them back to the Uinta agency.

Six hundred dollars have been subscribed toward erecting a monument to the memory of N. C. Meeker and those who fell at the White River massacre.

Four laborers on the South Park road recently quit work and started for Gunnison. Arriving at Gunnison they found the road closed for the winter, and started on foot. A snow storm soon overtook them and they wandered about. One of them struggled on through the night and early in the morning alighted the smoke of a locomotive. He soon found the track and fell upon it, overcome with fatigue and cold. He was picked up and brought to Denver by the trainmen. A party to search for the missing men was organized at Gunnison immediately on receipt of the information here given. There is little hope, however, that they will be found.

COLORADO.

Receipts for liquor license last month at Denver were \$11,300.

Summit county estimates the gross product in round numbers at \$3,000,000.

There are no less than ten tunnels now being worked on the P. & M. railroad.

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