

Nebraska Herald.

PLATTSOUTH NEBRASKA.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1871.

We are glad to note that the Omaha *Republican* and *Tribune* are both inclined to be a little more reasonable on the Butler impeachment question. They may yet learn that there is two sides to every story.

The *Statesman* of Thursday says: "At the examination of Calvan yesterday, one of the legal lights for the prosecution, saw a couple of 'eye loas' sharpening their pencils, preparatory to getting up a local, moved that said locals should be expelled from the room, as he did not wish to have the testimony published. The Disciple of Blackstone was somewhat taken back when the court informed him that in his opinion he, the court, had not power to suppress the press."

That "legal light" should be elected to the Legislature and placed in the next investigating committee.

ANOTHER SHORT TUN.

The Investigation Committee which has been hunting up testimony to try to convict Gov. Butler of "high crimes and misdemeanors" only took one-sided evidence, and now it begins to be whispered about that the managers will endeavor to get this one-sided arrangement called evidence before the Impachment Court without giving Gov. Butler the opportunity to cross examine the witnesses even there. We are prepared to be have that there are men who will do almost anything to injure a political enemy, but to seek to prostitute the high court of impeachment to such base purposes as this would indicate is beneath the dignity of an honest man, and is reserved solely for certain Nebraska politicians whom we may see proper to name on some future occasion. As we have said before, a move of this magnitude requires at least the appearance of fairness, even if it is not intended. There is a future, and the HERALD will be found posted on the various moves now being made on the chess-board at Lincoln.

IN A QUANDARY.

Our neighbor of the Omaha *Republican* is in a very bad pickle on the impachment business. Brother Balcomb is exceedingly hostile toward Gov. Butler, and seems rather inclined to manufacture as much public opinion against him as possible, while the editor, Mr. Potter, undoubtedly wishes to be impartial and do the fair thing. This makes it somewhat awkward, and may serve to explain the apparent absurdity in saying: "We have no doubt that David Butler has committed offenses which will justify his conviction."

A VERY MEAN THING.

The enemies of Governor Butler who have hounded him for the past two years, and many of them since his appointment as commissioner for the re-organization of the capital, on its removal from Omaha, are just now engaged in doing a little the meanest thing yet. They have advertised him to the world as a sounder on *ex parte* testimony—much of it could hardly be called testimony at all—and then knowing that, with all the evidence they could possibly bring and all the bitterness that could be engendered by gross misrepresentations, they had not enough to convict Governor Butler or even make him appear one tenth part as bad as he had been represented, they now commence in advance, to cry out that he has bribed the witnesses who testified against him before the committee, to flee the country and not be present at the trial. Upon the very face of this assertion is seen the impress of its falsity. If they were the kind of witnesses that could be bought and bribed so easily, how much weight should their testimony before the committee be given in the scale of justice? Is it fair to presume that, if any witnesses have left to keep from testifying before the court, where they would undergo a rigid cross-examination, that it is because they daren't testify before the court to what they had testified before the committee, knowing full well that they had sworn falsely, or to make it as mild as possible, that they had given evidence only on one side, with a view to injuring Gov. Butler's character as an officer and a man. Is not this the more probable solution of the cause of this disappearance, if any have disappeared? Dr. Miller, in his paper of the 9th, says: "We know of the effort that was to be made to get rid of Mr. McBird." Is it not rather a damaging admission, Dr.? If you "knew of it," and knew that it was to be made, why in the name of justice did you not take steps to prevent it being done, if you deemed his evidence of importance in the forthcoming trial? Why did you not say something in your paper that it was to be done, and thus put a stop to it, rather than to wait until he was gone, as you indicate he was, and cry out "We knew it. We knew Butler's friends were going to get him to leave." Is it not far more probable, if you "knew it" in advance, that it was Gov. Butler's enemies instead of his friends, who induced him to leave, and who are now crying "stop thief."

LAYS IT ON THE COMMITTEE.

In reply to our pointed and emphatic call on Dr. Miller to know where he obtained his information (or reputed information) relative to the Butler evidence before the committee, he says: "We never made a statement about Gov. Butler, nor about the evidence taken by the investigating committees which we could not prove in any court of justice in fifteen minutes."

In making this kind of reply to our article, in which we stated emphatically that he must either state a falsehood, or that some member of the committee must have furnished him with the information, he is correct or not, Dr. Miller instantly admits that some member of the committee did furnish him with the evidence, especially that of McBird. Who is the man, Dr.? The people would be gratified to know who that committeeman is.

OUR METHOD OF ASSESSING.

Should be changed in some manner to give more uniformity and more justice, and we hope the present Legislature before they adjourn will do something to relieve the people from the burthens of the present system. As it now is we have an assessor for each precinct, and they all meet and agree upon the rates at which lands and other property shall be assessed in the various precincts. In this manner, the assessor of Plattsmouth shall be valued at, and the assessor of Plattsmouth has but one voice (out of fourteen) in saying what the value of each of the other precincts shall be valued at. We do not believe, of course, that any assessor is legally bound by the action of this informal kind of proceeding, yet the assessors usually cause their figures to approximate to those agreed upon by the meeting. The result is that a combination of interests can, and often does, work a very great injustice to some particular locality. It may be said that the assessor of the precinct where the valuation is placed proportionately too high should not assess the land at the figure ordered, but should bring it down to a comparatively correct valuation. We agree, to some extent, with this view of the case, but then a feeling is soon engendered which causes each and every assessor to watch his neighbor assessor and cut down the prices in his own precinct, in order that his locality may not be assessed too high, until the property of the county is probably returned by the different assessors at one half, or perhaps one-third, of its real worth. In this way we are advertised to the world as having very little wealth and having and an enormous tax to pay on what we have, for the per cent of tax must be raised just in proportion as the valuation of property is reduced. As an illustration of our meaning, we will cite the fact that the real estate of our County Clerk, who is one of the heaviest land owners in the county, was last year assessed at \$3. (we believe that is the correct figure), per acre, while probably its real value—that which he would ask for it if he were for sale, or that which it would bring if offered for sale—would not fall short of \$20 or \$25 per acre, including the improvements thereon. This kind of valuation works an injustice to Plattsmouth, where property is valued at much nearer its true value—as it always is in a town, where much of the value is in improvements—the cost of which is known, and not estimated. This causes Plattsmouth to pay much more than her proportion of the tax; and then, again if our precinct Assessor attempts to reduce the assessment here to correspond with that of Morrill Pleasant and others do like-wise, our county is shown to be worth much less than it really is, and our rate of taxation is made very high. We hope some change may be made in the mode of assessing, and that it may be done soon. A County Assessor would be much better than the present method.

The Omaha press seems united on one thing—that they will force the Senate to convict Governor Butler whether it will or no. The *Herald* first cried out that any man who dared to vote against the impachment should be consigned to political infamy; then comes the *Republican* saying it "has no doubt" that he will be convicted, and then comes the *Tribune* with an intimation that if any man in the Senate has the impudence to oppose the conviction of David Butler he will be denounced as having been bribed. Knowing undoubtedly that there is no evidence to convict Governor Butler, these papers seem all the more anxious to create a pressure of public opinion that will force the Senators to vote for conviction. Hear what the *Tribune* of last Tuesday says: "We wish to say a word to the members of the Senate, who will, in a few days, be called on to decide the political fate of David Butler. We are led to suspect that certain very strong influences, wholly illegitimate, and, under the circumstances, utterly unworthy in themselves, have been brought to bear upon them."

If there is anything mean and despicable in journalism it is an insinuation like the above. If you know of anything wrong, why don't you say so; and if you do not, why do you say you are "led to suspect" there is? Dr. Miller sounded the key note for the other two papers after he returned from Lincoln, where he ascertained that there were grave doubts about there being any evidence against Gov. Butler. He immediately began an attack upon the Senators, telling them that they would be consigned to political oblivion if they dared to vote against Butler's conviction. If George L. Miller knew that McBird was to leave the country to prevent being a witness on the impachment trial, and he did nothing to stop him, and said nothing until after he had gone, isn't it fair to presume that he knew that McBird's evidence would be of benefit to Gov. Butler, instead of an injury?

The Omaha *Herald* says if Senator Tenant is intending to introduce a bill for the removal of the Capital he cannot do so too soon, in order that the Omaha delegation may have an opportunity of placing themselves on the record as against any such measure.

Printing of the Laws. It seems likely that the Legislature, after having out and dashed the civil code, made numerous amendments to the mechanic's lien and revenue laws, imposed new duties upon county officials, entirely revolutionized the system of paying warrants upon State, county and municipal treasurers, and mulled or mangled nearly everything within reach of legislative enactment, will go home leaving the people of the State in lamentable darkness as to what is law and what is not.

A bill was introduced by Senator Hilton, at the commencement of the session, providing for the publication of the general and certain local laws in every county where a newspaper is published, and also the reporting of the proceedings of county commissioners, that had many excellent features about it, and it passed the Senate. It was, justly perhaps, agreed that it was too expensive, on account of the great number of papers in the county laws should be published, though the low price of fifty cents per thousand, and lately paying for putting up the type and imposing the forms, makes it the cheapest possible printing. The law, if introduced, not only publishes the bills, but unless some steps are immediately taken, we shall beat sea for months, as nobody can tell how many people may commit impeachable offenses against the majesty of the laws of the current legislative body.

A bill with the delusive title, "An act to provide for the publication of the laws without expense to the State," has passed, but it amounts to nothing, as it simply provides that the public printer may strike off extra copies of the laws and sell them at the same price to the people that it charges the State. The public printer of course, needs no law to enable him to do this, and the price he may ask the people is not understood, but it would be wholly unconstituted to attempt to fix the prices of books kept for sale to the public.

In any case, it does not meet any want of the people. What is needed is an immediate dissemination of the general laws, so that we may not grope helplessly in the dark, until in his own good pleasure, the public printer shall send them to the Secretary of State. After that time of course, the laws are accessible and the need has vanished.

We suggest that the matter be brought up again and that the number of papers be cut down to one in each congressional district, and that the provisions to print proceedings of County Commissioners be retained. This will reduce the expense to a trifle, and bring the law into the hands of the reach of every citizen—*Janice*.

A ludicrous incident lately occurred on a Mississippi steamer, which we relate as a warning to those who attempt to change the personal adornments which nature has given them. A man who was journeying to Texas with his wife thought he would enjoy the luxury of shaving and shampooing. While this was going on he concluded to surprise his wife, and at his request, hair curlers and whiskers were changed from a fiery red to raven blackness. He had hoped to be met at the hotel at the door by his spouse, but instead of the intrusion of a stranger as she supposed, and admittance refused. He called himself her husband, she said he was an impostor. He attempted to explain. It was useless. A crowd gathered round, the hubbub became general. At last, in his perplexity, the hoosier exclaimed, "Sally, look at my feet!" One glance at the pedal appendages assured her. "Yes, John," she said, "I know them feet. They can come in, but keep that head out of sight."

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