

Lincoln Letter

Current Gossip from the
STATE CAPITAL
Legislative and Otherwise

H. R. 264, by McMullen of Gage, appropriating \$180,000 from the general fund of the state for the erection of a woman's building, a horticultural building and other structures at the agricultural farm, was placed on general file. Inasmuch as the committee is not favorable to the appropriation of \$100,000 for the erection of a wing at the Kearney normal school, there is liable to be a big fight on the appropriation for the university. It is said there will be less than 350 pupils enrolled at the agricultural farm next year, while there is liable to be 1,300 at the Kearney normal school. Inasmuch as there is over \$1,000,000 to be appropriated for the Lincoln institution, there is some feeling that an even distribution is not being made. Some contend that no appropriation for the university should be made out of the general fund, as the one-mill levy will be sufficient under proper management to meet all the requirements of the institution.

The house on Friday recommended for passage the joint committee primary bill, rushed it through committee of the whole and then passed S. F. No. 5, by Gibson, the employers' liability bill; indefinitely postponed Harvey's legislative annexation and recommended the Lee annexation bill for passage, while the senate side-tracked the joint committee anti-pass bill and recommended the King anti-pass bill, with amendments, for passage. They also submit to a vote the question of a constitutional convention.

After devoting two sessions of the committee of the whole to the senate in committee recommended for passage King's anti-pass bill as a substitute for the joint-committee bill recently passed by the house. As finally amended the bill is not quite as stringent as the house bill, but is much more severe than the King bill was originally. As it was introduced it was modeled after the national law on the subject, but as the senate finally recommended it, it is more stringent than the national law. The house measure was not considered.

The state conventions of next year probably will be confronted with the proposition of indorsing or turning down amendments to the constitution enlarging the membership of the supreme court to seven members, fixing the salaries at \$4,500 and of district judges at \$3,000, and to permit the legislature to designate methods of appeal to the supreme court. Since the decision of the supreme court that amendments may be voted on by straight party ballot the greatest difficulty of amending the constitution has been done away with.

Some objections have been raised to H. R. 432, a bill to impose a license fee on all corporations doing business in this state which are organized under the laws of Nebraska or under the laws of any other state. The annual license ranges from \$5 to \$200 and it is believed by the friends of the bill that it will raise \$150,000 annually to help pay the expenses of the state. The fee is based on capital stock of the corporation to be taxed. The bill was introduced in the senate by the senate judiciary committee and a duplicate was introduced in the house.

In the suit of the state against The State Journal company to recover \$85,000 alleged to represent the price of court reports which the defendant is charged with selling, the supreme court denied the motion of the state to amend its petition. Two former decisions were against the state in this suit, the court holding that the court reports were not the property of the state, that the reporter of the court sells copies of the opinions to various publications and that anyone is privileged to publish them.

After two hours of strenuous discussion the senate in committee of the whole recommended for passage the judiciary committee substitute for the Burns pure food bill. The only attack on the measure was in the interests of the druggists, who were represented on the floor of the senate by Senator Luce of Harlan, who is in the business. The principal difficulty came in amending section 9, which originally required all patent and proprietary medicines containing poisonous substances to be labeled poison in large red letters.

Governor Sheldon has signed S. F. 114, by Thomas of Douglas, known as the bulk sales bill, an act to prevent merchants from selling their stocks of goods without notice to creditors. The bill has no emergency clause.

The employers' liability bill as introduced in the senate by Gibson and passed by that branch of the legislature was passed in the house and is ready for the governor's signature. There were three bills of almost identical wording on this subject in the legislature. They were by Gibson in the senate and by McMullen and Cone in the house. The Gibson bill departs from the provisions of the other two in that it applies only to railroad men engaged in the operation of trains. It is the fellow servant act almost the same as passed by congress.

The 2-cent fare bill, signed by the governor and now in effect, was drafted by a joint committee comprising senators and members of the legislature. Senator Wiltse of Cedar was one who put in a great deal of time looking up the legality of the proposed measure. The bill is merely amendatory of the present statute, which fixes the passenger rates at 3 cents a mile. The bill changes the word "three" to "two." In addition, there is inserted a clause which states that no railroad shall be required to sell a ticket for less than 5 cents. This was put in to apply to interurban lines and to the sale of tickets on roads where stations are less than one mile apart. The bill changes the age at which half fare rates shall apply from children under 10 years to children under 12 years, which is now the rule in force on all roads in this state.

An argument which has been industriously circulated to defeat the terminal taxation bill has been the declaration that it would impose double taxation upon the railroads in counties under township organization, and therefore be unlawful, or else knock the townships out of their proper share of taxes. That statement is effectively met with a decision of the supreme court of Indiana, which will be offered by Clarke of Douglas in his fight for the passage of the terminal taxation bill. The court holds there with respect to a similar law that the fact that property is taxed in a township cannot release the railroad from paying its just share of taxes for municipal purposes to the town which may lie wholly within the precincts of that township.

The home insurance companies of the state won their battle in the senate when they succeeded in killing S. F. No. 212, a bill by Aldrich of Butler county, providing for an annual accounting and apportioning of the surplus of life insurance companies doing business in the state. The home companies contended throughout the insurance fight that this bill would bar them from competing with eastern companies in other states because of the reciprocal insurance laws which prevent an insurance company writing in any state a policy not permissible in the home state.

Without giving it a hearing before the committee of the whole the senate killed H. R. 175, which provided for the assessment of real estate mortgages as a part of the real estate and not as personal property, and fixed the status of the mortgage for taxation purposes as the county within which the mortgage is located and not the residence of the owner. The revenue committee reported the bill for indefinite postponement, and McKesson, who has a similar bill in the senate, made a fight to have the bill placed on general file.

Efforts to revive the defunct provision of the Gibson anti-brewery bill and incorporate it in another measure pending in the senate were promptly sat down upon by a majority of the senators. The provision was to limit the number of saloons to one for every 1,000. The bill under consideration was S. F. No. 295, by Patrick, to prevent the location of saloons within three miles of military reservations. The only amendments adopted were one to include Indian reservations and to exclude Fort Omaha from the provisions of the act.

Governor Sheldon permitted H. R. No. 116 to become a law without his signature. The bill provides that reporters in district courts shall receive 10 cents a page for making transcripts in criminal cases where the defendant makes an affidavit of poverty.

The senate in committee of the whole recommended for passage Senator Sackett's bill relating to the confiscation of coal in transit by railroads. The bill requires the roads to pay the value of the coal within sixty days.

The senate indefinitely postponed S. F. No. 403, by Hamer of Cherry, an act to permit precincts, townships, cities or villages to issue bonds in aid of steam railroads.

A bill by Marsh of Seward to compel Christian scientist healers to report contagious diseases to health authorities was recommended to pass after a sharp contest in the house.

Patrick's bill providing a new trial shall not be granted in criminal cases for error of the court where it is shown there has been no miscarriage of justice was recommended for passage in the senate after a lively fight against it led by King of Polk. The bill is intended to prevent the reversal of cases for mere technicalities which do not affect the merits of the case. King spoke against it declaring it was prejudicial to the interests of the defendant in criminal cases and virtually allowed the judges to say whether justice had been done or not.

A prohibition amendment to the constitution will not be submitted to the people for ratification at the polls next year. The prohibitionists were unsuccessful in their efforts to resuscitate S. F. No. 399, previously postponed.

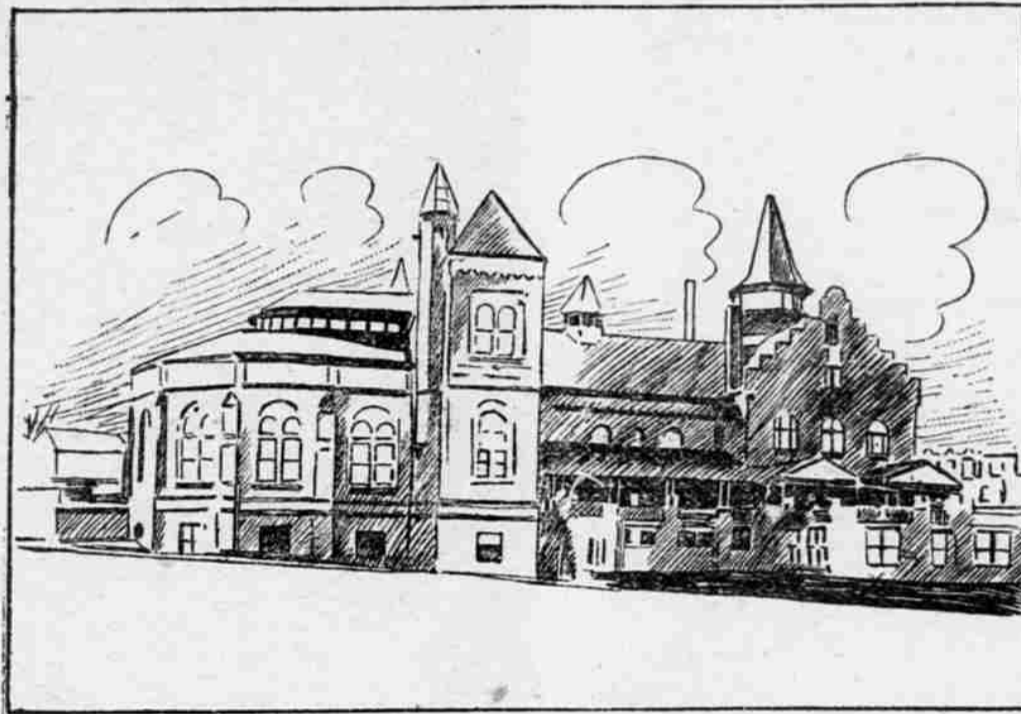
Forcible annexation of South Omaha and Omaha died without a struggle in the house. At the same time the bill to put the question to a vote of the people of both cities was advanced by the committee of the whole to third reading and will probably pass.

CARE OF EMPLOYES

RAILROADS SPEND LARGE SUMS FOR COMFORT OF MEN.

Considered by Up-to-Date Officials as Most Profitable Investment—Immense Clubhouse at West Philadelphia.

To keep the men who run the railroads up to the highest efficiency mark, transportation officers now consider that they can make no more profitable investment than in rest-houses, pensions, insurance and relief funds, Y. M. C. A.'s, schools and libraries. The welfare of the men behind the throttle is as carefully considered as the man behind the gun of a battleship. Welfare work among the railroads began systematically with the establishment of Y. M. C. A.'s. Now there are no less than 200 railway association branches representing roads which employ at least 800,000 men. In the largest railroad Y. M. C. A. in the country, located at West Philadel-



Twenty-five hundred railroad employees use this building as clubhouse and school. It has an auditorium seating 1,200, ample facilities for recreation and educational work.

phia, 2,500 railroad men are provided with all the comforts of a first-class clubhouse and many advantages that no ordinary club possesses. An auditorium, where an audience of 1,200 can be comfortably seated, and facilities for study, make it a great educational institution.

No Cash Dividends Here. It is not by accident that there are so many of these rest, recreation and educational oases located along the lines of 125,000 miles of American railroads. They represent a policy just as well defined as that which demands the best roadway or the most efficient locomotives. The big investment involved, officials believe, is a dividend not in cash, but in improved morals, more regular habits, better service, fewer suspensions for infractions of rules, an all-around higher type of men and a better understanding between the men and the railroad.

Resthouses fill in the gaps between the associations on some of the railroads. Comfortable beds for night use, couches where trainmen, to use their own picturesque expression, can "pound an ear" for an hour or two; lockers, books and periodicals, games,

amusements and restaurants are the equipment of the resthouse. The biggest of these is the Filbert street haven, in Philadelphia, which cost more than \$30,000, and is used every day by at least 1,000 men.

Increase Efficiency. For men who are compelled to lay over between runs the Y. M. C. A. or the resthouse is a godsend. Like the associations, the resthouses cost a lot of money; but nobody can estimate how much they save by keeping trainmen in good condition for work that requires the clearest minds and the soundest of bodies. Libraries and reading-rooms have been made still another avenue for the profitable investment of railway funds. A regular chain of libraries 108,000 miles long, either supported in whole or in part by railroad funds, has been established throughout the country and maintained by 48 different roads.

Pensions and the savings fund add more millions to the railroad disbursements directly benefiting their men. As corporations wake up to the necessity for a pension system they investigate the system adopted by the Pennsylvania to provide for old employees. From the time the pension

fund was established appropriations for it have amounted to something more than \$2,000,000, and the annual disbursements average \$400,000 at the present time.

Then, there is the savings fund conducted for the employees, to whom three and one-half per cent. interest is guaranteed. Between Pittsburg and Philadelphia there are 1,000 agents who are designated savings-fund depositaries, and at a place like Altoona there are often from half a dozen to 20 men in line to make deposits after working hours. Since this savings fund was established it has paid out \$1,225,000 in interest.

Relief Funds. To all these "provident institutions"—the name under which they are grouped in railroad bookkeeping—add the relief fund. Nearly all the older railroads have some such institution as this, and on a road like the Long Island, with between 5,000 and 6,000 employees, the annual disbursements exceed \$20,000 a year. The Pennsylvania fund has received \$3,500,000 from the company, and disburses every year nearly \$1,250,000 in accident, sick and death benefits.

ANGRY BULL DITCHES TRAIN.

Tossed from Track. Enraged Fighting-Bred Animal Returns to Attack.

On the Tampico branch of the Mexican Central railway a bull wrecked a train, resulting in the death of two trainmen and the injury of several passengers, says the New York Herald correspondent at San Antonio, Tex.

It was a clear case of the bull butting the train off the track. The train was of freight cars, with a coach in the rear. There were only seven cars and all of them went into the ditch.

The bull, a large imported animal of the black Spanish fighting breed, was seen on the track ahead, and all the whistling and alarms the engine driver could give failed to cause him to move.

The train came almost to a stop and gently pushed the animal off. But before the engine driver regained speed the animal was again on the track, braced, with head lowered and challenging the train.

The engine driver gently jolted the animal off a second time, and the performance was repeated.

This vexed the engine driver, and the animal seeming to desire a collision, the train was backed up a quarter of a mile and then with a good running start struck the bull.

Instead of being thrown off the track the animal was carried under the pilot of the engine and the entire train went into the ditch. The fireman and a brakeman, both Mexicans, were killed.

It is reported several of the passengers were shaken up very much. The bull was killed.

Gospel on Longest Railway. The railway which crosses Siberia is by far the longest in the world. The tremendous distances traveled and the religious character of the people have given rise to the chapel railway carriages for divine service. These are fitted up inside like a church, and they serve not only for travelers by rail, but for periodical worship by the inhabitants of remote villages on the great plains.

Holy Land Railroad. A small passenger steamer has been launched on the Lake of Galilee, in connection with the railway in the Holy Land.

Wild Animals and Insects, as Well as Men, Do the Work.

The achievements of those robbers and desperadoes who "hold up" or wreck railway trains are occasionally paralleled by wild animals. In Siberia, for instance, it has happened on at least one occasion that a bear has jumped on to the locomotive of a train and attacked the driver and guard. In one case of this kind, bruin met with so vigorous a rebuff that he fell back on to the line and was caught by the wheels, with fatal results.

In Canada it has more than once been found that the passage of a train has been disputed by a moose deer. The moose always got the worst of the encounter. Ostriches often cause a stoppage of trains in South Africa. They stick their heads in the sand balling of the tracks, and, as they are too valuable to kill, the train is stopped till they are captured or driven back to the farm from which they may have escaped.

Even insects may bring trains to a standstill. The white ant, or termite, accomplishes this feat by destroying the sleepers on which the rails rest.

That fish should interfere with trains would seem impossible, but they do so in India by being sucked into the apparatus for watering locomotives at country stations. And once a railway trolley car passing through flooded country was stopped, a large fish becoming jammed in one of the wheels.

Even weeds may "hold up" a train, as in Ecuador, where the vegetation along the track grows so rapidly that if it were not regularly kept down traffic would be impossible.

Owl Caught by Locomotive. While an early morning express from Glasgow to Aberdeen, Scotland, was passing Ailoo Junction about five a. m., a bar owl flew across the track and was caught by the locomotive. Miles farther on, when the train stopped, the bird was found clinging in its death grip to the handrail of the smoke-box. The owl has been stuffed and is now carried as a mascot by the engine-driver.

Round About New York

Gossip of People and Things
in the Great Metropolis

QUIET RETIREMENT OF MORGAN FROM WALL ST.

THAT Wall street has been looking forward to anxiously and with much speculation for several years has actually come to pass in the "House of Morgan." The "old man," as J. Pierpont Morgan is generally called in "the street," has to all intents and purposes gone into retirement, and in his place in the most famous banking house in America there reigns J. P. Morgan, Jr., or "Jack," as he is more frequently called and spoken of in the same district. No one can cry, "The King is dead! Long live the King!" for the head of the house is very much alive. Only he has handed over the practical administration of his banking concerns to his son, while in his magnificent new library on East Thirty-sixth street he is spending the evening of his days in the pleasure of the collector amid his collections. Like all the things the elder Morgan does, this change in his banking house was accomplished with little flourish of trumpets. So quiet and gradual has been the process that until the last few weeks but little attention has been paid to the important change which has for several years been going on in the house of Morgan. Of late Morgan, Sr., has not been in any too good health, and for more than a month has not been in the



financial district at all. Every time the stock market tumbles disquieting reports are circulated from one end of Wall street to the other that the "old man" is seriously ill, and in spite of frequent denials from other members of the firm, including "Jack," the reports persist and come to the surface at every favorable opportunity. But there seems to be nothing immediately alarming in Mr. Morgan's condition. The affairs of the great house of Morgan are now in the hands of three men, J. P. Morgan, Jr.; George W. Perkins and Charles Steele. Mr. Steele is the legal man, so that the heavy financial work, formerly the joy of the "old man's" life, is in the hands of Jack Morgan and Perkins. Not that these are the only members of the firm, but they are the active ones. The Morgan firm has 11 partners, but the members, other than those mentioned, are little more than head clerks. J. P. Morgan, Jr., is by no means an inexperienced boy. He is 40 years old and his training in the intricacies of banking has been long and thorough. Whether he will prove the genius in the world of business that his father has been remains to be seen. But if genius consists in an excessive devotion to hard work he may compare favorably with his illustrious father.

CHINATOWN WIPED OUT, NEW ONE IN BROOKLYN



THE heart of New York's Chinatown, which was wiped out officially at a recent meeting of the board of estimate, when a new park to occupy the acre and a half block bounded by the Bowery, Doyers, Pell and Mott streets was authorized, is owned largely by Chinese firms and individuals and includes the Chinese theater, in which several Chinese recently were shot to death in a high-binder war, the joss-house, and all the other oriental features which have made the locality the most picturesque plague spot in the city. Before the year is out most of the inhabitants will have moved to Brooklyn, where they are establishing a new Chinatown, and the narrow, crooked streets around Chatham Square are affording their last picturesque spectacle to the "rubber-neck" tourists in the celebration of

the Chinese new year, which is now on. All the business transactions of the last 12 months have been closed, every Chinaman has paid his honest debts, all the prayers have been said, and the advent of the new year, which occurred on the morning of February 12, was celebrated with the explosion of thousands of firecrackers, which a special ordinance of the board of aldermen, passed at the intercession of "Little Tim" Sullivan, who ranks next to Confucius in the Chinese calendar of saints, permitted to be hung in ropes and festoons from house to house across the streets. Tugged out in their brightest native garb, the inhabitants of the quarter are making the customary New Year calls and imbibing much rice and liquor. So far not a Mongolian has been killed, however, and in that circumstance is read the sad fact that the glory of Chinatown has departed.

NEW YORK A FRUITFUL FIELD FOR LAWYERS

EIGHTEEN thousand lawyers are living more or less luxuriously because of the controversies of individuals and the results of crime in the metropolis. Ninety-two others, candidates from the law schools, were admitted to the New York bar a few days ago, and there is scarcely a week in which a locally prominent legal light from some other part of the country, seeking a wider field and higher fees, is not added to the steadily increasing number. New York has a population of approximately 4,500,000, and this means that there is one lawyer to every 250 individuals; not a very large number from which to draw a clientele, it would seem, when the lawyers themselves and those who cannot afford the luxury of law are subtracted. Yet most of them have an opulent look that speaks eloquently of prosperity and suggests

an inquiry into the methods by which it has been acquired. There is the field of politics, of course, and in New York that takes care of many of the poorer attorneys, while practice before the civil and criminal courts of the city and state accounts for a goodly number of pleaders; but it is to the enormous volume of business transactions that the majority look for support. Many of the great financial and commercial institutions have prominent lawyers at their heads, and all of them are equipped with one or more salaried employees whose legal advice is indispensable in transactions involving, as they frequently do, millions of dollars. In addition to these sources of income there were more than 115,000 transfers of real estate last year, involving about \$1,345,000,000, and most of them provided handsome fees for lawyers.

FANCY PRICES FOR SITES ON MILLIONAIRE'S ROW



MANSION builders are planning to invest \$20,000,000 within a year along the one-mile stretch of Millionaires' Row, in Fifth avenue. H. C. Frick has practically closed a deal for the purchase of the Lenox library site in Fifth avenue, between Seventieth and Seventy-first streets. The property is in the midst of the storm center of the "400" and its dimensions are 200x125 feet. The library trustees have asked legislative permission to sell the ground. The price asked is said to be \$3,000,000. Mr. Frick now has a ten-year lease of the George Vanderbilt mansion, on the Fifty-first street corner, at \$50,000 a year. During the past few months more than \$6,000,000 has been paid for mansion sites in upper Fifth avenue. Most of these buyers will erect homes to cost double the price of the land. Others who have been holding costly sites for the past

few years are giving final instructions to their architects. As a result of the great wave of prosperity that has swept the country recently it is probable the last remaining vacant sites along Millionaires' Row will be covered by mansions. Prices are nothing less than fancy on proud old Fifth avenue. At the south end of Millionaires' Row land is bringing \$12,000 a front foot. At the far north end, beyond Andrew Carnegie's mansion, it is sought at \$5,000 a front foot. Very little land is to be had at those prices. None will be for sale soon because Millionaires' Row is filling fast and owners are so wealthy that they do not think of selling. When the last few sites are taken by mansion builders the entire stretch of the row will be cornered, so far as outsiders are concerned. It is not difficult to foresee a time when a site on that part of Fifth avenue will be almost priceless.