

CAPITAL CITY CHAT

RAILROAD COMMITTEE GIVES THE ROADS A HEARING.

COMPANIES AGAINST TWO-CENT FARE

Rate Discussion in the House Brings Out Partisanship—Railway Commission Bill Before Legislature.

Roads Have a Hearing.

The railroad committee of the house Tuesday night gave a hearing to railroad men and railroad attorneys on the anti-pass bill and the two-cent fare bill, the bills which were drafted by joint committees and advanced to the general file in the house.

Those who spoke were P. E. Eustis, passenger traffic manager of the Burlington; W. B. Kniskern, passenger traffic manager of the Northwestern; Gerritt Fort, assistant general passenger agent of the Union Pacific, and Frank Noy, general auditor of the Rock Island.

The hearing developed united opposition to the two-cent passenger rate bill on the ground of the hardship it would impose upon the railroads, but the railroad representatives when questioned concerning freight earnings united in saying they were speaking only for the passenger departments. They were one in declaring that present conditions are not a standard by which legislation must provide for "lean" years as well as "fat" ones. Questions propounded as to overcapitalization of the roads were met with the denial that the commercial value of the railroads is exceeded by the stock issues.

The arguments of all the speakers were directed chiefly against the two-cent passenger fare, the anti-pass bill being mentioned only incidentally. In answer to a question by Representative Walsh of Douglas whether he would consider it wise for the legislature to enact an anti-pass law Mr. Eustis said he would enact a law against free transportation.

The statements of all the railroad men contained allegations that the enactment of a two-cent passenger rate law would probably be followed by retrenchment in service, fewer passenger trains, the refusal of long lines between points to compete with short lines and very probable, in time, a cut in wages of employees.

Each speaker was well prepared with statistics. Mr. Kniskern told of the effect that density of population has upon railroad passenger fares which, when applied to conditions in Nebraska, showed that this state has a population of fifteen people to the square mile or 198 people to the railroad mile, while in Massachusetts, where a lower fare is charged, there are 370 persons to the square mile with a population per railroad mile of 1,427.

First Rate Discussion.

Monday the house turned down Representative Quackenbush's resolution directing the attorney general to enforce the maximum freight-rate law now on the statute books. Mr. Quackenbush, who is a fusionist, strongly urged the passage of the resolution, claiming that the best way to regulate rates was to proceed with the laws as hand which have been partially tested in court. He argued that the law had been declared unconstitutional only under conditions then existing, but that the court had granted leave for the attorney general at some future time, when conditions had changed, to make a showing that the rates were reasonable. Opposed to this view, E. P. Brown, of Lancaster, stated the republican view. He went into the history of the maximum rate law in detail, showing that it was passed in 1893, later being declared unconstitutional by the United States supreme court. The order of the court was that the attorney general might, at some future time, for the then existing board, make a showing that rates were reasonable, but that since then the law creating the board of transportation had been adjudged unconstitutional, and there was no board for which the attorney general could act. The resolution was indefinitely postponed by a strict party vote—57 to 24.

Garnishment of Wages.

Senator Thompson, of Buffalo county, has introduced a garnishment bill, permitting the garnishment of 10 per cent of the wages of all persons who are heads of families, both before and after wages are due. The bill will call for discussion, as those opposed to such a law declare that a conspiracy exists between wholesale and retail grocers that for aid in securing a bulk sales law the wholesalers would help the retailers secure a garnishment law. This is flatly denied.

It is contended by opponents of a garnishment law that there is no need of such a law; that grocers and others should exercise their judgment in selling to people on credit, and not expect the state to give them an iron-clad clutch on payment in a law to enforce collection. Under the proposed law, not only 10 per cent of the wages can be garnished, but costs can be piled up to considerable extent against the head of a family. The ordinary garnishment suit will cost at least \$15. A claim for \$10 or \$15 against a man who had \$25 due him would absorb all wages due.

Kansas Requests Co-Operation.

Official notice of action taken by the Kansas legislature in favor of a convention to be called for proposing amendments to the federal constitution was received by the Nebraska legislature in the form of a concurrent resolution, passed at Topeka, urging that congress take the necessary preliminary steps. The resolution cites particularly the need of an amendment providing for the election of United States senators by a direct vote. The Nebraska legislature will probably adopt a similar resolution.

Two-Cent Fare Bill.

The sharpest contest of the legislative session involving matters of political import, occurred in the house Thursday afternoon when the members discussed the two-cent passenger fare bill in committee of the whole. After spending over two hours on the bill the house declined to take definite action. An amendment by E. P. Brown, seeking to give the newly elected railway commission discretion to increase passenger rates above the two-cent limit and not over three cents a mile when necessity should demand on proper showing of a road, was voted down.

Consideration of the bill was begun with discussion of the amendment offered by Mr. Brown in words as follows to be added to the first section:

"Provided that when any railway corporation subject to the provisions of this act shall show to the satisfaction of the state railway commission that the rates prescribed by this act are unreasonable as to the said railway corporation so complaining, the railway commission may in its discretion increase the rates prescribed by this act as to such railway corporation so complaining to any sum not exceeding three cents per mile, during such time as the said railway commission may in its discretion deem proper."

The offer of the amendment was the signal for immediate opposition by Cone of Saunders who did not favor giving the commission power to pass on the justness of a rate. It was something for the court to decide and to place it in the bill was to gain nothing and to jeopardize the measure. He said the same matter could be placed in the big railway commission bill. All the bill needed was the emergency clause.

Mr. Brown then explained his position, declaring it was necessary to proceed with caution and conservatism and to take such action that would be perfect justice between the public and the corporations affected. There was some doubt whether all transportation companies in the state could be subjected to a two-cent fare. Those that cannot stand the rate should not be subjected to the same regulations as those that are able. There was grave danger in doing what had been done in the maximum freight rate case. If a stringent act were passed, affecting every road, then it would be too late for relief. Procedure in the courts that would prove the unreasonableness of the rate as applied to one road would invalidate the entire act and nothing would have been accomplished.

It was argued that even if the commission were declared to be without authority, the result, with the amendment in the bill, would not invalidate the measure, and the two-cent flat rate would still be there.

Friday the house voted to make the bill a special order for Tuesday, and in the meantime the republicans will hold a caucus to discuss the measure.

Primary Bill Ready.

The new primary bill, drafted by the joint committee was agreed to Friday night and the measure introduced on Monday in the house and senate. The bill was submitted to a meeting of the joint committee and though there were differing opinions as to some of the details, the committee agreed that the measure should be introduced under its name. It was drafted by a subcommittee consisting of Senators Aldrich of Butler and Patrick of Sarpy and Representatives Dodge of Douglas, E. P. Brown of Lancaster and Mackey of Custer.

In brief, the new measure provides for a mandatory primary election with a flat filing fee imposed on all candidates, the high candidate at the elections to be nominated. The rotating ballot is provided for when the number of candidates for an office exceeds five in number. The candidates in a county select the county committee and the state candidates with United States senator, congressional and legislative candidates meet in Lincoln to draft the party platform biennially and also to select the state chairman of the party with the members of the state central committee.

Employers' Liability.

Without debate the bill providing that employers shall be liable for the acts of fellow servants, S. F. No. 5, by Gibson of Douglas, was reported by the judiciary committee with the recommendation that it be placed on the general file. The bill as amended by the committee abolishes the fellow servant law and provides that employees of the railroads of this state engaged in train service, or repair or construction work, shall have the right to elect whether or not they shall accept relief from the Burlington relief department or sue under the law for damages.

State Buys Bonds.

The board of educational lands and funds has bought of a new bidder, a broker from Omaha, Mr. Hoobler, \$100,000 of Alabama state bonds at a price to net the state of Nebraska 3.83 1/2 per cent interest.

May Fix Up State House.

Repairs on the capitol building and grounds are to be the subject of inquiry by the house committee on public lands and buildings. A resolution by Dodge of Douglas, condemning the way the building is being kept up, was passed and authority was given the committee to ascertain the cost of the needed repairs. Mr. Dodge said the capitol was a disgrace to the state in its present condition. He was not in favor of building anew until the structure fell down, but he said he was in favor of doing some repairing.

Talk On Abe Lincoln.

A pleasing diversion from the routine of making laws in the state senate occurred February 12 when preceding the impressive and eloquent address of Rev. Isaac Franklin Roach of St. Paul's Methodist church, Lincoln, a quartet composed of Mrs. Lilla G. English, Miss Ethel Halderman, L. C. Oberlies and Prof. C. H. Miller, sang for the legislators and spectators. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was the first number and an enthusiastic recall, "America." It was Lincoln's birthday.

WIFE OF BRITISH AMBASSADOR



Latest portrait of the wife of Rt. Hon. James Bryce, formerly chief secretary for Ireland, who has been appointed British ambassador to the United States.

NAMED BY GREAT EXPLORER.

Waterway Called After Champlain Has Now No Designation.

A name which Samuel Champlain applied to a certain waterway in our country should be revived. Champlain has been called "the real founder and the father of Canada." He was also the first who carefully explored the coasts of our New England, years before the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers, and accurate and concise was his description of the shores and waters that he followed into Penobscot and Boston bays, past Cape Cod and along the south coast to Buzzards bay. Champlain was a modest man, but for once in his career he gave his own name to a geographical feature—that which marked the end of his discoveries in what are now United States waters. He wrote: "Coasting along to the southwest nearly 12 leagues, we passed near a river which is very small and difficult to approach because of shallows and rocks at its mouth. I gave it my name."

Seeing this waterway from the deck

HOW HE MIGHT QUIET BABY.

Simple But Energetic Method Advised by Mother.

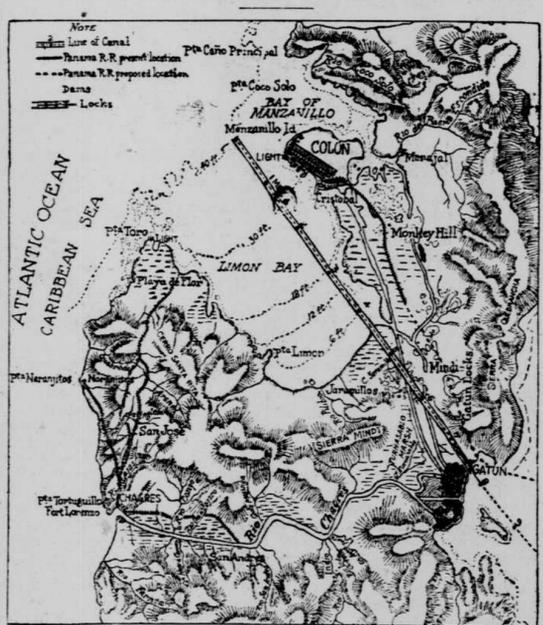
"Before I got this job I had no idea so many funny things happened on street cars," said a new conductor. "Every day I see and hear things that are amusing. For instance, a woman with a baby about two years old boarded my car and rode downtown. When we reached Fifteenth and California she rose to get off. The baby was tucked snugly in the corner of the seat. The woman hesitated in the aisle. 'Say,' she said to me, 'I'd like to ask a favor of you.'"

"I've got some shopping to do," she said. "Would you please take baby around a trip with you? I don't want him with me. I'll be back when you return to this corner and take him."

"Madam, I replied, I can't take care of your baby. Suppose he should get to crying, as he undoubtedly would?"

"Well, goodness me!" she said, "you could slap him, couldn't you?"—Denver Post.

LATEST OFFICIAL MAP OF PANAMA CANAL



There has been much diversity of opinion among experts as to the best method of building the necessary breakwaters to protect the eastern part of the Colon shore when the Panama canal is in operation. The chart shows the currents, reefs and other obstructions to navigation. The condition of wave exposure compels, for the breakwater, a large cross section and extra heavy blocks of stone or concrete, else the fiasco of the early Galveston jetties must be repeated.

Absent-Minded Prize.

"I've met the most absent-minded man at last," said the man who is always looking for freaks. "I thought I'd found him in the college professor who, when he went up stairs to dress for dinner, would absent-mindedly go to bed instead. But that fellow was displaced by a young writer who would put his foot up in a chair to tie his shoe, and then forgetting what he did it for, would put the other foot up in the chair and stand up in it. Then I met a woman who confessed to looking absent-mindedly in the back of her hair brush instead of her hand mirror when she wanted to see the back of her head, and I thought she had gone the writer one better. But I've met the king of the absent-minded world now. He is a young minister, and every once in a while he waits patiently half an hour for a car in a street on which no cars run. He has confessed it, but every once in so often he does the trick right over again."

First Use of Black Lead.

"It is difficult," says a writer, "to determine the exact period in which 'black lead' was first utilized as an instrument for writing or drawing, as it has been confused with other mineral bodies. The ancients used lead, but the metal was formed into flat plates, and the edges of these plates were used to make the mark. If an enormous design was desired the transcriber drew parallel lines and traced illuminated designs, usually with a hard point, but also with soft lead. That lead was known to the ancients is also proved by the fact that it is mentioned in the book of Job."

Compensation for Small Men.

There are, indeed, many compensations which fall to the lot of one who is short of stature. When taking off his hat to a lady he does not have to reach up half so far as his more lengthy fellow; if a dime is dropped on the carpet by a careless friend he is certain to find it sooner than anyone else; when he has mislaid his latchkey he can always enter the house via the slit in the letter box; diseases such as "smoker's throat" and "housemaid's knee" which assail other victims singly can attack him

Results of Exposure.

"They say she has rheumatism of the nerves," remarked the friend. "What is that now, rheumatism of the nerves? I never heard of it."

Explained.

"Invest," said Goldgobs, "but never speculate." "But what precisely is the difference, father," young Goldgobs asked, "between an investment and a speculation?" "It's speculation," the other answered, "if you lose."

THE USEFUL 'PHONE

BY NO MEANS USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR BUSINESS.

One Instance Where Wire Conveyed the Voice of Conscience—How Farmer Saved Long Trip After His Cows.

A group of telephone men were telling telephone stories the other day.

"A couple of young lawyers were just shutting up shop to go home one evening not long ago," said one. "It was in a big building, and as it was about nine o'clock, nearly all the windows were dark. One window across the alley, however, was light, and the curtain partly up, and just after they had turned off their own lights the two young fellows saw a man who was dictating in this room reach over and kiss the stenographer. They knew the man's name, that is, they knew the name lettered on his window; so they looked him up in the telephone book and one kept watch at the window, while the other rang him up."

"There were signs of perturbation in the room across the way when the bell rang. When he finally answered, the young fellow at the phone said: 'Stop kissing that girl.'"

"Who—who—who are you?" came a quavering, stuttering voice over the 'phone.

"I am the voice of your conscience," said the lawyer, and silently hung up the receiver."

"The marvelous extension of the rural telephone system out west," said a western man, "has introduced an element of variety and interest into the lives of the farmers that can hardly be computed. In some sections of the great farming states the farmers buy their own telephone exchange, and then each man runs his own line to his own house and has nothing to pay thereafter, except to keep his own line in order, and his share of the co-operative central office. The women on the farms, when their work is done in the afternoon, love to go to the 'phone and stand listening for hours to everything that buzzes over the wires. It's as good as going to see all their friends. The only trouble is that they get tired standing up and holding the receiver to their ears, and have to sit down and rest once in a while."

"But one day I found an old lady who had solved that problem. She had tied the receiver to the back of her rocking chair, and there she sat comfortably knitting, with the 'phone glued to her ear, listening to all the telephone talk of the county."

"I can tell a better one than that about those farmers' exchanges," said another carelessly. "You know they utilize their barbed wire fences for telephone wires. There was one enterprising Reuben that ran a line from his barn down to the pasture, and at milking time he would call up the cows and tell them to come up to the house."

The other telephone men looked at each other and then turned sadly away.

The Wolf in Switzerland.

Apart from the evidence of its presence in the age of pile dwellings, the earliest reference to the wolf in Switzerland is in a decree of Charlemagne of about the end of the eighth century. From this time to the latter part of the fourteenth century the records are exceedingly scanty, but during the next two centuries they become very common and show the strenuous fight against the marauder which had to be maintained by the inhabitants, and the part which it played in their superstitious ideas. A striking fact is its abundance at the beginning of the seventeenth century, which is explained as resulting from the devastation of the Thirty Years War. With the end of that century the period of its greatest abundance closed, and from hence onward it begins gradually to disappear, the last wolf having been killed in Lucerne in 1865, while the western frontier districts continued to suffer from its ravages until quite a recent date. The extermination of the animal has only been made possible by the introduction of modern weapons.—Geographical Journal.

Knew Him at Once.

There are other sure ways of bringing a man to mind besides mentioning his name. Among the candidates who were sent from Princeton to a Philadelphia church was one young man whose language was of the sort which dazzles and delights the younger members of a congregation, and sometimes pleases the elders as well.

In this case the committee was besieged to ask for the young man again and they consented, but unfortunately the man to whose lot it fell to write the letter had forgotten the candidate's name. Nothing daunted, he wrote to one of the seminary professors:

"Please send us that floweret, streamlet, rivulet, cloudlet and moonbeam young man again. We've forgotten his name, but we've no doubt you'll recognize him."

"We do," wrote the professor, and the desired candidate was sent, and subsequently was called to the parish.—Youth's Companion.

To Make Stones Stronger.

Almost everybody knows the rule of the masons that stone used in building should be so placed that it will lie as it lay in its natural bed when quarried. But Francis W. Hoyt, in the Engineering News, says that this familiar rule needs in many cases to be supplemented with other precautions. There are three planes of fracture known to quarrymen. The "rift" is the direction in which the stone splits most easily; the "grain" that which is next easiest; the "head" that which offers the greatest resistance. In a paving block the two sides represent the rift fracture, the top and bottom the grain and the ends the head. But in a quarry the natural bed is sometimes considerably inclined to the plane of the rift; hence the imperfection of the ordinary rule for placing the stone in building.

From Tutor to Forge

FORMER COLLEGE PRESIDENT BECOMES A BLACKSMITH.

Ill Health Forces Descendant of President of Yale University to Quit Educational Work for Manual Labor.

Indianapolis, Ind.—The brightest boy in the village school at Stilesville, Ind., prize winner at Ohio Wesleyan university, teacher in various schools, then president of Green River college, Kentucky, and now a blacksmith, toiling daily at the forge in his humble shop at Anderson, Ind., this has been the unusual career of Roscoe J. Stiles, great grandson of Ezra Stiles, Ph. D., a president of Yale university. The town of Stilesville was founded by his grandfather, in honor of whom it was named.

In his youth Roscoe was looked upon as a second Ezra Stiles. He liked school, and spent his spare time in reading instead of playing. His fond parents believed that a great future was before the young man in the educational world and they encouraged him to every extent possible in his studies. At the age of 17 he was sent to Indianapolis and entered what is now Shorthridge high school. Here he maintained his record as a brilliant student, and when he had completed his course with high honors he was sent to Ohio Wesleyan at Delaware, O. He proved a leader in all college affairs, joined the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, was prominent in the social life of the school and graduated, as usual, with honors. After leaving the university he naturally turned to educational work, and for eight or ten years taught in the high schools of cities in Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. Then he was offered the chair of history in Green River college at Maysville, Ky. This school then had an enrollment of about 300, and was one of the leading educational institutions of the state. He taught history for four years and when the presidency of the school became vacant he was readily chosen to fill the place. For four years more he served as the head of the college, when his health failed. Under his administration the school flourished and the enrollment was increased to almost 500. He brought about many changes for the better, including the elective system.

When he saw that he must give up his work he thought it would be only for a year or so, and decided to spend the time traveling. But for several years he wandered here and there

over the country without finding his strength returning, and so he finally decided to settle down in Anderson, near his brothers, and quietly await the end. He had never married and made his home with his brother Albert. For a while he spent his time in reading and studying, but having exhausted his means while traveling he decided to go to work.

His brothers and his friends thought he was only joking when he said he intended to open a blacksmith shop. Then when they saw he was really in earnest they offered to find something more suitable for him, but he declined their aid.

"I want to work, I want something that will tax my vitality to the utmost," he said in a recent interview, and in a short time he had purchased an old abandoned shop on the edge of the city.

"I would rather be a strong, healthy blacksmith than a tired, worn-out college president, with the grave yawning for me. I believe a strong physical body is the most essential thing.



ROS COE J. STILES. (Once President of a College, Now a Blacksmith.)

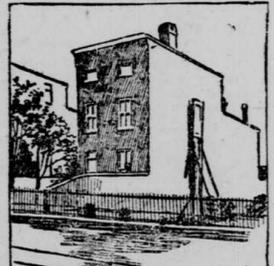
When my health failed I turned to manual labor. A man can keep up his education and work in the smithy as well. I am ready now to debate with any one on the question, "Was Plato's Philosophy Wrong?" and take either side of it."

The blacksmith can always find time to pause in his work to discuss history, philosophy or public questions with a visitor. His favorite study is history, as it was that subject he taught before assuming the presidency of Green River college.

Spite Fence Covers Window

Raised on Stilts, It Shuts Out the Light From a Second-Story Room.

Baltimore, Md.—For a quarter of a century one of the oddest spite fences on record has shut out the light from the second-story hall window on the north side of a house on Pennsylvania avenue and now, though it is old and mossy and covered with vines which have grown with the years, there seems to be no prospect that it will not live to remind more generations of the ancient misunderstandings which caused its erection. It is a



Odd Spite Fence in Baltimore.

board construction, raised on stilts, just large enough to cover the window and it stands within a few inches of the window opening.

In the house against which the spite fence is raised there are three generations of the family of Mr. and Mrs. William Messersmith, and the heads of the family have lived there for 43 years this coming April. In the next house to the north lives the family of Mr. Alexander Megary, the head of which raised the fence years ago—some say 20 years, some say 25.

Away back yonder, when Baltimore was far to the south and east of the place where now the Gilmore street cars turn into Druid hill park that was all country. The Godmans owned and lived in the present Megary residence, and then the Whitneys, and succeeded them came the Megary family. Mrs. Messersmith and Mrs. Megary were young married people then.

Would Prevent Mistake

The druggist had written it on the labels and also cautioned the old negro by word of mouth that the contents of one bottle were for external and the other for internal use, but he hadn't got a block away before he stopped a pedestrian to ask the difference.

"Why one is for external and the other for internal use," was the reply. "But which is it?"

"This is for external. External means for outside, you know. You rub it on."

"Yes, sah." "And the other you swallow." "Yes, sah, but sposh! I dun get dem bottles mixed up when I gits home?" "Yes, you might do that if you aren't careful. Have you got a wife?"

"Shorely, sah." "Well, then, let her take the contents of one bottle and you rub your legs with the other. Understand?"

"I does, sah," said the old man with a look of admiration, "and I'm mighty thankful to yo' about it. Befo' de Lawd, but when dese yere niggers

and their children used to play together on the lots about the houses. Children will quarrel, it is said, and the Messersmith and Megary children were not exceptions. First it was that thing, then this, then another, and in time the mothers began to "take up" for their respective children until there was a mutual agreement to disagree. Then, the Megary side says, the Messersmith family began to throw dirt and hair and refuse of various sorts from the hall window into the Megary flower garden, and the wind would often take the dirt and carry it over close to the Megary residence. Protests were made, and the elder Megary finally called on the Messersmiths and told them that he intended to build an obstruction against their window to keep down what had become a nuisance. The Messersmith denial was emphatic, and then the Megary side charged the Messersmith side with spying on the Megary dressing rooms from the hall window. One night the Messersmiths retired, and when they awoke in the morning the fence that was to shut them off was in position.

"We're used to it now and don't mind it a bit," said Mrs. Messersmith, and three generations, down to a toddling babe, joined in approving that statement. "Of course, it shuts off our light, but we have been shut off from light for 23 years by that fence, and we can get along without it just as well as not."

Smokeless Railway Engine. The dream of smokeless cities is likely to be realized at no distant day. European engineers have visions of smokeless railways, and a method of solving this part of the problem is being tested between Ostend and Brussels. The engine used is of special construction. It has an aspirator, which sucks in all smoke and steam, and a special receptacle where the vapors are chemically decomposed. Neither smoke nor steam escapes into the open air.

And Then He Kicks.

The fellow who tells a girl he would die for her may some day have a chance to prove it by eating her biscuits.—Philadelphia Record.

Weather and Suicides.

Suicide travels in waves like various kinds of crime, and in large cities they come in rapid succession. Dull November has been called the suicide month, but August shows a larger number the past year, and it is believed that the great heat has a very great deal to do with suicides. In extreme cold weather there are few suicides in this or any other country.

Bacteria in Gums.

Various bacteria are found by Greig Smith, a New South Wales investigator, to take part in the formation of vegetable gums. One kind produces soluble gum arabic, another an insoluble variety. Cultivation of suitable bacteria may greatly increase gum production, and the yield of unproductive species may be augmented by furnishing a little tannin.