

The Legislature

The house finally finished its labors on H. R. 344, the revenue measure, passed it and sent it over to the senate. There, it seems likely, the party lash will be applied and the bill passed in double-quick time. The measure has turned out to be a sort of white elephant on the republican hands and the majority seem anxious to turn it over to the governor.

A good many of the republican members foresee the final result of enacting H. R. 344. It will increase the burdens of taxation on the farmer and business man and lighten the already light burdens of the corporations. This shows good faith on the part of the majority. The republican platform of last year, when intelligently interpreted, meant nothing else than a relative decrease of railroad taxes and an increase of taxation on the farmer and business man—no one short of a mullet head could make anything else out of the smooth sentences. Strange to say the farmer and business man whooped it up for just such a measure as H. R. 344—but just the same, he will howl long and vigorously when he pays his taxes in 1904. And it is the inevitable reaction which is sure to come as the result of the measure, that frightens some of the Nebraska republican solons today.

Of course it will have little effect upon the election next year, because the taxes of 1904 will be collected principally AFTER the election. But the future success of the republican party in Nebraska depends in great measure upon this H. R. 344, and those republicans who know what its effect will be are not particularly pleased with the prospect.

However, they can't well turn back now. They have crowded over what they would do—and at this writing it seems likely they will do it. The Independent some time ago believed that no revenue bill would finally become a law, but it now seems that that was a mistaken diagnosis.

Curiously enough the feature of the present revenue law which has caused the two millions of floating debt is to be repeated in the new law. That is to say, the folly of fixing a maximum rate of levy which the state board may impose upon any county. It stands at 7 mills now, but the senate talks of cutting it down to five. This is simply the rankest kind of nonsense. Such a limitation will cancel the other feature of requiring the board to levy sufficient to meet the appropriations made—exactly where the trouble lies with the present law.

It seems strange that an intelligent legislature doesn't know, and can't find out, that there is absolutely no constitutional limitation upon the amount it may appropriate, and that if it does not empower the state board to levy at least one dollar in taxes for every dollar it appropriates, there is bound to be a floating debt. It is enough of a limitation to say to the state board, You must levy one dollar in taxes for every dollar of appropriations. Any mill limit, short of ten or fifteen, will finally be found to stand in the way of (a) either a proper equalization between counties, or (b) a sufficient aggregate levy to do the state's business without piling up a floating debt.

Such methods as now in vogue in this regard, and are seemingly to be continued, are quite at par with the ingenuity of the man who locks his trunk and gives his wife the key in order to keep himself from robbing himself.

A hundred thousand dollar appropriation has been made to erect a building for the agriculture and mechanical arts school. This is good news—if Governor Mickey doesn't use his veto snickersnee.

The "deficiency claims bill" now carries \$120,000 of republican deficiencies, despite the lies told by Governor Mickey and his coadjutors last fall that the books would be "closed without a deficiency." Which reminds the associate editor of a young lady at Fairbury who once protested vehemently that "I can lie if I choose to, because I'm a church member—and church members have a right to lie."

Stroud Scolds Parker

Editor Independent: Though never a member of the pop party or voted a pop ticket, after reading your editorials, and contributions of many of your able correspondents for the past six months, have got in the habit of looking for The Independent every week as a source of education in good citizenship. But if its columns are open to such false and venomous utterances as appears in the March 12 issue by some fool or knave that signs himself H. J. Parker of Clayton, Ill., on "Life Insurance" you will please strike my name from your list and dis-

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continue my paper. It do not know of any of the regular legal reserve old line life companies that issue any such policy as he mentioned. What the "fake imitation" associations (of which there are many) are doing, I do not know as their tactics and methods are very similar to those of train and bank robbers—always working their schemes in the dark. But one thing I do know is that the most successful business men all over the country are the largest investors in Aetna Life and Endowment Insurance policies, all of whom have nothing but praise and commendation for its fair and just business methods. Of the many I have sold to know of none that are dissatisfied or have been betrayed or disappointed, and our oldest and largest policy holders are our best patrons as they are constantly increasing their Aetna insurance as fast as their means permit.

Among business men of intelligence such false and villainous slanders as this "Parker rot" does no harm, but may mislead some of the young and inexperienced that otherwise would be investing his surplus savings where it would positively protect his family and his old age from want. Dr. Franklin said, "A policy of life insurance is the cheapest and safest provision for one's family." "He that fails to provide for his own is worse than an infidel!"
H. STROUD.
143 Main st., Oshkosh, Wis.

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