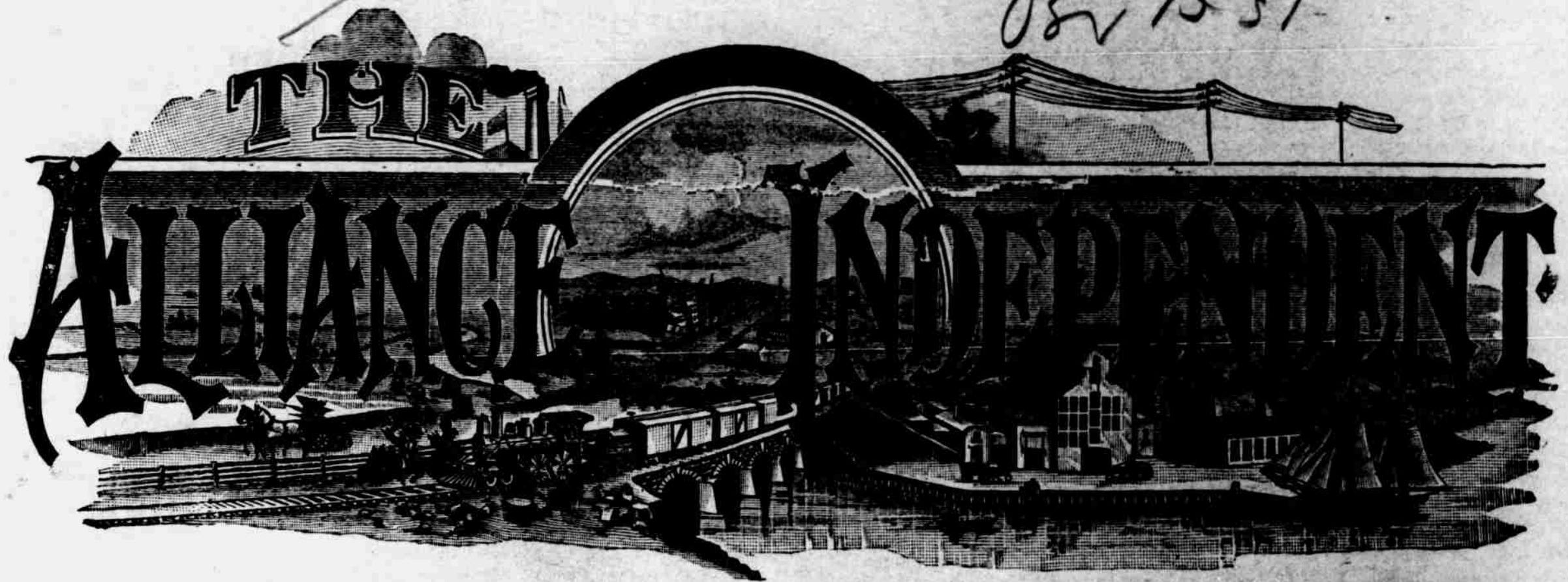


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MATTERS OF RECORD.

Record of the Independents in the Legislature of 1891—A List of the Measures Passed, and Their Good Results.

The Demo-Republican Combine—Representatives of Both Old Parties Were Traitors to Their Own Platforms.

The year 1890 marks the beginning of a new era in the history of Nebraska politics. There was a general breaking up of old political lines. New issues came to the front, and a new political party appeared on the scene.

Naturally the events of such a period are of more than ordinary interest. And especially are they of unusual interest at the present time when the same three parties are in the field each asking that the affairs of the state be placed in its hands. Let the three be judged by the records they made two years ago, and the fittest be honored, and trusted this year.

THE INDEPENDENT RECORD.

Before entering upon a discussion of the good results accomplished by the independents in the in the last legislature, let us take a look at the situation as it was at the beginning of the session. The men elected to represent the independents come fresh from the farms of Nebraska. They lacked experience and knowledge of law. They were poor men, yet they had pitted against them the concentrated capital of the country. They had to face a combination of corrupt political forces, such as seldom if ever disgraced the annals of a free state. All the other departments of the state government were in the hands of their political enemies who hesitated at no prostitution of the power these offices gave. They had only a very small numerical majority to begin with. They had some arrant traitors in their midst. The presidency of one house was in the hands of a member of the combine. The speakership of the other was filled by a man who lacked every qualification for the place. They had on their hands a great and unwieldy election contest. They were besieged by skillful lobbyists and corrupt boodlers.

complete break down of the movement.

Instead of this, the results were great and important to the people of Nebraska. In spite of all circumstances the independents succeeded in enacting almost every plank in their platform into law.

The following is a brief record of the most important measures introduced and passed by the independents:

First, The Australian ballot law, which had been defeated in the republican legislature two years before. This is a measure of first importance. It frees the laboring man from the tyranny of his employer, interferes seriously with the vote-buyer's trade, and tends to restore the purity of elections.

Second, The law authorizing the incorporation of mutual insurance companies. Under this law, a large number of county mutual companies have been formed, and are doing a large and very satisfactory business; also a state company.

These companies will this year save many thousand dollars to the farmers of Nebraska, and as the years go by the saving will be immensely increased. The farmers of the state had wanted such a law for a long time, but never could secure it, because the rich old line companies had a firm grip on the republican party.

Third, The free text book law. This is the wisest and most important educational measure passed in this state for years. Its benefits are felt in every section of the state, and it gives such satisfaction that no one would think of having it repealed.

Fourth, The repeal of the sugar bounty. In passing this measure the independents blotted out the worst and most pernicious piece of class legislation that ever disgraced our statute books. Even the republican party which foisted the bounty law on the people four years ago, dare not now demand its restoration.

Fifth, The bill providing for the deposit of public funds in banks, the interest to be turned into the treasury. This was a wise and sensible measure. It works a great saving to the people, and removes a great source of political contention. In most counties of the state this law has been properly complied with. It is impossible at this time to state how much money has been saved to the tax-payers under this law. If we suppose that the average amount of funds on deposit during the

tainly a low estimate, the interest at 4 per cent will amount to \$90,000, and that sum will be saved to the state. Next year the state treasury will come under the operation of this law, and there will be another large sum saved to the tax-payers, that now goes to enrich corrupt state officials, and to swell republican campaign funds.

Sixth, The law requiring county clerks to turn fees collected for making out tax-lists into the treasury instead of into their own pockets. By this law many thousands more have been saved to the tax-payers.

Seventh, A law requiring the registration of warrants, and another requiring the state treasurer to invest the permanent school fund in state warrants.

This law the present state treasurer has refused to obey. He has thus kept from a quarter to a half million dollars of the permanent school fund uninvested for two years. If the amount averages a quarter of a million for the two years (and it is undoubtedly larger) he has robbed the schools of the state of \$35,000. And this he has done in violation of law, and in order to pocket the interest on the funds.

Seventh, The law requiring the register of deeds (or county clerk where there is no register) to keep a record of mortgages filed and released.

Under this law the actual condition of the people has been officially ascertained, and the prosperity shriekers have been put to confusion. It has been shown that during the year ending June 1st, '92, the total mortgage debt of the nation has increased over eighteen million dollars; that the mortgage debts have increased in every county but five, and that chattel mortgages have increased faster than farm mortgages in 72 out of 90 counties.

A number of other good laws were enacted, but it is not necessary to enumerate them here.

□Laws should be judged by their effects. Is there a measure in the above list that has not proven its merit? Is there one which does not commend itself to the people. Does either of the old parties dare demand the repeal of a single one of these laws?

They do not, and this fact is unanswerable proof of their merit.

But the crowning work of the independents in that legislature was the passage of the Newberry bill, which met death at the hands of a democratic

people ever won over the railroads in the Nebraska legislature. If John H. Powers had secured the place of governor, to which he was fairly elected, that law would have gone into effect, and during these two years would have saved millions of dollars to the producers and consumers of Nebraska.

The independents in that legislature enacted their platform into laws.

They passed laws that were practical, economical and conservative.

They legislated in the interest of the taxpayers.

They were progressive, but not rash or visionary.

They neither advocated nor passed a single bad measure.

In spite of inexperience, in spite of treachery, in spite of appalling obstacles, they made a shining record.

THE REPUBLICAN RECORD.

And what were the republicans doing all this time? Although their campaign platform was almost identical with that of the independents, they opposed the very reforms it called for. They had promised a more stringent usury law, but they voted almost unitedly against such a law, and defeated it. They had promised to reduce freight rates to a level with those in Iowa, yet never did they fight a measure so desperately as the Newberry bill.

They united with the democrats to give the governorship to a man who was not really elected, an enemy to the public good, and a traitor to the principles of his party. They obstructed legislation, and fought for lavish appropriations.

What portion or particle of the record made by that once grand old party can an honest republican contemplate with pride or satisfaction?

THE DEMOCRATIC RECORD

Is so nearly identical with that of the republicans, that it is hardly necessary to discuss it under a separate head. They entered into the combine with the republicans and stood by it. They thus prevented a hearing of the contest. In matters of legislation they stood with the corporations and banks and against the people. There were of course a few notable individual exceptions, but they did not constitute the democratic party.

This is a record that ought to be discussed in every political meeting of the campaign. It is campaign thunder of the very best kind for the independents.

Next week we will publish an article