

THE NEBRASKA INDEPENDENT

ESTABLISHED 1889

Published Every Thursday

Lincoln, Nebraska

Entered at the postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, as second-class mail matter, under the act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS

\$1.00 Per Year
.50 6 Months
.25 3 Months

Subscriptions Must be Paid in Advance.

Subscriptions—Can be sent direct to The Independent. They can also be sent through newspapers which have advertised a clubbing rate, or through local agents, where sub-agents have been appointed. All remittances should be sent by postoffice money order, express order, or by bank draft on New York or Chicago.

Change of Address—Subscribers requesting a change of address must give the OLD as well as the NEW address.

Advertising Rates furnished upon application.

Sample Copies sent free to any address upon application. Send for Sample Copies and rates.

Address all communications, and make all drafts, money orders, etc., payable to

THE INDEPENDENT,
Lincoln, Neb.

Secretary Hitchcock and the senate committee on Indian affairs disagree as to his right to turn certain Indian territory land into a forest reserve. The senators call it executive usurpation, the secretary calls it legal. Since the action of the hero of a thousand battles of land grafters seems to have saved a large tract of land from the grabbers the public is inclined to call it honest common sense.

By degrees it is becoming known who Henry A. Richardson is. He is the head of the largest canning establishment in the country, the nearest approach we have to a canning trust. He is also president of a gas company, of a telephone company, and of an insurance company. He should feel very much at home as a Delaware representative in the national millionaire's club.

J. Ogden Armour, it is announced, will build a "model city" in connection with his new packing plants near Minneapolis. Model stables for horses and model dairies for cows have succeeded admirably, but model cities for human beings so far as attempted in such cases as Pullman, Whiting, Gary, or even Zion City, have not done so well. The difference is based, no doubt, upon that perhaps unreasonable quality in men that makes them insist to some extent on thinking with their own brains, even if they do not think as well as somebody else like Mr. Armour might think for them.

Three members of the lower house of congress ascend to the senate by virtue of this month's elections. These are Charles Curtis of Kansas, William Alden Smith of Michigan, and Joseph Dixon of Montana. Senators Brandegee of Connecticut, Burkett of Nebraska, and Hemenway of Indiana are comparatively recent promotions from the house, so that the new senate is to contain more than the usual number of men who have served in the lower branch. In late years governors and men in private life with large commercial-political interests have been favored in the making of senators and fewer men have gone from the house to the senate than was the case in an earlier day. A reduction of friction between the two houses should result from the change. Whether this is for the good of the country or not is a matter of opinion.

In New York the publicity bureau of the citizens' union was called into being by the refusal of the legislature to print daily reports of its proceedings. Two reasons are given why official statements of the proceedings are suppressed. "First, it enabled certain special publicity bureaus maintained by politicians, who derive big profits therefrom, to publish weekly reports of the progress of legislation, which

they sell to law firms and interested persons at a high price. Secondly, by the suppression of the record until after election the public is deprived of any official record of the votes of its legislators which might be used as campaign documents to defeat authors of bad legislation." Doubtless neither of these reasons figures with any number of members in the question of a daily legislative record, modeled somewhat after the congressional record, for the Nebraska legislature. It is a question of relation between value and cost.

The theory of wholesale rates as applied to freight shipments on the railroads having long ago been exploded, a disposition has arisen to carry the war into the question of passenger rates. In the hearings on the two cent passenger fare bill in Washington the other day a representative of the Pennsylvania road in answer to a question as to why his road was not willing to make the same low rate to occasional travellers as to those who traveled more, said: "I contend that a man who travels only once a year is not entitled to as low a rate as one who travels once a week or oftener." "Why?" asked Chairman Hepburn, of the committee. "Because of the principle recognized in wholesale and retail trade." "Would you apply the same principle to freight traffic?" asked Congressman Richardson of Alabama. The reply was a dense silence. There have been some recent disagreeable court experiences for railroads that apply their wholesale notions to freight charges.

Another Panama canal canard has been disposed of by the report of the canal commission on the borings at the Gatun dam site, showing that a firm and suitable soft rock bottom has been disclosed. For several weeks the advocates of the sea level canal have been whispering around Washington some immensely important confidential information to the effect that the Gatun dam must be abandoned because of an insufficient foundation. The information was extremely important if true, but fortunately it turns out to be baseless. Engineer Stevens disposes of a number of stories when he says "The investigations which the committees caused have thus far led to no disclosure of extraordinary difficulties requiring changes of previous plans. The continuation of surveys has for its object the complete adaptability of the design of locks and other features of the plan to the existing surface and sub-surface conditions. There is nothing in the examinations affecting the practicability or permanency of the Gatun dam."

Instead of halting, the government is now proceeding with its plans for letting contracts and going on with construction. The last hurdle seems to have been passed when the report of the borings was received from the Gatun dam site, and contractors offered to do the work on terms that seem satisfactory to the commissioners.

Oklahoma proposes to follow South Dakota, Utah and Oregon in bestowing the power of direct legislation upon the voters. At least this is the prospect from the action taken by the constitutional convention, now in session. This will involve both the initiative and the referendum. In Oregon no law passed by the legislature goes into effect within ninety days of its passage. If within this ninety days five per cent of the citizens of the state by petition ask for a popular vote on any of these laws this action suspends the operation of the law until after the next general election, at which the voters pass judgment on the measure. So much for the referendum. On the other hand the voters may cause the submission of an original act by securing the petitions of a given percentage of the total of voters. This initiative was taken in the case of the direct primary law, which was approved and the woman suffrage amendment which was defeated, while several acts of the legislature have been referred to public test since the new system came into use. South Da-

kota and Utah voters have made little use of their privilege. The Oklahoma people may have concluded that such a power is a good thing to have in reserve even though they may not be called upon often to exercise it.

THE POOR AND THE SALOON.

Chancellor Day in the role of reformer involves a change of cast such as to demand our attention. His public utterances have of late been almost exclusively a denunciation of such reformers, like the president of the United States, as cross the path of Standard Oil, the crib of Syracuse university. A muddle headed millionaire at a New York meeting mentions the need of philanthropic work among the poor. Dr. Day sees ruin in this course. "What is all this cry that is being made about the poor wage earner?" he asks. "The wage earners get enough for what they do, and a great many of them get more. I know the poor. I know they are the chief support of upwards of 10,000 saloons in this city."

Few have not felt obliged at times to resist the impulse to give a beggar a quarter because of the conviction that he would spend it for drink instead of for the food he says he needs. It remains for Chancellor Day to apply the theory to wages. The saloon is an

evil. It is supported chiefly by the poor. By cutting down wages therefore we starve the saloon. Perchance the wheat may be pulled up with the tares. No matter, wheat of that kind is cheap; we get a million units a year from Europe for nothing.

Of course this will not appeal to everybody. There are those who say the poor drink because they are miserable, not because they are mean. The opinion of Dr. Robert Bird, the English authority on the subject, is that bad air, underfeeding and exhaustion tend to create a craving for alcohol by weakening the system and making a stimulant welcome. He would favor abolishing the saloon by abolishing the poverty that swelters in sweatshops and tenements, rather than take up Dr. Day's plan of abolishing the saloon by making the poor too poor to support it. Others think that the chance given the poor to waste their substance in strong drink is not so much given at the demand of the poor as at the instance of people not poor who make large profits by developing the demand. But Chancellor Day knows better. Moreover, if the poor had more money than they could spend even in saloons, and used it largely in the promotion of intelligence and independence, there might be no Standard Oil. Then what would become of Chancellor Day?

MAKING OF GOOD GOVERNMENT

All Citizens Should Cast an Intelligent Vote.

In our effort to get the best possible government we frequently overlook the most vital elements that have to do with the making of good government. This government rests upon the honest intelligent vote of its citizens. Therefore if the citizens do not all vote the government suffers. The way it is now a very small per cent of our people have anything to do with the nominations for office. This is generally attended to by a very few of the politicians. After the nominations of course the people all have a right to vote but for some unaccountable reason they do not all vote. Sometimes not more than half of the electorate go to the polls. Because this is so corporations and other selfish interests are able to control elections very easily.

Then again why should a candidate for office be called upon to set in motion the machinery which will bring people to the polls? Think of the expense candidates are put to in coaxing people to the polls. One would get the impression that the whole thing is done for the candidates. All this is wrong. People should go to the polls and vote without any interference from any candidate, but they should all go to the polls, and if they do not in my judgment some method should be adopted to compel them to go. I do not believe that the government can be permanently run as a republic if the people will not vote.

Two years ago I drew a bill which provides in substance as follows:

Section one provides that every male inhabitant over the age of twenty-one years and under the age of fifty years, except paupers, idiots, lunatics and others specially exempted by law, should be assessed by the assessors to pay a labor tax of eight dollars.

Section two provides that three dollars of the eight dollars may be commuted in labor the same as labor tax is now commuted. This same section provides that five dollars of the eight dollars may be commuted if it shall appear that the voter has voted at all primaries and elections for the preceding year. This same section also provides that if any are unavoidably out of the county on any day when primaries or elections shall be held, or if on account of age or sickness they cannot go to the polls and vote, then if they will file a proper affidavit with the county clerk, or with the city clerk where taxes are paid to the city treasurer, setting up the fact why they could not vote, then such persons

shall have their labor tax commuted the same as though they had voted.

Section three provides that any person who shall make a false affidavit as the reason for his failure to vote at any primary or election shall be deemed guilty of perjury and on conviction thereof shall be punished the same as in other cases of perjury.

Section four provides that the county clerk and municipal clerk in each municipality, between the first day of January and the first day of March of each year, shall certify to the county treasurer the names of all persons who have voted at all the primaries and elections held in the county or municipality for the previous year, or who have filed the affidavit above referred to. This section also provides in cases where the labor tax is payable to the city treasurer that the county clerk and city clerk each respectively shall certify this information to the city treasurer.

Section five of the bill provides that it shall be the duty of each county treasurer, and of each city treasurer where the labor tax is payable to the city treasurer, to commute upon the books of his office five dollars of the eight dollars labor tax of all persons who have voted at all the primaries and elections for the previous year as shown by the certificates of the county clerk, or city clerk where said labor tax is paid to the city treasurer.

Wouldn't a law of this kind bring most people to the polls? Wouldn't it be proper to bring them in this way? I have thought about it a great deal during the last two years and the more I think about it the more I am convinced that a law of this kind should be passed.

GEORGE W. BERGE.

Colfax county's poor farm seems to be a paying philanthropy. According to the Schuyler Quill the report of Superintendent Trullinger for the three months ending December 31 showed that the farm had made a neat profit for the county. The receipts for the three months were \$745.94, and the expenses \$342.18. The expense account does not show the \$60 per month for superintendent's salary and telephone. The same account includes a number of items that are of a permanent nature, such as two hard coal stoves, furniture, brick for a foundation, lumber and eighty rods of hog fencing. Since the report was made Trullinger has sold twenty-two head of hogs that netted \$260 and which will be reported at the end of the present quarter. The farm still has twenty-one brood sows and fifty-four feed hogs.

What has become of the old fashioned man who called it "stone coal?"