

OUR LINCOLN LETTER

Gossip from the State Capital, Legislative and Otherwise

The house has made the 2-cent rate bill and the anti-pass bill a special order for Tuesday afternoon, and the action of the republicans on this measure will be fully determined by a ruling before the time. That the republicans have got themselves into an embarrassing position over this 2-cent rate bill no one denies. Each member of the joint committee which drafted the bill agreed to support it and to fight any and all amendments to it. When the amendment to permit the railroads to go before the railroad commission on the matter was offered, few of the majority knew it was coming and hence it was lost. Now some of the republicans believe to carry the amendment will be to place in jeopardy all the other joint committee bills, for the reason if one committee bill is amended opponents of the platform measures will have an excuse to attempt to amend the other committee bills. A big fight will be the result, and it might terminate in the state-wide primary bill being seriously damaged and it might hurt the terminal taxation bill.

Professor Howard of the state university, head of the department of institutional history and sociology, was one of the speakers before the senate committee on judiciary, in favor of the passage of H. R. No. 9 or S. F. No. 50, the child labor bills. Senator King of Polk presided as chairman of the committee. Many men and women, some of the latter club women of Lincoln, were present to favor the bill. A large number of members of the senate and some of the house listened to the addresses. The speech of Professor Howard made a profound impression. He reviewed the history of legislation in favor of children, beginning in 1802, in England, to the last bill of the kind, one that was passed in 1903. He told of the conditions that once existed, told hair-raising stories of abuse and torture, and narrated the changes that had been brought about by public sentiment and laws, some of the latter having been in force in Massachusetts, New York and Illinois for many years with marked success.

Governor Sheldon's scheme for the local taxation of mortgages, either domestic or foreign, scored a signal victory in the house, when it was reported by the committee of the whole for third reading by a decided majority. The bill provides for the taxation of all real estate mortgages in the county where the land on which the mortgage is held lies. At the present time mortgages are taxed as personal property so long as they are recorded in Nebraska and not assigned to someone outside the state.

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 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.

A movement to revive the county option bill, killed in the senate, has come to light and is being aided and abetted by some senators who voted against the measure. The plan is to have the house amend the measure providing for election once every four or five years instead of every two years and providing that the county election shall govern the entire county until the next election. As the bill was drawn it allowed cities and villages to vote no license even after the county had gone wet.

A bill of importance to the school districts of that section of the state in which the revenues do not permit of a seven months' school a year was introduced in the house by Doran, Henry, Hill, Metzger and Wilson. The bill provides that the state shall come to the financial assistance of those school districts which, though levying the maximum rate of taxes, cannot maintain a seven months' school, so that every school district in the state may have school each year for that length of time.

A measure important to all the people of the state was introduced in the house by Wilson of Custer county. This bill provides the state board of assessment shall use the unit system in assessing railroad property and the assessment shall be distributed according to mileage without regard to main lines or branch lines. Should the bill be signed by the governor after the terminal taxation bill is signed, it is thought by some the measure would nullify that measure.

The railroads had their innings before the house committee on railroads on the 12th on the proposed 2-cent passenger rate bill, and of the four corporations represented, each argued that the rate would not be compensatory and each said not only would such a rate be detrimental to the revenues of the roads, but harmful to the state in general, while P. S. Eustis, passenger traffic manager of the Burlington, told the committee the first step his road would take should the bill become a law would be a test in the courts.

The state wide primary law pledged to the people by the republican, democratic and populist state conventions, will be introduced into the legislature the first of this week. The bill has been blocked out by the subcommittee and sent to the joint committee. The bill as prepared in the rough provides that the general election officers shall be the officers of the primary, the same machinery being used at both elections. It has been decided that instead of electing the precinct and county committees that task will fall to the lot of the nominees, it having been agreed that under the latter plan people will be selected for those important places who will have some interest in the election and who will not leave all of the work to the chairman and secretary.

Senator Gibson's employers' liability bill and Senator Thomas' bill allowing street railway companies to own securities in and own, operate and lease interurban companies and interurban lines passed the senate without debate. The Gibson bill did not receive a negative vote. It relates only to the more hazardous occupations on railroads and provides negligence by a fellow servant shall not be a bar to recovery by an injured employe or by relatives of an employe killed by accident. Contributory negligence on the part of the injured is left to the jury, which is allowed to scale the damages in the verdict according to the proportion of negligence. It also provides the acceptance of insurance money or relief department policy hereafter taken out shall not be a bar to recovery from the company.

The child labor bill was reported back favorably to the senate, but a fight is scheduled in favor of the farmers. The bill was amended in the committee changing the hours during which children will be permitted to work, from 7 o'clock in the morning until 7 at night, to 6 o'clock in the morning until 8 at night. This was done to permit the milking of cows and to do the chores on the farms.

Mr. Fries of Howard, a member of the minority party, succeeded in getting recommended for passage his bill providing a tax of \$3 to be levied against persons entitled to vote who do not avail themselves of the opportunity. The bill was amended to exempt from the law those who are kept away from the polls by unavoidable circumstances, though a statement to this effect must be filed with the county treasurer or the tax will be levied.

The senate on the 12th spent three-quarters of an hour listening to a special program in commemoration of Lincoln's birthday and then adjourned out of respect for the day. Rev. I. F. Roach of Lincoln delivered the address before the senate and eloquently eulogized the life and influence of the martyred president. The Oberlin quartet sang the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and responded to an encore with "America." The services were impressive, though brief.

The joint committee appointed to draft a statewide primary law has concluded its work and the bill will be introduced the first of the week. Patrick, the fusion member of the committee, objected to the filing fee and may make a fight to have it stricken out by the legislature. The committee generally is pleased with the measure. It is a compilation of the Brown-Dodge-McMullen bills.

Senator King's free high school bill was recommended for passage by the senate. It allows any child living in a district which does not provide a full high school course to take the missing grades at some high school in the state. The tuition, which is fixed at 75 cents a week, is raised by taxation in his district.

The senate displayed a disposition to push the railway commission bill through as rapidly as possible when it voted to take the bill from the standing committee on railroads, to which it had been referred, and place it directly on general file. This will advance it more rapidly than the regular course.

S. F. 227, by Goodrich of Fillmore, providing that persons convicted of murder in the first degree shall be placed in the penitentiary and not put to death except by order of the governor, and in any event not less than one year after date of conviction, was indefinitely postponed by the senate.

The three uniform divorce bills recommended last fall by a meeting of divorce experts were introduced into the senate. The main bill changes the general divorce law, making it more stringent.

Sentiment for the most stringent anti-pass law possible has developed to such an extent in the house that the exceedingly stringent bill drawn by the joint committee is likely to prove inadequate to meet present ideas. In its place a substitute bill will be offered that has been prepared by Representatives McMullen, Jennison, Hamer, Cone and Quackenbush. It cuts off everyone from the free list save railroad employes, caretakers of live stock and railroad attorneys and physicians, who are on an annual salary of at least \$1,000 each.



GEORGE WASHINGTON. First in War, First in Peace and First in the Hearts of His Countrymen.

THE SPIRIT OF '76



BY W. J. MCKITTRICK



In our near approach to the anniversary of Washington's birthday it behooves us all to be very grateful to God and the revolutionary fathers for the nation which they gave to us.

Away with the man who does not love his country. It has its faults.

It is no better than the best man who lives in it, and the best man who lives in it is separated by a long distance from the angels of heaven. The writings and orations that would put us beyond criticism explode against some very hard facts and let out upon the air a great deal of silliness. Our politics are not so absolutely pure that a seraph's wing could graze them without contamination. Our ideals of greatness and glory are closer to the ground than they ought to be.

Our reverence for the sacredness of law that should be as firmly fixed, in our national conscience as Pike's Peak is firmly fixed in the soil of Colorado, is not beyond the cavil and complaint of those who study the foundations of our institutions.

But of one thing we are persuaded, and that is that the virtues of our country over-balance its faults.

There are more angels than devils among us.

The devils are making the most noise, but the angels are doing the most work. The man who believes that righteousness is losing its grip upon this nation is a woefully mistaken man. I heard a speaker the other day who proclaimed that we are falling from bad to worse and from worse to worst.

We do not believe him. We believe that we are rising from good to better, and from better to best.

One of the chief roots of our patriotism is gratitude, the realization of an immense debt to those who battled about the cradle of our national existence and won our freedom and independence at the points of their swords.

Here we are because the men of '76 put us here.

Here we stay because the spirit of '76 has kept us here.

Stormy Atlantic, mild Pacific, sleeping lakes, waving forests, tree-crowded mountains, gold mine and silver mine, storms out of whose tempest-driven hearts have fluttered the white-feathered birds of peace, fiery baptisms through whose flames have crept forth the evangelists, gave everlasting covenant. When we think of these things, when we stand upon the mount of vision, and the splendor of our country breaks upon our eyes, when the song of the reapers comes up to us, when we hear the hum of industry thrilling along the ground, when we see the gleaming rivers curving and winding like silver threads through vast gardens, what account of ourselves shall we give to ourselves if we take not the cup of praise and thanksgiving in our hands and pour it out to the heroes whose patience, faith and courage ushered in the dawn of our splendid prosperity?

They were fighting for the future, for the country that was coming. So are we fighting for the future—for the country that is coming. As we look into the faces of our little children we cannot feel that for us the battle is ended. We have won a country for ourselves. But we must win a country for them.

And love of country and love of children run together with the ambi-

tion to win a better country for them. Home and patriotism are linked together. The children will help to make the nation. But the nation will help to make those children.

That little dimpled cheek will not allow you to take off your uniform for a single day.

You must build his home. You must fight for his inheritance. You must put your life into the moving and marching forces of righteousness that are trying to win victories for him.

The next generation will live in the country which this generation is making for it. And each one of us is helping to make it. All of us are nation-builders. Every time we cast a ballot for an unclean office-seeker we are committing an outrage upon the future.

Patriotism can never be selfish. It can never be bound up and roped round in its own pleasures and comforts.

It can never stand still, looking backward.

It can never content itself with making a noise. In Washington's farewell address we see the prayers of a great soul embracing a nation's posterity. The pen that wrote the emancipation proclamation was tracing on the paper a heart's desire for a long procession of centuries.

And out of this love of country and this guardianship of our children will come the patriotism of service.

The Roman soldier cried out "It is beautiful to die for one's country." Our country does not want anybody to die for it now, but it does want all the multitudes of its people to live for it to do their big best or their little best to serve its highest and noblest in tents, and pass it along to the future cleansed, purified, sweet to the heart and sound to the core.

WASHINGTON.

Soldier and statesman, rarest union; High-poised example of great duties done

Simply as breathing, a world's honors worn

As life's indifferent gifts to all men born;

Dumb for himself, unless it were to God,

But for his barefoot soldiers eloquent, Tramping the snow to coral where they trod,

Held by his awe in hollow-eyed content;

Modest, yet firm as Nature's self; unblamed

Save by the men his nobler temper shamed;

Not honored then or now because he wooed

The popular voice, but that he still withstood;

Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is but one

Who was all this, and ours, and all men's,—Washington.

—James Russell Lowell.

Washington's Wealth.

Whether Washington can be put into the envied category of millionaires no one can assert positively. According to the late Paul Leicester Ford whose work, "The True George Washington," has received wide recognition, "the father of his country" was worth \$530,000. This fortune did not include his wife's property, but nevertheless it made him one of the wealthiest Americans of his time. Her part of the Custis property equaled "15,500 acres of land, a good part of it adjoining the city of Williamsburg.

DONE BY SIGNALS

HOW RAILROAD SWITCHMEN TALK TOGETHER.

Language Consists of Motions of the Hands and Arms—Easily Understood and Mistakes Are of Rare Occurrence.

They speak a various language, these switchmen do. And much of it is spoken with the hands and arms, says the Kansas City Star. Down in the Union depot yards they have signs which look odd, yet which tell things as plainly as words, and more quickly.

A Frisco transfer approached a signal tower a few days ago from the east. The pilot riding the front of the engine held up two hands, his fingers spread apart; then he stuck both thumbs to his ears; he gripped his left thumb with his right hand and jerked it away, then pointed to the lower



Talks to Towerman With His Hands. button of his vest. The four motions were these:

This is what they meant:

1. I have a string of cars for the Burlington yards.

2. I want in on track 19.

3. I want to cut off cars on 19.

4. I have also cars for 17.

M. A. Sheeley, the signal board operator, went to the telephone, called up another tower, got a favorable reply and swung the arm of a signal. The switch engine "wheezed" its way forward.

After the cars had been switched the pilot again faced the signal operator. He crossed and recrossed his forearms.

In a moment the semaphore swung for him and his train backed out on a main track. His crossed arms meant he wanted to cross state line with cars for the Union Pacific yards. The swinging semaphore gave him the track. When the string of cars stood safely in the Union Pacific yards the pilot held up two thumbs to another tower operator. This signal meant, "I'm on the spot."

A switch train stood on a siding in the West bottoms freight yard for half an hour a few days ago. The conductor stepped from the caboose, glanced along the line of box cars to where the brakeman stood "sunning" himself. He raised his left elbow and struck it several times with his right hand. The brakeman nodded and the two walked away.

A sidetrack in one freight yard leads to a brewery. When a string of cars is to be stored in on this track the conductor extends his left elbow and strikes it with his right hand. When these same train crews are thirsty they don't ask "Have a drink?" They give the elbow signal, which means "to the brewery."

A switchman made several futile attempts to couple a flat car onto the end of a freight train in the Santa Fe yards last evening. Time and again the train rammed back against the car, but the couplers would not clasp. The switchman stepped out where the



Tells the Brakeman: "We'll Have a Drink."

engineer could see and slapped his stomach with his hand. The engineer understood. They left the car.

The signal meant "to the rip track."

"Rip track" is the repair track.

"The signs in all yards are not the same," Mr. Sheeley said. "Necessity caused them to be invented. A pilot may ride up to my tower and without uttering a word tell how many cars he has; where he got them and what he wants to do with them. Perhaps they go to two or three different lines. It would take some time in talking to tell me what he wants to do. The signs may look odd but they do the work."

WILL BE RAILROAD WONDER.

Air Line Planned to Run Underground a Good Many Miles.

The latest and biggest project of David H. Moffat, the Colorado railroad man, is an air line from Denver to Salt Lake City over the continental divide, midway between the Union Pacific on the north and the Rio Grande on the south, says the Railroad Man's Magazine.

David Moffat has dug down into his own pocket and built several railroads which nobody else had the courage to tackle. He made money every time. But the present proposition is the stiffest one he has encouraged yet.

As soon as the scheme was broached it met with opposition from the roads that would be effected by it. When it was suggested that Moffat was at last up against a job too big for him and that he could not get a route one who knew him well remarked confidently:

"A right of way block David Moffat? I guess not. If there's no other chance he'll cuss a right of way through."

He didn't have to go to such an extreme, but he did have to furnish the money for the building. New York capitalists whom he visited refused to advance any money for the building, so he said.

"Never mind. I'll build it myself. We have a little money out in Colorado, I and my friends. We can all chip in and I guess among us we can make up a fair sized pot. The road is one of the plums of Colorado, but it'll take a little shaking to bring it down."

It took more than a fair sized pot, as the preliminary work for the surveys cost a quarter of a million dollars. The Burlington had tried to get over the mountains and had become frightened when a million dollars had been put into the work and brought no visible results and Moffat bought the rights the Burlington had acquired.

The first fifty miles of road out of Denver cost \$60,000 a mile, and the 35 miles up the foothills to the Main Range tunnel cost \$100,000 a mile, all this for grading before a single tie was laid.

In 11 miles there are 29 tunnels through solid granite, and the road has every conceivable sort of curve, from a horseshoe to a tennis racket. Bridges and fills cost a million dollars. Steam shovel cut, through rock, is 2,200 feet long and averages 40 feet deep.

The Main Range tunnel, nearly three miles in length, is under James Peak, at an elevation of 9,600 feet, and cost three-quarters of a million dollars. William Cook, whose firm had the contract for building one of the worst sections of the road, took down 12,000 cubic yards of granite with one blast, using 1,000 kegs of black powder and 15 boxes of dynamite to do it.

The worst part of the road, the way through the mountains, has been conquered, and what remains to be done is comparatively easy. Throughout the road is of standard gauge, 3,600 heavy Texas pine ties to the mile, instead of the usual 2,800, and 80-pound rails, and all equipment fitted for heavy through traffic. It was a magnificent conception in railroad building, and it took a magnificent courage to risk millions of dollars in a venture that had swallowed millions and given no return.

WENT AT PRETTY FAST CLIP.

It Jarred Loose the Range in the Dining Car.

"Yes, that was a pretty fast run we made on the Hummer," said Conductor Cad Smith at the Union depot recently, "but the run we made on the California special last Thursday night was a winner. We left Bloomington 40 minutes late, and when I got to the register book at LaSalle street we had made it up and had three minutes to our credit. That's going some! As I passed the diner on my way to the head end the cook beckoned to me and said:

"Look a-heah, boss. This yeah range is jached 'bout eight inches outer place 'count dat dah engineer man goin' round dem curves in too big a rush."

"The range was out of place, all right," continued Smith, "and when I reached the engine I said to the driver:

"The darkey back there is going to hold an executive session with you because you jarred his cook stove loose."

"How much?" asked the engineer.

"He says you knocked it eight inches out of place," said I.

"You tell that African for me," said the engineer, "that if he will wait till we go back to-night I'll promise to give him a ride that will put the stove back in place and scramble his supply of eggs in the bargain."—Kansas City Star.

Primitive English Railroad.

In the lake district of England there is a tiny railway which has only one train, run by two officials, one of whom is managing director, ticket collector, guard and porter, and the other chief engineer, engine driver and stoker. The train stops anywhere. It frequently goes off the line, but crows are carried, with which the train is persuaded to return to its proper position. When a friend of either official is observed the train is brought to a standstill. At one time, when the managing director was courting the daughter of a farmer through whose lands the line ran, the young lady would take her stand at a certain gate every evening, the train would be stopped and the young man would kiss her good night.