Nebraska Politics.

Excerpts From The Nebraska Independent, Lincoln, Nebraska, Made by Direction of the Populist State Central Committee .

ARE THEY SHIRKING?

Are "The Railroads of Nebraska" Paying Their Fair Share of the Taxes?-A Comparison of 1874 with 1901

As intimated last week The Independent expects to show by indisputable evidence, taken from the records, that the railroads of Nebraska are not paying, and have not for years been paying, their fair share of the taxes. To begin with, it may be said that comparisons made between railroad assessed valuations and those of many classes of personal property, such as merchandise, evidences of debt, etc., are not worthy of the most serious consideration. But rarm lands constitute from 45 to 54 per cent of the grand assessment roll every year, and this class of property is of such a nature that comparisons made between it and railroad property are probably the fairest that can be made.

The Independent's position on railroad taxation is well known. Theoretically there should be no railroad taxation, because the public should own and operate the roads; but until public ownership is a reality, and as long as railroads are owned and operated by private, or quasi-public, corporations the owners must pay taxes on the value of their property and franchises in the same proportion as owners of other property and fran-A chises pay taxes. Individual instances of tax-shirking, on the part of owners of certain classes of personal property, can be pointed out which would lead the uninitiated to believe that the railroads are overtaxed. Theoretically the comparison should be between railroad property on the one hand, and all other property on the other; but any attempt to do this only results in con- as a whole, is paying? In the light fusion because of the almost endless of the comparison, 1874 with 1901, we variety of things constituting personal property, and the absence of any reliable data from which to make the

comparisons. It may be possible to show that a certain merchant pays taxes on a ridiculously small percentage of the true valuation of his stock of goods: but the owners of farm lands have been discriminated against on account with the state board in making a poor lions of floating debt of the state. It of this even more than the owners of railroads have been. Farm lands are charged with about one-half the taxes; reliable data can be found showing the assessed valuation per unit of measurement; and comparisons can be made between their assessed valuation and the assessed valuation of railroad property to first settle the question as | cent in the depression. to whether, as between the two, both are being treated alike by the taxing

Granting that a considerable portion of personal property wholly escapes taxation, and that another portion partially escapes by being grossly unpaying their full share. All that it does show is that as between the railroads and these classes of tax-shirking of farm lands and doubtless the owner of city real estate.

For the purposes of our comparison this week we shall take the grand as. ple MUST LOOK after THEIR OWN. The roll for 1902 has not been completed, except as regards railroad assessment-and that is a subject of litigation. The railroad assessment | THE PEOPLE MUST STOP ELECTlast year; it was made by the present BY THE RAILROADS-Excerpts board. Comparisons with 1901 will not differ materially with those made with 1902 after the grand assessment roll is completed.

The grand assessment roll of 1874, consolidated to make but four items, is as follows: 11.000,579.5 acres at \$3.91.\$43,004,800.01

1,107,69 miles railroad at	9,941,809.00
\$10,095.89	11,183,114.40
Personal property	
Total	\$80,754,044.17
Acres	
Lots	199

Railroad 13.8 The grand assessment roll of 1903 is as follows: £,706.32 miles railroad at \$4,630.43 26,422,732.50 Personal property 33,852,218.19 Total\$174,439,095.49

Lots 19.8 Personal 19.3

Percentages-

railroads-follows: Assessed valuations per unit-Land per acre, 1874..... 3.91 Land per aere, 1901..... 2.47 Decrease per acre..... 1.44 Railroads per mile, 1901.... 4,630.43 that paper with being anything but 36.8 per cent decrease per acre.

Increases in 27 years-Per cent. Value. \$36,670,394.99, or....... 85.3 paper is giving its most loyal support Value, \$15,239,617.90, or.......136.3 is absolutely no question about all of Regardless of the actual value of a these three being the chosen nominees

54.1 per cent decrease per mile.

Why?

Why are the railroads using so much pay too much taxes? If the republican party wins, it will be argued that the whole matter was submitted to the people and the people voted for lower they got the gold standard, that is the way they got Bartley out and that is the way they propose to get asset curreney and lower taxes for the rail- elected if only republicans were alroads .- York Teller.

mile of road or an acre of land in assessed valuation of land per acre declined 36.8 per cent in the 27 years; but in the same time the assessed valuation of railroads per mile declined 54.1 per cent-a manifest advantage to the railroads, unless it can ne shown that the assessment of 1874 was grossly unfair to the railroads; or that the actual value of an average acre of land had increased proportionately more in the 27 years than the actual value of an average mile of railroad had increased.

If railroad assessed valuations in 1901, as compared to those of 1874, had declined only 36.8 per cent-the per cent of decline in land assessments -the railroad assessment would have been at the rate of \$6,380.60 per mile instead of \$4,630.80, an increase of \$1,749.80 per mile.

5,706.32 miles railroad at \$6,380.60\$36,409,758.15 Actual assessment was.. 26,422,732.30

Value shirking taxes..\$ 9,987,025.85 It is not sufficient to urge that some lands worth \$50 and \$60 per acre are assessed at \$3.50 to \$5.00 per acre, beare assessed at \$6,500 up to \$10,580 per A. T. & S. F.... mile; and there may be a number of miles of road worth five to six thousand dollars a mile that are assessed up to 40 or 50 per cent of the actual value. But the question before us is this: Are the railroads of Nebraska. considered as a whole, paying as much taxes on each dollar of actual value as the whole body of lands, considered are certainly justified in answering, no.

What will be shown by similar comparisons of 1901 with years subsequent to 1874 remains for subsequent articles; but in a general way this may upon something over \$43,000,000 in- young man. be said: There has been a persistent stead of \$26,000,000. That would mean of property. The assessors have vied much toward wiping out the two milways been more successful in this .ffort than have the assessors. When the assessors would depress 10 per cent the board would go down 15; when the assessors cut off 30, the board would cut off 45, always giving the railroads a relative advantage of about 50 per CHARLES Q. DE FRANCE.

KREP YOUR KYE ON THIS

"We must be moderate in our condemnation of these (railroad) officials, since they are the victims of the sysdervalued, it does not follow that the tem and often really deserve symrailroads are either overtaxed or even | pathy, for they are usually honorable men, and would under no circumstances de a wrong in their personal personal property, the railroads are affairs. We must awaken to the fact unjustly treated. But so is the owner | that the people CANNOT EXPECT them to safeguard or LOOK AFTER the PEOPLE'S INTERESTS. The peosessment rolls of the years 1874 and | Under certain circumstances, the WORM will TURN. Would that the people had the SPUNK of the WORM from Rosewater's brief in the mandamus case against the state board of

> "It may be interesting to give for what it is worth some information volunteered by John N. Baldwin of Iowa, who has been here this week trying to fix up the railroad tax case for the Union Pacific, in whose department he is retained. In a loquacious mood Judge Baldwin declared:

"'We are not bothering about the governorship anymore. That's been Personal 20.6 settled. We had a conference a day or two ago, and WE ALL AGREED ON MICKEY AS OUR MAN.' "-Excerpts from Rosewater's Omaha Bee 32,207,201 acres at \$2.47..\$79,675,195.00 June 9, 1902, first page, 7th column; City and village lots.... 34,488,950.90 from the staff correspondent in Lin-

Editor Rosewater is supporting the republican ticket from top to bottom. The railroads named Mickey nine days before the republican convention. Mr. Railroad 15.2 Rosewater says in his brief that "the people must stop electing the men named by the railroads." Yet Mr. A comparison of the valuations per Rosewater, by his support of Mickey. unit of measurement-acres in the is asking the people to elect a man case of land and miles in the case of "named by the railroads." Where is the consistency?

Rather Ludicrous Straddle The attitude of the Omaha Bee these Railroads per mile, 1874.... 10.095.89 days is truly ludicrous and brands Decrease per mile...... 5,465.46 independent in politics. Its editor is now in the supreme court of the state endeavoring to compel the state board of equalization to perform its plain duty in the assessment of railroad

The nomination of Judge Stark for congress by the unanimous vote of the populist and democratic conventions newspaper space to prove that they at Seward was a compliment rarely paid to any man in public life. It was a great contrast to the republican gathering at Beatrice which took 342 ballots to determine what railway should control the vote of the contaxes for railroads. That is the way gressman from the Fourth district, in the event he should be a republican. Judge Stark carries the brand of corporation. He is for the people always and all the time and he ought to be lowed to vote.—Geneva Gazette.

of the railroads. They are the candi dates who stand before the people to deal justly as between the railroadt and the common people. Do you think they will do it? Before you cast your already said about two of them and then also remember the interview with the leading attorney of the Union Paeither 1874 or 1901, it appears that the cific ten days prior to the republican state convention. Voters, it is a question that will be settled this year of which is the biggest in the government of Nebraska-the railroads or the people. The political parties have spoken on these questions and the tickets are now in the field. It can be another Dietrich campaign, over which nearly everybody has expressed regrets, or it can be an election to which in after years the people will point with pride as having started the emancipation of the people from rail road and corporation corrupt rule .--Democrat, Osceola.

What are They Worth?

Late, up-to-date information regard lieves the following is not far from a correct estimate:

U. P.....\$118,000,000 F., E. & M. V...... 39,000,000 Mo. P..... 36,000,000 C., R. I. & P. 13,000,000 history of the young man, who was cause there are thousands of acres of C., St. P., M. & O. 12,000,000 but twenty-one years old is that \$8 and \$10 land assessed at \$2 to \$3 St. J. & G. I...... 8,000,000 through the means of an unknown per acre. There are a few miles of S. C., O. & W. 6,000,000 road in Nebraska worth several hun- K. C. & O...... 5,000,000 dred thousand dollars per mile that S. C. & P. 1,350,000 Total\$355,450,000

To be conservative, let us discount this about 10 per cent and call it \$320; 000,000. Accordingly, at the assessed railroads pay taxes upon about 81-3 per cent (or one-twelfth) of actual value. Farm lands in 1900 were taxed railroads were assessed upon the basis of 131/2 per cent, they would pay taxes

taxes on all other property holders. twelfth of their actual value. Look at your own assessment and see if you are treated as well.

Governor Graddock

The democratic-populist nominee for is stirring up the tax-shirking franchise holders there in a way that betokens success at the polls this fall

"It is the abuse," says Mr. Craddock, "of the franchise privilege given nearly all the cities and counties through which the road passed votethe railway owners more than a reasonable interest on the cost of concapitalized, and the people pay interis owned in Kansas; and 539 million dollars owned by non-residents. Our railway commissioners assessed them resident stockholder, stock and bondholders interest on six dollars for each income value of the property and assess the home man for taxes at 25 cents to 50 cents on the dollar of the value of his property."

Still in His "In'ards"

The railroads of Nebraska have purchased space in a large number of the local papers of the state and are now using this in an effort to fool the voters into believing that the populist and democratic platforms are a lie when they say that the railroad corporations do not bear their burden of the taxes of the state. A number of the fusion papers are running this pared defense of the corporations.

mass of falsehoods and cunningly pre-This paper has refused the business aithough we were made a rate far in excess of that paid by local advertisers. Not only this, but the Western

Walrath in Polk County Democrat. rect. Bro. Walrath. Explain to your readers that it is a paid advertisement. and puncture every fallacy you can-Comment in last week's ready prints you will see that the W. N. U. did not "pull the stuff out of your patent in-

The State Ticket

The fusion state ticket nominated at Grand Island is one of the most representative, cleanest and ablest ever of election it will be a calamity to the commonwealth.-Geneva Gazette.

After Gray.

Full many a trust, behind a tariff wall. Doth exercise a huge financial sway: Full many a threat to push them to fall

Comes floating on the air from Oyster Bay.

LED A WILD LIFE. DROWN IN THE ELBE

IN HANDS OF RELATIVES.

VERNE STEWART IS HIS NAME

CORPSE FOUND IN A LINCOLN DIS-

PARENTS WELL-TO-DO PEOPLE

Man Killed in Sherman County in a Fight With Posse Proves to be a Former Rest. dent of Illinois,

Lincoln, Nebr., July 25-Verne ing the capitalization of the railroads Stewart is the real name of the of Nebraska is difficult to procure, but horse thief who was killed on April in round numbers The Independent be- 26 last in a battle with officers in Sterman county. His home was at Pittwood, Ill., seventy-six miles C., B. & Q...... 117,000,600 from Chicago, where his parents now reside. A strange part of the person writing from Oklahoma, his relative were led to make a search 100,000 for his body. His remains were recently taken from the dissecting room of the Lincoln medical college, where they had been legally consigned. Through the courtesy of the valuation placed upon the roads by the officers of the institution the remains republican board of equalization, the were shipped to Illinois for final interment a week ago last Monday. Had the search been delayed a upon 131/2 per cent of actual value and short time longer the means of identhey will doubtless be taxed upon tification might have been destroyed about that percentage this year. If in and the relatives would never have known to certainty the fate of the

The story of the discovery of the effort for many years to press down an additional \$85,000 of general fund young man's identity is quite interthe assessed valuations of all classes state taxes, which would help that esting. He was a wayward son and several years ago he left his home. in most of the counties, permitting a His brother-in-law, Noah Ash of lower levy and, consequently, lower Pittwood is in the grain business in Remember that on the average the that city and is a respected buisness railroads pay taxes upon about one- man. The young man's sisters are well connected, one being the wife of a presiding elder in a large district. Stewart could not bear the life of his home town and started out to make his fortune in the west.

> governor down in the Sunflower state | places leading a free and easy life till be settled for a while in Oklafor the fusion forces. The Pittsburg family sent him money. Once they Kansan quotes Mr. Craddock as fol- sent him \$300 to buy a team of the corporations that demands our at- live. But the border life was too tention. When franchises in this state enticing and he kept bad company. were granted to the steam railways In April of this year he with his friends came to Nebraska and near big donations. It was not conten. Greeley Centre, at Spalding, the plated that in addition thereto the theft of several horses was discov-9,000 miles of railway in Kansas was sheriffs of three counties and a large less than \$10,000 a mile or say 90 posse in pursuit. Across the line in million dollars in all. They have been Sherman county they were brought lions of dollars. Of this capitaliza- ex-Sheriff Houck received bullet tion a little over one million dollars wounds. During the encounter the thieves fortified themselves in a for taxation at 58 million dollars. In art, seeing they were surrounded other words, our people pay the non- started to run. He received a bullet in the base of the brain and died inone dollar invested in the state. Our stantly. His companions surredered officials assess this non-resident for and one of them, Harry Hill, was taxation 10 cents on the dollar of the brought to the penitentiary this week to serve a six-year sentence.

Many efforts were made to ascertain the identity of the dead man but they were to no purpose. He had given as aliases the names Charles Wilson, Hill and Baldwin. His remains were brought to Lincoln and viewed by many people, but none recognized him. His body was given to the Lincoln medical college through the regular channels and was preserved for use during the coming school year.

Harry Hill, the man brought to the penitentiary on Wednesday for the theft is one of the men arrested when Stewart was shot. He is charged with horse stealing for which he is settenced for six years Newspaper Union has pulled the stuff | Sheriff Smith, who participated in out of our patent inside prints after the chase brought him to Lincoln tracted. She had been for the past Smith is president of the company the very plain statement having been Hill is quoted as saying that they week staying with her sister, Mrs. incorporated a few weeks ago at made by us that we would edit all did not intend to injure the officers | Emil Barth, of this city. political matter in our paper .- E. A. when they were cornered and they merely discharged their guns a few (Better take the advertisement di- times to frighten the pursuers As several bullets nipped the pursuing officers, it is taken with a grain of salt. The men were implicated in is that metaphor mixed? Do fallacies other affairs in Greely county and & O. freight locomotive exploded near wear ruber tires? If you will look at since the affray, a large amount of the sixth column, alongside Commoner cattle rustling has been traced to their doors Two farmers living near Brayton lost sixteen head of cattle killed and Fireman Michael Muster They were driven to Fullerton and were loaded and shipped to Omaha.

In an interview he acknowledged his identity and denied positively the charge that he pawnad Yohe's jewels. May Yohe, who was formerly the wife of Lord Francis Hope, sailed for Europe today on the Fuerst Bismarck.

comparing a track a side grown a selection grant and a significant

ballot, read what Mr. Rosewater has THE REMAINS OF DEAD BANDIT GERMAN STEAMER PRIMUS CUT IN TWO BY A TUG.

FIFTY LIVES THOUGHT LOST.

NEARLY TWO HUNDRED ABOARD AT TIME OF ACCIDENT.

river Elbe at 12:30 Monday.

ever, Prussia.

bodies already have been recovered.

the Eilbeck male choral society.

According to witnesses aboard

Hansa, the movement was made too

precipitately. Primus struck the

tug's engine rooms and Hansa en-

deavored to push it ashore, but the

tug grounded and the ships parted.

St. Petersburg, July 23.-A ferryboat, while crossing the river Volga

Farmer Takes His Life.

Grand Island, Nebr., July 23.

Monday morning, when the two old-

er sons of Hans Voss, a prominent

German farmer residing a mile and

a half east of the city, went out to

the barn to feed their horses, they

found their father lying dead on a

pile of straw in the horse barn

They took him to the house and

promptly notified their relatives in

the city, and the coroner. It was

found that he had risen during the

He was married nearly twenty years

ago to a Miss Senbeil, whose parents

and family still reside in this vicini-

ty, and the first years of their mar-

ried life appear to have been happy.

The union was bleessed with four

children, trhee sons and a daughter.

In recent years the family appears

to have had some domestic unpleas-

antness, and last week Mrs. Voss

applied for a divorce, the hearing

having been set for today. She al-

Uopn retiring last night he had

spoken to his sons about harvesting

Locomotive Explodes.

Washington, Ind., July 23.-A B

Olney, Ill., today. Engineer Conaty.

of Washington, Ind., was instantly

was fatally injured. Fifteen cars

were wrecked and traffic was blocked.

Boy Injured by a Horse.

old son of Jonh Marshall, living three

and one-half miles northwest of Graf.

was kicked in the stomach by a horse-

concussion does not follow be will be

all right in a few days.

body on the straw pile.

eight harvesters were drowned.

the northern fairway.

Primus then sank.

swam absore.

185 PASSENGERS ON BOARD

Disaster Due to Too Precipitous a Move nent in Crossing Channel -Flood Causes Loss of Life.

He wandered about in different homa. On several occasions, his horses. He bought a tract of land in Oklahoma on which he aimed to people should be called on to pay to ered too soon after the deed for the men to effect an escape. They made for 1902 is substantially the same as ING TO OFFICE THE MEN NAMED struction. The average cost of the a long cross country run with the est on about \$60,000 a mile or 540 mil- at bay. Many shots were fired and trench in the sandbills when Stew-

Captain Strong in London.

New York, July 25.- A special dispatch from London to an af ernoon offered to the people of Nebraska for paper says that Putnam Bradlee their support. If any part of it fails | Strong arrived at Southampton today on the St. Paul, sailing under an assumed name.

NEBRASKA NOTES.

Deposits in the Nebraska banks increased nearly \$523,000, last quarter.

Burglers entered the house of Peter Rasmussen at Fremont and carried of a gold watch and chain and a few other articles of slight value.

Nebraska City board of health has finished the cleaning of the basins of of the water company and oversin feet of sediment was removed.

Nebraska City has more handsome lawns than any other town in the state. A prize is annually offered for the best kept.

The German Lutheran church at Fremont has purchased a corner lot and will erect a church on the site Hamburg, July 23.—The steamsh ip n the near future. Primus of Hampburg, with 185 pas-

sengers on board was cut in two It has been announced that Goverand sunk by the tug Hansa on the nor Savage had appointed T. J. Majors, of Peru on the state board of ed-So far as is ascertained about fifty ucation, in place of John Eitz Roberts. persons were drowned. Thirteen of South Omaha.

Fourteen hundred dollars in drill Primus was ar excursion steamer from Buxtehude, province of Han- and exhibition prizes are offered by the management of the state firemen's The disaster occurred between tournament which will be held at Blankenez and Nienstdeten. Among Grand Island, August 5 to 7.

the passengers were the members of It is claimed that the farmers of western Nebraska raise and fatten At the time of the accident Primus was crossing the river channel near their hogs for market on alfalfa at an Blankenez, from the southern into expense of a cent a pound. Twenty years ago alfalfa was unknown.

> Seventy-five per cent of the farmers of the state own their farms, and 90 per cent of the mortgages filed by them are for the purpose of improving their lands or adding to them.

John Wann a young farmer living In the interval, however, about near Superior had an arm cut of fifty of the passengers were able to above the elbow. He was driving a reach Hanas by means of ropes and team attached to a binder. The ladders. Seventy more were picked horses ran away and Wann was up by the tug's boats, while others thrown in front of the machine, with the painful result.

The land commissioner left to look Monday at Hersenk sank and fifty- up a tract of land in Nemaha county which some years ago was reported to have sunk into the Missouri liver. The track covers thirty-four acres and recently it was discovered that the land was being used for a pasture. If the land is found it will be put on sale.

> A. Giles, who was arrested at Genoa for alleged forgery, committed at Chicago, was taken back there without requistion papers by Detective Gallagher. Giles formerly lived at Genoa. He confesses his guilt and states that others will be implicated before the trial is over.

night, gone to the stable and taken State Engineer Adna Dobson restrychnine. Coroner Roedera at ceived a letter recently from F. H. once went out to the place and upon Newell of the United States geologiinvestigation found an inquest uncal survey, asking Dobson to point necesasry. The bottle from which out to him any storage reservoir he had taken the fatal draught lay schemes which would help Nebrasnear where the boys had found the ka. Mr. Newell wishes to secure information of the smaller projects, Hans Voss resisded in the vicinias the larger ones are known to ty many years being counted with him. his father, among the old settlers.

> Returns from threshers over the county show phenomenal yield of wheat from every locality. Reports show as high as fifty-seven bushels per acre. The grade of the wheat is very fine, some of it testing sixtythree pounds to the bushel. At Elwood six new steam threshers have been started, and all of them have at least three months' steady runs ahead of them.

leges great and repeated acts of According to an agreement encruelty, among them that of incit- terd into by leading Omaha and ing the children to be impudent to Lincoln implement dealers some her, etc. After having filed the pe- years ago, no exhibit will be made tition for the divorce she was afraid by them at the state fair. The to go to the house and did so, to get Lincoln dealers will invite visitors her clothing, only in the company to view their displays at the city of the sheriff. There is no doubt warehouses, but none except the but that the man took his life as a re- smaller dealers will have an exhitsult of this domestic trouble. He it of machinery or vehicles at the was well to do and in good health. fair.

Preliminary steps in the direction the oats today and gave no indica- of building the Kansas City, Beatrice tion of a despondent mood. He was & Western railroad were taken at prominently and well known in his Beatrice in the filing of a mortgage township, having several years ago by J. E. Smith, one of the incorpobeen a candidate for supervisor, rators, to the Union Trust company Mrs. Voss, his widow is quite dis- of Philadelphia for \$500,000. Mr. Beatrice and states that as soon as the mortgage filed is returned to Philadelphia the money will be forthcoming and work upon the construction of the new line will begin at once. Under the articles of incorporation the line is to be built from Virgina to Beatrice, thence northwest to Grand Island. The articles also include a branch line from Beatrice to Lincoln.

For the past week Wymore has peen infested by burglars. Several Graf, Nebr., July 23 -The six-year- petty thefts have been committed, but the boldest attempt was made when someone entered the home of The boy lay unconscious for a few mo- C. E. Benert, while the family was ments, but soon revived. Dr. Cassa- away, and stole about \$7 in cash mine of Graft was called and after from a toy bank and also made way making a careful examination said with a valuable ring. Entrance that the boy was not injured seriously was effected with a skeleton key, and if inflamation as the result of the | and before leaving the thief locked