

# THE NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

## A Synopsis of Proceedings in Both Branches of the Twenty-Eighth General Assembly.

### SENATE.

The following bills were placed on senatorial file on the 23d: H. R. 9, appropriating \$1,000 for incidental expenses of the legislature. It was amended to read \$2,000. S. F. 21, entitled guardians and wards. S. F. 17, in regard to the Dietrich land leasing bill. The rules were suspended and the bill was placed at the head of the list. The following bills were reported to the senate with the recommendation that they be passed: S. F. 25, giving veterans the same right to issue bonds for heating and lighting purposes as citizens of the first and second classes. To amend the placing of planks on bridges and culverts before crossing with engines. Amended that one person go 100 yards ahead of engines on the road to prevent accidents. Authorizing county boards to appropriate money for county fairs. To provide for the appointment of an insurance deputy. Fixing fees charged insurance companies and others for public papers. To appropriate \$2,000 for incidental expenses of the legislature was amended to read \$3,000. An act relating to township organizations was referred back to the committee on agriculture and introduced a resolution to have a committee of three appointed to investigate the reason of the difference in taxes paid by insurance companies in Nebraska and in Iowa.

In the senate on the 26th Secretary Allen to the governor announced that Governor Mickey had signed S. F. 10, to legalize issue of bond by cities of first and second class. Lieutenant Governor McGilton signed S. F. 25, reducing school investments to \$50,000, to give school privileges of normal schools. H. R. 67, amending the city council of Omaha to purchase Omaha water works, was read a third time and passed. S. F. 22, entitled "An act to create a food commission."

S. F. 23, providing penalties for adulterating food, were recommended to be placed on general file. Hastings resolution to have a committee appointed to investigate insurance companies' taxes was called and passed. S. F. 24, to provide for the establishment of a military code for the state of Nebraska and to provide for the organization, government and compensation of the militia and to provide for the establishment of the unorganized militia, to conform with an act of the United States congress "to provide the efficiency of the militia and for other purposes." S. F. 25, by Hastings—to provide for the independence of judges in public elections, to enforce the secrecy of the ballot, to provide for the selecting and nominating of all candidates for elections, except those to be chosen at any special election, to provide for precinct officers or members of school boards not members of the boards of education, to provide for primary elections, and to provide for the nomination of judges and clerks to serve at such primary elections, to provide for the nomination of candidates at such primary elections, to provide for the nomination and to provide the manner of nominating candidates for offices to be filled at special elections, to provide for the order of placing tickets of political parties upon the ballot for public elections, and to provide for the printing and distribution of the nominating list at public elections and primary elections for nominating candidates for office to be voted on at public election at public elections, to prevent in public elections or primary elections, and to provide for the punishment for the violation of the same.

Almost the entire morning was spent in the senate on the 31st discussing the bill for a joint resolution to memorialize congress to bill the land leasing bill of Senator Dietrich. However, the senate adopted an amendment that the fences unlawfully enclosing the public domain be removed. This occasioned much debate, until the senator changed his amendment so that the fences must be removed by June 1, 1904. This was carried unanimously. Senator Howell introduced the following:

"Whereas, Congress has prudently provided for the construction of a canal through the United States by an increase in the proposed appropriations for this branch of the service, therefore be it

Resolved, That the State of Nebraska, by its legislature, in session assembled, respectfully requests its representatives in congress to support an appropriation for a larger navy."

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### HOUSE.

H. R. 11, by House of Representatives to entitle county treasurers to retain official seals that would enable them to validate tax titles occasioned a heated and protracted debate in the house on the 23d. The bill was placed on general file. H. R. 10, by Jones of Otoe, providing for the election of county commissioners by an entire vote of the county in counties not under township organization, was vigorously assailed as a political measure. Recuse of Hall insisted that it was an attempt on the part of cities of the class of Nebraska City to obtain control of the county board. Kennedy of Douglas said that regardless of the purpose, the practical effect of this sort of bill is political, as suggested by Jones. The committee on boundaries, county seats and township organizations brought in an adverse report on the bill, which was voted down, allowing the bill to go on general file. H. R. 22, by Koettler of Douglas, compelling Omaha school board to buy its own books and H. R. 23, fixing salaries of secretary of state, were vigorously passed. Bills introduced for first time were: To establish a military code for the state of Nebraska, and to provide for compensation of the militia and to provide for the enrollment of the unorganized militia, to conform with an act of the United States congress "to promote the efficiency of the militia and for other purposes." To punish the stealing of domestic fowls and to punish persons receiving or buying stolen domestic fowls, making the offense felony.

In the house on the 29th Speaker McKelvey signed H. R. 27, by Gilbert of Douglas, the Omaha water works bill, which had passed both house and senate. The senate at this time sent in a communication that it had voted to adjourn to next Thursday, the house concurring. The house voted to refuse to concur in the senate's action. These resolutions were introduced by Christy of York.

We, the undersigned residents, voters, citizens, taxpayers and merchants residing and doing business in Otoe county, realizing that our present laws regarding exemptions are unjust and detrimental to the interests of the general public and that the same are a burden and a fetter upon the property of our citizens, do hereby petition your honorable body to amend, modify or repeal our exemption laws to such an extent at least that the merchants may have equal protection under the laws to any other class of citizens.

Whereas, we have heard continued reports of extortionate telephone charges, and as the rate with the telephone companies is being increased, and as it is necessary to investigate such charges and complaints.

Therefore, I move you that the speaker of the house appoint a committee of three to investigate and report on such charges to this house.

The outside counties of the state are vitally interested. The Omaha papers give only one side of the question. The outside newspapers are entitled to receive information exposing the selfishness of the Omaha real estate boomers. And the railroads have a perfect right to pay for the expense of printing this information.

"The railroads have no newspaper of their own to present the case, and they in no one newspaper of wide circulation standing up for the rights of the country as against the encroachments of the large city. The defense of the country must come from the country papers and not from the Omaha papers. And they do not demand that they use their space without recompense, although many of them, recognizing their own local interest in the controversy, decline compensation and freely open their columns to the forcibly expressed opinions of the Omaha scheme. The criticism from the Omaha boomers is ridiculous. It sounds like the plaint of a falling and hopeless cause."

### CRUSADE ON PRAIRIE DOGS.

"No bill of more importance to western Nebraska has been introduced in the history of this legislature than that contemplating a method for exterminating prairie dogs," said Representative Frank Currie of Dawes county.

Mr. Currie, the author of this bill, is an extensive rancher in western Nebraska. He has a very large constituency, from which comes a very earnest demand for the promotion of this piece of legislation. In his possession were several letters from men in various lines of business in his district, urging him to push this bill, insisting that it was of extreme necessity.

Mr. Currie's bill provides that all farmers within the territory most affected by these pests shall take proper means—and these means are described in the bill—for exterminating prairie dogs at the proper season and impose a penalty upon all who fail to observe this law. In the penal provision it is ordered that the road overseer shall be paid \$3 a day or hire someone at that price, to distribute the prairie dog killer for the farmer and assess the cost to the latter.

### LABOR UNIONS DRAFT BILL.

The labor unions of the state have drafted a measure, which will be submitted to the legislature soon after it convenes, providing for boards of education on all trains pulled by two engines. The argument in favor of the measure will be that a double-header at present takes away the employment of one crew over another, the crew doing the heavy lifting and the other crew being left to do the routine work. The same unions will introduce legislation fixing the number of hours a man may be worked without rest.

### BILL FOR GREATER OMAHA.

Senator Howell of Douglas in the senate laid the first stone in paving a way for greater Omaha. S. F. 150, introduced by Senator Howell, provides for a bill for the incorporation of the city of Omaha into the constitution. The amendment offered by the Douglas senator is as follows: "That where more than one-half of the inhabitants of any county shall reside within the corporate limits of a city or a part of a city, and the city or part of a city is within the boundaries of said county, the city or part of a city shall be deemed to be a part of the county, and shall be governed by one set of officers and the outgoing territory, if any there be, of such county may by legislative act be attached to the adjacent territory, or to any other counties without the vote of the inhabitants, and to such municipal organization the right to make its own charter by a vote of the majority of the qualified voters of the city shall be granted and repealed at any time by the division of any county under this provision the sections so separated shall each pay its just proportion of the general indebtedness to be ascertained and provided for, as may by law be determined."

Stephen Douglas's Great Speech. "The boys of 1861 are going fast," said the Major. "Nearly every morning there are names in the obituary columns of the great ones who were associated with events or incidents to which I held a personal, even if humble, relationship. There died last week a man who was, like myself, only one of a million soldiers, but I had known the man from boyhood, and in the first week of his boyhood he had been in front of the old Lincoln house, in Columbus, Ohio, and heard that wonderful speech of Stephen A. Douglas, which was never reported, and yet gave courage to thousands of hearts."

### OPPOSE COUNTY OFFICERS' BILL.

The bill introduced in the senate at the request of the County Officers' association is hung up in the committee, and when it comes forth there will likely be some objection to its passage, though the bill will be reported favorably. It is not the fact that the committee does not favor a four-year term for county officers, but that the committee does not intend to recommend that a county officer hold office for a time longer than the time for which he was elected. Another objection is that the bill does not favor having every county election held on presidential year or even year, as provided by the bill. Said one of the members of the committee: "We are in favor of county officers holding office for four years, but I do not want to tell a community that the man it has chosen for two years should hold office for four years."

### WOULD LET THE PUBLIC IN.

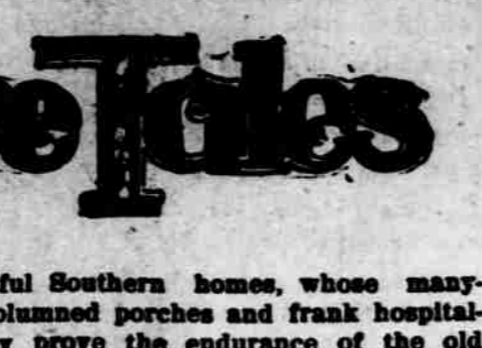
Lieutenant Governor McGilton has originated a plan with reference to the consideration of bills before the legislative committee which he thinks ought to be incorporated in the rules of the senate. This plan is to have a committee of five members, one from each branch of the legislature, to whom bills are referred, and to whom the committee calendar, each standing committee shall give notice to this body, in advance of the time and place of meeting of the bills to be considered by it, so that all persons interested may appear and request a hearing, subject to such limitations as the committee may impose.

### SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.

Governor Mickey signed house roll 67, the Gilbert or Howell bill on Sunday. The Gilbert bill is identical in all its provisions with the Howell bill. It requires the city of Omaha to acquire and operate its own water plant, and to this end provides that, within thirty days after the bill shall pass, a water board, which shall have a general manager, shall be organized, and shall be in charge of the plant after it becomes the property of the city. The water works bill has the emergency clause and it therefore becomes a law as soon as the governor gave his approval.

### STUDENTS OPPOSE THE BILL.

Students of the medical colleges of the state do not want the bill passed to compel them to appear before the State Board of Health after graduating from the college and stand an examination before being allowed to practice medicine. A majority of the students entered school believing that after securing a diploma they would be allowed to practice without more ado. The bill, however, provides that they shall appear before the State Board of Health, and that for the privilege they shall each pay into the hands of the said board \$25. The students believe that \$25 would be



The Soldier's Tear. Upon the hill he turned, To take a last fond look Of the valley and the village church, And the cottage by the brook. He thought of the sweet home, So familiar to his ear; And the soldier leaped upon his sword And wiped away a tear.

liful Southern homes, whose many-columned porches and frank hospitality prove the endurance of the old regime. Laughing children play where the flocks are stirred; carriages are given place to green lawns and smiling terraces.

"Monument after monument, tablet after tablet marks the position of his brave regiment, of that valliant troop. Chattanooga in the distance, so long the plaything of contending armies. Lookout Mountain frowns upon the town. Orchard Knob, headquarters during the fight of Generals Grant, Thomas and Gordon Granger, is littered with the wreckage of the foe. The winding trail of the mountains, each with a history, add to the variety and beauty of the drive.

Thomas W. Lloyd of Montoursville, Penn., relates the following interesting reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln: "I saw Abraham Lincoln for the first time in the winter of 1863, at one of his public receptions. It was only a child, who has since grown to be a man, but some kind of a divinity to be worshipped from afar, and naturally I was anxious to see him. I was therefore permitted to accompany my father, who was then serving as chief clerk of the House of Representatives, to one of the presidential receptions. I knew nothing of public functions at that time, and had some sort of notion that we would only be permitted to gaze upon the great man from a distance. When we came to him in the line, however, and he had greeted my father with a few pleasant words, we were about to pass on, the President said: 'Wait one moment; I haven't shaken hands with this little man.' He took me by the hand, patted me on the head, said a few kind words to me and we passed on."

"Later in the same winter I met him again at my own home in Pennsylvania. At the beginning of the war, as a mere child, I was fired with patriotic spirit and went about the streets of my native village making speeches, urging every man to enlist. I did not then know what the war meant, but I knew 'our side' was right, simply because it was 'our side,' and my appearance on the street was a signal to get me up on a store goods box to make a speech. My father had related this to Lincoln and asked permission to bring me to the White House. This was granted and one morning we drove there and were received by the President alone. As he rose from his chair to greet us I remember thinking he was the longest, ugliest and most ungainly man I had ever seen. When I was presented to him he leaned down, and, taking me by the hand, said: 'So this is the little patriot. Ah, Mr. Lloyd, in old times the boy is indeed father to the man. I wish all the men in the North had his spirit.'

"As he took me on his knee and talked to me of the war, all the ugliness was forgotten, and as I looked into his face and saw the deep set, kindly eyes, the firm mouth, and the smile which so kindly hovered, and listened to his gentle voice, I began to think he was positively handsome. As I look back upon the scene, it brings many tender memories of the man who, amid all the cares and burdens of his position and with the face of a mighty nation weighing upon his heart, had time enough to say a few kind words to a little child.

### KNOWN WHERE LINCOLN STOOD

Simple Way in Which He Manifested His Earnestness.

While I was an inmate of Gleason Sanitarium, Elmira, N. Y., I heard the following anecdote of Abraham Lincoln. We had at the sanitarium a very old gentleman by the name of Z. C. Robbins. He was of New Hampshire by birth, but had lived in Washington for fifty years, his business being a patent lawyer. He was intimately acquainted with Mr. Lincoln and was selected by him as chairman of the first police commissioners after his inauguration in 1861. To this Mr. Robbins owed the recital of the story to which I have alluded. He said: "After the emancipation proclamation had been written, it will be remembered, six months were given to the Confederates to lay down their arms and come back to the Union, before it would be in force. Providing the South returned to the allegiance of the Union as of yore, the proclamation was not to be issued. But God was working out the destiny of this nation, and not man, and the result is known to history.

The Southern States had gone against the Republican party. Republicans by the million came forward against the proclamation, upon the day fixed: They declared that it was against the spirit and wish of the people, and would ruin the party. Letters came pouring in from every state in the Union begging, imploring, sometimes threatening, and it was feared by a few staunch anti-slavery men of the country that Mr. Lincoln could not withstand the pressure. But he said nothing, kept his own counsel, and no man knew his mind.

One day about a week before the time in which the proclamation was to go into force, Mr. Robbins, as was his privilege, walked into the office of Mr. Lincoln, private secretary to Mr. Lincoln. He was feeling very anxious, for it was a dark and gloomy time for the country. Mr. Lincoln's room adjoined that of Mr. Nicolay, and while Mr. Robbins was sitting at an open fire, talking to Mr. Nicolay, Mr. Lincoln walked in, put his hands upon the shoulder of Mr. Robbins and said: "Well, old friend, the important day draws near."

"Yes," replied Mr. Robbins, "I hope there will be no backing down or backing out on your part."

LAST STORY LINCOLN TOLD.

It Connected Pardon and the Patagonian Way of Eating Oysters.

The last story ever told by President Lincoln was just before he left the White House to go to the theater on the night he was killed. This is the story as related by Thomas F. Pender, who is the oldest employe of the White House, and who went with Mr. Lincoln to his carriage on the fatal night.

"I have every reason," said Mr. Pender, "for saying that the last story was right here in this house. As is generally known, Speaker Colfax and Mr. Asimono of Massachusetts, were the last men to call on the President prior to his departure for the theater. When these men called and carried their cards to Mr. Lincoln, I know that they were the last to see him. However, not very long before they came Mr. Lincoln had received a visit from Marshall Lamson, who was from the president's home district, and it was Mr. Lamson who had introduced me to the President when I received my appointment in November, 1864. Mr. Lamson wanted to talk to Mr. Lincoln about a pardon for an old friend, a soldier who had been found guilty of some slight violation of army regulations. The case was thoroughly gone over by the two, and with pen in hand Mr. Lincoln, in the act of signing the paper which would make the soldier a free man when he turned to Mr. Lamson and said: 'Lamson, do you know how at Patagonians eat oysters?' 'No, I do not, Mr. Lincoln,' was the reply.

"Well, Lamson, it is his habit to open them as fast as they can throw the shells out of the window, and when the pile of shells grow to be higher than the house, they pick up stakes and move. Now, Lamson, I feel like beginning a new pile of pardons, and I guess this is a good one to begin on.

Mr. Pender says that he had every opportunity to study the President, for he was in the room with him nearly all the time—a bodyguard. Mr. Lincoln did not like the idea of being gaudied and made frequent objections

# LINCOLN, THE WHITE HOUSE AND SPRINGFIELD MONUMENT



"Well, I don't know," says Lincoln; "Peter denied his Master. He thought he wouldn't, but he did."

Mr. Robbins says that he felt a thrill pass over him. He knew by his hand on the left shoulder, he said: "I saw Abraham Lincoln for the first time in the winter of 1863, at one of his public receptions. It was only a child, who has since grown to be a man, but some kind of a divinity to be worshipped from afar, and naturally I was anxious to see him. I was therefore permitted to accompany my father, who was then serving as chief clerk of the House of Representatives, to one of the presidential receptions. I knew nothing of public functions at that time, and had some sort of notion that we would only be permitted to gaze upon the great man from a distance. When we came to him in the line, however, and he had greeted my father with a few pleasant words, we were about to pass on, the President said: 'Wait one moment; I haven't shaken hands with this little man.' He took me by the hand, patted me on the head, said a few kind words to me and we passed on."

## LINCOLN A PLAIN MAN.

Had Little Time to Waste on Appearance or Style.

When I first knew Lincoln he had all the habiliments of rusticity; his hat was innocent of a nap; his coarse boots and no acquaintance with blacking his clothes had not been introduced to the whisk-frown; his bagginess was well worn and dilapidated; his umbrella was substantial, but of a faded green, and for an outer garment he wore a short circular blue cloak, says Henry C. Whitney in Leslie's Weekly. He commenced to dress better in the spring of 1862, and he was absent from home, on political tours, usually did so; after he became President, he had a servant who kept him considerably "slicked up," but he frequently had to reason him into fashionable attire by telling him that his appearance was "official." He probably had a little taste or style about dress or attire as any man who was ever born. He simply wore clothes because it was useful and customary; whether they fitted or looked well was entirely above or beneath his knowledge. He had no regard for the style of his clothing, forms, manners, politeness, etiquette, official formalities, fine clothes, routine or red-tape; he delineated a bill of fare at a table, a program at a theater, or a license to get married. The pleadings in a lawsuit, the formal compliments in a social invitation, the exordium or peroration of a speech he either wholly ignored or cut as short as he could.

In all his political campaigns, the music, flags and bunting were nothing to him; he was talking rather of the statistics—how many votes were pro-Union, and what the result of the political thought were to change opinions and votes. And he also had a thorough contempt for the office of bailiff or clerk of a court, doorkeeper of a legislative or Congressional body, floorwalker in a store, drum-major in a band, or even a member of a town council. He declined to be called "Mr. President" or even "Mr. Lincoln" by his intimates; he called men by their family names.

### Lincoln's Love of Truth.

Slower of growth and devoid altogether of any brilliant qualities which Douglas possessed, says William G. Brown in the February Atlantic, Lincoln nevertheless outstripped him by the measure of the two gifts he lacked—the twin gifts of humor and irony, and what he lacked he made up for by the other drawn upward to the height of human nobility and aspiration. His great capacity of pain, which but for his buoyancy would no doubt have made him mad, was the source of his extraordinary strength. Familiar with squalor, and hospitable to vulgarity, his mind was yet tenanted by sorrow, a piece of midnight wrestling. In him as never before in any other man, were high and low things mixed, and the awkward and ungainly, and the unthoughtful, justified in their uses. At once coarser than his rival and infinitely more refined and gentle, he had mastered lessons which the other had never found the need of learning, or else had learned too readily and then dismissed.

Go, having some one constantly near him. On one occasion he said to Mr. Pender: "Pender, I do not like to be guarded, but I have received a number of threatening letters lately. I have no fears, however. The boys are rough and tumble, but they are not in their uses. At once coarser than his rival and infinitely more refined and gentle, he had mastered lessons which the other had never found the need of learning, or else had learned too readily and then dismissed."

Working as railway flagman in Kokomo, Ind., says the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, at 70 cents a day, is John Rooney, formerly an intimate friend and associate of Abraham Lincoln. Rooney is past 80 years of age, rough and tumble wrestler. "John," says Lincoln, "you are the only man who ever did that."