

THE OMAHA BEE.

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THE LEGISLATURE'S WORK.

The session of the Iowa legislature, which came to an end yesterday, was more remarkable for the quality than for the quantity of the work it performed.

An extraordinary amount of time was frittered away in idle discussions and vapors. As a result, the taxpayers have an unusual number of unpassed bills to contemplate.

There are between 300 and 400 bills in the senate and between 600 and 700 in the house which were not acted upon at all.

Some of these were of the greatest importance. They were neglected, however, in the useless squabbling over the prohibition bills and a few other leading measures.

Besides the prohibitory legislation, which was of a severity that almost amounted to ferocity, the most prominent work of the session consisted of railroad legislation of one kind or another.

It was a railroad legislature, and the lobby was present in unusual force. A shamesomeness was displayed in influencing members to vote for the interests of the railroads like nothing seen before in the state.

The lobby appeared on the floor whenever a railroad bill was up and openly directed the votes of members. A number of bills restricting railroad extortion were killed at sight.

Others were permitted to die the death in committees. Among the measures thus suffocated was one prohibiting railroads to charge more for a short haul than for a long one.

Another was to forbid discrimination between different customers on car-lot lots. Another was to compel all corporations doing business in Iowa to incorporate under the laws of the state, in order that they might be sued there.

Another anti-monopoly bill which was defeated was one to compel all telegraph companies to furnish the same service to all customers at the same rate.

ELECTION FRAUDS.

Among the needed reforms which the citizens of Omaha, regardless of party, should demand at the hands of the next legislature is a radical revision of the election laws.

The most glaring and outrageous frauds perpetrated at last Tuesday's election were committed through the fast and loose system of swearing in men's votes.

This swearing in votes by affidavit has become an incentive to wholesale perjury. Men who have not lived in the state thirty days, and men who do not comprehend the nature of an affidavit were taken from ward to ward and voted.

An examination of the affidavits in the ballot box will reveal the fact that more than one-third of all the votes polled were sworn in, as it is termed, and these affidavits will also show the most outrageous villainy on the part of citizens who vouched for hundreds of people whom they did not know, and criminal recklessness on the part of notaries in making out the bogus affidavits, which show on their face that the notaries knew that they were frauds.

Under this system of swearing our registration is a mere sham. Non-residents could not easily get their names on the register without running the risk of exposure, but any ward bumper, who works an election for pay, is ready to vouch for them.

The notaries ask no questions, and the judges of election entertain no challenge. By that system aliens who have not taken out their first papers, and vagrants who have no fixed abode are allowed to vote, and their votes frequently turn the scale in the most important elections.

Primarily the blame lies with the registrars, mayor and council. The position of registrar is of such high importance that none but the most competent and conscientious men should be chosen. Instead of that, with one or two exceptions, our registrars have been incompetent and imposed to live up to the letter of the law.

They do not give ample notice to the voters, and do not sit regularly as required. Of course they are not to blame for being compelled to advertise in a readership paper. The council alone is responsible for that.

The result is that nearly one-half of our citizens have not registered because they do not know when and where to register, and are not inclined to become subscribers to a paper, which they do not want, merely to keep themselves informed about registration.

But the greatest latitude for fraud is afforded by the law which does not compel the judges of election to entertain a challenge when a party comes to vote under an affidavit. Here is where reform is most needed.

CONGRESSMAN POLAND.

There is no doubt of the unanimous re-nomination of Congressman Poland. We wish his able colleague, Judge Poland, was equally sure to be returned, but we regret to learn that the old feud in his district is sure to be vigorously revived under the leadership of General Grant or some equally prominent leader of the opposition to Poland.

We have no means of ascertaining how successful a fight Judge Poland's foes can make, but it is true, for the good of the public service and the credit of the state, that the effort to defeat him will fail.

We do not say this because we have any personal difference with those who dislike the judge and desire to defeat him, but because we believe the quarrel is essentially a childish one that has no origin or basis save that of an old personal prejudice that ought to die out before the larger consequences of sound public service.

Judge Poland, like all men of vigorous, aggressive intellect and temper, has very likely in years gone by unwittingly offended some of the active and aspiring young men among his constituents, but we do not learn that he has done anything that ought to fairly stand against the record of his long, able, and excellent public services.

Saving Senators Edmunds and Morrill there is not a man in Vermont that has done so much public service of admirable and versatile quality as Judge Poland.

Mr. Payne, of Ohio, says that he is not a candidate for the presidency. Of course he is not, and he won't be. Until the democratic national convention nominates him.

Justice Field declines the nomination for president. Some people have a mania for declining what is not offered them.

The Kneavels Land Grab. The public is familiar with the facts in the Kneavels land cases, affecting a large number of settlers on the St. Joe & Denver land grant.

When the bill for the relief of the settlers came up in the senate the other day, Senator Van Wyck made the following remarks: SENATOR VAN WYCK.—In further explanation of the suggestion of the senator from Arkansas, I will say that from this statement of facts there is no question as to the right of the persons settling, purchasing and holding lands from the government, and the duty of the government toward them.

There is no dispute anywhere in this body or in the department that this relief should be had. This certainly is a remarkable case, where the statute was supposed to be so plain that the commissioner of the general land office and the secretary of the interior, even the common man who was seeking a home on the prairie, could read and understand it fully.

STATE NOTINGS.

LINCOLN. A colored woman living four miles west of Lincoln was severely injured by a stroke of lightning last Monday.

The two men, Lee and Mead, who robbed Jacob Leitell at the depot Thursday, were captured at Seward and brought back to Lincoln.

The News says "Sixteen persons have been arrested in Omaha for peddling 'hell-fires' on the holy Sabbath day." This explains the unusual heat of last Sunday and why the boys sought the cooling breezes on the lee side of the groceries.

Thomas Milton and a companion, driving home in a wagon, Monday, were struck by lightning two miles outside the city. Milton was instantly killed and his companion severely shocked. One of the horses was also killed.

The Democrat says Lincoln will build a hotel this summer which will throw a shadow over everything west of Chicago. The Democrat never exaggerates—hardly. But here is the picture: "The new hotel is to be erected at a cost of \$150,000, \$75,000 of which amount has already been paid in and the remaining \$75,000 secured. The house will be built at the corner of Eleventh and N streets, and to be five stories in height. The parlor will be after the name of the style of the Paxton at Omaha, except very much larger. The restaurant will be two hundred feet larger in area than that of the Paxton, provided with all the new modern improvements, fire escapes, and in every particular the finest hotel west of Chicago."

HARTINGTON. Two divorces were granted at the last term of court. The Hastings creamery will begin operation next Monday.

M. K. Lewis, of this city, has been sued for \$5,000 by J. N. Clark of Webster county, for infringing on a well known patent. J. E. Parker, a tooth puller, skipped out very suddenly, leaving several bills unsettled. It is reported he has started business in Red Cloud.

Henry Seeling, Peter Fox, Jas. Clark, Josiah Clark, and Fred Nabour, were found guilty of maliciously breaking into the house of D. J. Harbeck, on the night of the 21st, and doing him great bodily harm and frightening his family. They were sentenced to thirty days in the county jail and to pay a fine of \$30 and costs each.

Eight hundred and twenty-eight votes were polled on election day. The wife of Herman Godefeld died last Sunday from injuries received by falling down stairs a week previous.

The Tribune thinks that with Baby Barnes, Buffalo Bill, and the other stars of the Nebraska maintains a proud position in the galaxy of states.

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