

COUNTY OFFICERS TESTIFY

Men from Out in State Say Land Assessments Are Too Low.

BROUGHT IN BY THE UNION PACIFIC

Tax Commissioner Scribner of Railroad Contradicts Statements Made by Governor Mickey in Tax Suit Hearing.

The Union Pacific Railroad company has gone out into the state and brought in county officers to testify in its tax suit before Special Examiner Pearson.

Wednesday afternoon these witnesses testified: W. W. Wright, county treasurer of Gage county; J. R. Plasters, county clerk of Gage; Marlon Newman, former county judge of Saunders; Oscar Hanson, county treasurer of Saunders.

Hanson had looked up the 1905 assessment instead of the 1904, with which the suit deals, and asked that his testimony be withdrawn, which was done.

Wright said the assessment of Gage county land was about 15 per cent below the real value of the land, the average assessment being \$4.25, which was returned as the real value, while he believed the actual value of the land was over \$6 an acre.

Plasters thought the land was valued by the assessors at about 80 per cent of its real value. Newman said Saunders county land was returned at about 80 per cent of its real value.

On cross-examination, however, each witness admitted he was not familiar with the land in all parts of his county and each admitted that while some of the land was assessed too low other lands were assessed too high.

Tax Commissioner A. W. Scribner of the Union Pacific was on the stand all the morning. Attorney General Norris Brown appeared for the state and John N. Baldwin for the railroad.

The hearing, conducted at Union Pacific headquarters, will be resumed Friday and on Monday Tax Commissioner Curtis of Wisconsin will be a witness.

Scribner Contradicts Mickey. The testimony of Mr. Scribner was in contradiction to the statements made by Governor Mickey given some months ago.

The witness absolutely denied the statement made by Governor Mickey that he (Scribner) had sold the buildings of the Union Pacific had been insured at three-fourths of their value and the returns were based on this valuation.

Scribner said the Union Pacific did not insure its buildings and that they were returned at full value.

In the matter of deduction, which Governor Mickey testified had been made in accordance with the representations of the railroad, Mr. Scribner said the board had refused absolutely to allow for the deductions asked.

A large part of the testimony of the witness was in effect that the State Board of Equalization had taken into consideration, in its compilation of the stocks and bonds, property entirely outside of Nebraska and out of the jurisdiction of the board.

On cross-examination in the matter of the earnings of the Union Pacific, witness was asked whether, if any portion of a road earned more than another, it was not more valuable. In answer Mr. Scribner said the road does not make all the earnings, but the earnings are largely made by the employes and investments in other lines and by the feeders which bring business into Nebraska.

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BAXTER SOUNDS BATTLE CRY Nebraska to Become Storm Center of Land Fraud Investigations.

GOVERNMENT ONLY BEGUN ITS WORK District Attorney Says Rattling of Dry Bones Will Develop to Overshadow Prosecution Already Had.

"Nebraska is very likely to become a storm center of the land fraud investigations, not alone as pertains to the illegal fencing of public lands, but in the matter of illegal and fraudulent filings," said United States District Attorney Baxter Wednesday morning.

The investigation into fraudulent filings on public lands by individuals has, so far, not begun, but just begun. A great mass of evidence of the most startling character has been obtained by the special agents of the land department under the direction of the department of justice relative to wholesale and individual perjury that goes

back even farther than the fence question and when these cases are before the grand jury or the civil courts there will be a rattling of dry bones compared with which the fence cases will pale into insignificance, but as they appear to be, I am not at liberty to go into specific detail at this time. Sufficient to say there will be a vast number of acres of lands restored for honorable public entry under the homestead and other land laws. I might add that as the work proceeds the extent of these fraudulent appropriations of the public domain by perjury and subornation of perjury becomes startling. They will be carried out to the end, however, for the land department and Department of Justice does not intend to let any guilty man escape."

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MANY IN DAN CUPID'S NET Day Preceding Thanksgiving Maintains Its Reputation as Popular One for Marriages.

License Clerk Harry Morrill says, speaking out of a large experience, that, barring the rare days of June just preceding the opening of July, the day before Thanksgiving is always one of the most popular in the whole year for couples to seek permits to wed.

Three of the couples were married by Judge Vinsonhaler, and all the others expressed an intention to eat Thanksgiving dinner as married folk.

Up to closing time Wednesday evening Mr. Morrill had given licenses to the following couples: Name and Residence. Age. Thomas Hansen, Ascut, Ia. 21. Gertrude Cory, Ascut, Ia. 18. Henry C. Ord, Marquette, Neb. 28. Nellie Carnahan, Douglas county. 22. Henry H. Ruppel, Millard, Neb. 21. Lillie W. Plumb, Douglas county. 21. William Riebsamen, Omaha. 22. Lydia Ganobin, Omaha. 24. Gust Nelson, Valley. 21. Geneva Youngman, Valley. 21. Wylie S. Head, Des Moines, Ia. 25. Josephine Halpin, South Omaha. 22. Andrew Rosenquist, Omaha. 22. Selma A. Swanson, Omaha. 21. Edmund K. Kooser, Omaha. 20. Kate M. Kennedy, Omaha. 20. Bruno Soltau, Omaha. 20. Greco Rostin, Omaha. 22. Phiney D. McLean, Omaha. 21. Estelle E. Nicks, Omaha. 21. Louise Timme, Bennington. 20. Thomas W. Murphy, Omaha. 20. Margaret E. Leary, Omaha. 20. William J. Kelly, Omaha. 20. Anna Moore, Omaha. 21. Francis E. Curran, Omaha. 20. Frances Kravitz, Omaha. 20. Frank Rouse, Bescon. 20. Elsie E. Hannibal, Omaha. 21. George E. Uland, Malcom. 21. Elva J. Westcott, Malcom. 21. August Floberg, Essex, Ia. 42. Emma Peterson, Red Oak, Ia. 44. Henry B. Flancy, Clark. 24. Essie Shank, South Omaha. 24. Frank Doyle, Schuyler. 24. Mary Norton, Schuyler. 27. Christian E. Rouse, Omaha. 27. Camille Beech, Omaha. 26.

DENNETT'S STORE CLOSED ALL DAY THANKSGIVING

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Senator Jones Defends Legislature. DENVER, Nov. 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: It would seem that the easiest and quickest way by which reputation can be achieved or redeemed is by emphatically denouncing the last legislature. I read with interest the address of President Breckenridge to the Nebraska Bar association, while in the main his remarks will meet the approval of all of us, I confess that the "plain language unparaphrasing" used in the caption of "Freaks of the last legislature," criticizing the legislative utterances of that august body, appears hardly warranted or justified by the facts of the case.

There was no act passed by it "limiting the practice of law to duly admitted members of the bar." Such a law has been on the statute books for years, and the first session was simply amended by a bill introduced by a properly qualified attorney at the instance of the legal fraternity of Nebraska and for its benefit.

Regarding the charter of metropolitan cities, I am inclined to believe that the members of both houses credited the leading lights of the Omaha bar and their brethren, the real estate dealers of the metropolis, with the possession of sufficient legal knowledge and unadulterated patriotism to carefully safeguard the interests of the "Metropolitan City" in their championship of its ever-new charter.

President Breckenridge simply suggests criticism by mere mention of the fact that counties may now pay the premiums on the surety bonds substituted for the individual heretofore given by their treasurers. He certainly knows that in the case of other county officials a similar provision has for some years been part of law. The experience of many terms of legislative work has made the gentle-

man who introduced this measure a past master in the "inker's" art and his ability therein is as unquestioned as his integrity.

Judge Breckenridge is not only unkind, but unjust, in his criticisms and, indeed, incorrect in his criticism of the law relative to the "powers" of district judges at chambers. The bill was introduced (if my memory serves me) for the state bar by a jurist no less eminent in his professional skill and knowledge of the legal vernacular than the distinguished critic. The word "powers" is correctly spelled in the printed bill. The judges have been sitting at chambers under this law since June 1, 1881, and all the while "have been exercising such powers as may be conferred upon them in contradistinction to a court." The increase of power is in the right to hear and determine motions and demurrers. Did the president's wit play havoc with his memory, or is his own incubator out of gear?

His remarks as to the biennial elections bill seems prompted by sheer ignorance rather than "inexcusable folly." The people of this state are not glad because of the unconstitutionality of this law. The office of judge of the supreme court will be found at the head of the bill, in place of its vapid appendage. Its distinguished introducer is a lawyer now mentioned for a high judicial position, and incapable of being influenced by a "dishonest and corrupt lobby," and, in no measure before either body, were the sentiments of their constituents more earnestly sought and honestly acted upon by the members than in their support of this particular bill.

Almost as extraordinary are the learned gentleman's sarcasms upon the bill permitting increased compensation to clerks of district courts when the aggregate of fees shall fall to reach the meagre salary (in the smaller counties) allowed by law. If the humorist of the bench will refresh his soul and quiet his elocutionary agencies to know that the poor clerk is required to enter this additional compensation upon his fee-book and must account for it in the same manner and hold it subject to the same limitations as other fees. Mr. Breckenridge is entitled to our gratitude in that he gives us credit for "some commendable acts." Like the seals to the skinning, the legislature should ere this have become used to being damned.

Standing Up for South Omaha. SOUTH OMAHA, Nov. 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: Your editorial on cheap power and cheap fuel has the right kind of a ring. The writer felt just like this as to the South Omaha sewer proposition as we had an offer of a tannery, but it would not locate on account of lack of proper drainage and there are just enough "knockers" who live here and make their money here to put a damper on all public enterprises. But I am not in the least discouraged in South Omaha's future, as it is the best equipped and largest city in the United States for its size. J. G. BLESSING.

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