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C. F. SKIRVIN, Manager

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Keokuk, Iowa, March 15, 1909.

Indiana has a model legislature. It has adjourned.

It will have to be admitted that any legislature that defeats a measure for state-wide prohibition is a pretty good legislature.

The bill to prohibit the publication of accounts of suicides was defeated in the state senate Saturday afternoon. It was a freak measure and met a fitting end.

The legislature has refused to sanction the prohibitory amendment. It would now be a wise move on the part of the legislature to adjourn as soon as possible while its credit is good.

The senate at Des Moines has passed the house bill prohibiting the marriage of cousins. The governor's signature is now all that is required to make the measure a law. When it goes into effect Keokuk will cease to be the Gretna Green for Missouri and Illinois.

Another cause for profound thankfulness, when the day for giving thanks again rolls around, will be found in the fact that the tariff at the present extra session of congress was in the hands of its friends. It will be seen when the new law is made public that no radical changes have been made.

Count Zeppelin is to attempt to cross the Atlantic in an airship, following the course taken by Columbus in 1492. If Count Zeppelin makes the attempt, as he says he will, the Jacksonville Courier thinks it quite likely that he will join the late Christopher Columbus in his present occupation of pushing clouds. It is the belief of that paper that most men of ordinary intelligence, and this is supposed to include German counts, have too much sense or too much love of life to attempt to cross the Atlantic in a gas bag.

Des Moines advises say that the movement for resubmission of the prohibitory amendment has been defeated by the reference of the joint resolution to that effect to the senate committee on constitutional amendments. The committee is known to be overwhelmingly opposed to the proposition and will report against it. As the senate rules do not permit a minority report the fate of the measure is sealed. Friends of the resolution admit that it is dead. This disposition of it is a real triumph for temperance and morality.

In the view of the Dubuque Telegraph-Herald the Byers bills to secure better enforcement of the mullet law are without objection in their present form. They proposed dangerous centralization of power in the provision empowering the governor to remove peace officers, "for a Republican governor on the complaint of a few local Republicans could oust from office every Democrat on the pretext of neglect of his official duties." The Telegraph-Herald goes on to say:

In its amended form the bill makes peace officers subject to impeachment in the district court, and vests the court with discretionary power of suspension or removal. Instead of in-

stituting the plan for a state sheriff with power to supersede the local sheriff, the bill now empowers the attorney general to practice in the district courts to inaugurate or prosecute any motion.

The Kewanee Star-Courier is indiscreet enough to say in speaking of Junkin, the self-confessed murderer of Clara Rosen at Ottumwa:

"A criminal ought to be made to feel the weight of displeasure. Public safety is endangered by maudlin sympathy."

The Star-Courier would better not let Warden Sanders of the Fort Madison penitentiary hear it say that. It would get itself disliked. He would also charge that it was "persecuting" him.

It seems that the "pure boot" bill was the innocent measure it pretended to be. A delegation representing Iowa manufacturers of boots and shoes appeared before a committee of the legislature the other day and declared that the bill in question was a measure offered in the interest of Chicago, St. Louis and outside manufacturers who would crush out Iowa concerns. They dissected shoes and explained how they were made and of what material. If the bill is adverse to Iowa manufacturers it ought to be knocked in the head at the first opportunity.

THE COMMISSION PLAN. It may be set down as a foregone conclusion that Keokuk will have the commission form of government before many years. The development of the water power will make abandonment of the present system an imperative necessity. Already there is urgent need for some of the best and wisest and most experienced and successful business men in the city at the head of its municipal affairs, but they cannot be persuaded to stand for office under the political plan of city government now in force. Not only are they unwilling to stoop to ward politics, with the chances of defeat staring them in the face, but they cannot afford to give their time and attention to public matters to the neglect of private business for the salaries now paid. Even if they were sure of election they would hesitate to obligate themselves to give official duties the attention they deserve. If through any mishap the water power should not be developed the need of a better plan of transacting the city's business will still remain. The interests involved will not be as large as in the case of rapid growth of the city but with limited revenues, as at present, there is need for careful and economical management to make them go as far as possible.

The plan of city government now in force is cumbersome, unwieldy, inefficient, wasteful and extravagant. There is, apparently, no authority or responsibility located definitely anywhere. If anyone thinks there is let him attempt to get a wrong righted or a hardship relieved. He will be sent around from pillar to post and he will be fortunate if he does not have an experience similar to that of the historical personage who made the famous journey from Jerusalem to Jericho. As instances in point of the difficulty of locating responsibility, it may be remarked that it has not been determined even yet who was responsible for the condition of Fifteenth street at the time of acceptance of its "improvement" by the city, and that the authorization for exceeding the amount allowed by the council for paving Johnson street from Second street to the Levee still remains shrouded in a mystery as impenetrable as that which so successfully conceals the identity of the individual who struck Billy Patterson. But this is not the worst thing in connection with the present arrangement. The more aldermen there are the greater the "necessity," to use an aldermanic phrase, for what is known as "log-rolling" and the more it is practiced. This entails great, and oftentimes unnecessary, expense on the taxpayers. Aldermen in one ward vote for improvements at public expense in other wards in order to get in return votes for improvements in their own ward. This is a common practice—and the taxpayers pay the freight.

If Keokuk were governed by a commission of three men chosen for their fitness as managers of the city's affairs, without regard to politics, trading in improvements at the public expense would be at an end. Authority and responsibility would be concentrated and it would be possible to locate blame when blame was called for. The saving effected in public expenditures would pay the salaries of such officials several times over and leave a nest egg in the treasury. Good men would be willing to devote their best efforts to the city's interests if politics was eliminated and they were paid approximately what their services were worth. There are other reasons why Keokuk should turn to the commission plan for relief from present conditions, but these in themselves are sufficient. The facts here set forth cannot exist without coming to public notice, and as soon as they become generally known and receive the attention they deserve the change will be made.

"Young man!" exclaims the Ottumwa Courier, "let the clock look at you awhile. You have made it tired looking at it. You think it moves slow. What do you suppose it thinks of you? The only times it ever sees you move fast are at 12 and 6. The clock always moves the fastest when you are working the hardest."

THE PANAMA CANAL.

At a recent luncheon of the Chicago Traffic Club Mr. Isham Randolph, the distinguished civil engineer of that city, described President Taft's late visit to Panama to choose between the lock and the sea level types for the canal. Mr. Randolph, who was one of the six engineers to accompany the President, declared that the engineering experts believed the lock canal had completely demonstrated its superiority and upheld the minority report of the board of consulting engineers on whose recommendation it was approved by congress. Mr. Randolph said the canal should be completed at least a year before the date set, January 1, 1915, but that allowance had been made for possible delays. He also asserted the estimate of \$200,000,000 was liberal, and that he saw no necessity for the bill before congress to increase the appropriation to \$500,000,000. While the original estimate of \$128,000,000 has been greatly exceeded, he said, it is because they are making a better canal, and the Americans want the best. In addition, we have paid the French \$40,000,000, the republic of Panama \$10,000,000, and we have expended \$7,000,000 more for sanitation and government.

According to Mr. Randolph the hospital facilities at Ancon are so excellent that it is almost a pleasure to be ill, but there has not been a case of yellow fever on the isthmus for three years, and mosquitoes have been almost exterminated by pouring oil at the sources of streams he said. The reports of the great slides of earth have been greatly exaggerated. There have been only five slides, and while they have been large, including about 1,500,000 cubic yards, the amount is inconsiderable when compared with the total excavation, 142,000,000 cubic yards. Mr. Randolph's description of the canal was illustrated by stereopticon views taken during the trip and exhibited for the first time.

IOWA UNDER PROHIBITION.

In arguing against resubmission of the prohibitory amendment in the house at Des Moines one day last week Representative Moore of Linn county drew a graphic and true-to-life picture of conditions in Iowa under the prohibitory law before the enactment of the mullet law now in operation. What he said is worthy of reproduction and preservation for future reference. Following is an extract from his address:

"I have lived in Iowa all my life. I think I know something about the people of Iowa. Nearly thirty years ago people of this state adopted a prohibitory amendment, and I well remember it brought forth an era of lawlessness and riot, a period of law contempt. On every hand all the temptations that the liquor traffic could present were placed before old and young. And there was instilled in the young man a contempt of law, a contempt that flagrant violation always brings. An unspeakable condition of riot and lawlessness existed in all our cities.

"For fourteen years we have had rest and recovery from that ten year period of mistake and fanaticism. We now have a law faulty in construction, inconsistent in principle, but in operation admirable. It successfully controls an evil that always will be with us. The punishment of law violation is swift and certain where public sentiment is back of it.

"Now a new generation comes up and asks for a renewal of the unspeakable conditions of those ten years."

A BIG HARVEST NEEDED.

In his latest financial letter Henry Clews speaks of the politics of the new administration and tariff revision as potent factors in the present business situation. He then goes on to say that the next important element is the crop situation. The country's greatest need today is a big harvest, as Mr. Clews thus demonstrates:

"Prices of all food and agricultural products are too high, greatly increasing the cost of living, and no recession can be anticipated until the farmer gets to work and produces more abundantly. This he can well afford to do, for farming has become a much more profitable industry than in former days, and there is sure to be a ready market for profitable prices for all the grower can possibly produce. Our farmers should be shown that it is for their interest to strive to the utmost for large production. At present they are the most, if not only, prosperous class in the country today; yet they cannot indefinitely prosper at the expense of other classes, and their own progress will be prolonged and made more permanent by doing their share towards reducing the cost of living. As that element declines there will be more to spend in other directions, other industries will become more prosperous, the number of employed will increase, there will be a larger number of mouths to feed and a consequent better demand for food products.

NOTES AND COMMENT.

"Every time the Iowa general assembly adjourns the people of the state give a sigh of relief," observes the Council Bluffs Nonpareil.

A rich California widow has married her chauffeur. It is suspected that she did not feel wealthy enough to stand the expense of a husband and a chauffeur, so concluded to combine them.

"There is much talk about enforcing the laws," notes the Marion Register. "Not one man in a thousand knows what laws we have, and yet it is a safe proposition that we would have a better statute if three-fourths of the laws were repealed."

BURRELL ON BLYTHE

Howard A. Burrell, in Washington County Press: This man, hitherto in robust health, and but fifty-nine years old, was seized with heart trouble at Weaver's hunting lodge, six miles east of Wapello, last Friday. A doctor relieved the sudden pain and he slept quite well that night, but the next morning he dropped dead. Clots of blood in an artery near the heart suddenly stopped that superb mechanism.

General a strong railroad attorney, general counsel for the Burlington, he came into prominence as a shrewd politician in the successful campaigns he fought for his father-in-law, the late John H. Gear, for governor, for congressman and the U. S. senator, in 1884 and again in 1900. He was governor two terms, won once as M. C. and was then beaten. In politics Mr. Blythe was altruistic, never seeking place for himself, but always for others. He was so skillful an organizer that, to break his power, he was made a very effective Bogey Man by designing enemies, and, as witchcraft is always popular, since it appeals to the imagination, he was made a bogey man by those who believed that Blythe's real name was Mephisto. It became amusing to see the credulity of superstitious people. His fine Italian hand was seen, many thought, in the transfers of newspapers, and in this move and that on the political checker-board. Anything that looked vague and was construed as "occult" was laid at Blythe's feet; there was a world of suspicion; he was pictured as the arch enemy of "sacred (humbly) reform."

In reality he was the very least bit of a plotter. He was a perfect gentleman, open and direct in personal and political conduct, modest, truthful, regardless of his word, dependable, and cementing friendship by honorable, honest, square dealing. He was the reverse of all that he was painted by interested and not too scrupulous parties. The least of an egotist. If there was a streak of vanity in him, it was concealed. No fuss and feathers about him. He avoided the conspicuous places, wanted no brass band or claquers, or parades, or torchlight processions, and no one ever saw him "put on dog" or strut or pose, or assume lordly, and therefore, absurd, country stallion gait and manners. He did his work, stuck to his tasks, was plucky in fighting battles according to the rules of civilized warfare, and was a good loser. Instead of being a martyr, he was utterly sincere, a man of his word, a gentleman.

Altruistic, not self-seeking, Governor Shaw says he tendered the senatorship to Blythe, after Gear's death, but he wisely declined it, though he admitted he would rather be senator than anything else, but he recognized that he had been so long in railway service he would almost unconsciously be biased and warped in dealing with many a public question—his hand was subdued by the fact he had worked in the fewest public men have that much self-penetration. He understood himself and knew his limitations. It is a rare thing that a man rightly estimates himself. But Blythe had no illusions—he put the temptation away—he feared he could not be impartial on some lines. The essential greatness of the man shows full size in a personal transaction like that.

He must have been a strong lawyer. For twenty-five years he had been in the legal department of the Burlington road, and for several years he was its efficient head. Such posts do not go by favoritism. The late C. E. Perkins, president of that road for many years, had full confidence in the ability and probity of Mr. Blythe, and chose him as administrator of his vast estate.

Mr. Blythe was a New Jersey product, received a liberal education, and though, distinctively a man of affairs, a business man, a lawyer, he kept in touch with books of the best, and was a scholar as well as a man of the world. He was at ease with all classes of men and women, had a world of tact, and carried himself modestly but equally with all types of people.

The news of the swift death of this great and serviceable man resounded far, like the fall of the largest tree in the forest.

"Oh, yes, but he gave passes to delegates to political conventions."

True, it was the custom in his time, as it was once the habit of the clergy and the deacons and the church lady to hit the brandy decanter, and for certain good church folk in Europe to get heavily drunk at communions, and the sacrament had to be abolished till folks morals and habits mended. For years delegates of both parties got passes, and nothing was thought of by anybody. It was no more a sign of political corruption and prostitution than giving a man a cigar, or a drink, or a seat at your table, was a bribe given him. It was a matter of course, a custom, and customs are laws. Conduct and custom change as we climb the heavenly road. Pass-giving then was no more bribe-giving to delegates and politicians than to editors for advertising and good will. The "naughty" practice ceased several years ago, and we may admire our virtues all we choose.

"He lobbied legislatures."

Yes, and the railways pretty near had to do it, to stand any show. It is queer, the well-nigh universal hostility to railroads. Juries will suit them

every time, in spite of all evidence and charges of courts. You'd think the average man could be just to all parties, and feel and allow the weight of testimony, see the bearing and force of facts, but he is so full of prejudice and passion that he is a rare man, indeed, who will be fair to railroads. Always a sign of a small, narrow, shallow man. Legislatures are full of such creatures, and railway men do not want their properties pillaged by pirates, who need to have information thrust into their thick heads by a surgical operation, the way jokes are said to be introduced into Scotch skulls. The relations have changed now that roads do not need to maintain lobbies. All that order has been changed, but the passionate memory and poisoned prejudice remain. Railway attorneys do, indeed, still address legislative committees, and it is a hopeful sign that they receive from such bodies respectful attention and consideration.

We have a timely sample of the vicious prejudice to railroads. A year or so ago legislatures, without knowledge of the facts necessary to form a sound, fair, just judgment, penalized the railroads by slaughtering passenger and freight fares. Governor Hughes of New York, was the only governor in the United States big enough, bold enough, to veto such a confiscatory bill. He dared, considering the insane prejudice to roads, it was the bravest thing done in that or any other year. Now Federal Judge McPherson, of Iowa, praise be equally doled, declares the Missouri two-cent fare law unconstitutional because virtually confiscatory, because under that highwaymen act of her legislature roads did and could not earn over 3 per cent, whereas they should and must earn at least 6 per cent to make good all round and be just to everybody connected. And the Kansas legislature shows symptoms of hating her like law, and may repeal it. It would not be strange if the Iowa assembly should take some action. It is a gigantic craze, growing out of the insane hatred of railroads. It was as bad as the loud, not the good, kind of socialism, as bad nearly as Nihilism. Human nature can be perfectly contemptible.

Mr. Blythe was, like all other men, influenced and guided by "the ideas in the air" of his time. He worked after the fashion of the day, as do all others. We cannot utterly detach ourselves. But he was candid, fair and just. He was the best type of business and professional man, and Iowa cannot be too rich in such admirable citizenship.

A KEOKUKIAN IN TEXAS.

Richard B. B. Wood Talks of Conditions There and Pays Tribute to the Late A. J. Mathias.

SILSBEE, Texas, correspondence Burlington Hawk-Eye: Away down here on the gulf coast where it is heard that the air is always unskipped and salubrious we have had a little touch of the fingers of Jack Frost several times recently. But as I write now on the reverenced and celebrated Washington's birthday it is warm enough to sit on the galleries and shirt sleeves are in vogue. I look out through a window and see plum trees in bloom while lettuce, radishes and cabbages are growing in the truck garden. Watermelons and muskmelon seeds are in the ground in some places and wild flowers are blooming and forest trees are showing signs of leaves. The tall pines are always green.

You have no idea what a source of valuable information the Hawk-Eye has proven down here. It was the first Iowa paper we saw in Texas. From its columns we first heard of the dreadful accident which befel Mrs. Wells M. Irwin of Keokuk, who was dashed to the sidewalk by a runaway horse she was driving and taken up unconscious several weeks ago, and of her happy recovery, and from the same source we received our first newspaper announcement of the death of Abraham J. Mathias, cashier of the Keokuk Savings bank which occurred on Lincoln's birthday anniversary.

And this reminds us that no better man ever lived or died in Keokuk than Abraham J. Mathias. It was sweet that he should die amid the flags furled in honor of Abraham Lincoln's birth, on the very day that he was born into the Great World Beyond. He had performed his duty in a more humble sphere as faithfully as the great emancipator—paper and prince were the same to him—"A man's a man for a' that." Mathias was a man among men. It was not his thought to gain honors from any position he held but rather to act so as to elevate the position. He brought honors by his correct deportment rather than to receive them. No position which he possibly could have attained would have tainted him with snobbery. The roughest or humblest attacks of the "rank" in which he was engaged received as courteous treatment as the highest official and the least prominent patron was as kindly treated as the whose transactions ran up to the thousands or tens of thousands. His favorite in every walk of life was the honest, upright, courteous man and it was this high trait in his character that made him the noblest work of God and man to be trusted above his fellows in the community in which he lived. He sought no high sounding name: which wealth or position could

give if he must yield the duties and practices of a plain, unostentatious, courteous gentleman. These virtues he bore to the end of his successful and honored life. If Mathias told you it was so, it was so to the very best of his knowledge and belief, and that is why the entire community had the utmost confidence in him and recognized his words as a bond. He adopted no modern tricks of the trade in finance but went through life doing unto others as he would have them do unto him, and no higher tribute could be paid to any man. Sleep well, brave, tried and true man, sleep well. Mr. Mathias was not only well known in Burlington but had hosts of friends in other parts of Iowa and in Missouri and Illinois who joined his many friends away down here on the Texas coast in paying a silent tribute to his memory.

THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT.

Senate Solves Muddle by Providing Another Judge.

Des Moines Register and Leader: Judge Bank of Keokuk will not be legislated out of office, and the Lee county lawyers who object to trying all their cases before him will be relieved by the passage of the Allen bill which went through the senate yesterday. The measure authorizes the chief justice of the Iowa supreme court to appoint a judge to exchange places for two terms in each year with the judge who is alone on the bench in any judicial district in the state. There are two districts in the state with a single judge in each. Lee county composes one of these districts, and the other is made up of Iowa and Johnson counties.

The measure now goes to the house where yesterday a resolution was adopted which provides for the appointment by the presiding officers of the two houses of a joint committee to investigate the advisability of rearranging the judicial districts of the state.

Short Peach Crop.

Nauvoo Independent: It is predicted that the peach crop will be short in these parts this year, as the buds have been ruined by the ice and sleet during the winter. E. J. Barter informs us that the fruit buds are black and will not be productive. Believing that there will be few, if any, peaches, he has "cut his trees back" so that they will get a new growth. It is said that the apples and pears are in good condition and that unless a heavy frost nips the buds when they begin to open, there will be a good crop.

The One Who Makes the Noise.

Some have natures made of gold, without a speck or flaw. While some are only gilded forms, all padded out with straw; And while the modest, worthy man the world is slow to heed, The counterfeiter, who loudly brags, steps in and takes the lead. The one who makes the noise is sure to catch the crowd, and now I know why all the cattle tagged the old bell-cow. —Nixon Waterman.

The Waterloo Reporter wonders if Taft's first message will be as widely read as the account of his first "post-sum banquet."

Goss Signed.

Davenport Times: Governor Carroll this week handed State Pharmacy Commissioner Goss of Atlantic a fountain pen and a typewritten resignation, with instructions to "sign here." Goss signed. The governor failed to

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