

OFFICIAL SALARIES.

Suggestions Brought Out by a Perusal of the Kansas Blue Book.

EDITOR ADVOCATE:—The official state directory, known as the Kansas "Blue Book," compiled under the direction of Secretary of State Osborn, approved by the executive council, and issued last July, is an important state document, exhibiting to the people of the state its official machinery and the cost of maintaining the same.

In looking through this book of more than 100 pages, one cannot fail to be impressed with the idea that the state of Kansas is very liberal in the way of official salaries, and exceedingly so in many instances.

Many people in this state have entertained the idea for a number of years that the salaries of public officials are too high—far in excess of the salaries paid for similar duties performed in business or commercial vocations, and whatever the purpose may have been for issuing this official directory, it is certainly timely, and will give the taxpayers of the state a comprehensive idea of where a great deal of their money goes.

I may be considered by some persons as taking an extreme view, but I verily believe that in the matter of official salaries, the aggregate amount paid to all officials in the state could be chopped in two in the middle, and yet retain the same efficiency we now have in our public service, and bring to it the same degree of honesty we now have. By this I do not wish to be understood as wanting each official's salary reduced one-half, for while many are too high some are too low.

In some of the counties, where the reduction of fees and salaries has been agitated, taking the form of a local issue, the idea is being carried out in a manner highly satisfactory to the taxpayers and officers.

In Labette county the salaries of county officials are as follows: County clerk, \$1,250; county treasurer, \$1,250; sheriff, \$1,200; register of deeds, \$1,500; county attorney, \$1,250; county superintendent, \$1,300; clerk of district court, \$1,300; probate judge, \$1,400. That county has a population of 26,757.

In Cherokee county, with a population of 27,118, the county clerk, treasurer, register of deeds, county attorney, clerk of district court and probate judge each draw a salary of \$1,200 a year, the sheriff \$1,000 and county superintendent \$900.

In Douglass county, with a population of 23,384, the county clerk receives \$2,500 a year; county treasurer, \$4,000; sheriff, \$4,000; register of deeds, \$3,000; clerk of district court, \$2,500; probate judge, \$2,000; county attorney and county superintendent each \$1,300.

It will be seen that in the counties of Labette and Cherokee, each with a much larger population than Douglas county, the taxpayers are paying but a little more than half in the former, and not one-half in the latter county for what the people of Douglas county are paying the same officers, or \$100 less in both the counties of Labette and Cherokee with a combined population of 53,875 than Douglas county is paying with only 23,384 population.

In Atchison county, with a population of 26,455, less than either Labette or Cherokee, the aggregate salaries of the officers named is \$21,600. In Bourbon county, with a population of 26,426, the salaries of these officials aggregate \$19,700.

The same differences will be found in all counties where the salaries and fees of officials are claimed and adjusted un-

der the old law.

In those counties where the salaries have been cut down by special acts, there is no evidence to show that the business of those counties is not attended to with the same diligence and efficiency that characterized this same public service when salaries were twice the aggregate amount of to-day, and the officials are just as honest.

In looking over the several departments of state and our various institutions, I am led to the conclusion that Kansas is also liberal in providing official machinery, as well as in salaries in many of these.

In several departments at the state house, the clerical force could be reduced and a material reduction should be made in salaries. It is simply ridiculously absurd to pay from \$1,200 to \$2,000 a year for clerical help to men and women who would be justly remunerated and consider themselves fortunate in securing one-half of such an income in employment anywhere else.

In the matter of salaries of state officers and heads of departments, they seem to be fair and justly proportioned, with one exception: Why was the salary of labor commissioner fixed at \$1,000 when, as a matter of fact, it is certainly one of the most important positions in the state?

The office of adjutant general, or that department, evidently costs more than it should—more than the "soldier playing" business in this state demands. The present force in that office may be busy enough, but it is superfluous and not at all necessary.

When it comes to boards and commissions, and inspectors, a person becomes bewildered in contemplating the multiplicity of duties of the persons comprising them, three-fourths of which could be dispensed with and the state and its institutions not suffer by it.

Why could not the educational institutions of the state be placed in charge of one board of regents? Why could not a number of the boards, commissions, etc., be consolidated?

The truth is, many of these offices are absolutely useless, and were never created because they were needed, but for the sole purpose of bestowing cheap honors, and emoluments upon men for party service, and are, to a great extent, mere sinecures.

Useless offices and appointments must be lopped off and salaries and fees must be reduced if the People's party answers the demands of the people, who will not excuse the Populists on the flimsy excuse that this superfluous official machinery was created and turned over to them by the republicans.

Legislative action will be necessary in reducing fees and salaries, and in the abolition of some of the useless offices, but in the matter of clerical hire and other appointments, in a number of instances, the action of the legislature will not be necessary to bring about a more economical administration. If the People's party would retain the confidence of the people, it must be consistent.

J. F. McDOWELL.

Coercive Co-operation.

EDITOR ADVOCATE:—I have been both interested and amused at the action of the Kansas City papers in advocating the municipal ownership and operation of the water works of that city, and also am pleased at the amount of good work which the Star has done in the last year in urging the municipal and public ownership of natural monopolies.

I have been amused, also, at the roasting the Star occasionally gives the People's party for putting government

ownership of railways in its platform, yet the same reasons exist for national ownership and control of railways engaged in the interstate commerce that are good for municipal ownership of waterworks, lighting plants, telephone lines, or street railways in a city. I have also noticed the discussion in the ADVOCATE between the editor and his Colorado correspondent in regard to the terms "socialistic" and "socialism." The position of the ADVOCATE that the ownership and operation of water works or the ownership of a railway, or even the ownership of a public road is socialistic I take to be well founded.

The word socialism is used so loosely by so many people, and is used so often as a bogey to frighten the public, that it is difficult for many persons to arrive at a definite conclusion as to what is meant by the term. Professor Sumner says the free coinage of silver is socialism, that government paper money is socialism, and that the protective tariff is socialism. Mr. Frank Tracy, of Omaha, in his article in the May Forum entitled "Menacing Western Socialism," takes the ground that this movement for the public ownership of monopolies is a movement toward socialism.

Some time ago I saw that Mr. Powderly was reported as saying in an interview that he was a socialist, and stated that he was a socialist because of his belief in government ownership of railways and other natural monopolies. I have seen in print similar statements by prominent People's party leaders. Now, these things are no doubt desired by socialists and advocated by them. I believe in the public ownership and control of natural monopolies myself, and yet I do not consider myself a socialist at all.

Here is Prof. Ely's definition of socialism, word for word, as given in his "Outlines of Economics": "Socialism means coercive co-operation not merely for undertakings of a monopolistic nature, but for all productive enterprises. Socialists seek the establishment of industrial democracy through the instrumentality of the state, which they hold to be the only way whereby it can be attained. Socialism contemplates an expansion of the business functions of government until all business is absorbed. All business is then to be regulated by the people in their organic capacity, each man and each woman having the same rights which any other man or woman has. Our political organization is to become an economic industrial organization. Private property in profit-producing capital, and rent-producing land, is to be abolished, and private property in income is to be retained, but with this restriction, that it shall not be employed in productive enterprises. What is desired, then, is not as is supposed by the uninformed, a division of property, but a concentration of property. The socialists do not complain because productive property is too much concentrated, but because it is not sufficiently so."

I think that after reading it carefully there will be a few people inclined to quarrel with Professor Ely's definition of socialism, and his statement that socialism aims at coercive co-operation in all industries.

Common property in land is one of the things desired by socialists, but common property in land might, and would, exist without socialism or community of goods.

Albert Spencer, in 1850, said in "Social Statics," speaking of common property in land: "Such a doctrine is consistent with the highest state of civilization; may be carried out without involving a community of goods, and need cause no

very serious revolution in existing arrangements. The changes required would be simply a change of landlords, separate ownership would merge into the joint stock ownership of the public. Instead of being in the possession of individuals, the country would be held by the great corporate body—society. Instead of leasing his acres from an isolated proprietor, the farmer would lease them from the nation. Instead of paying his rent to Sir John or his Grace, he would pay it to an agent or deputy agent of the community. Stewards would be public officials, instead of private ones, and tenancy the only land tenure.

Until such time as a new definition of socialism is accepted by political economists and by the public, it only confuses the minds of many people to give it a loose definition. There are many of us supporting the movement for the public ownership of natural monopolies who are doing it with a belief that it will give a fuller recognition of individual rights, that it will be a step toward the realization of the law of equal freedom, and not with a belief that it will forward the essential doctrine of socialists, viz: Coercive co-operation in all industrial enterprises. QUINCY A. GLASS.

Greeting.

[The Kansas Star, published at the Olathe Deaf and Dumb Asylum, has the following from the new superintendent of that institution of January 4. We predict that the former difficulties experienced at this institution will cease and that there will be no further cause of complaint with its management.—EDITORS.]

To the Friends and Patrons of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb:

The new superintendent desires in this way to answer some of the many inquiries that are being received concerning the condition and work of the institution. There is perfect harmony and thorough co-operation in all departments. Such changes as may be needed will be made from time to time, to bring the institution up to the highest possible standing. The new superintendent feels that he has been called to a sacred work, and will devote every energy of his heart and life to the welfare of the institution. He feels a deep personal interest in every pupil and employe, and will never be a respecter of persons. He appreciates keenly the solicitude of parents with reference to the care and education of the pupils committed to his charge, and assures them that in everything their dear boys and girls shall be trained in the way that will lead to pure and noble manhood and womanhood. Parents need have no fear whatever in trusting their children to the care of the institution under its present organization, and it is earnestly hoped that all the old pupils will be promptly returned to their accustomed places, and that many new ones shall be enrolled. The superintendent invites the closest inspection of present conditions, and expects the hearty support of all in the very responsible work which has been committed to his care. Personal inquiries, by mail or otherwise, will be promptly answered, and every possible assistance rendered to those who desire to send their unfortunate dear ones here. A. A. STEWART, Superintendent.

Mr. C. Wood Davis, having completed his job with Washburn and Whittiker, one a millionaire flour packer, and the other a millionaire pork packer, to pass an anti-option bill, he has now taken a contract from Wall street to prove to the people of the west and south that the volume of currency has no effect on the price of products. If any man aside from Bean Soup Atkinson can do this, Mr. C. Wood Davis can. The New York Sun prints his first attempt in that direction. Mr. Davis always makes his statistics pay.—National Watchman January 5.