

LEGISLATURE DOES LITTLE DURING WEEK

NOT ONE BILL OF IMPORTANCE GIVEN FINISHING TOUCHES.

DOCUMENT EDITOR LAW WILL SAVE MONEY

List of Measures Which Passed Second House During Week—Senate Constitutional Committee Gets Busy and Disposes of Five Bills Early Vote on Suffrage Not Considered.

Special to Times-Republican.

Des Moines, April 3.—Within the past five days, the working days of this week, not a single bill that could be called of first importance has been finished up by the two branches of the legislature. The house has so much leisure on its hands that it took a recess for today. The only bill which passed the second house which might be regarded as of real value to the people of the state at large is the document editor bill, distinctly a retrenchment bill, and it has amendments which yet call for further roll calls before it is ready for the governor.

Providing for document editor to revise copy on the state printed matter and superintend the printing.

Increase in salaries of railroad commissioners to \$3,500.

Revision of laws of guards and clerks at reformatory and prison.

Directing county attorneys to follow transferred cases into the county where venue has been taken.

Providing one additional state home finding agent for state institutions.

Making it optional with city council to publish proceedings of council.

Authorizing collection of penalty on taxes only four years.

Reimburse for expenditures for the Gettysburg trip.

New injunction law for vice resorts.

Extending terms of commissions in military service to ten years.

An appropriation for railroad maps.

Increasing support for orphans' home to \$13 a month.

Authorizing cities to establish sanitary districts and to tax for street care and cleaning.

Legalizing act relating to New Providence and one at Cedar Rapids and one land patent.

Nothing conclusive nor final was done with regard to highways, tax on large appropriations, the capitol extension, nor any other of the large subjects to be handled.

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Amendment permitting verdicts by five-sixths of jury.

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It will be observed that the bills which contemplate reduction in the expenses of legislative sessions all refer to future sessions and not to this one. After admitting that the governor is right in his suggestion of reduction in the number of employees all action is being put off until it is too late to do any good now.

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It was certain that there were about thirty members of the senate, fully and fairly committed to the forward movement in roads legislation. When the bill passed it had thirty-five votes, the possibly some might not have voted that way but for the knowledge of the one-sided character of legislative sentiment. On the other hand there were votes cast in the senate against the bill on the same theory that many such votes were cast in the house, that of paying of campaign promises.

Removing Bad Kinks. The highway bill as passed would take a good many bad kinks out of the present law, and would go a long way toward making better the feeling of the people toward centralized control and direction of statewide highway planning and construction. It would establish better relations between the county boards and the county engineering department, would make it easier to dispose of the railway crossing troubles, increase the proportion of the auto tax going to each county, etc.

From the very first it has been known and acknowledged that as for the Johnston bill which the house put thru that it was not in good faith nor seriously intended to become a law. Some of those who voted for it would never have done so on the supposition it could ever pass the senate. It was avowed by its strongest and loudest advocates on the floor of the house that its chief purpose was to make a political issue for the campaign two years hence. In this the politicians had much local assistance in the way of publicity for their scheme. Many of the house members declare that but for the way the Johnston bill was treated with seriousness by those who ostentatiously opposed it the bill could not have passed the house. Its weakness was at once apparent when it came under discussion in the senate and could muster less than a third of the votes, when proposed as a substitute.

The highway law as presently proposed to go to conference committee unless the house is willing to accept substantially the committee bill on which the most of the work of the session has been put. If there is no legislation at all on highway matters the situation will be left just as at present.

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