

PROPOSED RAILROAD LEGISLATION.

House bill No. 743 (substitute for House bill No. 210) is quite a voluminous one, and it merits the impartial attention of all who are hoping for remedial legislation, in this line, at the hands of the People's Representatives.

Its comprehensive title is as follows:

An act to regulate reasonable maximum charges for the transportation of freight on the different lines of railroad in the state of Kansas, and providing for a state board of railroad commissioners with general powers of supervision over the transportation lines within the state, and giving to such commissioners full power and authority to control, fix and regulate the charges and rates to be collected by said road and transportation lines for carrying freight over such roads and lines in Kansas, and to prevent unjust and unreasonable discriminations in such charges, and providing for the selection of such commissioners and the manner in which they shall be chosen, and prescribing their compensation and duties, and making appropriations to enforce this act.

Section one provides that all railroad corporations or companies organized under the laws of Kansas, or doing business within the state, their trustees, receivers, lessees or managing agents or officers, shall be limited in their maximum charges to the rates of transportation which are provided for in this act, or fixed by the board of railroad commissioners herein provided for. The roads are to be classified according to the respective annual earnings of the said several roads within the state for the preceding year. Class A embracing all railroads whose annual earnings shall be \$4,000 or more per mile; class B shall include all railroads the earnings of which shall be from \$3,000 to \$4,000 per mile, and class C all whose earnings shall be less than \$3,000 per mile.

Section two provides that it shall be unlawful for anyone connected with any road to charge, accept or receive a greater rate for the transportation of property than provided for in this act, or than established and fixed by the said commissioners under the authority hereby conferred upon them.

Section three provides that the office of each of the present board of commissioners shall expire on April 1, 1891, and that the executive council shall, before that date, elect a competent person for a member of the board, whose office shall hold until the second Monday of January, 1892.

Before said date of April 1, 1891, the State Senate shall elect one member and the House of Representatives one member, their terms of office each to hold to the said second Monday in January, 1892.

But at the general election, in November, 1891, the three commissioners shall be elected, one for one year, one for two, and one for three years, from the said second Monday of January, 1892, and in the November of each following year, from 1891, one commissioner shall be elected for a term of three years.

The governor shall appoint to fill any vacancy that may occur, which appointment shall hold until the following election and qualification of his successor. The board of commissioners shall have power to appoint and remove their secretary, and each of the board shall give a bond in the

sum of \$10,000, to be approved by the executive council. No person having any bonds, stock or property in any railroad company, or who is in the employment or in any way pecuniarily interested in any railroad shall be eligible to the office of either commissioner or secretary of the board.

Section four fixes salaries, and provides for necessary office furniture and stationery, at the expense of the state.

Section five provides for a division of the state into three districts. The first embraces twenty-six counties in eastern Kansas, the northwestern one of which is Nemaha, the southwestern Montgomery. The second is in central Kansas, embracing forty counties, the westernmost of which are Smith, Osborne, Russell, Barton, Stafford, Pratt and Barber; and the third district is made up of the forty counties in western Kansas west of those last mentioned. One commissioner shall reside in each of said districts, but shall be elected by the electors of the entire state.

Sections six to fourteen, inclusive, provides for the methods of the commissioners to pursue towards the railroad or transportation companies, and the processes when there are violations or evasions of the law, to be pursued.

Section fifteen gives the schedule of rates and classification of freights, which are presented in comprehensive detail.

Sections sixteen and seventeen furnish minute constructions of the classifications.

Section eighteen specifies the civil procedure to obtain when the orders of the board are violated by any company, corporation or association.

Section nineteen explains when and how the board of railroad commissioners shall furnish the information as to maximum rates and classifications, and the duties of the attorney general, county attorneys, sheriffs and county clerks in the premises.

Section twenty defines the duties of railroad corporations in the matter of furnishing reasonable facilities for loading and unloading freight, and the power with which the commissioners are invested in compelling the companies to comply with the provisions of this law.

Section twenty-one provides for an appropriation of \$50,000, or so much thereof as shall be necessary to meet the requirements of this act and to pay salaries until June 1, 1893.

Section twenty-two specifies what kind of matter, in detailed facts, the commissioners shall present in their biennial reports, submitted to the Legislature, and also the duty of railroad officers to report the business done in their departments.

Section twenty-three provides how the attorney general may have cases advanced that are brought in any action under the provisions of this act, and the duty of the chief justice of the supreme court in cases therein named.

Section twenty-four gives power to the commissioners to prescribe and fix, after notice and hearing as provided in this act, the compensation

for switching any car, or doing anything relating to transportation, loading, unloading or storage.

Section twenty-five provides that the commissioners may employ one clerk and one stenographer, at a salary not exceeding \$1,000 per annum.

Section twenty-six declares that this act, being deemed of immediate importance, shall go into effect as may be provided.

STUPID BIGOTRY.

The *Capital* of the 21st has the following as a part of its generous display of headlines: "Mountebank Simpson. He appears before the coinage committee and brays forth his ignorance." One not familiar with the *Capital* would suppose from the above that Jerry Simpson had been guilty of some gross impropriety and had given utterance to sentiments that had shocked the refined intelligence of the American people. Glancing down the column of associated press dispatches in order to learn what Jerry has been saying that betrays such gross ignorance we find the following introduced by another of the *Capital's* complimentary headlines:

THE SOCKLESS MOUNTEBANK AIRS HIS IGNOMINANCE.

WASHINGTON, February 20.—Congressman-elect Jerry Simpson, of Kansas, representing the Farmers' Alliance, was one of the speakers before the House coinage committee. He said the farmers of the country demand and would insist on more money. He advocated free coinage as to the means of this end; also the subtreasury scheme and the issuance of paper money as methods whereby more money could be put into circulation. The people wanted a great deal more money and it was the duty of the government to furnish it. Mr. Simpson said he did not care if free coinage did cause silver to come to the United States. He wished it would come, and it could not come too soon, for it would give the people more money.

We would remind the *Capital* that a majority of the American people are tintured with the same kind of ignorance as that displayed in the above paragraph. The people of the United States demand the free coinage of silver and the issue of sufficient currency by the government to meet the demands of trade and restore activity and prosperity to the paralyzed industries of the country; and the braying of the *Capital* and others of its ilk will not retard the march of events that are destined ere long to bring about these results.

Mrs. ANNIE L. DIGGS, who is often unjustly confounded with Mrs. Lease, because she believes in some of the things that Mrs. Lease professes to believe, is to go to Washington and engage in newspaper work. Mrs. Diggs is a woman of more than ordinary ability and the Alliance party in Kansas will suffer a very serious loss in her going from Kansas.—*El Dorado Republican*.

The *Republican* is wrong, Mrs. Diggs is not abandoning Kansas. She does not even lose her residence here. She holds her position as associate editor of THE ADVOCATE, and goes to Washington as its representative. She goes in order to be in closer relation to the central government, and give the readers of THE ADVOCATE the benefit of a closer observation of governmental affairs. Whenever we need her services in the office more than we need them in Washington she will return. Do not flatter yourselves that the Alliance in Kansas, is to loose the valuable services of Mrs. Diggs.

CHILD LABOR.

It is very evident that those members of the state Senate who defeated the child labor bill have a very inadequate conception of the evils which their action will permit to continue. It has been ascertained that in the city of Topeka alone there are not less than fifteen hundred children employed in different capacities and at merely nominal wages. Aside from the fact that the constitutions of these children are being undermined by their long hours of service, they are likewise kept from school, and are deprived of that education which they should receive to qualify them for the duties and responsibilities of after life. It must also be observed that the evil, great as it is in this city, will not compare with what it is in great manufacturing centers. If our state should ever develop any of the great manufacturing industries so important to her material prosperity in the future, the employment of child labor, in these establishments, should be prohibited from the start. The building of the dam in this city looks to the establishment of important manufactories here in the near future. This is to be most ardently desired; but while we would encourage everything of this kind, we would not wish to see the health and intelligence of the rising generation sacrificed to the avarice and greed of manufacturing corporations. Our Legislators should give this question a more thorough and careful consideration. We observe among the votes that defeated this measure in the senate that of Mr. Wheeler, the recently elected Senator of the Thirty-second district. We are somewhat surprised at this. Mr. Wheeler is certainly not in line with his party upon this question. This measure should be reconsidered.

The *Nonconformist* of the 19th inst., in an article relating to the Turner-McGrath controversy has this to say of THE ADVOCATE:

We have full faith in the honesty and earnestness of Dr. McLaughlin and sincerely regret that any circumstance should intervene to prevent THE ADVOCATE from giving its full strength of its powerful influence on the side of personal and political integrity in the leadership of the Alliance.

While we do not intend to be drawn into any further discussion of this question, the above statement demands a brief notice. There is no circumstance that will "prevent THE ADVOCATE from giving its full influence in favor of personal and political integrity in the leadership of the Alliance." The position of THE ADVOCATE is simply this: The Alliance has plain and specific laws under which all needed discipline may be administered. The execution of those laws is in the hands of the people, and not in ours. After publishing the letter and other facts in our possession we do not care to fill our space with a further discussion of the question. Such discussion will not settle the differences that exist. The matter is in the hands of the people. They alone can order a further investigation if they desire it. If they do not desire it at this time we do not consider it our duty to urge it upon them. This is our position and we hope it will not be mistaken.