

## THE LEGISLATURE.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7.

Nearly the whole of yesterday afternoon was consumed by the Council in discussing the eight hour bill. It will be remembered that this bill makes eight hours a day's work on all public works, and had passed the House. Williams led the opposition to the measure, and among the arguments which he advanced against it were the proposition that it interfered with the right of private contract, favored the class of laborers who were employed on public works as against those who were not, and could not be enforced because no penalty was provided for its violation. Taylor and H. E. Booth favored the bill, and advanced in support of it the usual arguments. For a time it looked like the final vote on the bill would be a party one, with the Republicans in the affirmative and the Democrats in the negative. But Lund, a Democrat, made a speech in favor of the bill, and when the final vote was taken it was found that only two had voted against it—Hart and Williams. The Council adjourned immediately after the final vote on the bill was taken.

The House and House lobby listened about an hour, yesterday afternoon, to Allen's speech in advocacy of his bill providing for free public libraries in cities of the first and second class. It was an interesting address, and was replete with information and arguments calculated to show why free public libraries should be established, and the benefits accruing from them in cities where they existed. Not a word was said in opposition to the bill; in fact no one spoke upon it except Allen, and it passed by a unanimous vote. The bill provides for the appointment, by the president of the board of education, by and with the advice and consent of the board, of seven library directors, a minority of whom shall be women, and who shall serve without pay. This board of seven library directors control the disbursement of all library funds, employ a librarian, etc., and establish rules for the government of the library. A tax not exceeding one-fifth of one mill on the dollar, on all the taxable property in the city, is required to be collected each year for the maintenance and enlargement of the library. The collecting of this tax, and the establishment of a free public library, is mandatory upon each city of the first and second class, and any city of the third class may be brought under the law by appropriate action on the part of its mayor and city council.

With a haste bordering on precipitancy, the House yesterday afternoon passed a very important bill. It was not read by sections at all. The clerk read it through once in his usual and necessarily rapid style, and two or three amendments were made, when the final vote was called. Then several members seemed to regret that the bill had not received more deliberate consideration, and Johnson and Ivins both gave notice that they would move reconsideration of the vote by which the House passed it. The bill makes it a misdemeanor to drive stock off its range without returning it within twenty-four hours, without consent of the owner; requires all persons except

licensed butchers to expose for ten days the hide of any animal slaughtered; forbids any person save the owner or his agent to skin any animal found dead; authorizes the county court to appoint detectives to discover violations of the stock law; makes it a felony to mark or brand an animal with intent to deprive the owner of his property; makes it unlawful for any railroad to ship live stock before the same are inspected; requires the county court of each county containing a railroad station to appoint an inspector, whose duty it is to inspect and record all livestock shipped by rail out of his county. All shippers of stock must give the inspector at least two days' notice of any shipment they intend to make, and he is allowed \$3 per day, or fraction thereof, and twenty cents mileage one way, for his services, to be paid out of the county treasury. The bill is designed to check stock dealing.

The House killed two drastic bills yesterday. One provided that no personal property should be exempt as against a claim for wages due a servant or employee, and the other allowed the property of a debtor to be attached if he undertook to remove from the county. Varian pointed out the radical and very objectionable character of these bills, especially the first named; and the credit of killing them is largely due to him.

## THURSDAY.

Yesterday afternoon in connection with H. B. 30, Varian's bill to tax debts secured by mortgages and trust deeds, which came up as special order, resolutions upon the subject, adopted by the Chamber of Commerce, were read. The clerk read the bill at length, when Sears began a speech in opposition to it. He thought if he had Varian's eloquence and his own facts, he could convert the majority of the House to his view. It was a bad time to swap horses when crossing a stream, and it is a bad time now to revise our financial laws. It is the duty of the state to pass such financial legislation as will enable the people to borrow money at the lowest rate of interest. Utah is the best off of any commonwealth in the Union, financially, and her credit is of the highest. This condition is largely due to the character of our financial laws. The law passed at the last session, now sought to be repealed, was not hasty legislation. It was favored by our best financiers, who foretold its beneficent effects. Were it not that I am speaking for ten thousand men whose homes are mortgaged, I would not take the stand I do on this bill. Utah owes less per capita than almost any state in the Union, and with our financial laws as they are, we shall soon be relieved of financial stringency. The argument that California has a law taxing debts secured by mortgages is not valid. The speaker read from the report of the California state board of equalization, showing that the law was harmful in its effects, and was a concession to a certain class of agitators, who were arrayed in opposition to capital. The quotation showed how the mortgagor actually paid more tax than he would if the mortgage had not been taxed as part of the property.

The bill says to home money lenders, you can't live in Utah and loan your

money here. Home money lenders, in order to make loans here, must do so under color of the name of some person residing elsewhere. The Legislature should encourage capital to come here. Then we would have manufactures that would be taxable property which the tax collector could find without a candle. The speaker held up a copy of a Denver paper containing nine solid pages of advertisements of trust deed sales, brought on by attempted or proposed financial legislation of a bad character. Is it a healthy condition to have \$150,000,000 in the New York banks over and above legal requirements, or to have so much money in the savings banks of Illinois that their vaults cannot contain it, while the people are suffering for lack of funds with which to do business? This condition is due to distrust, and such proposed legislation as this bill adds to the distrust. The speaker gave comparative statistics showing the per capita indebtedness of ten states, and the increase of debt and taxable property in them. The debt per capita in Utah is not heavy in proportion to her wealth, and it could be increased without disadvantage if there could be a proportionate increase in the area of cultivated lands. In Illinois the ground is taken that the state has not the right to tax the note the merchant takes for goods,

Ivins said consideration of this bill had been postponed in order to give opportunity to get statistics showing why it should not pass, but they had not been presented. Sears had made a strong plea for the moneyed interest, but had not touched upon the principle of right which was involved. For forty years we had a revenue law which provided that property other than money should be taxed at a fair valuation. This was really a bill to tax money, and the question is: Shall we tax money or not? Of all kinds of property, money is best able to bear the burdens of taxation. The speaker read the statute passed at the last session of the Assembly, exempting from taxation notes and debts secured by mortgage and showed that the money which formerly paid a tax by being loaned, escapes that burden, provided it is secured by real estate. The public revenue was thus cut down, and the lender who had no real estate security paid a tax, while the lender who had such security did not. All money invested in this Territory, ought to be taxed, but as a matter of public policy, at the present time, it is best to exempt foreign capital from taxation. The people never asked for the law passed at the last session exempting secured debts from taxation. The people demand its repeal, and if this Assembly don't repeal it, the people will send a Legislature here that will. There have been protests in the papers, and from other sources, against this bill, but no such protests come from, or represent, the people. They come from capitalists.

Allen said he had no quarrel with capital, nor was he the special advocate of the man who had none. The question involved in this bill is a phase of the great subject that underlies all our financial distress. The men who own the money have destroyed half the wealth of the world, and now they seek