

Feb. 3, 1887.

**CHAP. 90.**—An act to fix the day for the meeting of the electors of President and Vice-President, and to provide for and regulate the counting of the votes for President and Vice-President, and the decision of questions arising thereon.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the electors of each State shall meet and give their votes on the second Monday in January next following their appointment, at such place in each State as the legislature of such State shall direct.

**SEC. 2.** That if any State shall have provided, by laws enacted prior to the day fixed for the appointment of the electors, for its final determination of any controversy or contest concerning the appointment of all or any of the electors of such State, by judicial or other methods or procedures, and such determination shall have been made at least six days before the time fixed for the meeting of the electors, such determination made pursuant to such law so existing on said day, and made at least six days prior to the said time of meeting of the electors, shall be conclusive, and shall govern in the counting of the electoral votes as provided in the Constitution, and as hereinafter regulated, so far as the ascertainment of the electors appointed by such State is concerned.

**SEC. 3.** That it shall be the duty of the executive of each State, as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the appointment of electors in such State, by the final ascertainment under and in pursuance of the laws of such State providing for such ascertainment, to communicate, under the seal of the State, to the Secretary of State of the United States, a certificate of such ascertainment of the electors appointed, setting forth the names of such electors and the canvass or other ascertainment under the laws of such State of the number of votes given or cast for each person for whose appointment any and all votes have been given or cast; and it shall also thereupon be the duty of the executive of each State to deliver to the electors of such State, on or before the day on which they are required by the preceding section to meet, the same certificate, in triplicate, under the seal of the State; and such certificate shall be inclosed and transmitted by the electors at the same time and in the same manner as is provided by law for transmitting by such electors to the seat of Government the lists of all persons voted for as President and of all persons voted for as Vice-President; and section one hundred and thirty-six of the Revised Statutes is hereby repealed; and if there shall have been any final determination in a State of a controversy or contest as provided for in section two of this act, it shall be the duty of the executive of such State, as soon as practicable after such determination, to communicate, under the seal of the State, to the Secretary of State of the United States, a certificate of such determination, in form and manner as the same shall have been made; and the Secretary of State of the United States, as soon as practicable after the receipt at the State Department of each of the certificates hereinbefore directed to be transmitted to the Secretary of State, shall publish, in such public newspaper as he shall designate, such certificates in full; and at the first meeting of Congress thereafter he shall transmit to the two Houses of Congress copies in full of each and every such certificate so received theretofore at the State Department.

**SEC. 4.** That Congress shall be in session on the second Wednesday in February succeeding every meeting of the electors. The Senate and House of Representatives shall meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives at the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon on that day, and the President of the Senate shall be their presiding officer. Two tellers shall be previously appointed on the part of the Senate and two on the part of the House of Representatives, to whom shall be handed, as they are opened by the President of the Senate, all the certificates and papers purporting to be certificates of the electoral votes, which certificates and papers shall be opened, presented, and acted upon in

Counting electoral vote.

Meeting of electors.

R. S., sec. 135, p. 22, amended.

Determination of contest by State law to be conclusive as to appointment of electors.

Certification of electors by State executive.

R. S., sec. 140, p. 23.

R. S., sec. 136, p. 22, repealed.

Certificates to be published.

Copies to be sent to Congress.

Counting electoral votes in Congress.

R. S., sec. 142, p. 23.

Opening and reading certificates of electoral vote.

the alphabetical order of the States, beginning with the letter A; and said tellers, having then read the same in the presence and hearing of the two Houses, shall make a list of the votes as they shall appear from the said certificates; and the votes having been ascertained and counted in the manner and according to the rules in this act provided, the result of the same shall be delivered to the President of the Senate, who shall thereupon announce the state of the vote, which announcement shall be deemed a sufficient declaration of the persons, if any, elected President and Vice-President of the United States, and, together with a list of the votes, be entered on the Journals of the two Houses. Upon such reading of any such certificate or paper, the President of the Senate shall call for objections, if any. Every objection shall be made in writing, and shall state clearly and concisely, and without argument, the ground thereof, and shall be signed by at least one Senator and one Member of the House of Representatives before the same shall be received. When all objections so made to any vote or paper from a State shall have been received and read, the Senate shall thereupon withdraw, and such objections shall be submitted to the Senate for its decision; and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall, in like manner, submit such objections to the House of Representatives for its decision; and no electoral vote or votes from any State which shall have been regularly given by electors whose appointment has been lawfully certified to according to section three of this act from which but one return has been received shall be rejected, but the two Houses concurrently may reject the vote or votes when they agree that such vote or votes have not been so regularly given by electors whose appointment has been so certified. If more than one return or paper purporting to be a return from a State shall have been received by the President of the Senate, those votes, and those only, shall be counted which shall have been regularly given by the electors who are shown by the determination mentioned in section two of this act to have been appointed, if the determination in said section provided for shall have been made, or by such successors or substitutes, in case of a vacancy in the board of electors so ascertained, as have been appointed to fill such vacancy in the mode provided by the laws of the State; but in case there shall arise the question which of two or more of such State authorities determining what electors have been appointed, as mentioned in section two of this act, is the lawful tribunal of such State, the votes regularly given of those electors, and those only, of such State shall be counted whose title as electors the two Houses, acting separately, shall concurrently decide is supported by the decision of such State so authorized by its laws; and in such case of more than one return or paper purporting to be a return from a State, if there shall have been no such determination of the question in the State aforesaid, then those votes, and those only, shall be counted which the two Houses shall concurrently decide were cast by lawful electors appointed in accordance with the laws of the State, unless the two Houses, acting separately, shall concurrently decide such votes not to be the lawful votes of the legally appointed electors of such State. But if the two Houses shall disagree in respect of the counting of such votes, then, and in that case, the votes of the electors whose appointment shall have been certified by the Executive of the State, under the seal thereof, shall be counted. When the two Houses have voted, they shall immediately again meet, and the presiding officer shall then announce the decision of the questions submitted. No votes or papers from any other State shall be acted upon until the objections previously made to the votes or papers from any State shall have been finally disposed of.

**Announcement of vote.**

**Objection to be in writing.**

**Decisions on objections.**

**Single returns.**

**Conflicting returns.**

**Announcement of decision.**

**President of Senate to preserve order.**

**Nodebate allowed.**

**SEC. 5.** That while the two Houses shall be in meeting as provided in this act the President of the Senate shall have power to preserve order; and no debate shall be allowed and no question shall be put by the presiding officer except to either House on a motion to withdraw.

SEC. 6. That when the two Houses separate to decide upon an objection that may have been made to the counting of any electoral vote or votes from any State, or other question arising in the matter, each Senator and Representative may speak to such objection or question five minutes, and not more than once; but after such debate shall have lasted two hours it shall be the duty of the presiding officer of each House to put the main question without further debate.

Limit to consideration.

SEC. 7. That at such joint meeting of the two Houses seats shall be provided as follows: For the President of the Senate, the Speaker's chair; for the Speaker, immediately upon his left; the Senators, in the body of the Hall upon the right of the presiding officer; for the Representatives, in the body of the Hall not provided for the Senators; for the tellers, Secretary of the Senate, and Clerk of the House of Representatives, at the Clerk's desk; for the other officers of the two Houses, in front of the Clerk's desk and upon each side of the Speaker's platform. Such joint meeting shall not be dissolved until the count of electoral votes shall be completed and the result declared; and no recess shall be taken unless a question shall have arisen in regard to counting any such votes, or otherwise under this act, in which case it shall be competent for either House, acting separately, in the manner hereinbefore provided, to direct a recess of such House not beyond the next calendar day, Sunday excepted, at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon. But if the counting of the electoral votes and the declaration of the result shall not have been completed before the fifth calendar day next after such first meeting of the two Houses, no further or other recess shall be taken by either House.

Arrangements for joint meeting.

Not to dissolve until result declared.

Approved, February 3, 1887.

CHAP. 91.—An act authorizing the construction of a bridge over the Mississippi River at Saint Louis, Missouri.

Feb. 3, 1887.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the consent of Congress is hereby given to the Saint Louis Merchants' Bridge Company of Saint Louis, Missouri, a corporation created by the laws of the State of Illinois, or its assigns or successors, or any legally incorporated railroad company or companies which may be associated with it therein, to build a bridge as hereinafter described, and maintain the same, across the Mississippi River at some suitable point between the present Saint Louis bridge known as the Eads Bridge, Saint Clair County, Illinois, and the mouth of the Missouri River: *Provided,* That no bridge shall be constructed across the Mississippi River within two miles above or two miles below the bridge heretofore constructed and known as the Eads bridge. Said bridge shall be constructed to provide for the passage of railway trains, and, at the option of the persons by whom it may be built, may be used for the passage of wagons and vehicles, for the transit of animals, and for foot-passengers.

Saint Louis Merchants' Bridge Company authorized to bridge the Mississippi River.

*Proviso.*  
Location.

Railway, foot, and wagon bridge.

SEC. 2. That any bridge built under this act and subject to its limitations shall be a lawful structure, and shall be recognized and known as a post-route, upon which also no higher charge shall be made for the transmission over the same of the mails, the troops, and the munitions of war of the United States than the rate per mile paid for the transportation over the railroad or public highways leading to the said bridge; and it shall enjoy the rights and privileges of other post-roads in the United States.

To be lawful structure and post-route.

SEC. 3. That if the bridge shall be made with unbroken and continuous spans, it shall have at least two channel-spans of not less than five hundred feet clear width each, and one span of three hundred feet clear width of channel-way: *Provided,* That said bridge may have two spans of not less than seven hundred and fifty feet each clear width of channel

Construction.

*Proviso.*  
Spans.