

The Herald and News.

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THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

IMPORTANT MATTERS IN SENATE AND HOUSE.

State House Litigation—Cotton Seed Meal—Telephone Bill—Seed Cotton Traffic—Other Measures.

The house today passed the Brice bill allowing counties to vote out dispensaries. The bill was amended so that counties voting out dispensaries shall pay an annual $\frac{1}{2}$ mill tax for the enforcement of the law, said fund to be used at the discretion of the governor and any excess go back to the county. The bill was further amended so that such counties shall not receive any of the dispensary school fund except that guaranteed by constitution to make up deficits.

J. K. A.

Bryan in Columbia.

Special to The Herald and News.

Columbia, S. C., February 18.—According to the present arrangement the Hon. William Jennings Bryan will deliver an address in the hall of the house tomorrow morning at 11:30 o'clock. He will be met in Augusta early tomorrow morning with a private car by a committee consisting of Governor Heyward, Senators Goodwin and Sheppard and representatives Cooper, Mauldin and Aull. The party will reach Columbia at 10:50 and Mr. Bryan will leave for Spartanburg in the afternoon.

J. K. A.

STAFF CORRESPONDENCE.

Columbia, February 18.—In accordance with a concurrent resolution adopted by both houses, the general assembly will adjourn sine die on Saturday. This consumes the forty days. Both houses will be ready for adjournment. There are very few bills on the senate calendar. The house calendar is very heavy yet, but it probably be in this condition should the house jog along for another forty days. Each house has been in session several hours every morning and several hours every night this week. The house has disposed of all the regular appropriation and supply bills, and they are now before the senate.

The senate had up the general appropriation bill on Tuesday night and amended it in a number of particulars. The general tendency of the senate was to increase the appropriations. It is a matter of note that during the whole session both houses have been liberally disposed. The senate amended by increasing the appropriation for the South Carolina college by about \$1,000; providing an additional \$2,500 for the erection and equipment of a building by the state colored college; providing an additional \$1,000 for additional scholarships in the South Carolina college; raising a few salaries and making other slight increases. The salary of the governor's stenographer was increased from \$500 to \$600. This is a just increase.

There was the usual fight on State college appropriations, on Tuesday night. The senate will further consider the bill before sending it back to the house with the amendments.

The Immigration Bureau.

The house has passed the senate bill creating the department of agriculture, commerce and immigration. But slight amendments were made in the bill and these have been concurred in by the senate, so that the bill is now ready for ratification. It may be that the new department, with the new offices it has established, will accomplish a great deal of good. Certainly the State needs a desirable class of immigrants. But in the present financial condition of the State, many of those who have deeply studied the

existing conditions very much doubt the wisdom of its establishment. It is going to take money to run it, and if the ideas of many of its advocates are carried out, it is going to take lots of money. Many members would not be in the least surprised to see a big extra appropriation asked of the next general assembly for the purposes of the new department.

Tax on Corporations.

The senate on yesterday slightly amended and passed the bill proposed by the Tax Commission, and which has already passed the house, to require the payment of annual license fees by corporations, and requiring them to make reports. The bill as it passed the house provided that reports should be made to the secretary of state. The senate amended by requiring that the reports be made to the comptroller general. The bill will now go back to the house for concurrence in the amendments, none of which affects the main provisions of the bill.

This is one of the several measures proposed by the Tax Commission appointed by the last general assembly to look into the financial condition of the State and to devise means whereby the deficit in the treasury could be made up. The commission proposed several measures but this and one other were the only two to get through the house.

The other bill referred to passed the house yesterday, but has not yet come to the senate. It is a "bill to improve a tax on gifts, inheritance, devices, bequests and legacies in certain cases." The main provision of the bill is that a tax of one per cent. shall be levied on all estates or inheritances of the value of \$10,000 and over.

The bill to impose a license on corporations, already referred to, developed some lively opposition in the house who characterized it as an effort to raise money by imposing on the corporations because members of the general assembly were afraid to impose anymore tax on their constituents. In a strong speech Senator Walker, of Georgetown, called it "rank discrimination." It was also urged that it would work hardship on the small merchant establishments, who are in active competition with individual merchants, upon whom the bill imposes no tax. The bill, however, passed the senate by a good majority, and only awaits concurrence by the house in the minor amendments.

No Income Tax.

The house on yesterday killed the bill proposed by the Tax Commission providing a graduated tax on incomes. The bill provided for a tax on incomes of \$1,000 and over.

For Tax Dodgers.

The house has passed the Tax Commission's bill to provide additional measures and remedies for the collection of past due and unpaid taxes upon certain property which has escaped taxation.

Slot Machines Outlawed.

The senate on yesterday passed the bill, already passed by the house, outlawing slot machines. The bill as amended by the senate provides that it shall be unlawful for any one to keep or permit to be kept a slot machine on his premises. Automatic weighing, measuring and vending machines, which give a uniform and fair return for each coin, and in which there is no element of chance, are exempted from the provisions of the bill.

State House Litigation.

Senator Manning stated in the senate yesterday that Attorney General Gunter had requested him to state on the floor of the senate that Mr. Gunter was very much gratified at the action of the general assembly, in the adoption of a concurrent resolution which was proposed by Senator Aldrich, providing that special counsel be employed to conduct the litigation against the architect and contractors who completed the addition to the State House. Attorney General Gunter had told him, said Senator

Manning, that had such action not been taken he would have requested it.

It will be recalled that Mr. Gunter was assistant attorney general under Mr. Bellinger, who was a member of the commission for the completion of the State House.

Cotton Seed Meal.

A very important measure, which had already passed the senate passed the house yesterday. The measure amends the law in reference to the inspection and sale of commercial fertilizers, so as to include cotton seed meal within the provisions thereof.

The Telephone Bill.

The house has passed the bill to give the railroad commissioners jurisdiction over all telephone lines in this State. The telephone companies were not very much averse to the passage of this measure, but claimed that the first bill proposed, which provided for the fixing of rates, would practically drive them out of business in South Carolina.

Interesting Miscellaneous Measures.

The house has passed the following measures, which are of interest and importance.

To regulate the giving of security for loans under \$25 and the charges therefor. This measure is aimed at the small money lenders, who charge negroes especially high usury.

To authorize and empower mayors and other officers to grant warrants to break and enter gambling rooms in cities of 5,000 population and over.

To prohibit the granting of pardon upon the condition that the person pardoned shall leave the State.

Making a small appropriation for laying off and beautifying the State House grounds.

To exempt soldiers and sailors of the Civil War from county or other municipal licenses, as hawkers, peddlers or butchers.

To Increase Salary.

The senate has passed the bill providing for the increase of the salary of the adjutant and inspector general from \$1,500 to \$1,900.

Ten Circuits Bill.

The senate has finally passed and sent to the house a bill to divide the State into ten judicial circuits. The bill may be considered by the house today. It is proposed to constitute the circuits as follows:

1. The counties of Berkeley, Georgetown, Dorchester and Orangeburg shall constitute the 1st circuit.
2. The counties of Aiken, Bamberg, Calhoun, Edgefield and Hampton shall constitute the 2nd circuit.
3. The counties of Clarendon, Florence, Lee, Sumter and Williamsburg shall constitute the 3rd circuit.
4. The counties of Clarendon, Marlboro and Marlboro shall constitute the 4th circuit.
5. The counties of Kershaw, Lexington, Richland and Saluda shall constitute the 5th circuit.
6. The counties of Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster and York shall constitute the 6th circuit.
7. The counties of Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union shall constitute the 7th circuit.
8. The counties of Abbeville, Greenwood, Laurens and Newberry shall constitute the 8th circuit.
9. The counties of Charleston, Colleton and Beaufort shall constitute the 9th circuit.
10. The counties of Anderson, Greenville, Pickens and Oconee shall constitute the 10th circuit.

Seed Cotton Traffic.

The senate has passed and sent to the house a bill to prohibit traffic in seed cotton between August 15 and December 15. There are now local laws on this subject, but this bill was made to apply to all the counties. The house has killed a measure looking in the same direction, but it thought that possibly the changes made by the senate will cause the bill to be favorably received in the house.

Anti Treating Bill.

The bill to prevent treating on election days has passed both houses and has been ratified. As finally passed, the bill makes it unlawful to treat a

"voter" within one mile of a voting precinct on primary or other election days.

Appropriations Again Discussed.

The senate has finally disposed of the appropriation bill and has sent it back to the house with amendments. After reducing the salary of the governor's porter from \$400 to \$300 the senate reconsidered its action and placed the salary back at \$400. An amendment providing for an appropriation of \$1,200 for an assistant clerk to the railroad commissioners provoked a lively debate, in which the commissioners were attacked by several senators, who said that the commissioners now had more clerk hire than they needed and who wanted the commissioners to "play clerk for a while." The appropriation was refused.

The amount of \$1,000 was added for a State Summer School. This amendment was vigorously opposed by a number of senators, but finally prevailed. Several other amendments were made—all of them increases. It is a fact worthy of note that not a single amendment made by the senate provided for a cut in any of the appropriations.

Newberry's Levy.

The senate last night took up the general supply bill and amended it in several particulars. Newberry's levy was reduced from three mills to $2\frac{1}{2}$ mills and a $\frac{1}{4}$ -mill levy was provided for indexing the records in the clerk of courts office; provided, should the amount received from this levy exceed \$1,000. Such excess shall go into the general fund. Messrs. I. H. Hunt, F. L. Bynum, and H. C. Holloway were named to superintend this work. \$250 was provided for the pay of the clerk of the county commissioners.

Vagrancy Bill.

The senate last night passed and sent to the house the Dean vagrancy bill. The bill provides that a man convicted of vagrancy may secure bond for his peaceful conduct and industry for the period of one year and that during such period of industry and peaceful conduct the sentence of the court should be suspended. The object of the bill is to allow vagrants to go back to work, if they will, instead of being sent to the chain gang. It was argued that the bill would induce a system of peonage in that a man could give bond for a vagrant and make of him a slave for a year. This objection was got around by an amendment providing that bondsmen shall not enter contract with vagrants except a magistrate see to it that the contract is in writing and just.

Local Option Bill.

The house last night devoted the whole of its session to a discussion of the Brice local option measure, which has already passed the senate. The bill provides that counties may vote away dispensary, but such counties shall be taxed to pay for the enforcement of the law.

Jno. K. Aull.

READY FOR SEA.

Washington Dispatch Causes Excitement in Army Circles in San Francisco.

San Francisco, Feb. 16.—Considerable excitement prevailed in army circles in this city today due to the receipt of a dispatch from Washington by Major Devol in regard to immediately placing the transports in this harbor in condition to sail. All vessels are ready for sea. They are the Crook, Mude, Warren Buford and Logan. The Sherman's also here but she has already been scheduled to sail to Manila March 1 with the twelfth infantry and 500 recruits.

Stationed at Presidio at present are the tenth, twenty-eighth and twenty-seventh regiments of infantry. These regiments have been drilling for weeks in expectation of emergency orders, and are prepared to sail on a few hours' notice.

The transport Warhorse here has been loaded up with big supplies of merchandise, clothing, provisions and bedding for a cold climate.

THIS WAR IS VERY HELL IN DEED

GREAT MOVEMENT OF TROOPS JAPS TO THE FRONT.

Operations on Land Will Soon Begin—Two More Russian Ships Torpedoed at Port Arthur.

Paris, Feb. 17.—An official dispatch received here today from Tokio announces that one of the most important movements of Japanese troops yet made is occurring today. One of the main branches of the army, consisting of three divisions and including a division of guards, is now going on board transports. The previous landings of Japanese forces in Corea and elsewhere are said to have been small compared with this simultaneous sailing of three divisions, aggregating approximately an army of 30,000 to 50,000 men. It is believed, but this is not sure, that the destination of this force is a point near the mouth of the Yalu river or a spot on the Liaotung peninsula, flanking Port Arthur.

Another official dispatch says a Japanese transport has been sighted off a town south of the mouth of the Yalu river.

Carrying Munitions of War.

Tokio, Feb. 17.—Eight transports with Japanese troops from Nagasaki and several additional vessels carrying war munitions are on their way to the west coast of Corea. Detachments of Japanese cavalry have already landed at Wiju, on the Yalu river.

Sixty Thousand Men.

Port Arthur, Feb. 17.—The report that the Japanese have concentrated about 60,000 troops at Wonson (on the east coast of Corea) with the object of entering Manchuria, is confirmed.

Attack Made in Snow Storm.

Tokio, Feb. 17.—A heavy storm spared the Russians from a desperate torpedo attack at Port Arthur on the morning of Sunday, the 14th instant. During the preceding night the vessels of the Japanese flotilla of torpedo craft were parted by the force of the wind and waves, in a blinding snow storm, so that only two of the larger destroyers succeeded in forcing their way through the fierce gale to Port Arthur. When they arrived there they attacked separately and the officers of one of them are confident that they succeeded in torpedoing a Russian warship. The destroyer Asarishikawa, arrived at Port Arthur about 3 o'clock in the morning and was met by a sharp fire from the fortress and Russian ships acting as scouts. The Asargiri discharged several torpedoes at a big warship, but the result is unknown. A cannonade was opened upon the scouting vessels and maintained until they withdrew. The destroyer Heyatory, Lieut. Commander Takenou, arrived two hours after the Asargiri and ran up close to the mouth of the harbor, where she found two warships, names unknown. She fired a torpedo at one and the torpedo exploded.

Admiral Toga, in reporting the attack, says although the results is unknown he feels sure the moral effect upon the enemy will be excellent. Commander Nagal commanded the entire torpedo flotilla. The number of the craft in the flotilla and point of their departure is concealed.

Two More Ships Torpedoed.

London, Feb. 17.—A dispatch to the St. James Gazette from Kobe, Japan, in reporting the Japanese naval attack on Port Arthur, Feb. 14, says the Russian guardship in the harbor and another Russian warship, lying outside the harbor, were torpedoed and that the Japanese retired without sustaining injury.

Caused a Fire.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 17.—A dispatch received here from Port Arthur dated Feb. 17, says that in the action of that port on Feb. 14, the Russian volunteer fleet steamer Kherson was struck by (Continued on Page Five.)