

State Affairs

(Continued)

for all of the major companies to reduce their taxes to the minimum of \$25 and this alone involves a loss to the State of some \$700,000.

Rebutted Director Heron: "Instances where taxes have been increased are as numerous as the cases in which they have been reduced, and many of the corporations, particularly the oil companies, will not be able to take off-set credits for depleted assets after the first few years of the new law is in operation."

Director Heron further declared that many of the advantages afforded the oil companies during the first year of operation of the new 4 per cent tax bill will not accrue next year.

Thirty Million Surplus. To the Legislative Director Heron explained that California is going through a transition period in the matter of taxation, that with approximately a \$30,000,000 surplus in the State Treasury care should be taken in making recommendations for changes in the present revenue laws.

Tax for Schools. The expense of the public school system is becoming too heavy a burden on the local taxpayer, thinks the Board of Equalization. Therefore, the board, through Chairman Collins, proposed to the Legislature a moderate sales tax which could be begun in a small way on non-essentials to make sure the system will meet with popular favor and which will be limited strictly to raising of money for schools."

License Plate Tax. Assessor Wolden of San Francisco, representing the County Assessors' Association, told tax probers that the assessors' organization favored, recommended: (1) the elimination of the personal property tax on motor vehicles and the substitution thereof of a tax collectable at the time motor vehicle license plates are issued; (2) the establishment of January 1 as the determining date for the assessment of property, rather than the first Monday in March, as at present.

Traction Hearing. On Thursday next week the tax committee will meet again in San Francisco. Present will be representatives of steam, electric and short line railroads. Their viewpoints on taxation matters will be heard, their recommendations considered.

Purified Politics

To put new and sharper teeth into the Purity Elections Act, adopted in 1907, Will J. French, director of the State Department of Industrial Relations, last week announced that he had designed a new set of election rules—a rigorous code of ethics.

To newsmen of the Capitol News Bureau, Director French admitted that whether politics is a sport, a business or a profession may be open to debate. Certain he was, however, of one fact: There is a great need for more orderly and ethical methods in the handling of political campaigns, especially in regard to unpaid campaign wage claims.

Said Director French: Someone must accept—in writing—responsibility for all campaign bills contracted, so that there will be no misunderstanding the "morning after."

As a result of unpaid wage claims which bobbed up in the wake of the recent Los Angeles city election, Director French announced he had under consideration the following tentative amendments to the Purity of Elections Act:

1. Printing and distributing circulars designating persons as members of "campaign committees" shall be prohibited, unless such persons have been expressly appointed, or otherwise duly constituted members of such committees.

2. No person shall be permitted to incur any expense on account of either a candidate or a committee, or to hire any person, unless authorized to do so in writing by the committee, candidate, or the persons in charge of the campaign.

3. It shall be a misdemeanor to represent one's self as a member of a campaign committee without specified authority.

4. After the committee has notified the candidate in writing of its organization, shall be personally acknowledge such committee.

5. Any individual or member of a campaign committee who shall directly or indirectly engage people to work, or incur obligations in the election, shall be personally jointly and severally liable for such

obligations. Any court shall have jurisdiction to pass upon and determine the validity of any claim arising out of an election, to pass upon any violation, and to make orders to be consistent with the law and its amendments.

Drug Troubles

If the State were to list its most troublesome institutions, probably occupying the topmost place on the list would be prisons and narcotic hospitals. When the State selects locations for such public institutions, usually the citizens in the vicinity object (See News Review, Sept. 16-22; "No Drug Farm"). Cause officials, though, embarrassment, worry. And even when sites are located and the hospitals and prisons established, troubles are not at an end.

The State narcotic hospital, being run as an experiment, was last week the subject of an official report by Earl E. Jensen, Director of Institutions. To Governor Young he declared that the courts were jeopardizing a State experiment by forcing the narcotic hospital to accept hopeless incurables and hardened felons as patients. Said Jensen: "We have recently received several cripples, some on crutches, and some in wheel chairs, all with years of addiction to (narcotics) and some a physical handicap which makes rehabilitation doubtful."

The State Hospital for Narcotics is listed as an experiment to determine the character of the addicts and means for combating the evils of the drug. Ninety patients now occupy the hospital. Thirty-eight patients have been paroled, almost cured, returning occasionally for treatment.

Dr. Walter M. Dickie, Director of the Department of Health, supported Jensen's contentions, and thought that responsibility rested with the courts to give the new experiment a fair trial and not use it as a dumping ground for criminal addicts and felons.

Needy Old Folk

Fortnight ago, Governor Young appointed Miss Esther de Turbeville, San Francisco social welfare worker, to be chief of the Division of the Aged, newly created bureau to supervise aid for needy old folks, the dispensation of old age pensions. (News Review, Sept. 30-Oct. 6).

Last week Pension Supervisor Turbeville announced at Sacramento that application blanks for pensions had been mailed to every county in the State. Said Miss Turbeville: Persons of 70 years or over who have lived in the State for 20 years, the county a year and whose property does not exceed \$3000 are eligible to apply for \$30 a month.

Applicants must obtain blanks from the clerk of the county in which they reside and, when filled out, submit them to county supervisors for decision. The old age pension law does not go into effect until January 1, but applications may be filled out at any time, thus permitting needy old folk to start the New Year free from worry and want.

The State's second humanitarian program, permitting a maximum State-county allowance of \$50 per month for the needy blind, is already in full swing. The blind aid statute has been in operation more than a month, but the extent of relief granted will not be disclosed until the State reimburses the various counties for half of the expenditure at the end of the first six months. Miss Mary E. Cronin, chief of this division in the social welfare department, announced last week.

Governor Young, in conference last week with social welfare executives, was pleased with their reports of work done, of work probed for. He gathered the Governor declared: "Rather than being a burden on the taxpayer, this fine humanitarian work for the aged and the blind will, in many instances, decrease the payments by counties.

Political Notes

Salty Waters?

Not many State officials at Sacramento read "Plain Talk," red-covered, unbroken national magazine of opinion. But those who do were startled last week when they received their October issue. In it they found a question brought forth which was one of the most startling of the many queries brought to the front concerning California's troublesome water problems.

The question, as set forth by Author Dr. Robert Stewart, dean of the University of Agriculture, University of Nevada:

"Boulder Canyon Dam, greatest irrigation project yet conceived, destined to make a million desert acres blossom like the proverbial rose;

"Or, a new 'Dead Sea,' the saline, borax-impregnated waters of which will kill every form of plant life they are intended to quicken."

Striking at the base of the giant Federal project by which it is intended the entire southern portion of the State should benefit, Dr. Stewart in his article pointed out as a probability that inundation of great strata of salt and deposits of borax in upper reaches of the Colorado River and, principally, along the Virgin River, a tributary, will render impounded waters unfit for irrigation use.

At first shocked at what they thought was an apparent oversight of the Department of Agriculture, geologists and engineers, State officials soon regained their senses; were inclined to take the entire article as anti-Boulder Dam propaganda, alarmist balldoo.

Fireside Lawyers

Engendered through the 1929 Legislature by San Francisco's Assemblyman William Hornblower was a bill whereby any person of good moral character who has studied law for at least three years may take the State bar examination. The bill, supposedly making study at the home fireside equally potent with that in college halls in equipping embryo attorneys, was signed by Governor Young, became law last August.

Last week Assemblyman Hornblower was indignant at the working of his law. He announced to newsmen that unfair discrimination was being practiced under the new law in the oral examination of the self-taught; that he would ask the 1931 Legislature to make examinations held under the auspices of the State Board of Bar Examiners reviewable by the courts.

Said he: "In one recent examination (oral), an applicant, who lacked the usual college training, was asked how many revolutions were in Spain—a question which seems as beside the point as 'How old is Ann?'"

To offset this condition, Assemblyman Hornblower declared he would ask for legislation to give the courts the power to override the board in appraising the erudition of bar candidates, and in sending examination papers back for re-marking if necessary.

Warfare

Interdepartment warfare over the right of the State to work its employees more than eight hours daily flared last week between the State Division of Industrial Welfare and the Department of Institutions. Called upon for arbitration and opinion, Attorney-General U. S. Webb ruled only partially in favor of the workers.

The complaint: Katherine, Philips Edison, chief of the Division of Industrial Welfare, charged that certain State hospitals are forcing nurses to work longer than the eight hours required of registered nurses under the requirements of the State Board of Health. Mrs. Edison held, and asked Webb's verification, that inasmuch as these nurses are graduates of so-called training schools operated by the hospitals, they are not exempt from the eight-hour-day-for-women statute.

The ruling: Attorney Webb's opinion, in effect, held that graduates of such State nursing school prior to 1927 may be required to work longer than eight hours without law violation, and affirmed jurisdiction of the Division of Industrial Welfare regarding nurses graduated since that time.

Rumors

Political rumors bruited about the State Capitol are varied, but many times authentic, political rumors travel with remarkable speed. Last week the following rumors about the following people and offices emanated from Sacramento:

—**Levan M. King.** When Lyman M. King of Redlands resigned last month from the position of Chief of the Division of Service and Supply, under the State Department of Finance, Controller Ray L. Riley (elected) immediately appointed him an inheritance tax appraiser for San Bernardino County. (News Review, Sept. 9-14).

Political pundits of the Oakland Tribune, reporting from Sacramento, last week said that former Senator King's resignation "is expected to be followed within the

next 60 days by a number of other resignations.

Chief among the resignations reported insinuated by the Oakland Tribune was that of King's chief, Alexander R. Heron, Director of the Department of Finance.

Said the Tribune: "The former senator's (King's) name . . . has been mentioned from time to time in connection with the probable successor of Heron as Finance Director. In other quarters it is believed that Bert B. Meek, Director of Public Works, will be switched to the finance department if Heron quits."

Other resignations listed by the Tribune . . . word is out that Keith Carlin, recently switched from Executive Secretary to Private Secretary to Governor Young, will also step out." (News Review, Aug. 19-25).

Division of Commerce. For director of the newly created Division of Commerce, rumormongers last fortnight named former Senator Elmer E. Sisson, head of the State Fish Exchange. Last week Rumor had a new name which is bruited about as Governor Young's selection for this position. The name was that of Los Angeles' Charles E. Bowen. Before the week was out, however, additional names were added as possibilities. The possibilities: J. F. Marias of San Mateo; C. E. Huddart, Oakland; R. V. Winquist, San Francisco, steamship financier; M. C. Cremer, San Francisco; Frank C. Russell and T. Pearson Henderson, Sacramento; E. M. Coleman, San Francisco.

Lawrence Monfort, newsmonger for the Capitol News Bureau, last week wrote the following story concerning the commerce division appointment: "A. R. Heron, Director of Finance, has been casting about for a commerce bureau chief for several months, and has been assisted by Assemblyman Bradford S. Crittenden of Tracy, author of the bill creating the new branch of government. Rumors, entirely unconfirmed, say that Crittenden favors appointment of Bowen, and that such choice probably would meet with approval of administrative interests feeling that the South has been neglected in allotment of political plums."

Army & Navy

Noisy Nights

No place for romantic rendezvous was the Southern California coast this week. The long white waves, cresting high as they came roaring in to land, the pale evening moon, smiling its gentle approval, were still there; but so was a constant fusillade of gun-shots, re-iterated, recurring, reverberating.

Off Santa Rosa Island, Santa Barbara, battleship divisions were last week located; firing night battle practice with five-inch broadside batteries, winding up the first round of annual gunnery practice. Directed heavenward were searchlight floods, star shells, flaring sky-rockets; for miles around the skies were spectators illumined, as the resounding shots interrupted the nocturnal silence.

This week the battleship divisions returns to port; remains at anchor until early next month, while machinery is conditioned, athletic competitions held, tests made. A month's sea activity will follow, culminating in January with firing of long-range battle practice.

Engineer Lanagan

Many graduates of the old Los Angeles High School, now middle-aged, have cast their lot for themselves, won fame, achieved recognition, in many lines of endeavor. Constantly they return to the Angel City, comment on the great changes, visit their Alma Mater, go away rejoicing.

Last week Major William H. Lanagan, a graduate of the first class of the new century, returned to Los Angeles to assume a post of responsibility, to become United States Engineer for the district between San Luis Obispo and San Diego, with headquarters at Los Angeles.

To interviewers, Major Lanagan last week refused to be considered a stranger to Los Angeles, declared he felt much at home; took up his new duties with zest. He succeeded Major F. Gross, transferred to the command of army engineers, crew slated to make a survey for the proposed Nicaraguan Canal. Lieutenant Shattuck occupied the post until Lanagan's coming.

Since his graduation as a mining engineer from Stanford University

in 1905, Major Lanagan has served in San Francisco, Siberia, Honolulu, Fort Leavenworth, Fort Humboldt; interested always in mining, army engineering.

Anti-Aircraft

No fear need Southern Californians have of attack from the Well protected will they be from zeppelins, agile airplanes, bombing birds of metal.

Last week army orders allotted five additional reserve regiments of artillery to Southern California, thus bringing total artillery units to nine. Five of these units are anti-aircraft and are commanded by Lieut. Col. E. A. Evans, Major F. H. Holden.

Much and great has been the interest shown in anti-aircraft artillery, which has been improved greatly, since the World War indicated the disastrous importance of aerial attack. One new gun recently installed at Fort McArthur, San Pedro, can fire 80 shots per minute; four of these guns can be so placed as to work as one unit, emitting 320 shots per minute. "Enemy" aircraft can now be perceived more easily, located more accurately, fired upon more effectively.

Prohibition

Grape Men Protest

When laws prohibiting the manufacture of liquor were passed, those who were most hurt, next to brewers and saloon keepers, were the grape growers. But in the interim since the laws were enacted, vineyardists have found other markets for their produce, have put grape growing on a paying basis. (News Review, Sept. 23-29). One of the most successful grape outlets has been for wine tonic manufacture.

During the last few months, spirited have been the complaints from many a Southern California city and town against the sale of wine tonics. So wrath was the W. C. T. U. of San Bernardino County that its representatives last week pushed claims for ordinances which would prohibit the sale of all wine tonics in that County. W. C. T. U. petitions, circulating, have reached the County Supervisors. The petitions demand that the anti-wine tonic ordinance be passed at once.

Alarmed lest many millions of dollars worth of business be ruined, and feeling that grape growing and manufacturing industries will be seriously jeopardized, grape men from Guasti, Cucamonga and Ontario took steps to circumvent the ordinance of the W. C. T. U. They would have the sales of wine tonics only regulated, instead of prohibited.

Extremely stringent was the W. C. T. U. statement against the tonics. The proposed ordinance would make it unlawful for anyone to manufacture, have, keep, store, sell, barter, transport, deliver, furnish, possess or have in possession any wine tonics or bitters.

The State Board of Medical Examiners, last fortnight launched an enquiry to determine the medical properties, if any, of the drug store beverages. Launched at the request of United States Prohibition Administrator W. H. Walker, the enquiry will include an examination of the formulae of eleven "tonics." Names of the tonics under fire last week at Sacramento were not disclosed. One of the formulae on a certain preparation was purported to include "mule glands."

"Spiked," No Longer

Broad, extensive, varied in the academic curriculum at the University of California at Los Angeles. Broader, more extensive, more varied are extra-curricular activities at the same institution.

But gay social festivities, where some college students are said to partake of intoxicating liquors, indulge freely in cocktails, imbibe quantities of "spiked" punch, are not to be included in the extra-curricular activities of the university.

University Director Ernest C. Meek, speaking last week before U.C.L.A.'s Interfraternity Council, reprimanded bibulous students, urged them to co-operate with the administration, to ban alcoholic beverages at university affairs, to inaugurate a "dry" social program.