MAJOR BATTLES IN LEGISLATURE

Solons To Fight Out Secret Ballot, Road And Eight-Month School Term

OTHER NEWS OF STATE

By M. L. SHIPMAN

RALEIGH, Feb. 11.—The major battle of the General Assembly will be fought over the issue of an honest election law. This is clearly evident and the big fight will start this week. Governor Gardner, hundreds of thousand of citizens and practically every newspaper of the State are lined up on the side of an honest secret ballot system; the peanut politicians and those others who still think an election is something to be controlled are fighting the measure and have succeeded in getting the Australian ballot bill reported to the house from committee with an amendment which would exempt counties from its terms if they desire exemption, and this will defeat the whole purpose of the secret ballot system, which is to have honest elections throughout the State. It is generally recognized that the county elections are controlled and it is planned to end this control and let the people choose their own county officers. Those who are fighting the measure, for the most part, fear the political consequences to themselves and their friends if honesty is anaugurated at the polls. There is the big fight—it is a battle between those who desire elections on the square and those who want them so that they can control them for their own purposes. The big guns in this fight will be fired this week when the bill gets to the floor of the legislature. It promises to be a record-making struggle.

Big Education Fight

Next to that will come the fight over education. There are a half dozen bills in the hoppers of the two houses providing for various kinds of educational control and the Governor has still another law. This measure will be fought by many but the others do not seem to present any real silution. Governor Gardner's plan would provide for an increase in the equalizing fund for public schools by nearly two million dollars, the money to be apportioned out to make the six months school possible without too heavy local taxation, to relieve these counties which have been carrying the eight months term without State aid and to extend the length of the term wherever possible having in mind an ultimate eight months term without resorting to constitutional amendment. Another plan provides a 40 cent tax in each county for school purposes to assure the eight months term. This measure has beat the governor's in getting a favorable report and may be aired on the floor this week. It will mean reduction of taxes for schools in some ocunties and increases in others. The Governor's plan, however, is favored by most of the legislators and probably will be victorious as it will assure educational relief without disturbing taxation systems too much, and that is the primary object of the legislature this year.

Third Question

The third major question before the General Assembly is the roads tax and road building plans. It is practically certain that the gasoline tax will be increased one cent but the question of what to do with this is puzzling many. A compromise bill has received committee approval and may be argued on the floor of the General Assembly this week. It provides that this extra tax money on gasoline shall be set aside for use in developing county highways with the provision that county highways with the provision that county levies shall not be increased by more than ten per cent over last year. It is also provided that this fund must be administered under supervision of the State highway commission. This will keep out those who merely want the fund to be turned over to county commissioners for road work, which means that it probably will be squandered and nothing good will result. Governor Gardner is understood to be favorable now to the bill which will provide for supervision under the State of certain county roads, this being the only change from his original plan which provided for additional roads to be taken over and made part of the State system. The bill approved incorporates his ideas and while there will be a fight, his side probably will be victorious.

With the session halfway over the legislature thus far has not handled any of the major problems. Of course a great deal of work has been done in committees but to the observer it appears that a lot of work might have been done in handling local bills and lesser important State-wide bills if the legislators had made up their minds to get them out of the way while the major measures were in committee. Now many of the lesser bills must be considered in the last month of the session and also there must be considered the finance bills, appropriation and revenue measures, road bills, school bills, secret ballot bill, and others. This means that there will be an invertable rush which may cause some important bills either to be neglected entirely or passed hastily without due study of many of their requirements.

Table Pension Bill

During the week the senate tabled a bill providing for pensions for widows and dependents of policemen and sheriffs slain in line of duty and assessing a special tax of one dollar on all convicted in criminal court in order to pay the bills for this fund. It passed the house but was tabled in the senate. However, it will come up for consideration again this week when it will be called from the table. Another important measure which must be considered is that providing for establshment of a State highway patrol with a State-wide licensing act for auto drivers. This measure is still in committee but is said to have a fair chance to pass at this session. Road authorities are in favor of it because they believe it will cut down materially the number of accidents on the roads of the State which are daily taking nearly two lives on the average.

Woman Is Honored

An unusual honor came to a Raleigh woman during the week. Dr. Delia Dixon Carroll was elected president of the Raleigh Academy of Medicine. It is the first time that a woman has been so honored. Dr. Carroll is well known throughout the State and is prominent in civic club circles and women's movements. The General Assembly paused during the week to honor the memory of Andrew Johnson, the man who fled from being a tailor's apprentice in Raleigh and returned later as president of the United States. Representative Oscar Haywood of Montgomery county and Judge Robert W. Winston were the chief speakers. Seven inebrities escaped from the State asylum for the insane last Friday and have never been heard from since. The men had been en route to a dance in the asylum grounds when they overpowered the guards and escaped. The Raleigh police department is on the alert for hold-up men following four hold-ups during the past three weeks. Business establishments have been the victims of the raids. Two arrests and convictions have been made, accounting for those who held up one place but the other robberies remained unsolved.

Senator Walter Clark of Mecklenburg has introduced a bill which would provide for refunds in the case of unfair rates charged by railroads for a period of two years prior to such legal action for recovery before the corporation commission. The bill is in the nature of an amendment to the present laws concerning railroad rates. The affairs of the State fair were somewhat cleared up during the week when all of the funds were accounted for but there still remains a deficit in operating expenses which the legislature must dispose of. Governor Gardner sent a special message to the legislature urging that an appropriation be made for prosecution of cases before the interstate commerce commission in which there had been overcharges because of unfair rates. The object of the legal action would be to get rates for the entire North Carolina territory which are comparable to those of other sections. Judge Winston introduced a bill which would restrict private prosecution in criminal courts to two lawyers who must be named by and with consent of the trial judge. The measure is designed to eilminate endless arguments in court and unusual pressure of wealth to get acquitals. An important measure proposed by Representatives Hines of Sampson was to appoint a purchasing agent to do all the buying for schools of the State on a competitive basis. It was argued that large sums would thus be saved.

Hearings Continued

Hearings continued before the joint finance committee during the week on more than two score of the provisions of the measure. Among those being heard were outdoor advertisers who are seeking to have their billboard tax lowered, a committee representing circus lovers who want the exorbitant tax removed from such performances, many business delegations opposing the income tax rates and system, cotton brokers protesting against license costs and many others. The city of Raleigh got through a special bill giving it the power to levy a three cent tax for park purposes if approved by the voters at a special election. It was made known during the week that eight men are seeking the job made vacant when General Manager Moye of the State fair resigned after being sick and after a poor report of the fair's operations under his guidance had been sent to the legislature. Those seeking the post are R. M. Jackson of Fayetteville; T. B. Smith of Clinton; A. H. Fleming of Louisburg; Norman Y. Chambliss of Rocky Mount; Heber O. Clark of Raleigh; W. H. Joyner of Garysburg, and T. N. Spencer of Concord. The job pays $5,000 a year and a committee has been named to investigate and report back to the full State fair board on February 12, at which time the new manager may be named.

The first snowfall of the year hit the capital city during the week and remained on the ground several days. It was about three inches deep and reports from other sections of the State indicated that it had been a general snowfall. State officials were indignant one morning last week when they found that practical jokers had visited capital square during the night and dressed up statues of George Washington, Zebulon Vance and Charles D. McIver. Employes of the State removed the funny clothing. Connie McLean, 21, of Granville county, an empolye of the State highway commission lost his life in an automobile accident in the city.

Based on conditions at this time, the outlook for tobacco growers this year is not favorable.

Student Slain

Forrest Bennett, above, 20-year-old freshman at Oklahoma A. and M. College, was shot and killed recently by Paul Locke, 19, Bennett's former classmate, at Bartlesville, Okla. Bennett was escorting a young lady home from the movies when Locke stepped from behind a shadow and held them up. In the dim light Locke did not recognize his former classmate. A struggle for Locke's weapon fired it, the bullet piercing Bennett's stomach. Locke blamed lack of funds for the crime.

Flu Epidemic Is Creating Record Demand for Vicks

432,000 Jars Every 24 Hours Needed to Keep the Nation Supplied with Vapor-Salve

Flu Milder But Widespread

That the public has not forgotten the lesson of 1918 is indicated by its prompt response to the warning of health authorities to combat the flu by keeping free from colds.

The demand for Vicks VapoRub, the vaporizing salve which proved so valuable during the 1918 epidemic, has already shattered by a wide margin all previous records.

Although the capacity of the Vicks laboratories has been tripled since 1918, they are once more operating night shifts to meet the national emergency.

The present output of more than 432,000 jars a day almost staggers the imagination. It means that every 60 seconds, day and night, over 3600 jars of Vicks are going out to check the nation's cold and help ward off the flu.

Mild though it is in comparison with 1918, this year's epidemic has already affected more than a million persons, and it is apparently still increasing.—Adv.

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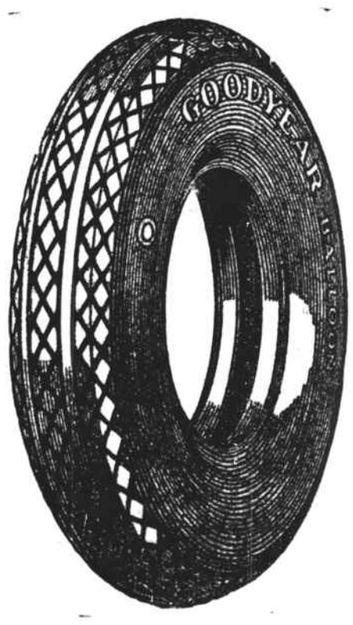

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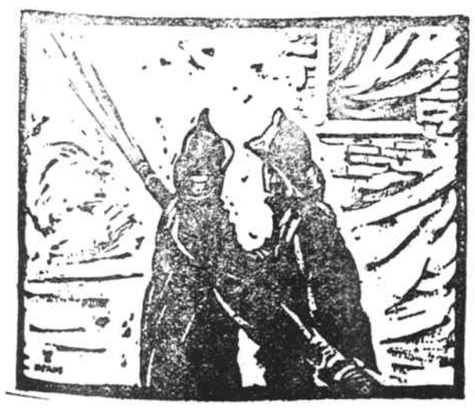

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