

FINISHING TOUCHES ON BILLS RELATING TO COUNTY FINANCES

Bills for County Government Reform Will Be Introduced Latter Part of This Week or Next.

SPONSORED BY ADMINISTRATION

Counties May Choose the Form of Government.—Other Bill Will Limit the Amount of Indebtedness.

Finishing touches are now being put on the bills relating to county government reform, which are expected to be formally introduced in the general assembly either in the latter part of this week or the first of next week. These bills are sponsored by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and by the administration, and are the result of the investigational work done by the County Government Commission, appointed by Governor McLean, and of which Dr. E. C. Brooks, president of State College is the head.

There will be two bills, or rather, two groups of bills. The first bill or bills will set out several forms of county government—the commission, the managerial, or some other form of county government, and any county, upon its own volition, may hold an election and adopt any of these forms it desires. But this action is not obligatory, and if it prefers, it may continue to hold to its present form of county government. Thus the counties are given full and complete autonomy as to the form of county government it desires to have.

The second group of bills, however, which will be designed to regulate the fiscal affairs of the counties, will be mandatory and compulsory upon all the counties, regardless of what form of county government they may have or may choose later, and are applicable to any of these forms.

1. Will limit the amount of indebtedness a county may incur through the issuance of bonds, and will limit the amount of bonds that may be issued by counties, even for necessary improvements, until the taxpayers have been given at least 30 days notice of the intention to issue the bonds, and an opportunity to be heard. And then a referendum vote may be demanded by ten per cent of the taxpayers. Where the improvements are not essentially necessary, a referendum will be required without petition.

2. Will provide that no bonds may be issued by counties, even for necessary improvements, until the taxpayers have been given at least 30 days notice of the intention to issue the bonds, and an opportunity to be heard. And then a referendum vote may be demanded by ten per cent of the taxpayers. Where the improvements are not essentially necessary, a referendum will be required without petition.

3. Will provide for the budgetary system of accounting, so that a record of all fiscal transactions will be kept at all times.

4. Will prohibit the issuance of short time notes for current expenses and the governing board of the county will be required to make out a budget estimate for the needs of the county for each fiscal year, and then levy a tax rate that will yield the revenue the budget calls for.

5. Will set a limit to the tax rates that may be levied for various purposes, on both real and intangible property.

While these fiscal acts will at first be purely legislative, a provision will be included to have them submitted as constitutional amendments at the next general election, when, if approved, they will become constitutional instead of statutory. No attempt will be made to make the various forms of county government constitutional, however.

While not much has been heard of the county government reform measures as some of the others, a number are inclined to regard these bills as among the most important, if not the most important, that will come before this session of the general assembly. First, these acts would install a uniform method of accounting, in all the counties of the state, much in the same manner as all the various state departments and institutions have been co-ordinated under the state budget with a uniform fiscal and accounting system. In this respect, these acts are designated to accomplish for the various counties what the budget system has accomplished for the state.

And, what are these results? First, expenditures would be limited to actual needs, and the tax rate determined by these needs, with sufficient taxes levied each year to take care of these needs, without piling up a deficit.

Second, a check would be placed upon the promiscuous issuance of bonds by counties, cities and towns, prohibiting the issuance of bonds even for necessary improvements without giving the taxpayers an opportunity to demand a referendum, and prohibiting the issuance of any bonds for unnecessary purposes without a vote of the people.

Third, through the uniform system of accounting that would be installed, a constant check on the financial condition of the county could be kept.

In other words, the counties would all be placed on a "pay as you go" plan, which would mean an eventual saving of millions of dollars to the taxpayers.

Of course, those counties which have already voted large bond issues would have to continue to levy a tax rate that would take care of both the bonds and the current expenses of the county, but these acts would regulate the issuance of any more bonds, and this would tend to curtail the local tax burdens, which in most counties, is increasing yearly.

Whether or not these bills will pass

LEGISLATURE TODAY DEVED ATTENTION TO MINOR MATTERS

Solons for the Most Part Worked on Routine Matters.—Two Important Bills Given Thought.

NATIONAL PARK QUESTION AGAIN

Brief Sessions Held so Addresses by Park Proponents Could Be Heard During Day.

State Capitol, Raleigh, Feb. 1.—The General Assembly ground away at routine today and acted upon two bills of outstanding importance. One of these was the Whitmore measure, designed to unite the hands of the state's delegates at the Democratic National Convention and relieve them of the necessity of supporting a man simply because he filed his nomination at the state primary. The bill passed, and was sent to the house.

In the House, Tobe Connor's bill regulating the reward paid for stills to \$20 and that only when an operator was convicted with the still, was passed with an amendment making it applicable to nearly half the counties in the state.

Both houses adjourned until 11 o'clock tomorrow in order to clear the slate for the joint session at noon to hear speakers on the proposed establishment of a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains.

The joint committee on courts and judicial districts, meeting today, did not adopt the report of the subcommittee providing for redistricting the state, but had so many other suggestions and discussions that adjournment was taken before final action was reached. The subcommittee proposed to re-district the state, making three general divisions of nine districts each.

Representative McLean suggested a constitutional amendment which would permit the creation of new districts without petition if this was necessary, but this suggestion did not have many followers.

Another suggestion was the re-organization of the emergency judges instead of four. The committee will work out the plans at some future meeting.

After much discussion a motion to report the Smith bill favorably by Representative Gold of Guilford, the joint committee on roads today voted unanimously to appoint a subcommittee to see if it would be possible to iron out the differences existing in the legislature about granting the Highway Commission authority in the local road laws.

This action was taken on motion of Senator Salmon of Harnett and after a very spirited support of the suggestion by Representative Connor, of Wilson, one of the authors of the original highway bill.

The house commission on public welfare reported unfavorably Miss McLean's bill to allow private employment agencies to charge a registration fee of \$1 and to increase the commission on the first month's income from 15 per cent, to 25 per cent.

The Mecklenburg representative, only a day legislator of the session, previously had her bill finally passed in behalf of the Charlotte Woman's Club, exempting it from taxes.

The bill of Representative Gold to establish a farm colony for women at a cost of \$100,000 was reported favorably and directed sent to the house appropriations committee.

LEXINGTON LIKELY TO SEEK COLLEGE

Chamber of Commerce Committee to Interview Rutherford Head.

Lexington, Feb. 1.—Lexington may stage a campaign to move Rutherford College to this city, according to Chamber of Commerce officials. Secretary C. W. Sturkey reports that a committee has been appointed to receive President M. F. Starnes of the college upon his visit here and to work out a proposition to be submitted to the full board of directors for their action.

President Starnes had expected to come here last Saturday but weather conditions forced him to postpone the trip. It has been reported that the board of trustees of Rutherford will hold a meeting on February 10th, at which time propositions for the removal of the college are expected to be received and discussed. Destruction of one of the principal buildings recently necessitates a new building program, it is stated.

As now drawn of course cannot be accurately foretold, and it is likely some amendments will be added either in committee or when they reach the floor of the general assembly. But judging from the trend of legislation already introduced, much of which has been to regulate the issuance of bonds by counties, indications are that the majority if not all of these bills should be assured of quick and easy passage.

It is generally admitted that the two greatest evils in keeping the county tax rates at a high level are poor fiscal systems, with faulty accounting, and the tendency to issue bonds for this, that and any cause—and these two evils, as well as many lesser ones, would be materially remedied by the county government reform acts.

Porter Richards, of Caldwell, Kas., was elected constable on his 21st birthday, when he cast his first vote.

CONTROVERSY OVER UPKEEP OF BRIDGE ENDED AT MEETING

Officials Representing City and Southern Railway Settle Differences at a Conference Monday.

BOTH SIDES ARE WELL PLEASED

Southern Will Build Abutments Over the Trestle to Prevent Sloughing at Bridge in Future.

An agreement has been reached in the controversy between the City of Concord and the Southern Railway Company in regard to the repairing and maintenance of the concrete over-bridge and the wooden trestle, it was said today.

The agreement was reached at a call meeting of the board of aldermen of Concord held Monday night at which meeting representatives of the railway company met with the aldermen. Both the city and the railway company agreed to do certain things that they had not agreed on in the proposals of a settlement of the controversy. The board of aldermen instructed Mayor C. H. Barrier and B. E. Harris, clerk and treasurer, to sign the agreement in the name of the City. The city agreed:

1. To maintain the approach leading to the west abutment of the concrete bridge, other than said crooked bridge over the railway's side track.

2. To provide or have provided by the State highway department necessary guards or guard rails, as it may deem best, on the extension of West Depot street, leading from its connection with West Corbin street and running northwesterly from Irish Buffalo Creek, thence to the west abutment of the concrete bridge over the Southern Railway's right of way.

3. To keep in repair and do ordinary maintenance required to the surface of the roading constituting the street to the west end of the concrete bridge, across the same to the east end thereof, as it would keep up the surface of its other streets of Concord.

The Southern Railway Company agreed:

1. To pay, on presentation thereof, bill of city for half of the cost of paving placed upon the surface of the concrete bridge over and across it.

2. To maintain the concrete structure and pay half of the cost of repairing the surface of the street.

3. To construct and maintain the necessary concrete abutments at the east end and the west end of the crooked timber bridge over the side track.

4. To maintain and rebuild when necessary in the future the sub-structure including the floor system of the said crooked timber bridge.

5. To pay half cost of surfacing over the crooked timber bridge when it should be repaired.

6. To reimburse the city for the amount expended for temporary repairs made by the city in December, 1926, in the surface of the street approach on the west side of the said bridge, due to the sloughing off of the fill for lack of abutments at either end of the crooked timber bridge.

The agreement was signed by Mayor Barrier and B. E. Harris for the City of Concord and by H. W. Miller, vice president of the Southern Railway Company, and W. S. Camp, assistant secretary and treasurer of the Southern Railway Company, for the railroad.

SENT RIGHT CARD TO WRONG SPOUSE

Congratulations on Birth of a Child Landed Him in Court.

Philadelphia, Feb. 1.—A card congratulating the wrong wife on the birth of a child led to the arrest of Edward J. Ireland, 27, of Chester, Pa., and his arraignment in court today. He was faced by both wives, and was held under \$500 bail for further hearing.

Mrs. Ireland who discovered her husband's dual family life, said she was Miss Willis Abernathy before she was married to Ireland in Greenville, N. C., June 8, 1925.

Mrs. Ireland, No. 2, to whom the baby was born, said she was Miss Susie Gay before she and Ireland were wed at Roanoke Rapids, N. C., September 19, 1925.

Ireland maintained homes for both wives in this city. Both women said he told them he was an insurance agent and had to leave on long trips. He divided the week equally between both households, they said. Mrs. Ireland No. 2 with her baby left the courtroom on the arm of Mrs. Ireland No. 1.

Coffey Will Plead Guilty.

Says Reduction in Cotton Acreage Will Not Exceed Ten Per Cent

The Tribune Bureau Sir Walter Hotel

Raleigh, Feb. 1.—The reduction in the cotton acreage in 1927 will not be more than 10 per cent, and the economic outlook for the South as a result is not encouraging, at least for those sections that continue to be largely dependent upon cotton. These figures have just been arrived at from a survey of farm conditions made in Washington and were made public today by Dr. G. W. Forster, agricultural economist at State College here, just back from Washington where he assisted the government statisticians in making the survey.

While the acreage in North Carolina and some of the eastern cotton states will probably be reduced more than 10 per cent—and will have to be if the farmers expect to make anything at all—these reductions will more than be offset by the large increase in acreage that will be planted in Texas and Oklahoma where the cost of producing cotton is far below what it is in North Carolina, where it is not necessary to use fertilizer and where through the use of the "adding" method of picking cotton and the use of cotton picking machines, it is possible for one man to take care of from 150 to 200 acres of cotton. Thus cotton can be raised at a profit even if it sells for only 12 or 15 cents a pound.

All of this in the face of the fact that there will be a world carry-over of approximately 9,000,000 bales of cotton in 1927 does not present a very optimistic outlook, according to Dr. Forster. But facts are facts and they must be faced—and better now than later, he says.

The cotton crop of 1926 amounted to 18,900,000 bales, according to the latest government crop estimate—the largest on record. The carry-over on August 1, 1926, was 6,700,000 bales and the consumption of American cotton in 1927 cannot exceed 15,000,000 bales, according to the most reliable estimates. Thus the carry-over of American cotton alone will be at least 9,000,000 bales, the largest on record.

With but a 10 per cent. reduction in the cotton acreage in 1927, according to Dr. Forster, the 1927 crop will then amount to not less than 14,000,000 bales. This amount, plus the 9,000,000 bales carried over from 1926, will give a total visible cotton supply of 23,000,000 bales in 1927. Added to this is the fact that the world's consumption of cotton will likely be less in 1927 than it was in 1926, with a corresponding decline in the demand for cotton. Dr. Forster says. Further gloom is cast over the situation by the prediction that no appreciable increase in the purchasing power of either the United States or the leading European nations is expected during 1927.

"Thus the outlook for cotton in the entire south is most discouraging," says Dr. Forster. "Therefore we must urge that each individual North Carolina farmer consider the facts that have been presented to us by present conditions. The outlook for southern agriculture in 1927 and the years immediately ahead is not bright. The fact seems to be that the South is on the verge of an impending agricultural revolution, the effects of which on our social and economic conditions may be far-reaching."

"Farmers have not yet generally learned to use the available information on the supply and demand for the various crops they are producing and they act independently in adjusting their production to market demands," Dr. Forster said, in giving an explanation of some of the reasons for present conditions. There is still a feeling, too, that if another large crop is produced, Congress will step in and furnish relief through legislation. Dr. Forster says.

When told of Dr. Forster's statements and estimates, Frank Parker, State department of agriculture and the United States department of agriculture, declared that the federal survey along the same lines had not yet been completed and that hence he could not speak for the federal department. However, he said that there was already much in support of Dr. Forster's findings.

FULL AGREEMENT ON DISARMAMENT QUESTION

Negotiations Between Allies and Germans Ends in Full Agreement.

Paris, Feb. 1.—(AP)—Full agreement on the disarmament question which has been the subject of protracted negotiations between the allies and Germany, was reached today.

The allied Council of Ambassadors is working out a few remaining details, but all pending differences over the military control of Germany have been settled and there are no problems to be turned over to the league of nations.

The inter-allied military control commission now ceases to function, the league taking over the work of seeing that Germany complies with the disarmament provisions of the Versailles treaty.

In broad lines the agreement calls for the destruction of fortifications at Kuestrin and Glogau, in Prussia, and 22 fortified works in the vicinity of Koenigsberg. The German government solemnly affirms that no other fortifications exist except those expressly recognized by the allies, and engages not to construct others.

THE COTTON MARKET

Opened Steady at Unchanged Prices to Advance of 2 Points.—May Goes Up to 13.46.

New York, Feb. 1.—(AP)—The cotton market opened steady today at unchanged prices to an advance of 2 points. Trading was quiet. Prices fluctuated within a range of 3 or 4 points during the first hour. May contracts ruling around 13.46 and October 13.88, or within a point of yesterday's closing quotation.

Private cables reported continental and Bombay buying, with negating light in the Liverpool market.

Speculation in the English market was one of the sustaining factors. Locally, but failed to stimulate much buying as traders appeared to be waiting for developments in the southern spot markets, or more definite news of coming crop prospects.

Cotton futures opened steady: March 13.25; May 13.46; July 13.68; October 13.91; December 14.04.

To Ring Carrow, on Flying Heels at Stroke of 12.

High Point, Jan. 31.—All public dances in High Point will stop at midnight in the future, according to Mayor H. A. Moffitt. The announcement followed the last of a series of four telephonic events staged in connection with the furniture exposition.

The mayor made an exception of the four exposition dances in order that the visiting furniture men might be entertained more elaborately.

BUDGET AND REVENUE BILLS TO COME OUT ALMOST UNSCATHED

The Two Bills Will Be Sent Back to the Legislature Almost Like They Were When Introduced.

ONLY MINOR CHANGES MADE

The Twin Bills Seem to Have Been Balanced as They Were Introduced in General Assembly.

BY HENRY LESENE International News Service Staff Correspondent

Raleigh, Feb. 1.—The administration's budget appropriations and revenue bills will find their way out of committee rooms late this week—unscathed.

The two bills will be sent back to the Legislature looking very much like they did when they were introduced a few weeks ago. After being subjected to weeks of microscopic scrutiny, it is believed that only minor changes, if any at all, will be evident when they are turned back to the General Assembly.

At a time when the bills have been before the finance and appropriations committees for four weeks, the committees have indicated no inclination to seriously alter the original drafts prepared by Governor Angus W. McLean and his Advisory Budget Committee.

The maintenance measure, transmitted in the Governor's message, has been torn down and pieced together again by the appropriations committee, with no noticeable changes, while the revenue bill has undergone the exacting study of the finance committee.

A multiplicity of state department and institution heads, together with other interested parties, has appeared before the committees, clamoring for allowances above those recommended by the Governor and the Budget Commission.

To all of which, the committees have not turned a deaf ear, but all the time, ostensibly, marveled at the liberality of the Chief Executive's recommendations.

One reason why the committees are apparently thinking twice before allowing or increasing any of the recommended appropriations is because of the fact that the twin bills are balanced so prettily as they stand.

To alter one of the bills would upset the balance which the Governor and the Budget Commission took careful pains, and also considerable time, to make it tally exactly.

To boost appropriations would, necessarily, mean an increase somewhere in one of the tax tables. If, however, the appropriations committee would make some slashes instead of increases, the excess revenue would go into the "Surplus."

However, it has been pointed out, the appeals of the numerous department and institution heads is not so gloomy, after all. It would be possible to reduce certain appropriations and increase others without seriously disturbing the balance, and arousing the disfavor of Governor McLean.

But, even though the twin bills get to the floor of the General Assembly practically intact, they will have a stormy route to travel before they are enacted, it is regarded as practically certain.

Hints of a combat over the equalizing fund already are prevalent. The "insurgents" would advocate a bigger equalizing fund than the Governor and the Budget Commission have recommended.

The amount recommended is exactly \$2,500,000. The divided report of the Governor's Education Commission pointed out the necessity of a \$4,000,000 fund.

The 1927 General Assembly now is in its fifth week, with no state-wide bill ready for ratification.

However, introductions of bills during the first four weeks of the session have been heavy. In the House, 116 bills have been dropped in the hopper, while the Senate has produced only 43.

The House has passed 55 bills, and the Senate 50.

Charlotte Contractor Ends His Own Life in Florida.

Fort Meyers, Fla., Jan. 31.—E. O. Little, of Charlotte, N. C., general contractor, committed suicide today at Naples, by shooting himself with a revolver. A coroner's jury held that he "took his own life while temporarily insane."

Little had been building stations for the Atlantic Coast line at Naples and other towns along its new extensions from Fort Meyers. Relatives here could scribble no motive for the act, but business associates said it was reported that Little had been in financial difficulties for some time.

CANTONESE DECLINE TO SIGN AGREEMENT WITH THE BRITISH

Negotiations Halted Because British Are Now Concentrating Troops at Shanghai.

WANT THE TROOPS MOVEMENT HALTED

Eugene Chen, Cantonese Foreign Minister, Opposed to Coming of More British Troops.

Hankow, China, Feb. 1.—Negotiations between the Cantonese and British for a new agreement to take the place of the treaties now in effect between China and Great Britain were broken off today by Eugene Chen, Cantonese foreign minister.

Chen, who had been negotiating with the British charge d'affaires O'Malley, refused to sign the agreement proposed by the British as long as armed forces of England are concentrating at Shanghai.

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AMERICANS FLEEING FROM DANGER ZONES OF INTERIOR CHINA

Many Missionaries Are Included in the Scores of Americans Seeking Out Places of Safety.

NAVAL FORCES ARE MOVING NEARER

American Forces After Positions That Will Make Them Effective in Rendering Assistance.

Washington, Feb. 1.—(AP)—American refugees, including many missionaries are fleeing in increasing numbers from the danger zones of interior China to the seacoast cities, and United States naval forces are moving closer to the theatre of war to afford them any protection that might be needed.

Admiral C. W. Williams, commander of the Asiatic fleet, has reported to the navy department that many American citizens acting on the advice of American Minister MacMurray at Peking have begun an evacuation of interior Chinese provinces because of movements of Cantonese forces, while Shanghai dispatches report a general missionary exodus from almost every province under nationalist control, due to anti-foreign agitation and hostile student mobs and soldiery.

Meanwhile two American destroyers are en route to Shanghai for possible emergency use.

The fourth regiment of marines at full war strength also is preparing for what appears to be an early departure from San Diego for a Far Eastern destination. It will be under the command of Col. Charles E. Hill.

Some of the Chinese cities from which Americans are hurrying to places of safety are Chung King, Chang Sha, Szechwan and Foochow. At Hankow and Nanking, American consuls have warned Americans to leave. Those in Amoy, Swatow and Canton have been concentrated in places which could be evacuated on a moment's notice.

The United States ship Monocacy which is standing by at Szechwan during that city's evacuation, has reported that 104 Americans and 105 British are unaccounted for. By American consular and naval authorities seeking to send them out of the interior of China.

Fifty-one Americans and thirty-four British have left Szechwan while forty Americans and 170 British are expected to arrive at Chungking, another evacuation center, within ten days.

Exciting Pursuit of Supposed Run Runners Described; Car Wrecked.

Charlotte, Jan. 31.—Details of a wild ride through the hills along the North Carolina-Virginia border, including the deliberate wrecking of one automobile by an alleged run-runner, abandonment of another while running at high speed under a prohibition of fire leaped onto the running board were disclosed here today with issuance of a seizure warrant for the two automobiles.

The cars were seized January 22, when Fred Breen of Greensboro was arrested in the hills north of Leaswell, Va., and taken under \$300 bond.

John S. Funn, prohibition agent, and two assistants lay in wait on the Martinsville, Va., road near the State line. Two cars came along. The State agents gave chase. They overtook the second car and Funk leaped to the running board, according to the story told here. The man in the car leaped out leaving it to run wild. Funk managed to stop the car and then gave chase with his own machine to the other.

As the dry agent was about to overtake the second car the driver is alleged to have deliberately run it over an 80 foot embankment and wrecked it. Breen was arrested soon afterward.

William P. Parsons Dead.

Wadesboro, Jan. 31.—William P. Parsons, Mayor of Wadesboro and president of the First National bank of Wadesboro, died Monday morning about 3:30 o'clock. Mr. Parsons, suffered a serious heart attack last summer and was critically ill. He recovered sufficiently to attend to his affairs, but his health remained precarious, and about 10 days ago he was again stricken.

Flesh Colored Horse With Wool Socks.

Asheville, Feb. 1.—(INS)—Lest they be forgotten while girl students of the school are attracting so much attention by the donning of flesh colored hose with wool socks on top of the Hal Fletcher High School boys have adopted a fad too. Swathing every boy's neck or dangling from his high pocket is to be seen a gay bandanna handkerchief, displaying to the fullest effect its brilliant red or blue background, with figures in yellow or white.

"As long as the girls wear socks we are going to wear bandannas," the boys declared