With the Legislature

(By Emmet Atkins, Jr.)

Raleigh, Feb. 11—Approximately a thousand school teachers from the entire state gathered in Raleigh Saturday morning to try to revive the apparently moribund teacher-salary-increase bill which had just the previous day been voted down by an overwhelming majority in the House appropriations committee. Purpose of the meeting, expressed by Miss Agnes McDonald, Greensboro, president of the North Carolina Classroom Teachers Association, was ". . . to express our views and get clearly fixed in the mind of the public that we . . . are standing back of this restoration of salaries." The mass meeting was the first indication of life in the dormant "school bloc," usually as articulate and loud-voiced as any contingent in the legislative camp.

Recommended in the original budget draft, the proposed salary increase, which would provide a $5-a-month raise for teachers with nine years' experience, is now apparently doomed for this session. The $500,000 allotment granted the Greater University soaked up all the money earmarked for teacher-pay-increase. Unless continued juggling of figures by the appropriations and finance committees brings to light hitherto unsuspected revenue sources, which is in turn highly unlikely, North Carolina's teachers will have to continue to get along for at least two more years on their depression-level salaries.

In voting down the ninth salary increment for teachers, the committee expressed the opinion it would rather leave the school fund allotment to be used at the discretion of the School Commission, rather than tying the hands of that body by definitely allocating funds for the pay increase. Rep. S. O. Worthington, of Pitt, who offered the school fund figures adopted by the committee, told the members: "I feel that it is best to give this money to the school commission to carry on work for things that may have been overlooked and for things we are unable to see now."

Apropos of the present salary scale for teachers in the state, one committee member said: "It is my considered judgment that this represents North Carolina's public disgrace No. 1."

After nearly two weeks of budget revision, the appropriations committee had at week's end made a total reduction of approximately $61,000 for the biennium. First reductions, amounting to almost a half million dollars, most of which was lopped off appropriations for state departments located in Raleigh, was offset last week by the granting of a similar amount to the University and other educational institutions in lieu of increased tuition. The two weeks revision amounted practically to transferring $500,000 from state agencies and departments to educational institutions. The $61,000 net cut will doubtless be utilized before the appropriations bill reaches the House floor. Still remaining to be considered by the committee is the highway department appropriation.

Meanwhile, changes voted in the revenue bill by the Finance committee already have lowered its estimated total by $900,000 for the biennium. This leaves the budget currently out of balance to the tune of approximately $1,000,000.

The appropriations bill is slated to reach the floor of the House by Thursday of this week.

At its final meeting of the week, the Finance committee deferred action on remaining controversial matters until this week. The committee has made two material reductions in the revenue bill so far: The amendment restricting exemptions of some building materials from the sales tax is estimated to reduce revenue by $400,000 a year. The net effect of actions on intangible tax, with the share of local units increased from 50 to 75 per cent, partially offset by increases in rates is now estimated as a loss to the state of $200,000 a year. The gross reduction of $600,000 has been partially offset by two material increases. Revenue from vending and other slot machines has been upped $150,000 and the franchise tax on corporations $25,000 a year. Pending increases are proposed for wholesale dealers in petroleum products and bottlers. Reductions are pending for railroads. No action has yet been taken on beer and whiskey tax.

* * *

The Senate appropriations committee added a quarter million dollars to the state's old-age pension fund by neatly transferring Confederate widows pensions, heretofore borne as a separate fund entirely by the state, to the regular old-age pension rolls. Confederate widows' pensions cost the state $500,000 yearly. Under the new plan, the widows' pensions will be transferred to the regular old-age pension rolls, where state funds are matched by Federal funds, thus releasing $250,000 a year. In addition, widows will receive their checks monthly, instead of semi-annually. The quarter million dollars released by the simple bookkeeping transfer will be added to the state's old age fund, raising that figure to $1,250,000 available as compared to the $1,000,000 recomended. These funds, matched with Federal and county allotments will mean $4,200,000 yearly will be available for payment of old-age pensions in this state, compared with $3,700,000 now spent yearly. Approximately 34,000 aged persons can be pensioned on that amount.

* * *

Striving to gain some measure of harmony before reporting the election reform law to a full committee, a sub-committee studying the bill struggled with it valiantly during the week. First roll-call in the sub-committee brought out a four-to-three vote for abolishing the absentee ballot entirely in primaries. The bill will be reported to a full committee of 35 members early this week, where it is slated for an unpredictable baptism of fire.

An unfavorable report by a House judiciary committee during the week dealt a death blow to the much-debated bill to abolish capital punishment. Bandied back and forth during the past few weeks the bill lost much of its chances of passage after the first hearings were held two weeks ago—at which time experts, physicians, and prison officials voiced their opposition.

Paul Green, Chapel Hill professor, author and playwright, appeared before the judiciary committee after the vote had been taken. Green told the committee: "I have had much experience with Negroes and poor white people. The poor people are the guys that get it in the neck. Wealthy persons are seldom executed." He expressed his hope that North Carolina would take leadership in the South in abolition of capital punishment.

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Presbyterian Notes

A stewardship conference was held at the North Wilkesboro church Friday, Feb. 10.

Dr. E. E. Gallespie, Synod Home Mission superintendent, spoke on the subject, "Our Church's Task."

Mr. J. O. Blevin, an elder from the Lansing church, spoke on the "Stewardship Legion of Honor." In this talk Mr. Blevin told how the churches around Lansing had used the Lord's Acre Plan by dedicating a hen, pig or calf, or some farm produce for the work of the church. This plan has been used by many rural churches and great good has come from it in the development of the churches that have used it.

After the supper hour Dr. E. K. Tenny, of Atlanta, Ga., gave the inspirational address for the evening. There were seventy-five in attendance at this meeting from the churches of Winston-Salem Presbytery.

Rev. O. V. Caudill preached to a large congregation in the Lansing Presbyterian church last Sunday night.

The council meeting of the Elkin Presbyterian church was held at the home of Mr. Morgan Hanks Tuesday night. At this meeting plans for the work of the church was discussed.

Bill Manson, of Union Theological Seminary will preach at the Elkin Presbyterian church Sunday, March 5, at the 11 o'clock hour. We especially invite you to hear Mr. Manson on that Sunday.

The regular men's meeting of the church has been changed from February 21 to February 22.

You will find a cordial welcome awaiting you at our Sunday school and church services.

Get a Testimonial

A young man walked breezily into the doctor's surgery.

"Ah, good morning, sir," he said. "I've just dropped in to tell you how greatly I benefited from your treatment."

The doctor eyed him up and down.

"But I don't remember you," he said, "You're not one of my patients."

"I know," replied the other, "but my uncle was and I'm his heir."

The DOCTOR Tells the Story

Superstitions

For thirty-four years Dr. Joseph L. Miller has been practicing his profession among the miners, moonshiners, lumbermen, crop-share farmers and other hillbillies of a mountainous section of West Virginia.

Like all country practitioners, he does everything for his patients from surgery to medical care of their diseases. In these years he has brought thousands of babies into the world, under conditions which are far from ideal, yet strange to relate, due to their natural hardiness, his mortality rate has been exceptionally low.

Like most physicians, practicing among such people who have little money, more than half of his patients are unable to compensate him for his services, but they receive the same treatment and coureous consideration at his hands, as his paying clientele.

One of his greatest difficulties is overcoming the superstitions which are born and bred in these simple folk. He has compiled a long list of some of them, which he gave me, and which I herewith reproduce.

Asafetida, a vile smelling drug, suspended in a bag about the neck keeps away such diseases as measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, mumps, croup and scarlet fever, while a bit of brown glass on a string about the throat prevents goitre.

Kernels of red corn carried in the pocket prevent hemorrhages and form blood clots in wounds so that one will not bleed to death.

For nose bleed, the blood is allowed to run on an axe, which is then stuck in the ground or in a tree.

Copper rings or plates of the same metal in the shoes keep away rheumatism.

A dirty, greasy dish rag passed over a baby's face prevents convulsions.

Sheep bones carried in the clothes overcome cramps.

Hair from combing the head is always burned to keep off headaches.

Babies' clothes for six months are put on feet first to keep them from becoming stunted.

Parents bite their children's finger nails to keep them from stealing.

Snake skins, worn as belts, prevent lumbago, while the oil from snakes and fishing worms, locally applied, stops pain and infiammations.

Blood from black cats and black chickens, works wonders for skin ailments.

Pans of water placed under the bed overcome night sweats.

Nutmegs carried in the pants pocket stops indigestion, while castor beans in one's hip pocket overcome colic.

We may laugh at these peculiarities but wise city folks observe as many foolish customs as do these simple mountain people.

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