

INVESTIGATION INSTITUTED.

Speaker Wright's Assailants Must Prove Charges.

No Result in the Senatorial Battle—Four Ballots Yesterday—Senate Repeals the Belshaw Act.

The storm center of legislative interest yesterday was distinctly located in the Assembly. That was evident before the gavel fell at 11:30 a. m.

The hour being later than the usual one for convening, the San Francisco "Call," "Examiner" and "Chronicle" with their "follow-up stories" of yesterday's lurid attack upon Speaker Wright, had arrived and were well distributed throughout both houses. All the members knew, from the "Record-Union," that Speaker Wright had denounced the charges in Sunday's "Call" as false from beginning to end, and had declared that they were manufactured by the correspondents of that paper.

The spirit of unrest did not break out into any visible or audible demonstration, but that matters were in the strained condition which must presently come to an issue of speech every one on the floor evidently felt. But if people feared or looked for any sudden outbreak, any counter denunciations made in the heat of anger which should further fire the passions already aroused they were disappointed. However strong might have been the indignation, however great the temptation to self-defense or to assertion of innocence, it was held in check and a becoming dignity characterized proceedings which may be the initiative of grave results.

THE SPEAKER SPEAKS.

Speaker pro tem Anderson was called to the chair almost at once and the galleries, lobbies and spare seats in the Assembly floor showed more than the usual number of visitors for a rainy morning.

The Chaplain's prayer for "wisdom to see and courage to do the things which are right," doubtless found an echo in many hearts and intellects, but there were those who, also without doubt, had long ago lost all use of such wisdom and whose courage, at about the same period, had suffered a change into "nerve."

Before the regular order of business began Speaker Wright was seen standing on the floor of the house very near his old place, where, during the thirty-second session, he arose so often in the interest of wise legislation. Very briefly and quietly he stated to the House that charges had been made against his honor, which, in his position as Speaker, impugned also the honor of the Assembly, and he asked for a thorough investigation by a committee to be appointed by the Speaker pro tem. Speaker Wright's exact words are given in the day's proceedings in another column.

JOHNSON'S RESOLUTION.

In offering his resolution embodying the Speaker's request, Grove L. Johnson was more than usually calm and dispassionate, though not less than usually earnest and determined. His well-known and undisputed power of invective and vituperation was held well in check and his speech, which received the assent of the whole House, will be read with interest in its place in the proceedings.

Johnson's resolution was unanimously adopted.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

When it came to serving on the committee—that was different. Four out of the seven members appointed by Speaker pro tem. Anderson tried to beg, Mead did not want to serve, neither did La Boree; Mellick, in his own inimitable fashion, frankly admitted that he had a Senator of his own that he wanted to elect, and did not care to antagonize his colleagues, as he inevitably would if he went to investigating. Wade was just as busy—a member of another half-dozen committees—in fact, things began to look uncommonly like that well-remembered dinner party in sacred history where the host had to go out into the highways and hedges to get his guests.

But Dibble made a little motion that no one should be excused. It was carried, and so ordered, and, now that there is a full-fledged investigation committee in operation, old members begin to feel at home, and the daily Senatorial contest will have a rival show to play against.

The first meeting of the committee, of which an account is given below, was held a 5 p. m. yesterday, and adjournment was taken until 2:30 p. m. to-day.

SENATORIAL.

There was no rift in the Senatorial

cloud yesterday. There was the same talk about gains, but when it came to a ballot there was absolutely no change in the position of the possibilities.

Four ballots were taken during the joint session, the first resulting as the one taken on last Saturday, and each of the three which followed might have been mistaken for the first.

There seemed to be a decided feeling against adjourning after the joint session got to grinding, and though there was no evident hope for a break from any candidate to some other one, the members hung on and sat and voted, and voted, and voted. They probably desired to get on record.

Another effort will be made to-morrow, but the sagacious ones do not venture a guess as to whether or not a break will come. Who will be the lucky one remains to be seen.

HAPPY CONSTITUENCY.

Interest in the Senate yesterday centered around the majority caucus bill, which amends those sections of the Political Code relating to the number and compensation of officers and attaches of the Legislature, and which are commonly known as the "Belshaw Act."

The bill provides for additional patronage, including committee and other clerks, porters, etc., raising the per diem patronage \$153 in each house above the amount allowed by the provisions of the Belshaw Act.

The Democrats took a determined stand against the bill, and a heated discussion followed, in the course of which Smith of Kern stated that the Democrats had offered to vote for the bill, provided they were allowed a place at the crib; but that, as the Republicans would have to take the "roasting and the cursing," they proposed to shoulder the responsibility—and take the State Treasury with them.

La Rue, Doty and other Democrats threw the charge back at Smith, saying that offers of patronage had been made Democrats for their votes for the bill. Doty said he had been approached with such an offer, and that some of the minority had been offered patronage aggregating \$15 a day to "help out."

During the discussion the dry bones of former sessions were dug up, and Cutler recollected that on one occasion a Democratic Legislature had created a fat position for a man, and that his sole duty was to wind up the eight-day clock.

It was argued that the attaches named in the bill were enough, and no more, to insure the proper transaction of business, and in the end the rules were suspended, and the bill passed by a strict party vote.

COMMITTEES.

The Ways and Means Committee had under consideration yesterday Valentine's bill appropriating \$150,000 for a Californian exhibit at the Paris Exposition of 1900. They will report favorably on it to-day, only a few unimportant changes having been made in committee.

The ballots in the contested election case of Leon Jones vs. Wardell were received by that committee last night, and considerable progress was made in the count.

FOUR BALLOTS—NO CHOICE.

No Material Change in the Senatorial Situation. With relation to the election of a United States Senator to succeed Stephen M. White, the Legislature yesterday proceeded to stand still. The usual number of ballots—four—were taken, with the usual result, and even then nearly one-half of the members favored taking another.

On the side of the majority every man stood fast and voted as he had voted on Saturday. Senator Davis, who, ever since the beginning, had cast his ballot for Irving M. Scott, was excused for three days, and as a consequence Scott received only one instead of two votes, as before.

Assemblyman Chynoweth was absent during the first two ballots, but he, being for Grant, had taken the precaution to pair with Miller of San Francisco, one of Burns' adherents, so that both Burns and Grant were short a vote. After Chynoweth appeared he voted for Grant, and Miller for Burns. Assemblyman Raw, a Grant adherent, was absent, and he had paired with Assemblyman Rickard, a Burns man, so that throughout the balloting both Burns and Grant were each a vote short of that cast on Saturday.

The Democrats cast the first ballot of the day—the thirteenth of the session—for Abbott Kinney, and afterward voted straight for Stephen M. White, whom, it is understood, they will

support until the end of the trouble. Assemblymen Brooke and Burnett, however, flocked by themselves and voted for De Vries. Senator Feeney, who since the first ballot had voted for John Rosenfeld, was absent, which accounted for the cipher at the foot of the Rosenfeld column.

Another attempt will be made to elect at noon to-day, and though six or seven ballots have been taken without result, the crowd each day holds good. The people who compose it expect that the break will come, and they evidently desire to be in at the death.

The vote in detail on the fourth ballot yesterday—the sixteenth of the session—follows:

Barnes—Senators Dickinson, Luch-singer, Morehouse; Assemblymen Atherton, Clough, Knights, Knowland, Lardner, Muentner, Stratton—10.

Bulla—Senators Currier, Simpson; Assemblymen Belshaw, Conroy, Cospel, Mellick, Miller of Los Angeles, Robinson, Valentine—9.

Burns—Senators Bettman, Burnett, Hoey, Laird, Leavitt, Shortridge, Wolfe; Assemblymen Arnerich, Barry, Beecher, Cobb, Devoto, Dibble, Henry, Jilson, Johnson, Kelsey, Kelley, Kenneally, Lundquist, McKean, Pierard, Rickard, Eugene Sullivan, Wright—25.

Grant—Senators Boyce, Cutter, Jones, Maggard, Nutt, Smith, Trout; Assemblymen Bliss, Blood, Cargill, Clark, Crowder, Dole, De Lancia, Greenwell, Le Baron, McDonald of Alameda, McDonald of Coluoume, Merrill, Miller, Milles, Radcliff, Raub, Raw, Works, Huber, Marvin—27.

White—Senators Ashe, Boggs, Braun-hart, Chapman, Curtin, Doty, Dwyer, La Rue, Pace, Prisk, Sims; Assemblymen Boone, Canfield, Cowan, Crowley, Fairweather, Felix, Griffin, Hanley, Hoey, Mead, Mack, Meserve, O'Brien, Stewart, E. D. Sullivan, Wardell, White—29.

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Prisk was followed by Dwyer and Chapman, and the rules were declared suspended.

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Lieutenant Governor Neff ruled the motion out of order, but was opposed by a number of Republicans, among them Dickinson and Smith, who said that while they had no desire to vote to overrule the decision of the Chair, they would be obliged to do so did the President insist on his ruling.

The bill was finally ordered to its second reading. It is a revised amendment of the Belshaw Act, passed in 1897, and cutting down the force of employees of the Legislature nearly three-fourths.

Earlier in the session a caucus bill, No. 133, was evolved, amending and virtually repealing the Act, by enumerating what officers should be employed, and then closing with a clause making room for as many more as might be deemed necessary. Radical changes were made in the bill which was up for consideration, among which was the elimination of the clause providing for "more." It provided, in the Senate, for the following additional force over those named in the Belshaw Act:

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