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AND THEY FOUGHT.

The House Engaged in a War of Words Because a Bill Was Referred to an Unpopular Committee.

Governor Clough's "Civil Service" Appointments Shook up the Dairy Commissioner Somewhat.

Special Correspondence.

The past week has been a productive one in the house of representatives. Of course it has not been specially productive of anything in the senate, because that body seldom produces anything but dead bills. The senate is properly known as the legislature's slaughter house. On Thursday the house passed the bill to make the railroad and warehouse commission an elective body, and the word was immediately given out that the senate would kill it when it got in there. Well, probably it will. It did anything it could to kill the Anderson bill, both before and after its passage, and it still has a club in soak for that same bill before this session closes.

The people of this State have shown pretty conclusively that they want a good deal to say about who shall hold office, and the more chances they are given to vote on these matters the better they will be suited. Chas. Dickens said of the circumlocution office, otherwise the court of chancery, "Whatever was required to be done the circumlocution office was beforehand with all the public departments in the art of perceiving how not to do it." It is a good deal so with the railroad and warehouse commission. Some people go so far as to call it the railroad's warehouse commission. When you get before this court with a case in which you are interested you are in a lovely position to lay down the other cases and troubles of life and take up joys of immortality, for you have a job there is only one end to—the first end. And even if you do get your case through the commission you find that you are right where you begun in the first place, for the district court has appellate jurisdiction of the railroad and warehouse commission, the State supreme court has appellate jurisdiction over the district court and the U. S. supreme court has still another guess at it.

A railroad commission elected by the people and given power to act, instead of sitting around and dozing, would raise more hell with trusts and corporations in fifteen minutes than this sleepy old board would in a life time—and they are long lived, at that.

There seems to be a marked disposition on the part of the house to make some practical inquiries into the matter of public printing, and the UNION'S condemnation of the extravagance and folly of the system of department reports has been generously commended. A resolution is now pending which may bring out some information on this subject. It appears that the State is being "soaked" for a good many thousand dollars a year on its printing. This is a matter over which the printing commission is supposed to exercise complete control. As a matter of fact, and because of the peculiar rule, it actually has no control over it. The commission elects an expert printer and commits the whole thing to him. After that the contracts are let on his estimates, the bills are O. K'd by him and the secretary of State and the commission has practically nothing to say about it. The legislature should pass a law requiring the executive heads of State departments to issue a general and comprehensive report covering the work of all the minor departments. The work of compiling and printing these reports, and the responsibility for their cost, should rest upon the various departments. They could be printed in the open market for half what they now cost under the present system.

Representative Douglas introduced a railroad bill Saturday over which there was a sensational contest. The bill is to regulate the rate for the shipment of grain, coal etc., and the speaker referred it to the committee on railroads. The so-called "reform" members have not had very good luck with the bills which have gone to this committee, and they moved to commit the bill to the committee on grain and warehouse, of which Tom Torson is chairman. This was a direct and unmistakable blow at the speaker, and Mr. Jones' friends resented it on the spot. All sorts of insinuations and threats were hurled back and forth, and when a vote was finally reached the chair was overruled and the bill was sent to the grain and warehouse

committee. Speaker Jones felt the affront most keenly, and it was generally deplored on all sides. He is admittedly fair and impartial in his rulings, even by the members who opposed him in this case, but the friends of the bill allowed their zeal to carry them away, and they unthinkingly said things which were better left unsaid. The title of the bill alone was sufficient to warrant the speaker in committing it to the railroad committee, and the proper course would have been to commit it there, and then if the members wanted the grain and warehouse committee to pass upon it it could subsequently have been referred to that committee for a hearing.

Labor Commissioner Powers is still at work on his civil service scheme. In his late "examination" he admitted that there were only three out of the 20 questions he asked which were of his own make, and anybody who has money to burn can get even money that Powers couldn't answer six of the 20 questions himself. The probabilities seem to be that he will skin through the investigation with the greater part of his hide on, but it is lucky for him that the house hasn't got it in charge. He would get the most beautiful roast that was ever administered to a State official, and if he has the nerve to offer his civil service bill in any shape he will get such a turning down that even he will see the point. It doesn't really cut much of a figure what the committee may say about the matter the fact remains that a great majority of the legislature believes that the report, the civil service scheme and the commissioner himself are very much of a whatness, and that the State could worry along admirably without any of them.

The senate struck a snag when it ran afoul of William Wilkinson, the Minneapolis minister who declared that the department store investigation was started as a blackmailing, leg-pulling scheme. The senate proceeded with great pomp and deliberation to summon Mr. Wilkinson before it and when he got there he just repeated the offense and waited to see what they were going to do about it. He is still waiting. Wilkinson is almost as much of a bore as Powers, himself, and in the late campaign he nearly drove people crazy with his speeches against time, but he has as much sand as a glass factory and he is a hard man to scare.

One thing must be said for this legislature and that is that there have been less leg-pulling bills introduced than at any former session which I have attended. Of course there is plenty of time yet, but so far there have not been above half a dozen bills introduced whose plain purpose was to draw out the lobby. Old members spot these leg-pullers as readily as a Kentucky colonel would water in his whiskey, and it has got so that the member who introduces them soon loses caste.

I see my friend Charley Whitney, of the Marshall News-Messenger, deploring the practice of legislatures of going into the investigation business. That is where Charley makes a mistake. He should have issued regularly printed cards early in the session, inviting the members of the legislature to come in whenever they felt like it and investigate him. Previous to this he should have so conducted the affairs of his office that he would be ready for an investigation at any time. That's the way to be independent of an investigation.

Dairy Commissioner Anderson didn't worry about civil service rules in his department when it came to reorganizing the staff. Gov. Clough settled it without any examination. He went through the office like a Cuban cavalry charge, and the result was such a clean sweep that it almost awoke Anderson from the slumber in which he has rested for the past four years.

VULTURE.

Won't Resent It. The reports of the arrests being made on the Rum river, of farmers and small saw mill owners for stealing logs stranded along the banks of the river, brings to the minds of Minneapolis lumbermen a few things that they might perhaps have forgotten, otherwise. But one or two Minneapolis lumbermen receive Rum river logs now, or have for several seasons past. Mr. Fry told me that he always noticed that there was an awful big percentage of loss from Rum river drives, in the years gone by—a bigger percentage than was the case on other tributaries of the Mississippi. He never knew why it was, at the time, but now he concludes that it may have been on account of the pilferings of the residents along the banks of the Rum.

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Anoka parties who have been suffering for years have at last concluded that patience has ceased to be a virtue, and have had a number of arrests made for log stealing. The papers in the towns along the Rum river have lately been filled with articles, pro and con, upon this subject. One enterprising journal claimed that a church was built in a little village near the Rum, entirely out of lumber made from stolen logs. The trustees of the church have come to the front and denied the report emphatically, and claim that there were no more stolen logs used in making the lumber of which their church is built than if they had purchased their lumber at Anoka or Minneapolis. This might be taken as a little fling at the lumber manufacturers of Anoka and Minneapolis, which, however, they will not resent, if they can only put a stop to the stealing of their logs in the future.—Lumberman.

DEATH DEALING FUMES.

They Claim Four Victims in the Town of North Branch.

A terrible fatality by which four lives were lost is reported from the town of North Branch. John Bonehman his wife and two sons are the victims. Wednesday morning Mr. Bonehman undertook to examine his potato cellar in which he had a can of hot coals as a safeguard against frost. He entered the cellar through the ventilating shaft in the roof and could have been in but a few moments when he succumbed to the noxious fumes. Mrs. Bonehman, after calling to her two sons, ran to her husband's rescue only to meet with the same fate. The two boys, William and Ernest, following her, were also overcome by the noxious fumes. The younger son, Albert, thirteen years of age, notified the neighbors who upon arrival found three members of the family already dead and William nearly so. Medical aid was summoned from North Branch but William, without regaining consciousness, died shortly after the arrival of the doctor.—Cambridge Press.

Jake Got There.

The reappointment of J. V. Wilson to his old place in the department will be a distinct gratification to the many friends of the genial "Jake" in and out of St. Paul. Mr. Wilson voluntarily resigned the place in 1892 to take the position of street commissioner under Mayor Wright. Then came a Democratic hiatus in St. Paul politics and Wilson was not in it. He went to Princeton and bought wood, traded horses, swapped jack-knives, and sold cows, hustled around in his own energetic Yankee fashion, and was always making an honest living. He got into the campaign last fall and did some excellent work, and here he is again.—St. Paul Dispatch.

Bound Over.

During D. H. Robbins' absence in the east last fall someone entered his store and carried off about \$125 worth of dry goods and groceries. No clue was found until last week when a family row occurred at one of the cabins at the lake and one of the inmates gave the snap away. As a result of a search some of the plunder was found concealed beneath the floor of Wm. McLean's house and Sheriff Claggett brought him to Princeton Tuesday. McLean waived examination and was held to the grand jury.

Will Move the Mill.

C. B. Buckman came down from his lumber camps and saw mill on Skunk brook, Sunday. Mr. Buckman says that on Saturday his contract for 400,000 feet of hardwood timber to be delivered to the Foley Bros. at Bridgman on the St. Cloud & Hinckley road, was completed. The mill will continue to saw hardwood timber for a week or ten days. Most of the lumber was sawed for car timber. Some pine will be sawed for the Rich Prairie market this spring, after which the mill will be removed to another location.—Little Falls Transcript.