

THE PRINCETON UNION

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The ostensible declination by Olsen of the agricultural college deanship diffuses an odor of fox.

The president is now engaged in his annual occupation of exploding bombs in the halls of congress.

Judge Calvin L. Brown's dissenting opinion in the tax amendment case is sound law and good common sense.

We had supposed that Frank Day was the de facto governor of Minnesota but it appears from Labor Commissioner Williams' expose that Harvey Grimmer is also it.

So it turns out that Senator Tillman was followed about the country by secret service men at the instigation of President Roosevelt. If they kept up with Ben's gait they certainly went some.

In its "Twenty-five Years Ago" column the Duluth Herald chronicles the dissolution of partnership of the firm of Champagne & Porter. Presumably the result of too much fermentation.

There appears to be as many factions in Chinatown, San Francisco, as there are in some of the churches of the country. Twelve factions of ehinks recently entered into a pact at that place to keep the peace for twelve months.

Bob La Follette has issued the first number of his "Weekly Magazine." It contains sixteen pages and the cover bears the motto, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Bob's troubles have commenced.

Notwithstanding the four to one guess of the supreme court there is not a sane and sensible man in the state who honestly believes that a majority of the votes cast in the 1906 election was in favor of the wide-open tax amendment.

Survivors of the earthquake in Messina have decided upon an immediate reconstruction of the city and the re-establishment of the civic administration, and this in the face of predictions by scientists that a recurrence of seismic disturbances will continue for a period of at least three years.

Dear old Lunnion has brought out the latest sartorial sensation in the shape of pants with wide velvet cuffs at the bottom of the legs. We would suggest the Beau Brummel of Minnesota—Governor John—as the proper person to introduce the fashion into this state.

Since the employees' profit-sharing plan was introduced by the United States steel corporation in 1903 the workmen who purchased stock have received in dividends and bonuses the sum of \$12,000,000. It would be better for the working man were there more "grasping, soulless" corporations of this kind in the country.

Amendments to the legislative, executive and judiciary appropriation bill, reported to the senate by the committee on finance, propose an increase of the salary of the president of the United States from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per annum and that of the vice president from \$12,000 to \$20,000. These salaries are none too high for the president and vice president of the greatest nation on earth.

Mike, the Union's special St. Paul correspondent, will have something to say each week during the session of the legislature. Mike's instructions are to give the news as he finds it, and to regard every member of the legislature as honest and well-intentioned until he is positively convinced to the contrary. It is fashionable nowadays to regard members of the legislature with suspicion, but the Union does not care to be fashionable. There is a host of newspaper correspondents at the capitol this winter, but we venture the assertion that our Mike will hold his own with the best of them.

If the office of bank examiner is to be created by the legislature this winter the Union takes pride and pleasure in nominating Frank Stacy for the position. Frank is a financier of no mean ability. Besides he is handy with his pen, as witness his handiwork in the governor's message.

Dozens of papers in the state are complaining because Governor John does not remain at home and attend to his duties instead of traveling about the country delivering lectures. But then there is nothing for him to do at home unless he sits around and twiddles his thumbs. So far as duties are concerned they all devolve upon Mr. O'Day, Mr. O'Grimmer and the other members of the kitchen cabinet.

A copy of the Duluth News Tribune's book of cartoons for 1909, containing a selection which has appeared in that paper during the past year, has been received at the Union office. The cartoons are Handy's handiwork. Handy is the caricature artist of the News Tribune and he holds a place in the front rank of journalistic illustrators. The News Tribune's book for 1909 is a splendid art production.

Commenting upon the selection of Olsen to succeed Randall as dean of the state agricultural college the Mower County Transcript says:

It will be a relief to the educators of the state that John W. Olsen will no longer be the figurehead in the state educational department office. His appointment as dean of the agricultural college is a ridiculous commentary on the old saying that merit wins. In Olsen's case it seems to be a case of political pull.

Some sensational testimony came out in the Riddell-Riley election contest case involving the office of sheriff of Itasca county. William Schultz of Sand Lake testified that one man voted six times under as many different names. This reminds us of the "good old days" in Galveston, Texas, when a man was permitted to vote in every ward of the city provided he cast the "right" ballot.

The only incident "worthy of note" in the proceedings of the house on Thursday, says a Washington dispatch, and which caused a good deal of amusement, was a discussion of the forthcoming African hunting trip of President Roosevelt and a reference to the Ananias club. Pray, what is there about this tomfoolery that is worthy of note? The people do not elect legislators to sit around and discuss wild beast hunts or tell snake stories.

President Judson of Chicago university says that more attention should be given to character training in the public schools. He declares that "the proper training of character should be put into practice in every school room in the land, that it should be made a part of the training of every professional teacher, and should be foremost in the thoughts of all to whom are intrusted the destinies of the young." Dr. Judson's sentiments are worthy of consideration.

In a letter to the Granite Falls Tribune Hon. L. H. Johnson of Minneapolis, former speaker of the house, takes exceptions to the accusation that he supported the democratic candidate for governor in the last campaign. Mr. Johnson asserts that he has supported and voted for every republican candidate for governor during the past twenty years. No one who is acquainted with Mr. Johnson will accuse him of disloyalty to his party. We have always regarded him as a true blue republican.

Judge Jones of Union City, Tennessee, on Saturday imposed the death penalty upon six of the night riders found guilty of murdering Captain Ranken and sentenced two accomplices to twenty years each. In thus sentencing these assassins the judge merely did his duty—he meted out no greater punishment than the culprits were deserving of. Night riding, so-called, has attained such proportions in some of the southern states that the life and property of the inhabitants have been placed in jeopardy, and it is to be hoped that the penalties imposed by Judge Jones will have a deterrent effect upon the operations of the infamous gangs of cutthroats.

A man in Newington Center, Conn., claims to have discovered a method of making a good grade of paper from sugar cane. Others say they can make it from cornstalks, pampas grass, straw, etc., at small cost. Then why don't they make it and enter into competition with the paper trust? There would be millions in it.

An important case affecting the use of "stickers" in elections was ruled upon by the state supreme court on Friday. It was an appeal taken by G. O. Homme of Yellow Medicine county from a decision of Judge Gorham Powers in which the use of "stickers" was ruled to be illegal and, in consequence, O. C. Snortum was declared to be elected to office. This ruling is reversed by the supreme court. Homme was defeated by Snortum in the primaries but was elected by the use of "stickers" on the general election ballot, and Snortum contested its validity.

The actual value and extent of the state's iron deposits is not known. The governor says that there are "over 1,000,000,000 tons of ore in sight, with new discoveries every season."—Northfield News.

Perhaps the governor did say so, we should hate to dispute such eminent authority as the News. At even 25 cents per ton that would mean an addition of \$250,000,000 to the state's permanent funds. It strikes us that the figures are rather extravagant. The tax commission estimates the iron ore on state lands at 141,575,398, exclusive of some undeveloped tracts covered by state contracts.

Louis W. Hill, president of the Great Northern railway, has been tendered the chairmanship of the state highway commission by Governor Johnson. Mr. Hill is a young business man of exceptional high ability and, if he can spare the time to devote to the duties of the position, he will undoubtedly make an excellent record for accomplishing things at the head of the commission. The governor is to be commended for making such an excellent appointment. But had a republican governor named Mr. Hill for a place on a state board what a howl would have gone up from the "unperfected" democracy.

If the Duluth News Tribune has sized up the situation correctly North-eastern Minnesota need have no fear of an iron ore tonnage tax at this session of the legislature, unless such a measure is favored by two-thirds of the members of the house and senate. That paper confidently remarks:

"This session, therefore, can have no occasion for worry nor anxiety that any tonnage tax can get by the governor. He will veto any and all of them just as fast as they are submitted to him. He has said so, or his intimates and sponsors know not the truth, and he is a man of his word, a second Lincoln and a revised and expurgated edition of Theodore Roosevelt."

In reply to a correspondent's query relative to the qualifications of Mr. Olsen for the deanship of the state agricultural school, Col. Whitman of the Ortonville Herald-Star sarcastically remarks: "If the governor had asked our advice we should have suggested some simple test of Mr. Olsen's knowledge of farming, like grits for breakfast or a large red Weathersfield onion for dessert, and if he shied we should have recommended retaining him as the head of the educational interests of the state, where it does not seem necessary to know anything except a very cheap grade of politics."

President Gomez of Venezuela has released the political prisoners, twenty-seven in number, which the despot Castro had confined in the dungeons of Fort San Carlos on an island off Maracaibo. It is stated in the dispatches that these prisoners—men from the best families of Venezuela—were being systematically starved to death and were in a pitiable condition when given their liberty. Villains of the Castro stripe should not be permitted to take refuge in civilized countries—there should be a law providing for their extradition—for they are murderers and criminals of the deepest dye. Castro should be sent back to Venezuela to receive his just deserts.

TAX AMENDMENT CARRIED.

By a majority decision of the state supreme court, handed down last Friday, the canvass which declared that the so-called wide-open tax amendment, voted upon in 1906, was valid is upheld and the district court at Duluth reversed. The facts in the case are as follows: Through an error in the printing of the tally sheets prepared by the state for the general election, held in November, 1906, in many election precincts the votes cast for the good roads amendment were credited to the tax amendment, and the votes cast for the tax amendment were credited to the good roads amendment. Many voters, who did not believe in removing all constitutional restrictions from the legislature in matters pertaining to taxation, voted against the amendment. On the other hand the good roads amendment was popular with the people—almost everybody believes in improving the highways—and the error in printing the tally sheets was to say the least a queer blunder. Certain parties in St. Louis and Carlton counties contested the findings of the state canvassing board which declared the tax amendment carried and the good roads amendment defeated. A recount of enough election precincts was had to demonstrate beyond a doubt that the tax amendment was defeated and the good roads amendment adopted, and on the evidence adduced the St. Louis county district court so held. The state appealed to the supreme court and, stripped of legal verbiage, that court now holds that, in order to set aside the result as announced by the state canvassing board it was incumbent upon the contestants to prove by a recount of the entire vote or at least of such a proportion thereof that even if all the remaining votes were counted one way they could not affect the final result.

Judge Calvin L. Brown, who is generally regarded by lawyers and laymen as an able jurist, has filed an elaborate dissenting opinion in which he holds:

"It is elementary that election returns especially certified are prima facie evidence of the correctness of the result thereby shown, and in the absence of proof to the contrary, not mere assertion in a notice of a contest, import absolute verity and are final and conclusive. To overcome this presumption the evidence of irregularities, errors, or defects must be clear and free from doubt. It is unnecessary to cite authorities to a proposition so fundamental and necessary to the integrity of our elections. It is also elementary that in contest proceedings the contestant, however broad may be the allegations of his notice, is required to go no further with his evidence than to make out a prima facie case in his favor. He may prove less but never more than he alleges. (Paine on Elections, §24). He may attack by his evidence such of the returns as he chooses, and if he thereby changes the result announced by the official returns, he may rely upon the verity of those not attacked and rest his case. At this point, by all the rules of proceedings in cases of this kind, the contestee must take the laboring oar and overcome the prima facie case thus made."

Notwithstanding the decision which makes the amendment part of our state constitution thousands of people will continue to believe that it never was adopted. At the election last November an amendment similar to the tax amendment that was voted upon in 1906 was submitted and failed to secure the necessary number of votes, which goes to prove that a majority of the voters of the state do not believe in giving the legislature carte blanche in taxation matters. Under the constitution as it now stands it is possible for the legislature to exempt any class of property from taxation, or to provide that a certain class of property shall be taxed at a certain rate, and another class of property of equal value at a less rate. The bars are down, all constitutional restrictions are removed, and any kind of tax legislation goes.

A copy of No 1, volume 1, of La Follette's Weekly has been received. The contents of the magazine give no immediate indication of setting the world on fire, as might have been expected by those who took cognizance of the advance advertising sheets. The articles are commonplace, lack originality, and are decidedly flat.

AN UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT.

Minnesota's tax commission is composed of three capable men—Messrs. Lord, McVey and Hall. It will be readily conceded that Mr. Hall in point of ability is, to say the least, the equal of his colleagues. In the forthcoming report of the commission to the legislature it is understood that Messrs. Lord and McVey will recommend a tonnage tax in preference to an ad valorem tax for iron ore. Mr. Hall dissents. He takes strong grounds in favor of an ad valorem tax and advances several powerful arguments in support of his contention, the most important of which, in our judgment, is the following:

"A tonnage tax is levied upon the ore actually mined (or shipped) in each year. If it is a year of prosperity with a large and unusual demand for iron and steel, the output of the mines will be large, resulting in a correspondingly large revenue from the tax. If the year is one of depression, panic or stagnation, the output will be small and the revenue correspondingly small.

"This would result in a perennial uncertainty as to the amount of revenue the public would derive from this source which would be at all times embarrassing. The state, county and assessment districts which are entitled to the proceeds of the tax may or may not have a large income therefrom in any one year. Their respective treasuries may have a surplus or a deficit depending entirely upon the prosperity or depression of the iron and steel business for that year.

"In any year in which there is a surplus of revenue by reason of a large output of the mines, such surplus is apt to be squandered for unnecessary public purposes. It is not the habit of the governing bodies in American counties or municipalities to allow a surplus to rust in the public vaults. In any year in which there is a deficit in the revenue by reason of a small output of the mines, such deficit must be made good by increased taxes upon the real estate and personal property not included in the iron properties.

"The existing ad valorem system presents no such uncertainty in the public revenues. They are practically fixed and determined each year and are not dependent upon the fluctuations of the iron and steel market."

OPINIONS OF EDITORS

Beneath Notice.

A lying man has no standing; people won't even take the trouble to sit up and notice him.—Walker Pilot.

Tough Legislative Sinners.

The bigger the sinner, the more prayers there are offered for him. This was aptly illustrated by the large number of aspirants for the position of chaplain of the legislature this winter.—Walker Pilot.

Governor John's Veracity Questioned.

John W. Olsen has stepped out of the office of state superintendent of schools into that of dean of the state agricultural college. There was no politics in the appointment of Mr. Olsen, says Governor Johnson. (?)—Roseau Times.

Educators Wanted to Get Rid of Him.

It would be real interesting and instructive for Dean Olsen of the farm school to print autograph copies of a few of the many letters written by educators from all parts of the state, asking how they could help him get his present job.—West St. Paul Times.

Condemnation Deserved.

The primary election law has received more condemnation at the hands of the people than any law put on the statute books in recent years. A revision of its provisions is absolutely necessary if not its repeal.—Brainerd Dispatch.

A Twin City Corporation.

The state fair is nothing more than a twin city corporation supported by the taxpayers of the state. It has all the armless beggars in the state beaten to a standstill in asking for alms, and then disburses nine-tenths of the funds among twin city residents.—Vesta Censor.

Amen the Snob.

The most despicable human being is a snob. Be natural and do not try to give the impression that you are so much better than all creation. You are never given credit for more than your exact worth and if you are priggish your better qualities are entirely overshadowed.—Swift County Review.

Billy Has a Mind of His Own.

W. H. Williams, state labor commissioner, will tell Gov. Johnson a few things before he walks the plank, and at the same time enlighten the legislative body a little. Billy Williams, as he is affectionately called by his friends, is a good labor commissioner,

but these things don't count in Johnson politics—you must be for Johnson first, last and all the time, and be ever ready to take your cue from Frank Day. But poor Billy had a mind of his own and now see what it has brought him to.—Foodworth Broadaxe.

Neff Will Furnish a Lemon.

The United States uses seven billion pounds of sugar a year. We can stand it if we are handed a lemon occasionally.—Fairmont Sentinel, Hon. Frank Day's paper.

We will hand you one the next gubernatorial election.—Lake Crystal Union.

How Politics Are Being Eliminated?

The elevation of J. W. Olsen, state superintendent of public instruction, to the position of dean of the agricultural college is a typical example of the manner in which the Johnson administration is separating politics from the affairs of our educational institutions.—Lake Benton News.

He Is Immaculate.

Every once in awhile one reads of glaring conditions discovered in certain public offices by the state examiner. If it is a pertinent question we would like to ask: Who in h— examines the public examiner? Of course, we are acting on the theory that it takes a thief to catch a thief.—Foley Independent.

Wherein Has He Distinguished Himself?

And now the democratic henchmen of Gov. Johnson are calling those papers who do not believe that the sun rises and sets in his immediate vicinity, "peanut partizan editors." May we inquire wherein the governor has particularly distinguished himself during the past four years, except as a good jollier and all around mixer?—Preston Times.

Olsen a Mere Politician.

The state agricultural college, the fountain head educational institution of the greatest agricultural state in the union, should be under the charge of a man especially fitted by experience, education and practical knowledge for the position, and it is a burning shame that the school should be dragged into politics, and the action of the past week does not reflect much credit on the democratic administration.—Spring Valley Sun.

Absent Most of the Time.

In many states the law provides that when the governor is absent from the commonwealth which elected him its chief executive, the lieutenant governor becomes acting governor. This might be a wise provision in Minnesota. We have a governor who is absent from the state many days in delivering lectures for his own profit. There should be some responsible authority when he is so often absent, and it would seem to be much safer to have this authority vested in the lieutenant governor, elected by the people, than in a clerk selected by the governor. Here is another opportunity for the republican legislature to safeguard the interests of the people.—Journal-Press.

A Slam at Long-Winded Messages.

Neither a president nor a governor can outline in a message of manageable proportions full details of the legislation which he recommends. He would find no difficulty in summarizing in a newspaper column or two of snappy, meaty propositions the whole legislative program that he wishes to set before the legislative branch. Executive achievement, apart from mere buncombe and brag of personal or party accomplishment, can best be presented in departmental reports. These reach legislative bodies in far more complete and understandable form than can be included in any executive message. Summaries reach the people of the state or nation with much more impressive effect if printed separately from time to time than bundled together in an overloaded executive document.—St. Paul Dispatch.

Slater Is Frank Day's Best Appointee.

Edward K. Slater in Martin County Sentinel: It lies with us whether we shall be just as mean and niggardly as we can be and keep out of jail, or whether we shall fill such a niche in the world that when our activities shall cease our acquaintances will mourn or heave a sigh of relief. This is not entirely a matter of sentiment either. The business and professional world is calling for men of ability and agreeable dispositions. The grouch isn't wanted anywhere, and there is really only one appropriate place for him—the place where there are no taxes and no good buttermakers. The law allows a man to make a certain kind of a fool of himself if he so chooses. It can't prevent him from "souring" on himself and the rest of the world. It gives him the insalienable right to divorce himself from friends and society, and if he wishes to be a damphool in general that same law will protect him in doing so. In fact the instruments through which the law operates seem to take peculiar delight in giving him that protection.