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THE SKYLINE OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF MECCA

22,000 TEACHERS LINE UP FOR FIGHT OVER PENSION PLAN

City's "Fifty-Fifty" Measure to Be Laid Before the Schools This Week.

Most of New York's 22,000 public school teachers to-day got their first real idea of what their new pension law is likely to be, and most of them are reported to be ready to rise against it. Detailed information concerning the measure, giving in also notations the position of the Teachers' Committee of One Hundred and Fifty on various features, was circulated this morning in the form of two bulletins, issued by the committee.

Leaders among the teachers are outspoken against the proposed bill on two main grounds:

1. That it is not a fifty-fifty plan, the city and the teacher each contributing half, as the city maintains, but one in which the teacher carries nearer three-fourths of the burden.
2. That it is unjust and burdensome on the younger teachers, especially the women, in that they are forced to contribute to the pensions of the older and higher salaried educators, notably the men holding the big jobs.

The bill as a whole will be laid before the Teachers' Committee next Thursday afternoon. Its provisions have been read to the executive committee of this body, but there has been no discussion.

After the Committee of One Hundred and Fifty acts on the bill it may be referred to the teachers for a referendum vote. Those leading the fight against the measure are complaining that the teachers won't have time to fully consider the details of the bill, as it is the announced purpose of the city to get it before the Rules Committee at Albany before Feb. 1.

Henry Bruere, Vice Chairman of the City Pension Committee, who has had the measure in charge, told the teachers' executive committee last week the teachers should hasten their consideration of the measure in order that action may be had at this session of the Legislature.

The teachers appear to be divided into two large groups, one led by the Teachers' Federation, composed of the presidents of the various teachers' associations, who favor the bill, and the other under the direction of the Committee of One Hundred and Fifty, designated to represent the teachers in the formation of the pension measure. William E. Hendrie is chairman of this committee.

Chief opposition lies in the proportion of the pension the individual teacher must pay. The terms of the bill fix the rate at from 5.25 to 14 per cent. of the salary of the beneficiary, according to compensation at the time of retirement.

The city contends its plan is one in which the city and the teacher contribute equal amounts to make up what is designated as an annuity for the teacher after thirty-five years of service. The assumption is that the average teacher begins work at twenty and retires at fifty-five, the average expectancy of life being sixty-seven. This means if the teacher should live the full span of expectant life the teacher would be carried on the pension rolls twelve years.

Alleging that a false basis has been arrived at by the city's actuary, members of the committee contend that such rates of assessment put the burden of the annuity almost entirely on the teacher. One member of the Teachers' Executive Committee made computations showing that a teacher entering the service at twenty and retiring at fifty-five will have paid into the pension fund in round figures \$6,300, including compound interest, which is guaranteed in the measure. This teacher will receive in annuity, should he or she live the full twelve years, \$9,000, of which the city will have paid only \$2,700 instead of \$4,500.

Estimates made by teachers who are expert mathematicians show the assessments could be at a much lower rate, some arguing that even 4 per cent. of the salary is all that the teacher should be called on to contribute.

Members of the Committee of One Hundred and Fifty are openly attacking the feature of the bill which makes the amount of the pension one-half the salary received at the time of retirement. It is argued the rate set by the city greatly favors the older members of the service at the expense of the younger. Some go so far as to assert that the plan forces the young women teachers to contribute largely to the pensions of the men who hold the good jobs, the women being virtually barred from the higher paid positions.

Should no new pension law for teachers be passed at this session, those entitled to pensions, it is said, need not suffer, as there is now in the old "bankrupt" fund about \$1,000,000, enough to carry on the pension payments for about two years.

This fund is composed of \$500,000 remaining from the old fund, \$250,000 from excise moneys and \$250,000 accumulated from unexcused absences.

REAL STUDY OF WEAK MINDS.

N. Y. U. to Start First Comprehensive Investigation.

Through its department for the training of students of backward and defective children, New York University will begin this week the first comprehensive study ever undertaken of feeble-mindedness, showing it as a common factor in criminology, poverty and deficiency in public school children.

This is the first time feeble-mindedness, its causes, consequences to society and methods of treatment will have been brought into relation.

The course was organized with the co-operation of Dr. Thomas W. Salmon, Medical Director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. It will consist of fifteen lectures by prominent authorities. The Women's City Club, Women's Municipal League, National Civic Federation, Public Education Association and other organizations are working with the university to make the study of benefit to the city.

The first lecture will be next Friday by Dr. Henry H. Goddard.

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