PROGRAMME AT ALBANY

BUSY WEEK PROMISED.

Utilities Bill Hearing and Kelsey Examination Important Features.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Albany, March 24.—Though this will be a busy week in both houses of the Legislature, two things will overshadow all other developments—the hearing on the Governor's Public Utilities bill on Wednesday before the Senate Judiciary and Assembly Railroads committees and the continuation of the Kelsey defence on Thursday before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Much interest is being displayed here in this first formal discussion of the utilities bill, and much speculation is rife as to the form opposition to the measure will take. From the developments at this hearing the Governor's friends think they can get a fair indication of what they will have to fight to pass this bill. In all probability amendments will be suggested or offered formally then which will be pressed in subsequent committee meetings or on the floor of the Senate. This hearing, in short, will be the first skirmish of the battle, and will disclose practically all the enemies' plan of attack.

At the same time there will be considered, in accordance with the clever tactical move of Senators Grady and McCarren several days ago, the Grady bill to establish a board of control for public utilities in New York City, and the McCarren bill to give the powers of the Rapid Transit Commission to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment. Senator Grady has not been in the Senate for several days, though he has been active in other sections of this city, but it is expected that he will be at the committee meeting on Wednesday. Senator McCarren also is a member of the Judiciary Committee. These two are looked on here as the leaders of the legislative enemies of the Governor's bill, though Senator Cassidy is likely to give them a hard run for first place. Their requests that their measures be considered at the same time as the Governor's bill will give them excellent opportunity to suggest consolidation of the three measures or amendments to make one conform to the others. Thus the way will be open for dozens of suggestions for mutilating the Page-Merritt Utilities bill.

RAINES'S OPPOSITION CARRIES WEIGHT.

Some question has been raised here since Senator Raines's attitude against the Governor on the Kelsey question was made so unmistakable by his action last week whether he would be against the Public Utilities bill. It has been common talk that he did not favor the Massachusetts ballot. Though in this he has been only one of many politician-legislators who have practically killed all hope of the Governor getting this part of his reform scheme from the Legislature, his opposition carried weight because of his position as majority leader. Similar opposition to the Governor on the utilities bill might produce complications, as the Governor's friends probably will want a caucus of the Republicans called to consider the bill and make it a caucus measure.

The Kelsey defence will be taken up again on Thursday. "Sensational evidence" is promised in his favor for that time. This is believed to be letters showing that he consulted the late Governor Higgins about the retention of Messrs. Hunter and Vanderpoel, respectively deputy superintendent and chief examiner. Many persons here cannot see how even that can help him much, in view of the fact that Governor Hughes early last summer, then not even discussed as a candidate, urged him to discharge those men, and his advice was seconded by Senator Armstrong at the meeting of the Bar Association, which Superintendent Kelsey barely recollected.

Up to date Mr. Kelsey's lawyers have presented testimony and exhibits amounting to about two hundred thousand words, and they have just got a good start in their case. Hundreds of exhibits are still to be presented, and many more witnesses examined, if they have their way. The time necessary to have all this material printed and considered by the committee can well be imagined. Long before the committee could get through the mass of documents the Legislature would have adjourned. The salient facts brought out so far seem to prove that Superintendent Kelsey was at his desk every day; that he wrote hundreds of letters; that he used his best judgment in passing on departmental affairs presented by his subordinates, sometimes turning down their suggestions in favor of suggestions offered by persons outside the department in whom he had confidence; that he presented a preliminary annual report to the Legislature early in the year, which none of his predecessors ever had done, and that the Governor had said of that report that it was "a good memorandum."

KELSEY EXAMINATION THURSDAY.

But the Governor's contention that Superintendent Kelsey neglected his higher duties—the "obvious duties of the first importance"—to attend to the customary round of routine department affairs seems rather to be proved than controverted by the case his lawyers have presented. The Governor's friends in the Judiciary Committee think that if the case goes on for a few days longer in this fashion they will have no need to argue that the Governor is justified in demanding that Kelsey be dismissed. Examination of Kelsey himself probably will take up all of Thursday and Friday. Then must come a decision by the committee whether other witnesses are to be heard. On the decision of that question will rest the speedy termination of the case.

The Bingham police bill will come before the Senate for advancement to third reading on Tuesday. Most of the arguments made against the measure in committee and at the public hearings will be repeated, doubtless, but it seems sure to pass the Senate by a good, safe margin. Senator Grady, doubtless, will fight it with all his power, but that hardly can stop the measure. Some of the legislators who heard yesterday of Magistrate Whitman's crusade against the police for failure to close the saloons in Captain Daly's precinct practically threw up their hands, conceding that if any further arguments were necessary to insure the bill's passage that would furnish the necessary impetus.

The recount bill will be passed early in the week by the Assembly without any especial difficulty. When it gets over to the Senate, though, its course will not prove so easy. From present appearances there exists little chance that it will pass that body. The present indications are that it will die in committee. Of course, the Governor has committed himself to the recount proposition, and he may win so decided a victory in the Kelsey case and the public utilities fight that the recount bill will follow, also. Close observers of legislation, though, think this is unlikely, and that the recount bill will go to sleep peacefully along with the Massachusetts ballot measure.

CRITICISED BY MR. WHITNEY.

Senator Saxe's bill, repealing the Saxe-Stanley Eleventh avenue track removal of last year, will come up for passage in the Senate on Monday night. This measure is a compromise proposition, to which the New York Central and the Rapid Transit Commission have agreed. It is being rushed through because under the law of last year the city could institute condemnation proceedings against the railroad on March 26. So, since the railroad has protested and managed to win round the Rapid Transit Commission and some of the people in that district who demanded last year's law vociferously, the Legislature is hurrying to pass a law which will not hurt the railroad company's feelings. The present bill has been criticised severely by Travis H. Whitney, legislative counsel for the Citizens Union.

Two measures, also by Senator Saxe, prohibiting ticket speculating, will come up for passage on Monday night. Indications are that they will be passed, although a hard fight was made against their advancement by the Democrats and some Republicans, who didn't believe that the Legislature should interfere with what they said was purely a city affair.

Among the important bills presented last week were the Saxe bill to repeal the Eleventh avenue track removal law of last year, already referred to, and a measure from the Senate Cities Committee as a substitute for the McCarren school teachers' bill. Senator Saxe had a measure allowing the Governor to appoint a commission of three members, one a Supreme Court justice, to revise the Civil Code. The Senate Finance Committee presented a bill abolishing the present board of consulting engineers, and another providing for the appointment by the Governor of three expert civil engineers who shall advise the State Engineer on canal work.

Bills of importance now stand as follows:

Senate Int. No. 1, Grady, introduced January 2; providing for board of control of public utilities in New York City; referred to Cities Committee, referred to Judiciary Committee March 18 for a hearing.

Senate Int. No. 217, Foulker, introduced January 24; providing for new Rapid Transit Commission in New York City; referred to Cities Committee; March 18, referred to Judiciary Committee for a hearing. Assembly Int. No. 405, C. F. Murphy; same; referred to Cities Committee.

Senate Int. No. 241, McCarren, introduced January 28; replacing Rapid Transit Commission with Board of Estimate; referred to Cities Committee; referred to Judiciary Committee March 18 for a hearing.

Senate Int. No. 362, McCarren, introduced February 6; amending act to relieve congestion at Brooklyn Bridge; sent to Governor March 21.

Senate Int. No. 363, McCarren, introduced February 6; extending western terminal Brooklyn Bridge; to Governor March 21.

Senate Int. No. 378, Cassidy; introduced February 11; taxation of personal property; committee of the whole March 22.

Senate Int. No. 488, Saxe, introduced February 25; making ticket speculating near theatres misdemeanor; order of third reading March 21.

Senate Int. No. 489, Saxe, introduced February 25; prohibiting city authorities from licensing ticket speculators; order third reading March 21.

Senate Int. No. 513, Frawley, introduced February 26; permitting amateur boxing exhibitions; passed March 20; sent to Assembly and referred to Codes Committee.

Senate Int. No. 566, Armstrong; amending public officers' law relative to receipts and expenditures; committee of the whole March 20.

Senate Int. No. 711, Saxe, introduced March 18; Eleventh avenue track removal; order of third reading March 20.

Senate Int. No. 730, Owens, introduced March 19; relative to powers of Tenement House Commissioner; referred to Cities Committee.

Senate Int. No. 741, Saxe, introduced March 20; revision of civil code; referred to Finance Committee.

Senate Int. No. 742, Finance Committee, introduced March 20; repealing act providing for board of consulting engineers; committee of the whole; recommitted to Finance Committee March 20.

Senate Int. No. 744, Finance Committee, introduced March 20; empowering Governor to appoint three civil engineers as advisory board to State Engineer; committee of the whole March 20; recommitted to Finance Committee.

Senate Int. No. 745, Cities Committee, introduced March 20; school teachers' bill; committee of the whole March 20.

Senate Int. No. 748, Cobalan, introduced March 20; providing for five cent carfare within limits of cities over 1,000,000 population; referred to Railroads Committee. Assembly Int. No. 1,352, Schultz; same; referred to Railroads.

Assembly Int. No. 46, Prentice, introduced January 9; recount for ballots election 1905 New York City; third reading March 21.

Assembly Int. No. 681, Phillips, introduced February 11; limiting campaign expenditures of candidates; order of second reading March 14.

Assembly Int. No. 140, W. L. Lee, introduced January 15; prohibiting city magistrates from practising law or serving on political committees; passed March 19; to Senate March 20; referred to Cities Committee.

Assembly Int. No. 141, W. L. Lee, introduced January 15; prohibiting justices of municipal courts from practising law or serving on political committees; passed March 19; to Senate March 20; referred to Cities Committee.

Assembly Int. No. 653, Prentice, introduced February 8; creating fourth deputy police commissioner for New York City; passed March 20; to Senate March 21; referred to Cities Committee.

Assembly Int. No. 883, Cities Committee; introduced February 20 as substitute for Prentice bill reorganizing Police Department in New York City; to Senate committee of the whole March 29.

Assembly Int. No. 1,316, Wells, introduced March 19; relative to political contributions by corporations; referred to Judiciary Committee.

Assembly Int. No. 1,317, Wells, introduced March 19; relative to contributions toward promoting or opposing legislation; referred to Judiciary Committee.

Assembly Int. No. 1,742, Stern, introduced March 20; providing for issuance of transfers in New York City any time after payment of carfare. Referred to Railroads Committee.

Other bills of importance now stand as noted in previous tables.

STRINGENCY THE CAUSE.

New Haven Stops Improvements—To Connect with Central Vermont.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

New Haven, March 24.—It was said by a railroad man here to-night that the improvements which the New Haven Railroad will stop because of the financial depression would amount to $10,000,000. It was also said that, although some apprehension exists over the attitude of the New York State legislation, and particularly with reference to the Public Utilities bill, it is the financial stringency rather than the fear of hostile legislation which has caused the New Haven road directors to decide to stop every improvement for which contracts have not already been signed.

The attitude of the Connecticut Legislature toward the road has been consistently friendly. Yet a large part of the improvements summarily stopped are in Connecticut. They will not be resumed till the financial market is easier. Some of these include the new line between Greenwich and Danbury, largely for freight purposes; the double tracking of the Highland division, between Hartford, Waterbury and Poughkeepsie, and the new union depot and the general passenger transfer station, in this city. The $4,000,000 improvements in this city, known as the cut, will be completed according to contract. Rumors are current that President Mellen will soon make another trip to Washington for a second conference with President Roosevelt.

More friendly relations between the New Haven road and the Central Vermont are expected as a result of the proposed line which President Mellen announced will be built between South Bridge and Palmer, where connection with the Central Vermont will be made. President Mellen to-night declined to state whether this new route would be equipped with steam or electricity.

It is said authoritatively that the New Haven will very soon merge the controlling corporation of the Consolidated Railway and New England Navigation Company. This is part of the general policy of the New Haven company of merging with itself all of its subsidiary corporations as fast as the law allows it to do so. Another step on the part of the New Haven company will be the extinction of the various holding companies of the complicated Rhode Island Street Railway system and their merger under the centralized control.

COMMITTEE ON WATER STORAGE.

Supporters of the proposed constitutional amendment permitting the use of state land for water storage have asked that a committee be appointed to investigate the whole subject of water storage. It is suggested that this committee be made up of Senators and Assemblymen and others appointed by the Governor. Assemblyman Merritt made the suggestion at the joint committee hearing in Albany last week, proposing that the committee report before next fall, when, if the Legislature acts in favor of the amendment, the voters will have to pass on the measure.

Advocates of the water storage say that such a proposition should be satisfactory to all concerned. At the hearing before the joint committee it was brought out that the people at Indian Lake, a storage reservoir, are unanimously in favor of water storage.

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ATTACK BY JACKSON.

AGAINST UTILITIES BILL.

His Brief May Serve as Textbook for Opponents.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Albany, March 24.—The Public Utilities bill, which in its present form satisfies Governor Hughes, does not at all satisfy Attorney General Jackson. He made known his objections to-night in a voluminous letter to Assemblyman Glynn, of Rochester, and supplemented his objections with the declaration that he would be glad to prepare amendments. Six points are brought out in this brief: First, the commission should be elective, and not appointive; second, the bill violates the principle of home rule for municipalities; third, an unfair tax for New York City is imposed; fourth, the bill usurps the power of the Attorney General; fifth, one commission of general jurisdiction over all public service corporations is favored; sixth, one commission of five members is favored.

The opinion here is that this brief of the Attorney General will serve as an excellent textbook for the opponents of the Governor's measure. Recent years have brought a constantly increasing demand for proper regulation of public service corporations, says the Attorney General in his preamble. This demand has arisen from the general knowledge that corporations "have been guilty of making extortionate charges, of discriminations, of granting rebates and conducting their business in a manner oppressive of the rights of the people," thereby becoming "so rich and powerful as to be a menace to popular government." Because of all this the Interstate Commerce act was passed, and at the last Congress greater powers were given to the commission.

PUBLIC UTILITIES CONTROL DELEGATED.

In many states state control of public utilities "has been delegated by legislative enactment to administrative bodies," says the Attorney General. In this state there have been the railroad and lighting commissions. Then, after speaking of the recommendations of the Governor's message, which the Public Utilities bill was drafted to carry out, the letter says:

This bill has been assumed by the people and the press to be in accord with the recommendations of the Governor and with the public demand, but in many respects it falls far short of this effect and is open to the most serious objection. Great as undoubtedly is the urgency for reform, the magnitude of the proposition is such as to make full consideration and proper amendment imperative. The good features of the proposed bill are copied almost literally from the United States Interstate Commerce act. These are supplemented by present New York State legislation, good and bad, regarding gas and electricity. Other good features of the United States Interstate Commerce act are rejected, and in their place are substituted features had in principle and unconstitutional. The present commissions are merged and then redivided upon merely geographical lines, in which process the proposed re-enactment of present provisions to which I will specifically refer later would be utterly inapplicable, unjust and unconstitutional. The powers of the commission for the enforcement of their orders are properly enlarged and penalties provided.

The present gas and electricity commission was not created until 1905, but the inherently bad principle of the present scheme should be sufficiently demonstrated in the denial of the right of municipalities to operate their own lighting plants.

The Railroad Commission has been for many years the subject of popular disapproval and the railroad law has been generally conceded to be inadequate, and recent developments, especially in the city of New York, have accentuated the necessity for its reconstruction. In rebuilding these institutions let us lay first a sound foundation.

First—The commission should be elective and not appointive. The proposed bill makes provision for the appointment of commissioners by the Governor by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, while it gives the Governor the absolute power of removal over all these commissioners and the appointment of their successors during a recess of the Senate; also the sole power of appointing the chairman of each commission. The experience of the people in having their representatives chosen by indirection has not been a happy one. They have grown restive because of their inability to directly elect their representatives to the United States Senate. The abolition of existing state commissions, appointed in precisely the same manner as is proposed for new commissions, has been plainly demanded. It is unwise to proceed upon the theory that a mere exchange in the name and number of commissions, together with an amplification of powers without any material change in the system of creating the commission, will insure better permanent results.

REMEDY IS MORE DIRECT CONTROL.

The remedy is to give the people more direct control. The bill continues the present appointive system, with magnified possibilities of the misuse of power and the perversion and suppression of the popular will. It places in the hands of appointive officers administrative, legislative and judicial powers and functions that should only be exercised by officers elected by and directly responsible to the people.

Experience is complete justification for the fear that if this bill in its present form becomes law the appointive commissions which it creates and endows with unprecedented powers may some day become an asset of a political organization, and all the vast machinery which it sets up may fall into the hands of the very corporations now sought to be controlled.

Second—The proposed bill violates the principles of home rule for municipalities. It subjects municipalities to the same control, visitorial and inquisitorial action of the commissions as it does corporations and individuals, and fixes penalties upon municipalities for failure to comply with the commission's orders. It prohibits any city, town or village of the state from establishing and operating a plant for the production and distribution of gas or electricity for the benefit of its inhabitants without the consent of the state commissions. It denies the righ of municipalities to prevent monopoly by admitting competing plants or operaing their own plants.

This is usurpation by the state of the proper powers of a municipality and an indefensible interference by the central government with the right of the people to govern themselves. The people of a municipality pay the taxes necessary for the support of their municipal government, and it is not the business of the rest of the state to determine whether, in the orderly and proper administration of that government, the municipality may or may not produce and distribute gas or electricity, or both, within its own confines and at its own expense. Every citizen of a city or village might vote for a municipal gas plant and yet the proposed commission could arbitrarily render ineffective the unanimous will of that community.

Third—Unfair tax for New York City. This bill provides that the expenses of the commission in the first district shall be borne exclusively by the city of New York; expenses of the commission in the second district shall be paid by the State of New York upon the audit of its Controller. This puts an unequal burden upon the city of New York, as, after paying the entire expenses of the commission in the first district, it bears its proportion of the expenses of the commission in other parts of the state.

IN CONFLICT WITH EXISTING LAWS.

These provisions and the powers of the commission to fix the amount to be raised by the action are certainly in conflict with existing laws and restrictions of the Constitution relating to the taxation and the government of cities.

Fourth—Usurps powers of Attorney General. The provision in the bill authorizing each commission to create a legal department which shall "represent and appear for the people of the State of New York and the commission in all actions and proceedings involving any question under this act" is unconsitutional. It seeks to divest the office of the Attorney General of duties and powers conferred by the Constitution, and is but another advance of the extravagant and illegal policy out of which the special counsel scandals have sprung. The Attorney General is the constitutional law officer of the state and his office cannot be abolished piecemeal by the Legislature. The most important activities of the Attorney General are those which grow out of conflicts between the state and the public utility corporations, and I believe that the suggestion to subordinate the Attorney General to counsel selected by an appointive commission will not seriously be considered by the Legislature.

Fifth—One commission instead of two. The Governor recommended a single commission to take the place of the Board of Railroad Commissioners and the Commission of Gas and Electricity for the reason that there "are now corporations which are subject to the jurisdiction of both commissions and in some cases the same questions are presented for the decision of both."

The bill creates two commissions, each acting separately within the jurisdiction for which it is appointed. Each will be required to deal with similar questions, and it is difficult to see how any harmony of administration can be obtained by the two separate and distinct boards acting upon precisely similar questions in different parts of the state whose decisions upon those questions may be, and probably would be, in direct conflict.

The Attorney General continues that there should be only one commission of general jurisdiction over all public service corporations. For economy he would have the commission of five members to have four-year terms, two elected one year and three two years later. He thinks also that the Governor's bill is contradictory in sections, as it provides that the commission in New York City shall have jurisdiction over railroads exclusively in that district and over street railroads "any portion of which lines lies within that district, and all transportation of persons or property within that district or from a point within either district to a point within the other district."

There was much comment to-night over the marked resemblance the Attorney General's opinion bears to the trend of the favorite Hearst doctrines. He is Mr. Hearst's most devoted official.

JOINT HEARING ON TORRENS BILL.

A joint hearing at Albany, before the Senate and Assembly judiciary committees, on the bill providing for the introduction of the Torrens system of registering land titles, has been set for Wednesday, April 3, at 2:30 p. m. The bill was introduced in the Senate by Mr. Cohalan and into the Assembly by Mr. Prentice.

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ARMY AND NAVY NEWS.

[From The Tribune Bureau.]

Washington, March 24.

INDUCEMENTS TO ENLISTED MEN.—There is a perceptible improvement of the re-enlistments in the navy, much to the gratification of the naval authorities, who found that something must be done to keep men in the navy. Much the same condition confronted the artillery of the army, where men who had been trained for special service in that branch found ready means of employment at better wages outside of the service. In the artillery it was arranged that a man should be eligible to appointment as plotter, observer, etc., with increased pay, and this has materially stimulated re-enlistments. Men who have served a term are anxious to stay in the service, which is a condition most desired by those in charge of the enlisted force. In the navy those who re-enlist are to be paid $5 a month additional hereafter. The extra sum will not apply to those who have re-enlisted in the past, but goes into effect about this time. The order was signed four months ago, and those whose terms of enlistment had then expired were permitted, under law and regulations, to remain out of service four months and then return, with the advantage of continuous service, and now with the extra $60 a year. The effect has been noticeable at once and appears to insure the naval force of the continuance in it of men who have been specially trained for duty on shipboard and whose place will be hard to fill with brand new men.

FITTED FOR PANAMA WORK.—Civil Engineer H. H. Rousseau, who has gone to the Isthmus of Panama as a member of the Canal Commission, left a creditable record on the Pacific Coast. Before he was appointed as chief of the bureau of yards and docks, a place he held for a few weeks when he was transferred to the Canal Commission, he was in charge of naval public works at Mare Island, California. At that yard there has always been much trouble with keeping open for large ships the channel approach to the yard. Every year a great amount of costly dredging had to be done, and at one time the situation was so troublesome and threatened to be so enduringly expensive that the proposition was made to close the Mare Island yard. Of course, this met with immediate opposition from people in San Francisco and Vallejo, at which latter place the yard is located and of which town it is the main support. Mr. Rousseau superintended the completion of the bulkheads which increased the depth of the channel, in addition to which he devised and installed a big flusher, the effect of which was to so stir up the silt at the bottom as to enable the current to carry the former cause of trouble out into the bay. The device has preserved the Mare Island Navy Yard from extinction.

RETURN TO FIRST PRINCIPLES.—The commissary general of the army, who will after July 1 have charge of the purchase and distribution of field ovens for the military establishment, has come to the conclusion that the devices which are now issued to the service are not the most desirable and that it will be better to return to the type of field oven which was used in the Civil War. It is not often that instances of this kind occur, and that an article of military use has not been improved since it was employed in the War of the Rebellion. There has been much discussion of the field oven, and some hoped that it would be supplanted by a rolling oven, one mounted on wheels and capable of being taken along with the troops and in readiness for the delivery of its product whenever camp was reached. The field oven is of wrought iron and the type which is now to be used will be a slight improvement over the Civil War oven by the addition of smokestack and the folding floor. The ovens are designed so they will be collapsible to aid in their transportation with the least occupation of space. They are erected on the ground with very little preliminary work and were of great convenience to the army in the Civil War.

QUARTERS TO BE PARTLY FURNISHED.—One of the most important provisions made by the late Congress is that which is contained in the Army Appropriation act, and which permits the quartermaster general of the army to furnish heavy furniture for officers' quarters. This has been done to a limited extent under the law for the public rooms of officers' messes on the theory that these are the places of common entertainment where visitors to posts must be received, and accordingly it was considered proper that the government should stand the expense of furnishing such apartments to a certain extent. Hitherto officers have been obliged to furnish their own houses entirely, and this represented considerable loss either in transporting heavy furniture from place to place or selling it whenever there was a change of station. As far as may be, out of the appropriation for regular supplies of the quartermaster's department, heavy furniture will be bought and will become a part of the fixtures of officers' quarters. The list of such furniture provided by the government will include dining tables, ice boxes, bedsteads, hatracks, chairs and sideboards. This means considerable to officers who have hitherto had to get along as best they could with their furniture, and it will be welcome news to the army that such a provision is to be made hereafter in the quarters occupied by officers and their families.

SUPERFLUOUS LEGISLATION.—A bill passed at the late session of Congress authorized the President to appoint as second lieutenants in the army three young men, Messrs. Cleveland, Mahaffey and Keller, who had been dismissed from the Military Academy for alleged hazing. They have passed the age of twenty-seven years, and the bill which was enacted authorized the President to appoint them to the army as commissioned officers despite this fact. It developed, however, that the limitation placed upon age is not a matter of law now, but is entirely controlled by army regulations, and the President could designate the candidates for appointment with the aid of legislation. The question has now come up whether the law did not go further and permit the President to appoint these men without the examination required of all civilian candidates. It has been held by the War Department that, as nothing is said in the law on this subject, the ex-cadets must stand the same examination as other appointees to second lieutenants from civil life. The whole thing ends with the fact that what legislation was obtained for the benefit of these men was entirely unnecessary.

RUSHING BIGGEST BATTLESHIPS.—The Navy Department has decided that everything must be in readiness as soon as possible for the bidders who wish to compete for the contracts for the two new battleships. Instructions have been given that the skeleton plans which were submitted to Congress must be fully developed, with complete specifications and detailed drawings, and finished by April 15. This will make it possible to issue the advertisement a week or so later, and have the plans and specifications ready for the examination of bidders by May 1. It is the present intention to allow the bidders two months in which to submit their proposals, and the probable date of opening will be July 1. It is expected that there will be a keen competition among the private ship builders for one or both of the contracts, while bids will be received from the navy yards at New York, Norfolk and Mare Island, in order that there may be a comparison of the proposals from a government plant and those from private shipyards.

NAVAL BATTALION NOW ON NEWARK.

Men of 1st Formally Put Vessel in Commission—To Cruise in July.

After mustering, drilling and dancing for fourteen years on board the old frigate New Hampshire, now known as the Granite State, the officers and men of the 1st Naval Battalion are now to be quartered on board the U. S. S. Newark, which was formally turned over to them on Saturday by Adjutant General Henry, of this state, who had received her at the Brooklyn Navy Yard from Rear Admiral Coghlan, representing the government.

After the ceremony the Newark was towed by navy yard tugs, in charge of Captain Frank Bell, to the West 79th street pier, where she is now moored. Upon her arrival there Captain W. B. Franklin, commanding the 1st Battalion, with Lieutenant Commander A. B. Fry, Lieutenant W. A. McGrath, Ensigns Waite and Stevens, and ten men from each of the four divisions of the battalion, marched on board and put the ship in commission.

Boatswain John Law, U. S. N., and twenty-four enlisted men, eleven of whom belong to the engine and fireroom force, are nominally in charge of the ship. They will keep her in first class condition until the 350 men of the 1st Battalion take her on their first cruise in July.

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WANT ROOSEVELT AGAIN.

Michigan Lawmakers Vote 75 to 37 for Him.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Lansing, Mich., March 24.—Roosevelt sentiment seems to be as strong in the Michigan Legislature as in other states where polls have been taken. With three or four exceptions every member of the state's lawmaking body, when asked as to his preference for the next Presidential candidate, answered by asking the question, "Do you mean counting in Roosevelt?"

Few could give an answer without making it expressly understood that their first choice is President Roosevelt.

As to the issues of the next campaign, the opinion is almost unanimous that control of corporations and federal regulations will be prominent factors, while opinion is divided as to how much of a figure revision of the tariff, ship subsidy and the Panama Canal will cut. It is noticeable that the feeling is getting strong that the control of corporations doing interstate business should be left to the federal government.

The poll of both Senators and Representatives shows as follows: Roosevelt, 75; Taft, 16; Root, 7; Cannon, 6; Hughes, 3; Fairbanks, 3; La Follette, 2.

WILL SUCCEED G. J. GRAMMER.

B. B. Mitchell Said To Be Selected for Vice-Presidency of Central.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Springfield, Ohio, March 24.—It was learned here to-day that B. B. Mitchell, freight traffic manager of the New York Central lines east of Buffalo, will succeed the late G. J. Grammer as vice-president in charge of the traffic. Francis La Bau, assistant freight traffic manager, is to succeed Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell is now in Chicago preparing for the new work, but the appointment will not be made formally until April 15. This delay is entirely out of respect for Captain Grammer.

Mr. Mitchell for years was at the head of the Blue Line at Rochester. From there he went to the Michigan Central.

TO MODIFY DEMANDS.

Better Prospect of Avoiding Strike on Western Roads.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Chicago, March 24.—The prospect of a railroad strike became to-day less threatening, when the brotherhoods of trainmen and conductors decided to present modified demands at the conference on Tuesday with the general managers of forty-two railroad systems. It is understood the original demands for a wage increase of 15 per cent and an eight-hour day will be waived and that the men will ask for a 12 per cent advance and a working day of nine hours. Several minor concessions also will be made by the employes in the hope of effecting a compromise.

Railroad officials refused to say what attitude they would assume toward these overtures for peace, but it is believed that the proposal of the men will be the first step toward a satisfactory settlement, which will avert the walkout of fifty thousand employes. The feeling is that the roads will respond with an offer slightly lower and that this will be acceptable to the unions.

It is expected that the roads, if matters come to a crisis, will renew their proposals, and in the last extremity suggest that President Roosevelt be appealed to as a peace maker.

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NANCE O'NEIL ESCAPES FLOOD.

Miss Nance O'Neil, who is to take the title part in "Clio," Edward Royle's new play, arrived in this city last night from San Francisco. Miss O'Neil said that their journey East was delayed by washouts at several places, and that near Reno, Col., the passengers had to leave the train to escape the flood. On Monday Miss O'Neil will begin rehearsals at the Knickerbocker Theatre. The play will open at Atlantic City on April 18, and thence go on a tour. The title part was originally designed for Leslie Carter, but after her disagreement with Manager Dillingham the latter engaged Miss O'Neil.

TAORMINA BACK AGAIN.

The auxiliary yacht Taormina, in which Ralph Brandreth, her owner, started on a three-year cruise on Saturday, returned and yesterday anchored off Tompkinsville. This is the third time the Taormina has got under way and returned to port. The thick weather prevailing outside the Hook is said to have caused her to come back.