

CITY OWNERSHIP BILL NOW READY

Measure Affecting All Municipalities to Be Offered Next Wednesday.

GOV. SMITH FAVORS IT

Majority of Senate Said to Be in Line With New Whitney Plan.

Special Despatch to The Sun. ALBANY, Jan. 5.—A bill permitting each city in the State to purchase and operate every public utility within the city limits which is favored by the state Conference of Mayors, has been drafted and perfected and will be introduced in the Legislature next Wednesday, according to present plans.

Some public officials who believe there is a public sentiment for municipal ownership, but who are personally opposed to this new departure, justify their advocacy of this scheme upon the ground that New York city and other big cities could not put it into operation because the city debt limit stands in the way. They will be disappointed when one provision of the "Municipal Ownership" bill, which avoids the debt limit prohibition by permitting a city to issue public utility securities which would not be included in computations of a city's debt limit. This is now the rule concerning New York city subway bonds and water and dock bonds.

Where a city's debt limit does not interfere, a city may issue the usual obligations of a municipality to purchase public utilities.

Bill Drawn by Whitney. Travis H. Whitney, a Public Service Commissioner in New York city, was one of the committee which drew the bill favored by the Mayors' conference, and the measure provides that a municipality shall not commence the acquisition or establish or begin the operation of a public utility without first securing the consent of the Public Service Commission, and all municipal public service corporations will be under the jurisdiction of the public service commission, with the exception of those which were under private control.

Each city is to create a municipal director of public utilities with power to appoint and remove employees who would have the power to provide adequate and continuous service at reasonable rates without undue discrimination.

Another provision would permit several municipalities or political divisions of the State to organize into a single utility district and jointly acquire and operate public utilities, as is now the case where one corporation operates the trolley roads in Albany, Troy, Rensselaer, Watervliet, Cohoes and Green Island.

When introduced in the Legislature the bill will be referred to the Cities Committee in each house. When Senator Wagner's municipal ownership bill came to the Senate last year fifteen Democrats and eight Republican Senators voted for it, which was three more than the twenty-five needed to pass it. This year there are twenty-two Democratic Senators, and Senator James A. Smith, the Democratic leader, says that every one of them will vote for the municipal ownership of all public utilities and that more than enough Republican Senators will be returned to the Legislature to pass the bill. If the bill does not become a law this year it must be defeated in the Assembly, because if it passes that house it will be signed.

At the end of the last Senate session Senator George F. Wagner was appointed chairman of a special committee to investigate the question of municipal ownership and report back to this Legislature. Senator Artztinger is now in business in Chicago and such an investigation was not undertaken as he was in New York in Washington all of last year. He declined a re-nomination for the Senate.

The new Senate rules adopted on Wednesday abolish the standing committee on affairs of the city of New York. This means that all New York city legislation will go to the regular Senate Committee on Cities. The special committee to consider New York city legislation was newly established two years ago for the purpose of providing an important chairmanship for Senator Orden L. Mills, who retired from the Senate for service in France. When the committee was first established there were eight Republican Senators from New York city among its members. Of this number only two have been returned to the present Senate, all the other Senators from New York city now being Democrats.

When the Republican leaders decided to hold the committee as there were not enough Republican Senators from New York city to provide a majority of the committee.

This means that New York city legislation will be disposed of by a general cities committee dominated by up State Republican Senators, and it is this committee which will dispose of the municipal ownership legislation.

DISCONTENT IN BRITISH ARMY.

War Office to Demobilize Men Who Misunderstood Status.

LONDON, Jan. 5.—It is revealed in a statement issued by the War Office today that trouble similar to that which has been reported in the ranks of the British Army, but on a smaller scale, is being experienced by the men who were acting under a genuine misunderstanding as to disciplinary measures which will be adopted. A large staff of officials has gone to Flanders and Dover to investigate individual cases of discontent and to demobilize men who are entitled to their discharge from the army. The War Office admits that the affair seemed at first likely to lead to serious consequences, but says it is now being satisfactorily arranged.

AUSTRALIANS DID THEIR BIT.

Took 28,005 Prisoners From March to October.

MELBOURNE, Australia, Jan. 5.—The Minister of Defense publishes a report on the work of the Australian troops in France from March 26 to October 5 last. The report says that the Australians took 28,005 prisoners, 323 guns, many machine guns, mortars and howitzers, and millions of rounds of ammunition. They also recaptured 216 miles and villages, apart from many other gains in farms, hills and woods, and they released 251 square miles of French soil. The five Australian divisions at the front never numbered more than 100,000 men.

Czech Foreign Minister Quits.

PRAHA, Jan. 5.—Dr. Benes, Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, has resigned, according to a Budapest despatch received here.

MURDER SUSPECT SAYS HE HAS ALIBI

Maine Man Denies He Was in Rockland, Me., at Time.

ROCKLAND, Me., Jan. 5.—Olli Tuorilainen, who was arrested at Riley last night on suspicion of having been concerned in the murder of Mrs. Harry E. Brown at Rockland last Monday night, was brought here today. The prisoner was taken later to Bath, and to-morrow he will be taken to Rockland. Tuorilainen told the authorities he was not in Rockland at the time of the murder. He said he left the city on Monday morning, arrived at Riley late Monday afternoon and went to work in a pulp mill the next morning. Deputy Sheriff Allen said this story had been corroborated by a woman who claimed to have accompanied him part of the way, and that the men in authority at the mill had told him they were sure the man had begun work there on Tuesday morning.

SUFFS BURN MORE SPEECHES; JAILED

Washington Militants Put Wilson's Rome Address to Flames; Police Act.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—A party of suffragists stepped out of the headquarters of the National Woman's party this afternoon, went over to La Fayette Park in front of the White House and started to burn the speech the President made in Rome yesterday. They were promptly arrested, the fire extinguished and at a late hour to-night were still confined, having refused to pay up bail.

It developed to-day that while nobody was looking some of the "martyrs" of the so-called militant suffrage were arrested Saturday for about the same offense. They had been allowed to keep a fire going in the park for some days waiting for some utterance by the President bearing on democracy in general so they could throw it in the flames. Park policemen took them and put out the fire. Three of the same women were arrested to-day.

To-morrow the birthday of the patron "martyr" of the party is to be celebrated—Joan of Arc. To pay their respects to the memory of the Maid of Orleans still another fire is to be lighted in the same park and the death of Joan's life and her tragic death depicted on a special banner to be carried for the occasion.

The passage in the President's Rome speech to which special objection was taken to-day was that "in this age men are nearer to liberty than they ever were before."

It had been planned to keep a watch fire continually going in the park before the White House waiting to receive speeches of the President touching on democracy as far as uttered.

COBLENZ RULED LENIENTLY.

American Bands Played German Christmas Music.

BENLIN, Jan. 3 (Associated Press).—The rule of the Americans in Coblenz is characterized by "big hearted leniency," a despatch received here from Coblenz to-day says. The citizens are permitted to move about as they desire, it is declared, and the wish of the American commander "that the people might act as if no enemy troops of occupation were here" is being completely realized. "The soldiers," continues the despatch, "do a great deal of buying, especially of jewelry. They also eagerly purchase German decorations, helmets, sabres, etc." "The Americans gave a Christmas celebration for the citizens which attracted a great crowd. The children received quantities of sweets. The American bands played German Christmas songs."

THOMAS LONG ATTACKED BY BANDITS

Thomas F. Long, who served as a member of the Assembly for one term and who was prominent as an officer of the Independence League, was taken to the New York Hospital yesterday, after being attacked by three hold-up men in West Sixteenth street near Eight avenue. Mr. Long left a barber shop shortly before midnight and was attacked as he walked. The fight aroused neighbors who called the police. The assailants escaped.

SENATOR GRAVES INTRODUCES FIRST BILL AT BEHEST OF STATE EMPLOYERS.

WOULD EXPEND \$2,500,000

C. A. Chase, President of Association, Explains Purpose of Measure.

ALBANY, Jan. 5.—Senator Ross Graves of Buffalo introduced the first bill for 1919 in the New York State Senate. It is a bill for the reorganization of the Department of Health and includes appropriations of \$2,500,000. The measure is introduced at the request of the Associated Manufacturers and Merchants of the State. It has caused considerable comment here and is regarded as the first step by organized employers to check the propaganda for compulsory health insurance.

"The Associated Manufacturers and Merchants," said Carleton A. Chase of Syracuse, president of the organization, which is now recognized as the strongest State employers' association in the United States, "accepts responsibility for the bill introduced by Senator Graves and Assemblyman Beyer, and we believe we have made a start along right lines. It is not quite true, however, to say that the bill is put forward as an antidote for compulsory health insurance. The bill stands squarely on its own merit and owes its existence only indirectly to the campaign which has been waged for compulsory health insurance."

Result of Investigation. "It was while investigating compulsory health insurance, however, that the attention of the association was attracted to the possibilities for good that might accrue from a proper system of sickness prevention, and our bill is the direct outcome."

"Our association does not expect that the sickness prevention bill will be taken up and passed immediately. It realizes that it has merely made a start along sound lines and that there will be considerable criticism and comment on the Graves-Beyer bill. But in any event it is a start."

Back to Peace Basis. The task of returning the State to a peace basis has been undertaken promptly by the Legislature and several important measures having that object in view already have been introduced for consideration.

Departments created to meet war requirements are closing work as rapidly as possible and before the end of the session of 1919 will have gone out of existence.

One of the first bills introduced by Senator Sage amends the civil service law so as to give to veterans of the war a preference in the appointment to public service.

Senator Sage and Assemblyman Macbold, respectively chairman of the Finance and Ways and Means committees, have prepared bills repealing the laws which established the Food Supply Commission, the State Food Commission, the State Defense Council and the Ice Controller, departments created to enable the State to meet important problems imposed by the war.

FIGHT STARTED ON HEALTH INSURANCE

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State Comptroller Travis in his annual report makes recommendations for increasing the State's revenues and for performing a more economical administration of State business with a view to meet all necessary expenditures with a direct State tax smaller than last year's.

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BREWERS COUNCIL ASSAILS STATE LAW

Says Constitution Makes Government by a Minority Possible.

DESIGNED TO CURB CITY

May Now Be Used by Prohibitionists to Defeat People, He Asserts.

William H. Hirst, counsel for the New York State Brewers Association and the Society of Restaurateurs of New York, issued a statement yesterday condemning the proposed ratification of the Federal prohibition amendment by the New York State Legislature.

The burden of Mr. Hirst's statement is that such action without a referendum would constitute an example of minority government. Mr. Hirst argues that the large plurality given Gov. Alfred E. Smith in New York city against a referendum would constitute an example of minority government. Mr. Hirst argues that the large plurality given Gov. Alfred E. Smith in New York city against a referendum would constitute an example of minority government.

After referring to the constitutional provision that forbids New York city to have a majority representation in the Legislature, while the total population of the city is more than half that of the entire State, Mr. Hirst continues: "The burden of Mr. Hirst's statement is that such action without a referendum would constitute an example of minority government. Mr. Hirst argues that the large plurality given Gov. Alfred E. Smith in New York city against a referendum would constitute an example of minority government."

It would be the height of oppression, it would be the height of folly for any party to vote en bloc for the perpetration of so manifest an injustice upon a protesting city by taking advantage of a majority in the Legislature, which is the only excuse or explanation ever offered was that it would prevent just such a situation."

JEWELS BURNED IN OLD INN.

Valuables Worth \$40,000 Locked in Structure Built in 1835.

LYNNFIELD, Mass., Jan. 5.—Jewels valued at \$40,000 were lost by the burning of the Sunting Inn here early today. They were the property of Mrs. Cora Baglestone, owner of the Inn, and were locked in her room on the second floor. The loss on the buildings, all of which, with the exception of the stables, were burned, is estimated at \$100,000. The fire started apparently on the second floor, around a fireplace chimney. Only a few guests were in the house at the time and these as well as the employees escaped uninjured.

The Inn, situated on the shore of Lake Sunting, has been popular for years as a dining resort for automobile tourists. The original portion of the Inn was built in 1835.

SAYS CITIES ARE WET.

"They also disregard the fact that other cities and towns of the State have recorded themselves against prohibition and that their population together with that of the city of New York constitutes the vast majority of the population of the State. It would be preposterous and sheer madness to apply this theory to the prohibition question. Any majority vote in the Legislature which could possibly be mustered in favor of the prohibition amendment would represent less than four millions out of the nearly ten millions of population of the State and in that fact constitute one of the rankest

ARMY OFFICERS TO GET COURT-MARTIAL

Continued from First Page.

discipline must be maintained, even at the expense of bringing to trial some of those who are shortly to leave the service. It is a sad thing for an officer at the close of his career to find himself before a court-martial, but something must be done or it is certain that conditions will grow steadily worse.

Calls on Press to Give Its Help. "I believe the public press of New York can render to our Government a great service in this matter. During the progress of the war the loyalty of the press was one of the very greatest assets of our Government. The press can still perform a great duty and render valuable aid to our country in matters connected with the return of our troops."

Gen. Shanks complains at this point that untrue or inaccurate statements have appeared in the newspaper columns of some newspapers regarding the arrival of troops. One instance had to do with a statement that the process of removing the wounded from France was unduly slow because of poor arrangements, and another complaint touched upon a statement that men were packed into another troopship "like immigrants" and "herded below like cattle."

Gen. Shanks denies this absolutely, writing that American troops are transported in the best vessels that float, that they are made comfortable and that they are fed as well as troops in the world are fed. Returning to the main topic of his letter, he says: "I have found on investigation that not infrequently the relatives and friends of the officer concerned are to blame. They call him up by telephone or sometimes wire him from a distance insisting that they are made comfortable and that they are fed as well as troops in the world are fed. Returning to the main topic of his letter, he says: 'I have found on investigation that not infrequently the relatives and friends of the officer concerned are to blame. They call him up by telephone or sometimes wire him from a distance insisting that they are made comfortable and that they are fed as well as troops in the world are fed. 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