

CITY NEWS

J. S. Bradstreet III—J. S. Bradstreet is suffering from nervous trouble, which is to be cured, it is thought, by a stay in the Judd house for some time.

Salaries Not to Be Restored—The county commissioners, yesterday morning, after auditing bills, went into a committee of the whole and considered the application from the different county offices for a reconsideration of the salary cuts made some time ago. Having made changes, it is not likely that the commissioners will restore the salaries to their former level.

Laboratory Work Suspended—The partial destruction by fire Sunday of the chemical laboratory at the state university, has suspended the "lab." work by students. The front rooms of the building were but slightly damaged by smoke and water, and lecture work will be conducted there, as usual. After an adjustment of losses, which will be made immediately, the work of repairing the building will commence, and it is expected that new equipment will be provided in a few days.

Luxton Vaccinated Them—Every person receiving a workhouse sentence from Judge Holt yesterday morning had a dash of vaccine added to his sentence, free of charge. H. A. Luxton was on hand with the vaccine needles. Among the prospective workhouse prisoners were three colored women, taken from the Warmick road, 207 Second street. They loudly protested when told that they must submit to the orders of the health department. Protestations were of no avail, and the doctor despatched the cases in a lively manner.

That "U. S. Sign"—The postoffice department is insisting that the street railway mail car shall not have the sign "U. S. Mail" on any car actually carrying mail at the time the sign is displayed. A strict enforcement of this rule would require the company to use detachable signs instead of having the words painted upon the sides of the cars. Neither the street railway nor the company is willing to do this at one time or another during the day carries mail pouches, and the interurban carries mail boxes at certain hours. The words "U. S. Mail" is not being put on any of the new cars, that is, the cars numbered above 80.

IN SORE DISTRESS

Beltrami County Is Bankrupt, and Anarchy Threatened.

COURT'S DISASTROUS DECISION

Taxes Illegally Levied for Three Years Past—Immediate Relief Is Sought From Legislature.

Beltrami county is in distress. Unless speedy relief is granted by the legislature, a condition will prevail there bordering on anarchy.

The treasury of the county is exhausted. The limit of indebtedness has been exceeded, and the county government is a pauper, without visible means of support.

The jurors drawn for the January term of court struck, refusing to accept county orders for their pay, and the court adjourned without the jury. The judge could not hold them, as under the law there was no means of paying them.

Sheriff Bailey has eight prisoners in the county jail, and he is unable to release them in a few days unless relief comes from some source. He has firewood for four days more, and cannot get another stick of wood. His salary has stopped, he does not feel inclined to advance the money without prospect of return. Merchants refuse to accept county orders for groceries, and there are \$22,000 in county warrants and orders outstanding, which will not pass anywhere. The county auditor and county treasurer have quit their offices.

The immediate cause of distress is a decision made over the county against T. B. Walker, Walker and Akeley, the Red River Lumber company, to enforce the collection of 1899 taxes levied in the county for the past three years were illegally assessed, and were invalid, thus putting a stop to the collection of taxes.

The trouble is that Beltrami county has outgrown the law under which it was organized. Beltrami and Cass counties were organized in 1857, when the population was about 100,000, and there were no railroads, and nearly all the population the floating inhabitants of lumber camps. To prevent the looting of its treasury by carpet-baggers, the law provided that the county should not levy more than \$12,000 in taxes for all purposes, and placed a limit on its indebtedness of \$6,000. The 1899 legislature raised the tax limit to \$20,000, and the indebtedness to \$12,000. Such a sum was even then sadly inadequate, and for three years the law has been disregarded, in the hope that the legislature would increase the tax limit.

Lumber Companies Refuse. Residents of the counties paid their taxes without protest, but the lumber companies refused, and have paid nothing since 1897. Meanwhile the population of Beltrami county has increased to 111,000. With the advent of the Fosston line of the Great Northern, Bemidji has grown to a city of 2,180 inhabitants. The valuation of the county was \$1,300,000 in 1898, since when the value has risen to \$2,000,000, but this is now placed at nearly \$3,000,000.

Under the 1899 valuation, state taxes amounted to over \$900,000, and the school tax to about \$6,000, leaving less than \$5,000 for the expenses of the county and for local school taxes. The total salary list of the county is \$20,000 per year, the district court costs \$6,000 per year, the justice courts \$2,000, and supplies for the offices \$2,000 per year, while the total revenues of the county are only \$42,000 in collections of all kinds. It is easy to see where this puts the county. There is now about \$32,000 in delinquent taxes outstanding, which will not be paid in time to meet the demands of the law. This decision brought the county face to face with ruin. The judge said he would have much preferred to decide in favor of the county, but it was impossible. He attached a memorandum to his decision saying that the restrictions it imposed were unjust, and that they did not give the county any right to sue to preserve its offices. He held it to be a matter requiring the attention of the legislature.

Delegation on the Ground. There are now on the ground in St. Paul the following citizens of Bemidji: A. P. White, cashier of the First National bank; W. F. Street, county attorney; Thomas Bailey, sheriff; Dr. D. B. Newman, county physician; C. W. Speelman, clerk of courts; J. H. Hanner, county auditor; W. Wesley Wright, chairman of the county board; F. E. Dudley, president of the village council; Thomas Sweet and C. E. Carson. They will urge on the legislature the passage of three bills.

The first bill has already been introduced by Senator McCarthy of Grand Rapids. It removes the restrictions imposed by the act of 1899, and puts the counties of Bemidji and Cass on the same footing as other counties of the state. A second bill will be introduced, validating the tax assessments of the past three years, which have been made in excess of the limit allowed by law. A third bill will validate all county orders issued in excess of the limit.

Cass county has not been greatly hampered by the law. It has not so large a population or valuation and has not greatly exceeded the limit of the law.

The senate judiciary committee will probably grant a hearing on Senator McCarthy's bill to-morrow and recommend it to pass. The measure needed will be pushed as rapidly as possible.

It is an unfortunate fact that Beltrami, with 110,000 people, has no resident representation in the legislature. It is represented in the senate by Senator Myran of Ada, and in the house by Representative Rapp of St. Hilary.

IT'S THEIR OWN BED

Lumbermen Don't Sympathize With Beltrami County People.

LAW DELIBERATELY VIOLATED

T. B. Walker Says That the Rapid Reversion of Timber Will Follow Unjust Taxation.

The lumbermen of Minnesota take no such lugubrious view of the conditions prevailing in Beltrami county as do the inhabitants of that county who are asking the legislature to legalize their acts respecting the imposition of taxes on timber. Judge T. B. Walker, of Beltrami county, in a suit brought by the county against T. B. Walker, et al., to enforce the collection of the 1898 taxes, stated that the taxes levied were illegally assessed.

The contention of the residents of Beltrami county which was rehearsed at length yesterday's Journal, has brought out strong protests from the lumbermen. After tracing the history of the legislation of four years ago when the legislature deemed it unwise to organize Beltrami county and Beltrami county an open plan which would permit the county authorities to levy taxes and collect them at their pleasure, the lumbermen declare that the county officials refused to be governed by the understanding embodied in the legislative enactment which placed the maximum taxation that could be levied in Beltrami county at \$12,000, a limit afterwards raised to \$20,000.

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"The action of the county authorities," said Mr. Walker, "shows the necessity of the lumbermen taking out all of the timber in the county, and a reasonable amount of taxation should be maintained. If the legislature should now go back on its record in this matter, the lumbermen must remove their timber without delay, or they will lose it, and the amount of the taxes that will be collected in the next five years."

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T. B. Walker speaks for the lumbermen, says that since the counties were organized on the above plan, large valuations have been placed on the lands, and an excessive rate of taxation has been imposed, largely exceeding the amount fixed by the legislature. This rate, Mr. Walker says, has led to a total of \$48,000 for 1899 and about \$72,000 for 1900. In addition, Mr. Walker says, the county lands, which the lumbermen are scarcely able to sell at \$1 an acre, were assessed at \$5 an acre by the officials of Beltrami county.

"The action of the county authorities," said Mr. Walker, "shows the necessity of the lumbermen taking out all of the timber in the county, and a reasonable amount of taxation should be maintained. If the legislature should now go back on its record in this matter, the lumbermen must remove their timber without delay, or they will lose it, and the amount of the taxes that will be collected in the next five years."

Lumbering the Sole Industry.

Mr.