

NO SLIDING SCALE

Will Satisfy the Solons of the House in the Way of Liquor License.

And They Therefore Recommend the Passage of a Straight \$500 License Bill.

The Subject of the Competition of Convict Labor to That of the Free Artisan Discussed at Length.

And the Lower Body Resolves That It Must Cease—Something About Roller Mills.

Mr. Linnan Says the Statement That He Belonged to the Ramsey County Ring is False.

Doings of the Day.

Almost a full senate was present yesterday morning, there being but two absentees, Senators Pillsbury and Ward. There was an exchange of chaplains, Rev. Harrington, chaplain of the house of representatives, and also of the state prison, taking the place of the Rev. Hobart. However, it must not be inferred that there is such an increase of wickedness in the senate as to require the invocation of the state prison chaplain to save it from going utterly to the bad. The devotional exercises as conducted by Mr. Harrington were beautiful and impressive.

There was considerable lobbying going on yesterday, embracing a variety of subjects, ranging all the way from the measure excluding passengers from taxation to matters of greater magnitude.

The omnibus bill appropriating over \$30,000 out of the internal improvement fund for the construction of bridges in various parts of the state came in from the house yesterday, and is a formidable bill, about an inch in thickness. It was referred to the committee on roads and bridges, of which Senator Blake is the chairman, and it needs the assistance of a clear-headed civil engineer and about a dozen lawyers to scare the "woodchuck" out of such a brush heap. An omnibus bill is a paradise for bills of a questionable character. The senator who is getting a thousand for his district will vote for many thousands for a less meritorious project in order to get his share.

SLIDING SCALE LICENSE BILL PASSED.

In the afternoon the senate devoted its time chiefly to the passage of bills, and the one which claimed the most attention was the one establishing a graduated license fee for the sale of intoxicants. By diligently canvassing the senate the friends of the measure managed to get enough senators pledged to run the bill through the senate by adjusting the license fee to suit localities. The chief thing accomplished by the bill is the fixing of a \$500 license upon cities of over 9,000 population and scaling it down so that the corner grocery may sell for \$50. It is almost a barren victory for the temperance and high-license people, for it simply fixes a high license in cities, villages and towns enjoying corporate privileges and having the power to control the matter with far better judgment as to surrounding circumstances than the legislature could possibly do, even if it amounts to anything at all in cities having such charters as St. Paul, Minneapolis and Stillwater.

Upon the passage of the house bill for reorganizing the representative districts of Washburn county, the same bill having been previously killed in the senate, Senator Wilson took the floor and denounced the bill as purely a piece of political gerrymandering in order to secure the whole legislative delegation to one county. Of course the bill passed the senate.

Senator J. B. Gillilan, chairman of the senate judiciary committee and congressman elect, yesterday sent to the governor his resignation as a senator to take effect on March 3. Senator Gillilan has long and faithfully served the state in legislative halls, and his great experience as chairman of the judiciary committee has made him a man of peculiar value, and it will be difficult to replace him. It is hoped he will be equally valuable to the state in his new position.

IN THE HOUSE.

At the request of Mr. Drake, chairman of the finance committee, unanimous consent was given yesterday for reading all bills with regular appropriations for state institutions, current expenses, etc., a second time and placing them on the calendar for passage ahead of other bills.

The Winona county delegation have reached an agreement on the senate bill creating a municipal court in Winona city, and the bill will be up for passage at the next meeting of the senate.

A resolution of Mr. Pattee limiting the introduction of bills to those proposed in a businesslike spirit by Messrs. Daniels, Durant and Murphy, and then it was adopted by a good majority.

Mr. Ende offered a resolution that employees of the state in no later than the twelfth day of the month pay rolls for the full year be put upon the pay rolls for the full year.

Upon the motion of Mr. Hendrickson the house voted to print the bill restricting the city of St. Paul for the information of members.

The speaker has appointed Messrs. Cornish and Daniels as the additional members of a special committee to investigate the St. Cloud, Mankato & Austin railroad.

Mr. Cornish introduced a bill yesterday authorizing the commissioners of Ramsey county to fill any vacancy in the board caused by death which it occurs.

Mr. Downes of Henderson appears on the record as the author of a bill that looks to reorganizing roller skating in this state. First the bill proposes to require all such places to be licensed, the fee for which is graded from \$25 to \$300, and then it prohibits allowing males and females to appear on the floor and skate together, or at the same time, under a penalty of \$25 to \$100 for each offense.

The speaker, with a due appreciation of the fitness of the Ramsey county delegation to wrestle with such a question, referred the bill to its investigation and report.

It being evident that the bill introduced some time ago adding to the duties of the oil inspector that of inspector of gas had been smothered, Mr. Thompson yesterday introduced another bill of similar purport. Its fate is death.

The house yesterday concurred in the senate amendment to the bill for a third hospital for the insane, in striking out the commis-

sioners named in the house bill and devolving upon the appointment of such commission upon the governor, and passed the bill as amended.

The house concurred in the senate resolution memorializing congress for an adjustment of cases in dispute in connection with the Southern Minnesota railroad land grant.

The vote by which the state park bill was defeated Thursday was reconsidered yesterday, amended and approved by a vote of 110 to 85, and in that shape passed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. Linnan rose to a question of privilege yesterday morning, and read from the Pioneer Press as follows: "I wish to be notified, wishes to abolish the office of public examiner. And why? Let us see why. I suppose the office was created to examine the books, transactions and methods of the officers of the treasurer and auditor of Ramsey county. The developments were of a somewhat serious nature. It was disclosed that such a nature was disclosed that indictments by the grand jury were only avoided by a hasty reimbursement of missing funds. A regular system of embezzlement had been going on for some time. The officers concerned were Democrats. The local Democratic organ commenced a furious warfare on the public examiner for this faithful discharge of his duty, which resulted in a complete purgation and reform of the administration of these and other county offices. Mr. Linnan was a member of the grand jury, and that is what the matter with Linnan."

In response Mr. Linnan said in the first place he was not noted for wishing to abolish the office of public examiner. When that office was created he was a senator from Carver county and voted for the bill. Furthermore, when the bill was up giving the examiner an additional clerk he had but only his influence in his favor and voted for it. Again he had no hand in the matter. He was county auditor or county treasurer of Ramsey, nor was he, or had he been, a member of any Ramsey county ring. In brief, he said, there was not a word of truth in the article, but he was sorry to say it was about as near the truth as any paper usually got. "And that is what is the matter with Mr. Linnan."

CONVICT LABOR.

The bill of Mr. Myers to prohibit convict labor being brought into competition with the artisan labor of the state, coming up on third reading, Mr. Pratt of Stillwater took the floor in opposition to it. He said he had no more interest in the present contract system than any other of the citizens of the state, and all he proposed to do was to present a few facts for members to consider. Up to last year the prison of New York had been managed under a system very similar to that in use here. At that time the prison had for years paid a surplus into the state treasury, while the deficit last year, under the operation of a law of the same general features as the one under consideration was between \$200,000 and \$300,000. Several years ago Wisconsin did away with the contract system and carried on its state prison as is proposed, and so badly did the new plan work that in three years it went back to the contract system. The same experience had been that of all states that had tried other than the contract system success had alone been achieved in Michigan, all others having suffered losses. Referring to the management of the Stillwater prison, Mr. Pratt said the average earnings of the state prisoners in an average of 232, and notwithstanding the loss of time by the fire, was \$38.98 per capita above all expenses except for salaries of officers. This would give \$100 convicts at \$38.98, and for 700 the contemplated capacity of the prison would give a surplus over expenses, other than salaries of officers, of \$27,486. The salaries of the officers now aggregate \$24,392, and as is well understood it would cost little if any more in this direction to care for 700 than for 300. It will be seen that with 700 convicts the prison would be nearly or quite self-supporting. He did not mention convict labor in competition with the artisan labor of the state, but held that as now employed it came in less direct competition with such labor, than did the Michigan institution managed directly by the state authorities. In the Michigan case the convict alone, he claimed the Michigan prison did the mechanics of Minnesota every day.

MUCH GREATER INJURY.

than did their own state prison. The Michigan prison also made large numbers of shovels, spades, etc., and also household furniture, all of which were brought in direct competition with the artisan labor of that and adjoining states. At Stillwater the principal manufacture was that of three or four mechanics were employed, their works and the work of the convicts not competing with outside labor. At one time the contractors were large manufacturers of four barrels, but upon the introduction of the state convict labor competing with the labor of other points, it was abandoned. Now there was but one shop in which work was done that came in competition with outside labor, the hardware shop, in which there were employed some forty-five convicts and twenty-five free men, and he believed that branch of manufacture was soon to be abandoned. But whether it was to be or not, the house, before voting for the pending bill, should first satisfy itself that the law proposed would give the state any benefit. If it did not, he submitted the present system should not be interfered with, at least until the expiration of the existing contract.

Mr. Durant said the prison plant consisted of valuable buildings and machinery. The principal manufactures were railroad cars in the machine shops. The hardware finished work sold up to May last was \$44,000. At one time there were on the pay rolls of the contractors over 1,200 convicts, employed at good wages. There are now 289 convicts and 311 convicts. The capital stock of the company is \$1,000,000. The effect of the bill under consideration would paralyze that company. The total sales of products last year were between \$1,200,000 and \$1,300,000. The sales of the jobbing department, in which is included the hardware finished product were about \$200,000. The value of \$150,000—the only manufacturer of the kind in the Northwest—and of threshing machines \$1,100,000. The amount of orders for hardware products, since May last, amounted to less than \$10,000. The fact was it was a question as to whether the temperance interest was being built up, which hostile legislation would paralyze. Pass the bill and there would have to be an entire change in the policy of the state as to the care of its convicts. The convict labor had to be employed, and he believed in no way could that labor be brought into less injurious competition with the artisan labor of the state, and therefore he claimed the bill should not be passed.

Mr. Myers said it seemed to him to require \$100,000 a year to run the state prison, if the prisoners were not required to do any work, the care of the present convicts would cost less than \$50,000. He had no wish to attack the prison, however. What he objected to was the selling of human beings out to contract labor. He believed that such a system ought to be abolished. One of the great objects of a prison should be to protect society. The theory is that confinement will make the bad man better. But how can that be brought about if a man is sold as an animal? Capital is greedy, and will make the most of its purchase. Under the present there is no possible chance of reformation. Instead, the victims became imbruted and ready to make war upon their fellow man. The first step to reform this condition is to do away with the contract system, and put the control of convicts in the hands of the managers of the state, and employ them as not to bring their labor in competition with the artisan labor of the state. This is what the bill proposes to do and he hoped it would be passed.

Mr. Durant, speaker for Mr. Erickson, said he believed it a fact that the management of convicts in the Minnesota prison was the most humane of any similar institution in the country. They were entirely under the control of agents of the state who were not overworked or cruelly treated. They were not overworked or cruelly treated. Mr. Durant then reviewed the financial history of the institution, which he said showed economical and judicious management. There were now 350 convicts in the prison, and he believed that the labor of the convicts was being put to the best use of employment. If the house was satisfied the present system was wrong, then it would be their duty to vote for the bill which he proposed.

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tion, and the roll was called with the following result:

- YEAS. Mazy, Foster, Blackman, Bradford, Bruce, Byrum, Byrne, Cannon, Chase, Casper, Carlson, Cass, Collette, Coulter, Dowd, D., Drake, Durand, Erickson.

- YEAS. Smith, J., Spaulding, Stephen, Hunt, Edmond, Reese, Valentine, Fiddes, Webster, Flynn, Simpson, Hendrickson, Messrs. Durant and Warner first voted no, but when they found the bill had passed changed to aye, and after the result had been announced Mr. Durant gave notice that he would move to reconsider at an early time. In explanation of his vote Mr. Hendrickson said he had intended to vote for the bill, but after the explanations he should be obliged to vote no.

The bill increasing the salary of the attorney general from \$2,500 to \$3,500 was passed by a vote of 110 to 85. The bill was introduced by Mr. Turrell, fixing the license at not less than \$500. The bill having been read Mr. Dyer, a friend of the measure, offered an amendment incorporating the local option feature of the existing law, and also providing that municipalities should be limited within liquor shall be sold in such towns, and moved its adoption. He said the adoption of the amendment would remove one objection many friends of high license had to the bill as introduced, and also made it conform to the wishes of many of the people who had passed during the afternoon.

Mr. Daniels, in speaking in favor of the amendment, went quite largely into the general merits of the bill, which he hoped would be passed without other amendments, and especially applied to the chair of the committee to prevent an amendment making the license less than \$500. The bill was intended to be a high license bill pure and simple. There was, he said, an almost universal demand for such legislation. He could see how an amendment of the kind he proposed would be a great benefit to the state. It might be said that high license would not stop drinking whisky. True, but it would stop it at every four corners for the demoralization and destruction of the youth of the land, and the general impoverishment of the people. It would drive out and close numberless saloons in both city and country. Every father and mother in the land was directly interested in the amendment. The salary of the officers now aggregate \$24,392, and as is well understood it would cost little if any more in this direction to care for 700 than for 300. It will be seen that with 700 convicts the prison would be nearly or quite self-supporting. He did not mention convict labor in competition with the artisan labor of the state, but held that as now employed it came in less direct competition with such labor, than did the Michigan institution managed directly by the state authorities. In the Michigan case the convict alone, he claimed the Michigan prison did the mechanics of Minnesota every day.

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