

EDITORIAL

of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
Dr. West's bill has many ounces concealed about it.
Its title sounds mild to a degree, but its effect will be powerful.

Here's the way its caption sounds when read:
A bill relating to secret societies and orders in Florida.
Nothing startling in this, when considered by itself.
Read the bill and nothing appears of a crime-preventing kind.

It provides that all secret societies and orders now existing shall have their charters approved by the Board of State Institutions within six months after the act becomes a law, or be dissolved, and all societies and orders which may be organized in the future must have charters approved by the Board of State Institutions. It provides further, that all assemblies without charters approved as aforesaid, may be treated as disorderly assemblies.

If this bill is enacted—
Negro orders and secret societies can be wiped off the map.

Negro societies are organized with the best intentions sometimes—sometimes not.

They are used to hatch crime.

They are hotbeds of evil designs.

Dr. West's bill allows the highest officers of State to control them.

BY THE WAY

Capt. E. N. Dimock of Palm Beach, former Senator from Dade County; Capt. George Baker, Mayor of West Palm Beach, and Mr. John Sewall, Mayor of Miami, have been here for several days for the purpose of entering protest against the division of Dade County, as proposed by the bill introduced in the Senate Tuesday, to create the County of Palm Beach. Their chief argument is that the portion of Dade County to be cut off has not sufficient population for such separation to be profitable to property owners.

It is worth noting that the three gentlemen named are warm admirers of the Florida East Coast Railway Company, though that may not indicate that the company is opposed to county division, though it is natural that it should be, if for no other reason than that Mr. Guy Metcalf has his mind set on accomplishing this thing, and the East Coast Railway Company has, for a number of years, delighted in thwarting any project that Guy might conceive.

Mr. E. H. McMichael, representing Maynard Merrill & Co., one of the book companies that would be glad to share some of the business which the American Book Company is doing in Florida, was in Tallahassee yesterday and the day before. He admits that he came to attend the meeting of County Superintendents, but that he had no interest in staying until after the vote on the school book uniformity measure, which his competitor is fighting. So Mr. McMichael will leave this morning. He did not make any speech before the County Superintendents as the American Book Company agent did, nor did he make any effort to get before the Legislative committee which will report on this measure.

In noting the vote of the committee on the matter of creating Pinellas County, three of the members who voted to report the measure unfavorably have county division fights on their own hands, or prospects of one. Hooker of DeSoto, Morrison of Volusia, Watson of Dade are all apt to be in the same boat before the end of the session, and therefore the fact that they voted for an unfavorable report on the Pinellas County bill means only their effort to establish a precedent for this Legislature, and prevent creation of more counties.

In the Senate Journal of Tuesday, Senator Buckman explained his vote against Senate Joint Resolution No. 1 (Beard's suffrage amendment) by saying—

"That he voted against the amendment, as in his opinion it was unwise, presupposed a condition that did not now exist, and would be productive, if passed, of more harm than any possible good at this time to the people of the State and her interests."

The courtly and genial Thomas J. L. Brown of Tampa is an interested observer of the Legislative grindstone this week. "Indian information" gives the hint that Mr. Brown has a small ax to put on that same grindstone, which he will use to chop out funds for some more State fairs.

THE "GUM BUNCH BILL"

Turpentine and Timber Leases Will Be Assessed as Personal Property, and They Will Be Sold for Delinquency.

A bill that will be known to Legislative history as the "Gum Bunch Bill" is now getting its finishing touches, preparatory to introduction, and if enactment follows the State will enjoy a revenue of which it is now deprived.

The provision of the bill is to compel lessees of turpentine and timber lands to pay a tax on leases, the assessor being empowered to assess the same as personal property according to the value of the lease.

Failure to pay such taxes will result in the lease being sold and a final transfer six months after date of delinquency, but the owner of the lease will be estopped from operating at once. The lease may be redeemed any time within six months by payment of the tax, with 25 per cent added.

Heretofore valuable leases have escaped all taxation, but with the enactment of a law of this kind this form of property will be obliged to bear its share of the public burden.

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