

EDITORIAL

Haskins and Sells would have been discovered some time ago.

I am told that Senator West has been outvoted in the sessions of that committee, and that he is not responsible for Haskins and Sells.

Who then is responsible for Haskins and Sells? The majority of the committee.

And in order that this responsibility, which is a large one, may rest on shoulders where it properly belongs, even though these be small, I will mention Mr. H. H. Buckman, Chairman of the committee, as responsible for Haskins and Sells.

Does not Mr. Martin, the discreet representative of Haskins and Sells, say in his testimony that he met the Trustees under the chaperonage of Mr. Buckman?

To put it as mildly as possible, to be real nice about it—

I will say concerning the action of this Investigating Committee in turning over to H. & S. the investigation of the people's business demanded by the people, in the kindest and most gentle language in the world—just to hint, to murmur, to put in motion the limpid ether waves—

That it is the most outrageous proceeding, the most utterly uncalled for action, the most violent flying in the face of the will of the people and the most inexcusable conduct of a public nature that I have witnessed or heard of, and I have heard of some.

The whole purpose of this chairman of this committee, and the majority voting with him, has been, from the start, to conceal what they were doing.

Appointed by the representatives of the people to investigate the acts of their servants, so that the greatest publicity might be thrown upon them, they use the closed door and the dark lantern methods.

Secret sessions held in the dungeons of Spanish castles during the days of the Inquisition were not more guarded from the public eye than were these sessions of this committee, whose watchword should have been "Publicity."

This has not only been an improper course, but an unwise one, for by this procedure, Mr. Buckman, and the majority voting with him, have cast a doubt on whatever report that committee can make that will destroy its usefulness as a public document, for the simple reason that public documents prepared by star chamber methods are not accepted by the public.

The House has twice expressed its disapproval of this procedure, the first time by passing a resolution instructing the committee to hold open sessions, and second, by appointing a committee to investigate the Investigating Committee.

The bill prepared by the second investigating committee, which was introduced yesterday by its chairman, should pass the Senate. It will, of course, pass the House.

I was at first not much in favor of having this investigation made, because I did not recognize the demand for it. It did not come from the people. I was confined almost entirely to the three classes of newspapers—one owned by the railroads, another controlled by them, and a third those innocently and ignorantly echoing the sentiment of the other two.

The request of the Governor for an investigation was good in principle, but the necessity for it was not apparent. It seemed like a request for a vindication. There does not appear good reason why the people should pay for a vindication of their servants. If there is good cause to suspect public servants of wrong-doing, their masters, the people, through their representatives, can impeach them. If there is not good cause, they should be let alone, as there is a check on every one of them.

But, now that Haskins and Sells have had charge of this investigation, and this firm of New York accountants is making up the report at the direction of Mr. Buckman, backed by a majority of the committee, whose every act in this Legislature has shown them to be enemies of the Trustees, I am in favor of the investigation, and believe that it should be carried on by the people's representatives, whose first duty should be to fire Haskins and Sells and employ Florida certified accountants, if they need any.

So, the Senate should pass the House bill, creating the Investigating Commission, which would be evenly divided between the friends and the enemies of the Trustees—each side having four. No fairer proposition than this could come before the people.

It will cost nearer fifteen thousand dollars than five thousand dollars to make it. This is certain, as the expense will not be less than \$100 per day average, and it will take five months to do it and prepare the report.

TEED—SOUNDS LIKE TWEED.

Frank Wilson, member from Lee County, has plucked a few of the tail feathers from the American eagle, that peevish journalistic bird that prints in Estero and screams about cellular cosmogony and other kinds of nonsensical gibberish. He introduced a bill, which has passed both houses, to abolish the town of Estero, which is said to be twelve miles square or round.

I am rather inclined to think it is curved or zig-zag, because I hear a lot of crooked things about it.

Mr. Wilson has done well; next thing for him to do can be done after the Legislature adjourns, and that is—

To go back to Lee County and head a movement that will expose this fakir Teed and prevent him from perpetrating his nonsensical moonshine on the gullible crowd that he gathers around him.

The day of the fakir is about done in Florida. Teed seems to be the last of this gang. He calls his community a communistic community. The name that I would select for it is foolish community made up of dupes. That is, all except Teed, Silverfriend and Andrews.

I am not sure that the Sheriff of Lee County is not the proper man to attend to Teed. In that case, all that Mr. Wilson will have to do will be to make the proper affidavits and place them in the Sheriff's hands.

Certainly Estero should be abolished and Teed run out of the State.

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