

# THE INDEPENDENT

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FRANK GODFREY, City Editor and Business Manager

Residing in Honolulu.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1903.

## HOUSE'S EXPENSE BILL.

The Senate yesterday afternoon, in adopting the report of the Ways and Means Committee, passed the House Expense Bill [No. 1] on its second reading, reducing the amount asked from \$20,000 to \$18,000. We think this proceeding to be dictation with a vengeance, although Senator Cecil Brown held that the "superior" body should not dictate to the "inferior" how it was to spend public money for the public weal. Yet the committee, composed of two Republicans and one Home Ruler, unanimously says that "it is with reluctance that we recommend this amount of \$18,000."

It has taken the Senate over a fortnight to decide what to allow the House for expenses during this extra session. But that is not the rub; it is whether this amount will be accepted or not. If it is accepted, then the House may likewise treat the Senate to the same dose of physic by the same procedure, and then the tables will be turned, as the latter's Expense Bill is still being held by the House, and both can do the same trick of reducing, yet neither can act independently of the other.

Senators Achi and McCandless both held that the Senate had a right to question the House's demand, the former finally moving to amend the committee's recommendation as in the original House Bill (1) by increasing it \$2,000 more, making \$20,000 in all. But the latter strenuously held his own and moved to amend the demand to \$10,000, and was backed up by Senator Dickey, saying that that would be sufficient to carry the House through, including the printing of its journal, which was given to one printing establishment without calling for open public tenders, yet a personal request was made for bids and only one bidder was the result, and that one

was the one to whom the work has been finally given. And now, the bill has passed its second stage, and should it be finally passed on third reading, and if not accepted, a conference will be the ultimate result.

We think the matter will soon be up to the "inferior" body to act, and that right soon, for we know whereof we repeatedly spoke that its members are in need of funds to live upon. If it is not passed, we understand that they are only too willing to return home without passing upon any of the needed Appropriation Bills. The high handed proceeding of the Senate has been held to be a means of subduing the House members to become easy carrion for the vultures to prey upon and in such a way destroy the integrity of the Republicans themselves, for upon them must ultimately rest the spending responsibility. And knowing this, as orally asserted by Senator Baldwin, the Republican majority of that "superior" body has given way rather than quarrel with its "inferior" majority. But it is currently reported that a certain "superior" being has as much as said that the Representatives should be made to feel the pangs of obstinacy and thereby become easy prey and made to know what it is to be poor and lowly.

Senator Baldwin rightly said that the Republican party in the Senate does not feel that the House should be asking more than double what is spent by them, as was the case during the regular session, but now it is asking four times as much as the other is asking. Of course, as stated by Senator Cecil Brown, it is to be presumed that the members of the House are gentlemen and honorable, and that they are not a set of thieves and scoundrels, they best knowing what they need and how to spend the same. It is true that neither can get the money without the consent of the other, he held that \$18,000 was too much, but they ought to vote for it, and that "as Senators they had no right to ascribe motives to the House of Representatives which we would not ascribe to ourselves as Senators." The end of it all being the adoption of the report and \$18,000 went with it, which is \$2,000 less than what was asked.

Now it remains after the Senate has passed it on third reading, for the House to accept or decline. If the former, nothing remains but to go on with the work; and if the latter, it can retaliate by doing likewise. As both bodies are Republican controlled, it seems strange that they should be at cuts on the matter of legislative expense. "As murder will out," so will more come out later on this subject.

There was a very decided and expressed dislike to the new pitcher of the Elks team on Saturday last but the manifestation was in no way creditable to the "gang" who made the loud noises. The pitcher acted the gentleman by his ignoring the insults and in his play showed his ability and equable temper. There is but little doubt but that the new comer will win his way into the good opinion of all lovers of good ball before the season is over and it is to be hoped that even the most rabid "fan" will be more kind in the future to any and all new players until "tried out."

## A "MOCK" SESSION.

Certain "wiseacres" amongst the House Republicans, feeling the gravity of the situation in the three days adjournment taken by the House decided, this morning to call the House to order, which was done, as will be seen in our report of the "mock" proceedings elsewhere in this issue, only to adjourn. They held that should be adjournment be held to be illegal, it would be necessary in order to be legal and to be within their rights, thereby not jeopardizing public interest, to meet and adjourn, and this decision was carried by having the Vice Speaker call order, it being also held that he a perfect right to do that in the absence of the Speaker. Of course, the major portion of the Republicans, with a few Home Rulers fell into line and held an "illegal" session.

We will reiterate that this forenoon's session was an "illegal" one, the Vice Speaker not having the right to call order, unless it be only in a "mock" session, and we hold this one to be nothing more nor less than such. When the House adjourned on Saturday last, it did so to Thursday morning, at 10 o'clock, a specified time, and within that time, we hold the action of the Vice Speaker to be an unlawful one. If at the specified time to which it had adjourned the Speaker was not present, then and only then could the Vice Speaker have the right to do what he did today. The minutes of the last meeting were not read, and we held that the same could not and cannot be altered to mean otherwise without the sanction and approval of the Speaker, who announced adjournment till tomorrow morning. Our ground will be borne out by those same minutes; and interesting developments are in store when the House meets tomorrow.

It is understood that the Governor advised the calling to order of this morning, yet at the same time, so 'tis reported, he did not think that the House had exceeded its right, virtually supporting Speaker Beckley's ruling. It was also reported that the Attorney General had given a written legal opinion to the Governor, practically upholding the course adopted by the House. Then, if such really is the case, THE INDEPENDENT's contention that the "days" meant in the Organic Act are "session" or "working days," and not days of twenty-four hours duration.

But as a member of the House said to us this morning, that if the now "three days adjournment" of the House is deemed illegal, although attorneys are divided on the legal construction of Section 42 of the Organic Act, already quoted and referred to herein, the calling to order this morning cannot do any harm, if thereby the rights of the people are protected. Conceding that such a course may be proper, all that we can say is that two illegal actions cannot make one of them legal.

The police last night arrested four deserters from the gunboat Yorktown and returned them aboard the ship.

The May number of the Planters' Monthly has been issued. It contains valuable information relating to sugar and other farming.

## PUBLIC WANTS WATER

The closing down of the pumping plants at this time is a most serious matter, and the fact that the cause for suspension is a lack of money will not appeal to the favorable consideration of the voter. If the pumping system cannot be run a few weeks over the fiscal period, in any event, it is time that a new arrangement should be made. Superintendent Brown should have asked for and insisted upon getting sufficient money for this purpose, and the manifest duty of the Legislature was to have kept the water appropriations for all cities up to a mark that would have made a situation like the present one impossible.

We believe that if the water is shut off, householders on the slopes will have a clear case for indemnity from the government for water paid for and not received; and we do not know but that in case of fire the insurance companies could come back for damages for losses sustained as a result of the failure of water.

The people hold the water bureau and the Legislature responsible for the efficiency of the water service. They are paying enough for it, and want "the goods." Any fight that there may be between the water bureau and members of the Legislature is not a matter of public concern. What the taxpayers require is water, and plenty of it.

## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

And now Miss Ellen M Stone wants damages from the Turkish government for her capture and detention by the Macedonian brigands in 1901. We sincerely hope that the lady will be disappointed in her aims. If the world ever saw an illustration of clear cut, bald faced, honey-mouthed, profligate missionary graft, this is one. Miss Stone, with the usual missionary instinct, "budded" in where she was not wanted and had no business to be; was captured—which she wanted to be, because there was money in it; was ransomed by the United States government for several million times more than she was worth; posed and made money out of the "graft" incident to her adventure. And now she wants damages. Well, God help us! Verily two eight horse teams could be driven down the duct of missionary appetite and leave plenty of walking room for the lands and money of the "uncivilized" world, besides.

It seems that the contract given out by the House to print its journal is worrying some of the Senators, because it is paying \$2.10 a page, without a bond being given, as against \$1.33 for the Senate journal under a bond. This is held by a few of the Senators, Senator McCandless the foremost advocate amongst them, as a reason for reducing the House Expense Bill, in the hope that it might cause its printing to be likewise refused to conform to that of the Senate. But all of these hawking for spills are of that great party of political grafters. It does seem unfair and unjust to pay more in one case when both could have been done for one and the same price. But what are they going to do about it? The work has been given out, and would the Senate insist upon the House recalling and countermanding its order?

And this has been done after the House's action in demanding a good and sufficient bond from bidders on any tenders called for materials and supplies, and when it came up to itself, it failed ignominiously to so demand that much desired saving provision.

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