

HARRISBURG LETTER.

The Bill to Require Personal Registration of Voters.

HOSACK TRACTION MOTOR BILL.

Its Author Declares It Is Not Designed to Empower Electric Railroads to Furnish Light and Heat—The New Oleo Bill and Other Measures.

(Special Correspondence.)

Harrisburg, Feb. 21.—The introduction of a measure to require voters to personally register with a board in which the minority party can be represented was an important feature of last week's legislative proceedings.

Other business of widespread interest was the recommitment of the Hosack traction motor bill and presentation of bills to legalize the sale of oleomargarine and to improve the state banking laws.

The voters' registration bill was introduced by Mr. Fow, of Philadelphia, who claims that so far as personal registration, uniform throughout the state, is concerned, it is unnecessary to wait for the constitutional amendment designed by the Representative Woodruff's joint resolution.

Mr. Fow's special purpose is to enable the minority to check the majority party and thus remedy such abuses as the alleged padded registrations of Philadelphia. The bill requires that every election division shall have a registration board of two members to register voters.

The registration boards shall sit with the election boards in the polling places on election days, to register persons claiming the right to vote, on account of sickness or other cause, had been unable previously to register.

Certificates of Registration.

When the registrars do not know that an applicant is fully entitled to be registered, they shall require sufficient proof upon the oath or affirmation of himself or other persons, qualified electors of the division.

The voter shall show his certificate to the election judge, who after reading it to the clerk and finding everything all right shall perforate it with a punch and return it to the citizen, who thereupon is to receive his ballot.

Vacancies in the board shall be filled by appointment in the manner of filling assessorships, and the members shall be compensated as assessors are paid. Falsely vouching for registration is to be punishable by a fine of not more than \$300, or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.

The "Fancy 'Bred Good" Unauthorised Ex-State Printer Clarence M. Busch will have to bear the expense of getting up the fancy bird book, entitled "Enemies and Diseases of Poultry," for which he put in a bill to the state of \$55,662.85.

The Hosack Traction Motor Bill. It was on Mr. Hosack's motion that his bill to empower traction companies and other corporations to branch into lines of business not aimed at by their charters was recommitment by the house to Chairman Savage's committee on corporations.

The bill would have done this, however, and Mr. Hosack feels that it would therefore have met much stronger opposition than he had anticipated. He does not disclose the particular benefits in view for any corporations to which this project relates, but it is believed that he will have the bill amended to satisfy the opponents of the proposed control of public light, power and heat by traction companies.

Governor Stone on Saturday signed the constables' fee bill, the first to become a law in this session. The bill was pushed by its chief backer, Representative Hoy, of Clarion, to have it a law before Tuesday's election, so that its benefits could be received by the constables then elected.

The house bill regulating the fees of constables in attendance at elections and at court passed the senate finally. This is the first bill of the present session that will go to the governor for his action.

Mr. Creasy, of Columbia, put in a bill in the house, similar to the Bullitt

law, providing a new charter for Pittsburg and Allegheny.

To Reform the Banking Business.

In the senate Mr. Magee, at the request of the state banking department, introduced several bills looking to reforms in banking business. They include measures amending the act creating a banking commissioner, in case of absence or inability, shall have power to appoint a deputy to perform the duties of the office; also limiting the amount of loans to officers and directors of banks, trust companies and savings institutions to 10 per cent. of the capital stock actually paid in and surplus, and in making loans to firms or houses in which they may be interested, directly or indirectly, to 25 per cent. of the capital stock paid in and surplus.

The batch contained other bills providing that directors of banks, trust companies and other financial institutions, in declaring a quarterly or semi-annual dividend, shall pay the dividend not later than 15 days after it is declared, and if the directors or trustees shall make dividends impairing their capital they shall be jointly and severally liable to action of debt on bill in equity in their individual capacity, to such corporations for the amount of the dividends so paid, and each director present when such dividend is made shall be adjudged consenting thereto unless he shall forthwith enter his protest in the minutes of the board and give public notice to the stockholders thereof; also providing for the submission to the commissioner of banking for his approval the charters of financial institutions and requiring building and loan associations chartered by the state to register in the banking department when such associations close their business.

A New Oleo Bill. Restaurants and boarding houses professing in placards that they do not serve out real butter would be the spectacle under an enactment of a bill presented in the house by Mr. Millikin of Huntingdon. The bill is prompted mainly by the claim that legalization of the restricted sale of butter imitations is preferable to experiences under the present law, which permits deception of the public.

For manufacturing oleo \$1,000 a year shall be paid for license, \$500 for wholesaling and \$100 for retailing. Each package offered for sale shall be labeled in large letters. Restaurants using oleomargarine or butterine shall pay \$50 a year and boarding houses \$25.

With the license the dairy and food commissioners shall distribute signs to give notice that the article is sold in the store or used in the restaurant or boarding house. The signs must be conspicuously placed. The penalty for violation of the act shall be a fine of from \$100 to \$5,000, or imprisonment, or both.

Newly discovered provisions in the bill introduced by Senator Scott, of Luzerne, and on third reading in the senate, for the reorganization of the National Guard, are found to be widely criticized, and not solely on account of the greatly increased cost of swelling the number of infantry companies from 150 to 180, the artillery batteries from three to five and the cavalry troops from three to five.

A soldier who has compared the details of the bill with the present law says: "The Scott bill emanated from the adjutant general's office. To a large extent it aims to establish our national war department system in the state. Under its provisions our National Guard commanders would have their hands tied, as were those of General Miles when he wanted to deal with matters controlled by the quartermaster and commissary departments. The Scott bill would give the governor 126 appointments more than he has had heretofore, and would enable political influences to permeate the entire National Guard system."

The governor's principal appointments have been the major general, brigadier general and members of his staff. This bill would let him fill all the important positions in the departments of the quartermaster general, commissary general, surgeon general, adjutant general and inspector general.

The "Fancy 'Bred Good" Unauthorised Ex-State Printer Clarence M. Busch will have to bear the expense of getting up the fancy bird book, entitled "Enemies and Diseases of Poultry," for which he put in a bill to the state of \$55,662.85. Judge McPherson on Saturday handed down an opinion sustaining Thomas M. Jones, ex-superintendent of public printing, in his refusal to approve the payment.

The "Enemies and Diseases of Poultry" was originally a pamphlet, containing 128 pages, and cost \$488.24, but as reprinted by Mr. Busch from copy furnished by subordinates in the agricultural department, it contained 568 printed pages and 131 costly illustrations, of which 95 are full page colored lithographs.

When Mr. Busch presented his bill to Mr. Jones he promptly refused to pay it, for the reason that the copy had not gone through his hands, nor had the work been ordered by the head of that department. Mr. Jones also refused to approve the bill because there were a number of things in the book that were irrelevant, and to his mind were only placed there to fill it out and add to the cost. The most potent reason for refusal, however, was that this was not a reproduction of the original pamphlet as ordered to be reprinted by the legislature.

Conspicuous among the offices which Governor Stone has yet to dispose of is that of Major John C. Delaney, superintendent of public buildings and grounds, whose four year tenure will expire next month. Senator James G. Mitchell is bowed out as a candidate to succeed the major by the legal prohibition of his filling such a place during the term for which he was elected senator. Lewis E. Beitler, who was Governor Hastings' private secretary, denies the report that he aspires to fill Major Delaney's place.

More than a month of fruitless balloting for senator, with the result as doubtful as ever, has wearied the legislators. Intimations from the Quay side that the situation may change materially next week are but repetitions of similar hints given a week ago that a break in the line before this time was not improbable. The prevalent impression is that the monotony will continue until after some step in connection with the pending Quay trial.

WILKINS.

CONGRESS' LAST DAYS

The President Will Insist Upon An Adequate Army Bill.

OTHER IMPORTANT WORK.

Less Than a Fortnight Left to the Fifty-fifth Congress—Army Bill, Nicaragua Canal Bill and Anti-Scalping Bill Among the Important Measures Now Pending.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 21.—Yesterday began the last full week of the Fifty-fifth Congress. One week from next Saturday, on March 4, the present Congress will expire by limitation of law, and unless an extra session of the new Congress is called, Washington will not see the legislators again until the first Monday in December.

Whether or not an extra session will be necessary depends altogether, perhaps, upon the developments of the next few days. It is the general opinion of public men here that if the legislature now asked for by the majority in Congress and by the administration is enacted, nothing will occur during the coming eight months to make the convening of the new Congress necessary. But the uncertainty of the present session is unprecedented. All of the most important work of this Congress has been so delayed that it now comes forward in apparently inextricable confusion, struggling for precedence in the closing twelve and a half days of the session.

The list of important measures to which the Republican Congress and Republican administration are committed is most imposing, and fine parliamentary and political strategy, aided by all day and practically all-night sessions, must be put into practice from this day forward if the programme is to succeed.

The House of Representatives, with its habit of doing business in a business like way, assisted by Speaker Reed's code of rules that permit a vote to be taken when the debate has been closed, has done its business well, and nearly, if not quite all, of the important measures struggling for passage in the lying hours of the session have already passed the House.

The river and harbor bill, to which the Senate has added the Nicaragua canal bill as a rider, and the anti-scalping bill to secure the passage of which measure the railroads have again sent an important delegation to Washington for a last stand, have both passed the House, as well as the several big appropriation bills that are now pending in the Senate committee or on the Senate floor.

The Senate is, of course, favorable to the Nicaragua canal bill, having passed it this session and previously, and its conferees will make such a stubborn fight for it that the river and harbor bill itself will be endangered.

The anti-scalping bill was some time ago made the unfinished business of the Senate, but its friends have just recently allowed it to give way from time to time for other and more popular measures.

They have no idea of abandoning it, however, and it may go through in the log rolling rush of the closing hours, when all things are possible, but it is likely to be killed.

Bills That Should Pass. The bill appropriating \$20,000,000 for the payment of the indemnity to Spain having been ruled off the sundry civil appropriation bill as not "germane," will be passed as a separate measure, although the short-sighted statesmen are at present standing in its way. They will be bowled over at the proper time, as there is no doubt of the bill's passage.

The important measures in addition to the army reorganization bill, the canal bill, the anti-scalping bill and the river and harbor bill, are the bill giving a form of government to Hawaii, the additional measure regulating contract labor in the islands, the Alaskan Code bill and the administration measure known as the Hanna-Payne shipping bill. A "subsidy measure," the Democrats call it. A "bill to add the American merchant marine" is the Republican title. But under whatever name, it seems to be destined to defeat.

The Democrats, as a party, are arrayed against it, and neither Mr. Hanna in the Senate nor Leader Payne in the House is conducting a very energetic canvass in its behalf.

Friends of the army bill won a great victory yesterday when the Senate, by a vote of 44 to 28, took up that measure, and it was made the unfinished business.

The postoffice bill was before the Senate and threatened to consume all the day. About two o'clock Secretary Alger came to the Capitol and a conference was called by the Republican leaders in the Vice president's room. It was then determined to make a test. General Hawley at once began to gather his forces. While the roll was being called there was intense excitement. The Democrats attempted to make objections, but they were not heeded, and the vote was taken. There were some surprises, among them being Senator Hoar's vote to take up the bill, and Senator Quay's vote against it. This latter is explained by saying that Quay is not against the army measure, but being in charge of the postoffice appropriation he did not want it put aside.

The silver Republicans voted against the bill, led by Teller and Pettigrew, but the Southern Democrats came out strongly for it, including Morgan, Lindsay, Pasco, Kenney, as well as Murphy of New York. These, besides Bacon and Clay of Georgia, will all vote for the bill, so there are really only eight votes for it.

It is possible that while the reorganization bill will pass, some of the appropriation bills will fail, and thus be the cause of an extra session. The Democrats have concluded that the Hull bill practically, as now reported, will be passed. They have given up hope of adopting the Cockrell substitute, but will talk against the bill for some days hoping to force a compromise.

The president, however, is still firm against this, and General Hawley repeated yesterday before the vote that unless the reorganization bill passed an extra session would be called.

Senator Allison said: "As it now stands, no one can predict whether there will be an extra session or not. It remains with the Democrats to decide."

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The Orange (N. J.) Board of Education has promulgated a rule which says: "The female teachers must remove their bicycle skirts while teaching their classes." Whereupon the Orange Observer naively observes that "this ought to increase the school attendance at once."

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THE MARKETS. BLOOMSBURG MARKETS. CORRECTED WEEKLY. RETAIL PRICES.

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