LETTER FROM THE STATE CAPITOL

PUBLIC UTILITIES BILLS ARE COMING INTO THE LEGISLATURE IN UNLIMITED NUMBERS.

ROAD COMMISSIONER RESIGNS

Various Bills Before Legislature to Give Control of Utilities to State Public Service Commission.

By Willard Bartlett

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Appropriation bills have become the chief feature of the lawmaking sessions here. When the legislators can see the end of the measures providing the cash for the maintenance of state institutions and departments they will be able to set a time for the 1919 session to adjourn. Everything that can not get through by the time the last appropriation bill is passed will be allowed to go into the discard.

Some lively battling over appropriation measures features the proceedings. The actual amounts asked are not the cause of the battling but the new budget commission method is. A number of senators object to the chaos in the budget bills which have come in piecemeal and have not been digested with budget bills expected. They assert that the senate is being put into the place it usually saw.

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The house has adopted finally the budget bill, passed several weeks ago by the senate. The house made a number of amendments, none of them making any vital changes. The Road dog licensing bill, aimed to protect sheep, also has passed the house after long delay. Detroit was excluded from the scope of the bill, as it has an efficient dog licensing system under which the receipts go into the police pension fund, and also has no sheep industry in or near it.

The senate has killed the Baker bill to adopt the so-called Oregon plan for Michigan primary and election campaigns. This includes the publication by the state of a campaign book in which all candidates may advertise their candidacies. They would not be permitted to do any other advertising. The bill was the cause of many debates, but nothing was said when it came up for final passage. It only obtained 13 votes.

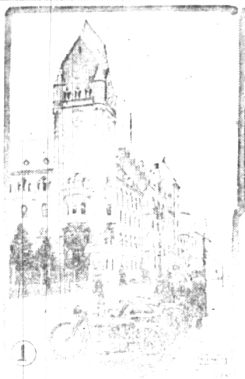
The Hopkins bill to create such a state tank commission has been adopted by the house. It provides that the commission consist of the state food commissioner, the professor of dairying at the M. A. C., the state market director and two others to be appointed by the governor. The commission shall study milk production and costs and in case of price disagreements may recommend a fair price.

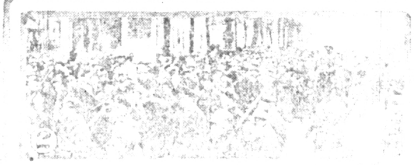
Gov. Sleeper has signed the Lewis prohibition bill, amending the law so that possession of liquor is a felony, and no property rights to liquor remain. He also has signed the bill for the issuance by the secretary of state of monthly crop and livestock reports, the statistics for which are to be gathered by township cornes throughout the state.

The senate and house have locked horns over the style of budget bills, the house wanting to bunk in one item salaries of minor clerks and assistants in state institutions and the senate wanting to specify exact salaries down to the last assistant janitor. A conference committee will be needed to attempt an agreement.

The senate passed a bill to raise the legal passenger fare rate on steam railroads from 2 cents to 2 1-2 cents a mile and then called it back from the house to amend it so as to grant 3 cents a mile to small roads. These rates, of course, cannot apply while the government holds the roads.

Rep. Reutter has put in a bill to prevent the auditor general from selling for unpaid taxes any land belonging to any county, city, township, village or school district in the state.





NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Effects of German Protests and Threats Seen in Delays of the Treaty Makers.

WILSON URGING MORE SPEED

Anxiety Is Felt Concerning Relations with Hungary and Russia—Lloyd George Explains Ireland's Situation—Peace Bills in Congress—Other Cities.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

[illegible]

When the matter of the Rhineland was taken up the effect of the German protests again was evident. It was virtually decided that no more slight to be taken regarding the occupation of the Rhine, but that the region should be neutralized and policed by allied troops until the indemnities are paid; that the Saar coal basin shall not be allotted to France but shall remain under German sovereignty, the coal products shall go to the French for a certain period of years. It is presumed that Poland and Bohemia would need the soft banks of the Rhine since the British have insufficient forces for the purpose and America does not wish to have any soldiers in Europe after the treaty is signed. King Albert of Belgium went to Paris last week, probably to discuss by conference shared in this so-called "Big Four" Wilson.

Marshal Foch was sent for to Spa Wednesday with full instructions for ending the dispute concerning Danzig. The allies wished to have it declared free and his French directives aided in that port, and the Germans declared they would not permit it and the difficulty was left everything from the Italians worrying by this.

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STATE NEWS

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Grand Haven—John C. Angus has been elected president of the Chamber of Commerce here. B. A. Blakeney is secretary.

Jennings—John Wilson, a resident here for 30 years, was killed when he fell from a logging chain at one of the mills here.

Big Rapids—Fifteen students living here are being sought by the police for "cutting" a local picture theatre. One of the students paid a fine.

Grand Rapids—Chas. Hedges, will probably die as the result of injuries received when caught in a whirling pulley at the gypsum plant here.

Owosso—A legal battle has started in the circuit court to determine whether or not veterans are entitled to [illegible] Owosso.

[illegible]

Lansing—Insurance commissioner Frank Ellsworth issued an order effective April 15, eliminating the four charge of 10 per cent on all fire policies. This means a reduction in the cost of fire insurance of 10 per cent and Ellsworth estimates a saving to policy holders of more than $1,000,000 per year. Total premiums on fire and tornado policies written in Michigan last year amounted to $14,746,000, while the total fire loss in the state was $8,146,671. The loss ratio of all companies writing fire insurance in Michigan last year was 55.23 per cent.

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Kalamazoo—Mrs. Agnes Mix, of Hartford, Mich., granddaughter of Sagi-Ah-Wah, chief of the Pottawatomie Indians, is in Kalamazoo collecting evidence to prove her claim to a share of the $150,000 she says is still due the tribes as deferred payment for lands given up by the treaty of 1833.

Bay City—Gordon Pierson came home from France after six years' service in the Army to find that his father, mother and sister had been killed five weeks ago in an automobile accident. He came here seeking his only living relative, an aunt, and learned that she had died two months ago of influenza.

Saginaw—Three hundred and fifty Saginaw business women, members of the Saginaw Business Girls' Co-operative Club, applauded heartily when the Rev. H. P. Maus, of St. Andrew's Catholic Church, invited to address their club, told them present day tendencies in the dress and deportment of young women employed in stores and offices is immodest, bordering on the scandalous.

Muskegon—A military physical training camp, backed by Chicago men co-operating with the government which will supply all the equipment, has been landed by this city, the Lake Harbor property, formerly a famous summer resort four miles south of the city, having been found selected for the purpose. The ultimate object of the plan as outlined by the Chicago interests backing it, is the establishment of a national system of physical military training for all high schools of the country which are able to maintain it.