

LEGISLATIVE DOINGS

Appropriations Asked for Total \$425,000—Rural Credits Bill Causes Controversy—Consolidation of State Departments on Program—"Bone Dry" Bill on Way—No Change in Tax Notice Law—Woman Introduces Measure.

Salem.—The legislature began the third week of the session with all the big constructive legislation yet to receive attention. In fact, aside from Representative Anderson's measure to make effective the "bone dry" constitutional amendment adopted at the November election only one or two other bills of any great importance to the state at large had been introduced.

When the legislature adjourned last Friday in order to permit members to visit the agricultural college at Corvallis Saturday, one-third of the 40-day limit which the law sets on the session had expired and leaders appreciate that it will be necessary to get down to business this week if the usual rush is to be avoided during the closing days of the session.

During the second week of the session the volume of bills introduced was larger than during the first week and if the bills dropped into the legislative hopper continue at the present rate the proposed legislation will be almost as great as it was two years ago. The senate adjourned with 119 bills on the calendar, compared with 98 at the same time in 1915 and the house had 176 compared with 206. Four measures passed both houses, two of which received the signature

of the governor. The senate sent sixteen other bills over to the house for action and the house sent twenty-two more bills to the senate.

First Bill Signed is for Expenses.

The first bill to pass both houses and receive the signature of the governor was an appropriation of \$25,000 to defray the expenses of the legislature itself. This is only a starter and several more bills relating to the expenses are likely to follow. The total expenses for the 1915 session ran up to \$68,416.03 and it is hoped the expenses of the present session will keep within that figure.

Appropriations aggregating \$424,787.50 have been introduced. The budget of the state game and fish commission came in with an addition of \$89,600 and miscellaneous claims which have been filed make a grand total of \$520,975.56 which has been asked of the legislature during the first two weeks. Inasmuch as the legislature faced a budget of \$715,382.09 in excess of the 6 per cent limitation amendment when it convened it finds itself at the close of the second week with a total sum of \$1,194,830.15 which it must cut out to keep within the constitutional requirements.

Must Make Rural Credits Effective.

One of the important tasks before the present session is to enact a law making effective the rural credits amendment to the state constitution adopted at the last election.

Senator Shanks of Wheeler county has sought to meet the situation by introducing a bill creating two new offices and an expensive system of administering the rural credits fund.

His bill already has become more or less of a storm center and has engendered a controversy between Senator

Shanks and State Treasurer Kay. A bill representing the views of the state land board and the organizations which initiated the rural credits amendment will be ready for introduction this week.

An effort will be made at this session to work out an effective plan to consolidate state offices and departments. Both houses tackled the problem last week. The senate desired to have a joint committee of both houses handle all consolidation bills, but the house rejected a senate resolution favoring that plan; so each house will have a committee to pass upon consolidation bills.

First Consolidation Measure Loses.

The first of the consolidation measures to come to a vote in either house provided for a new state board of education of three members and a paid secretary at \$1800 a year. In this board were to be combined the state board of textbook commissioners, the board of higher curricula and the board of regents, respectively, of the University of Oregon, Oregon agricultural college and state normal schools.

The senate committee on education, returned unanimously a recommendation that it be indefinitely postponed. The senate adopted the report.

Creation of a state department of agriculture under which would be consolidated several state boards and officers now operating separately is provided in a measure introduced into the state house of representatives by Representative Vernon A. Forbes of Bend.

The departments consolidated would be the fair directors, live stock sanitary board, stallion registration board, board of horticulture, dairy and food commissioner and deputy scaler of weights and measures.

The new department would be divided into five divisions—live stock, horticulture, agriculture, fairs, grain and hay and dairies and pure food. A commissioner would head the department and a director manage each division.

Hearing on "Bone Dry" Bill.

The "bone dry" bill introduced in the house last week by Representative Anderson started on its way through the legislative mill Monday evening when the joint senate and house committee on alcoholic traffic gave wholesale grocers, food manufacturers and other interested parties an opportunity to be heard on the provisions regulating the use of alcohol.

As drafted the measure prohibits the importation of liquor into the state by any person by any means for any purpose other than medicinal, scientific or sacramental. It carries an emergency clause designed to make it effective immediately upon its passage and as soon thereafter as the governor has signed the bill. The bill does not contain the "search and seizure" clause, which has been so much talked of during the last few months.

Would Punish Drunken Chauffeurs.

Without a dissenting vote the senate passed the bill which makes it a crime for a person to drive a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor; prescribes a penitentiary sentence or jail for the person who, while intoxicated, drives an auto in a careless or negligent manner, and causes the death or serious injury of another person; prescribes a fine of \$10 a day for any person who shall knowingly employ as chauffeur a person addicted

to drunkenness.

Tax Notice Via Postcard Is Lost.

The bill to abolish publication of delinquent tax notices and substitute a system of postal card notices was unanimously disapproved by the senate committee on assessment and taxation following a public hearing at which the dangers of the measure were vividly brought out.

It was the feeling of the committee that even in this Multnomah county measure it would not be wise to adopt the postcard system. Informal discussion among the committee members revealed the decided opinion that a postcard system of notices is so inadequate, and involves such danger to titles, that some provision ought to be made for publication of the delinquent tax list.

Contention Over Care of Dependents.

The Bowman bill providing for the care and control of delinquent and defective children went back to committee for further consideration after it had come on third reading for final passage. Since it came back into the house from the committee on health and public morals, it has become a storm center of contention.

One point urged against the measure as introduced and favored by the committee, is that while it withdraws state aid from sectarian institutions which now handle these children, it makes no money provision for their care under state supervision.

Woman Member Offers Bill.

Mrs. Thompson, the only woman member, introduced her first bill, a measure which would compel the commitment of patients to the institution for the feeble minded. Any county judge may, under this measure, cause a feeble-minded child to be brought before him and conduct an examination. One or more competent physicians are to constitute the examining board. The relatives of a person adjudged feeble minded can have the privilege of appealing. Other states have similar laws.

Legislative Brevities.

Service on jurors by registered mail is provided for by a house bill, introduced by Stafin, of Polk.

A memorial to President Wilson asking a speedy return of the Oregon troops on the border was adopted.

Resolutions of sympathy over the death of Admiral Dewey were unanimously adopted by the house and senate.

A bill for the repeal of the mothers' pension act of 1913 was introduced in the house by W. Al. Jones of Marion county.

A bill to prevent Japanese from owning or controlling property within the state of Oregon was introduced in the senate by Senator Wilbur of Hood River county.

Every man has a right to work, says Representative Laurgaard, who introduced a joint resolution in the house proposing an amendment to the constitution which will grant state employment to all unemployed who have been residents of Oregon for a period of five years.

With but one opposing vote the senate took a crack at high interest rates which prevail in many of the central and eastern Oregon counties by passing Senator Pierce's bill reducing the legal contract interest rate from 10 to 8 per cent per annum, and reducing the regular legal interest rate from 6 to 5 per cent.

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