



## The Indianapolis Times

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"Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way."

### Utility Laws

That many of the laws pending before the legislature in respect to utility regulation possess merit is beyond question.

That few of them will pass is more than doubtful.

The utilities, knowing what they want, have a group of lobbyists who hobnob with the lonesome lawmaker in the evening and persuade him that the poor utilities are really just outside the poorhouse and that any law that would relieve the people might send them over the hill.

One of the meritorious measures which the utilities are fighting would take the publicly-owned utilities away from the public service regulation.

If the utility commission really represented the people, as it is supposed to, this law would not be necessary.

Some cities own their electric light plants. Some have water systems. They can control and regulate their own business by electing capable city officials.

When the state interferes in the administration of the utilities it does so in order to prevent the people from getting the most capable administration. They always step in when these plants become most efficient.

The truth is that the Insull monopoly, which is rapidly taking over government as well as electricity, does not like the constant comparison between efficient municipal plants, giving low cost, and his own system.

His agents shudder when they see the things that are happening in municipal plants such as one in Richmond.

One of the other measures which should pass would put holding companies under the utility commission. The water baron of Indianapolis disposes of his own operations through his Delaware corporation, which owns the stock of the company.

The public does not get a view of the real management as long as corporations which hold the stock of utilities are not under public control.

But even if these laws are passed the people will get little relief as long as a majority of the commissioners are "utility minded."

Just what that means is interpreted in huge burdens upon the public. No law for the protection of the people will be of any benefit if the commission is named by the utility interests.

Whenever any member of the commission renders a decision which the utilities do not like, his term of office has in the past been of brief duration. The utilities find ways of getting to Governors.

It would be unfortunate for the people for the next four years if the recently named policy man for Insull should come into control of the public utility commission through his boyhood friendship for the Governor.

The fact that he was rapidly promoted by Insull after the election of Governor Leslie should warn the Governor that there is necessity of a special caution in naming utility commissioners. Those who have been kind to the Insulls in the past ought to retire. The men who have shown independence should be retained, unless the state of Indiana is to become a province in the Insull empire.

To pass good laws is highly important. To get men with some regard for the rights of the people to enforce these laws is even more important.

### The Prince's Tour

Haroun Al Raschid learned many things in his midnight prowlings about Bagdad, things which a ruler never can learn on his throne. Incognito opens many doors.

The Prince of Wales does well to have a personal look at starvation in the British mining fields. No accounts of starvation are as convincing as a personal look. There are times when one wishes owners of mining properties, even in the United States of America, would take a personal look.

We remember once when there was a strike among the textile workers in Lawrence, Mass., and the police were trying to prevent starving parents from sending away the children. A United States senator went up and took a personal look at conditions. The effect was such as no mere description would have produced. It was a healthful effect.

The prince cannot, by waving a wand, relieve starvation among the mine workers. If he gave all his own and his father's personal fortune it would not restore prosperity to the mine industry. But the prince can do a real service to humanity by forcing the spotlight which follows him to disclose these pictures of misery.

By taking thought, a nation may begin to alter the worst of economic conditions. If the Baldwins will not take thought, the MacDonalds and the Snowdens may. If the tories can find no way out, perhaps the liberals and the laborites can.

### Sh-h-Sh-h-h!

They have killed the resolution to Americanize the senate by eliminating secret sessions. But, like the black cat, the issue will come back to haunt the senators until these hush-hush proceedings are abolished.

Of course the Jones reform resolution was not killed outright yesterday. That would not have been possible. Most of the senators are too sensitive to public opinion to vote openly against the reform. It simply was sidetracked by legislative maneuvering in such a way that it has little if any chance of coming up again at this session, much less of being acted on favorably.

Senator Curtis, who soon is to be inaugurated as Vice-President, is the man who blocked action yesterday. His original plan was to commit the reform to the rules committee, of which he is chairman. But when that move was shown up by the reform group, Curtis was satisfied to push the resolution out of its privileged calendar position, which was just as effective in this crowded short session as to inter it in committee.

Curiously, Vice-President Dawes, who is a conservative on practically every issue but change of senate rules, had brought the Jones reform resolution close to victory by ruling that only a majority vote was necessary for passage. Hence Curtis intervened just in time.

All that the Jones resolution does is to require a two-thirds vote to put the senate into secret session. What is so revolutionary about that? An adequate answer can not be found in the debate on the resolution.

About the only defense of the present secrecy system was that of Senator Bingham, who maintained that executive officials would punish senators if they knew

## M. E. TRACY SAYS:

"Age Seeks Preservation, While Youth Seeks Adventure."

DENVER, Colo. Feb. 1.—Don't let any fool you, the west still is a cattle country. Many a cowboy may have gone to Hollywood and many a ranch may have been broken up into small farms, but old Mooley and Prickly Porky are still with us.

The livestock show brought 945 carloads of prize specimens to Denver, and Denver is not the only, or even the largest, cattle center of the country.

During the week of the show the Denver Union Stockyards handled 30,000 cattle, 20,000 hogs, 40,000 sheep and 2,000 mules and horses.

We still are a nation of meat eaters, as William Childs is willing to concede.

William Childs, it will be remembered, got the idea not only that a vegetarian diet was good, but that he could popularize it through the chain of 125 restaurants which he founded.

He made the attempt and a faction of stockholders, dissatisfied with the reduced dividends which followed, threw him out of control.

Now he is back in the saddle again, ousting his enemies, making one of his brothers president of the \$37,000,000 corporation, another brother treasurer and his wife secretary.

### Enforcement Funds

There is no real disagreement between house and senate on the question of increased funds for prohibition enforcement. A majority in both branches insists on honest and effective enforcement, and feels that existing conditions can be improved.

But the house believes that an additional expenditure of \$24,000,000 of the taxpayers' money should not be sanctioned for any purpose in a hasty and haphazard manner. It is to be hoped that the senate will recede from its position and adopt the procedure dictated by prudence and custom.

The senate's plan is obviously unsatisfactory and violative of all business principles. It proposes to turn over \$24,000,000 of public funds to be spent at the direction of one individual when and if he finds that appropriations already made are insufficient.

Childs is out after proxies to clinch his victory at the stockholders' meeting which will take place March 7.

In the same way Rockefeller is out after proxies with which to oust Colonel Stewart when the stockholders of the Standard Oil Co. of Indiana meet on the same day, and Colonel Stewart is out after proxies with which to save his job.

Most of our major corporations are getting too big for any one man, or even a small group of men to control through stock ownership, which means that they have evolved from dollar despots of economic republics.

Business Republics

NOTHING illustrates the democratization of industry like the way big boys turn to politics when they want to get, or retain control of some corporation.

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