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## THE OBSERVER

BRUCE DENNIS EDITOR AND OWNER.

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### FIELDS FOR SECRETARY.

It appears to be a fact that few voters are taking much interest in the secretary of state race now so near the climax. Olcott, the present incumbent, a republican, so-called, but appointed by a democratic combine of office holders, seeks re-election on the republican ticket, and Frank S. Fields a Portland man, for several years clerk of Multnomah county, is also a candidate on the republican ticket. Fields has proven his worth by a record in his county that is amazing—he turned a losing proposition into a big money making office and made order and system out of chaos and disorder. There seems little to be said, the republicans can readily diagnose the situation and come, to a correct and plausible conclusion as to which of the two is the more entitled to the nomination.

### WHO ARE YOU, BROTHER?

Someone who asserts he is a constant reader of the Observer but beyond that neglects or fears to make

his identity known has forwarded a "spasm" in the way of a communication relative to the Appeal to Reason. The Observer publishes communications only when signed—the writer is not required to attach his name to these communications as they appear in the issue but once again the Observer reiterates its regulation that the writer make his identity known. Writing under the shadow of an assumed name or without any name at all, it is an easy matter to say most anything that comes along. Among other things he, she or it calls the Observer to "say something" or other about publishing a news dispatch from Girard, Kansas, relative to the collapse or so-called collapse of the Appeal to Reason, an item of news published the length and breadth of the land the day it was sent out, and concludes by affirming the Observer lied and knew it lied. If Mr. Friend of the red flag organ and mouthpiece of anarchy will step to the front perhaps we will say something.

### THE USE OF THE TELEPHONE.

From the annual report of the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. come interesting statistics are available. Compared with the cost of service in former years, there has been a steady decrease in revenue per subscriber's station, showing that now the average subscriber pays for a higher grade, more comprehensive service, less than half what he paid 16 years ago for the much less useful service which was then possible.

The Bell company's toll lines now reach 70,000 places, which is 5,000 more than the number of postoffices in the United States and 10,000 more than the railroad station. The total wire mileage has been increased to nearly 13,000,000 miles, of which over half is underground, and the new 450 mile subway between Boston and Washington has been completed except for the drawing in of some of the cable.

Speaking of the utility of the telephone service, President Theodore N. Vall says he thinks the public is fast coming to believe:

"That telephone service to be perfect must be universal, inter-communicating, inter-dependent under one control, and that no isolated section can be considered independently of any other or of the whole system, and that rates must be so adjusted as to make it possible for everyone to be connected who will add to the value of the system to others."

Of government ownership, the report says that there is hardly a government telegraph or telephone system in the world now operated which shows a profit under accounting methods employed, and not one that would now show a deficit under accounting methods obligatory upon private business enterprises. Taking the kind and quality of service, the extent of territories covered, and the wages to employes, the report states that there is no service in the world cheaper than the telegraph and telephone service of the United States.

The inter-operations of the telephone and telegraph systems are said to be improving rapidly, and through co-operation the entire service can be made better, broader and more economical.

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### Friday's Primary Important.

Salem, Ore., April 16.—National political interest will turn to Oregon at the end of this week in view of the state wide primary election to be held Friday with the Oregon presidential preference feature added to the primary law that has been in effect for the past six years. The primaries are open to republicans and democrats, no other political organization having the 25 per cent of the vote required to constitute it a "party" under the law. The names of Taft, Roosevelt and La Follette will appear on the republican ticket and those of Clark and Wilson on the democratic. In view of the fact that primary elections are an established fact here, it is believed there will be no occasion for the confusion that marked the recent New York primaries, and since the primaries are conducted by the state in the same manner as are general elections there is reason to believe there will be a truly representative vote of the adherents of all the candidates.

In addition to expressing preference for president, each Oregon voter will be entitled to vote for one of the ten delegates which his party is to have in the national convention. Of the ten receiving the highest vote each will receive \$200 from the state to pay his expenses at the convention. Voters also express a choice for presidential elector, each voter voting for one and the five highest being the nominees for the November election. Delegates to the national conventions will be obligated to support the candidates of their party receiving the majority in the preference primary.

So far as the state is concerned interest centers largely in the advisory vote on United States senator, it being expected as in the past the legislative assembly will simply register the selection of the people for this office. A hard fight to displace Jonathan Bourne, Jr., is being made by Ben Selling, a prominent Portland merchant who was president of the state senate two years ago. The chief

objection made to Senator Bourne is that his interests are in Massachusetts and not in Oregon; that he has visited Oregon but three times in the past six years. Mr. Selling stands among the progressives of the republicans and apparently will make a strong run for the place. There are two other candidates for the senatorship, but the contest is believed to be between Selling and Bourne.

The democrats, too, encouraged by the election of George Chamberlain, democrat, as Bourne's colleague two years ago, are taking strong interest in the senatorial primary vote and likewise have four candidates.

There is no governor to be elected this year, and aside from president and senator the interest in the primaries will be centered in local contests in the various counties of the state.

### A STRIKING PARALLEL.

(Pendleton Live Wire Editorial)  
Saturday afforded a striking parallel. One column of this newspaper contained a synopsis of Senator Robert M. La Follette's speech, in which he scored the monopolistic power of Wall street and declared the railroads are controlled by eight men and the wealth of the nation by not more than a dozen. Progressive legislation, declared the speaker, who is recognized as the father of the progressive movement, insists upon a curtailment of this power.

"In another column of the same issue appeared a statement of the platform pledges of George T. Cochran, of La Grande, candidate for the republican congressional nomination, in which Mr. Cochran set forth clearly his proposed relief. Senator La Follette declared against stock-watering; George T. Cochran declared against stock-watering. Senator La Follette declared the money trust must be curbed; George T. Cochran advocated national control of corporations doing an interstate business with jail sentences instead of fines for the 'high-ups,' as the only real method of bust-

ing trust. Senator La Follette endorsed direct election of United States senators and presidential primaries; this is the first plank in Mr. Cochran's platform. On many other issues the platform of the La Grande water superintendent is identical with the statements of "Wisconsin Bob."

"Mr. Cochran, it must be understood has devoted his attention to his own candidacy and has not endorsed one man rather than another for the republican presidential nomination. He will abide by the decision of the people and support their choice for president.

"But attention is directed to this parallel merely because the only argument that has been directed against Mr. Cochran is that he is not a 'progressive.' So far as we have heard

no one has accused Senator La Follette of being a standpatter or a conservative."

(Paid Adv.)

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