

THE OBSERVER

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EDITOR AND OWNER.

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"PAT" AS GAVEL WIELDER.

When the House of Representatives assembled this winter at Salem there will be a lively skirmish for the speakership. Probably the most plausible candidate at the present time for the place is Pat McArthur, who handled the gavel in the same capacity during the session of 1909. He was fair and square during that session and made a good presiding officer.

Speakership of the legislature does not mean as much now as it once did. In days of old a speaker was a czar, now in these days of progressiveness he is but a mere presiding officer.

It is therefore necessary to choose the man who presides well, which is a gift rather than acquired by training.

Pat is more or less of a rough-neck Oregonian, well-bred, standard by performance and is democratic in his manner of living. Hence his ability to recognize all kinds and classes of men. While he does not have the distinction of having been born in a log hut, his well-to-do parents were the right kind and never spoiled the boy. Pat has had experience in many lines, has been a breeder of good horses, wears a white hat and is what the newboys would call, "a common guy." The old Nesmith honesty is in his bones and the House of Representatives would be in good hands with him as presiding officer.

WHAT OF THE PARTIES OF THE FUTURE?

Men and women interested in public affairs are discussing two questions, suggested by the sweeping victory of the Democrats and the fact that the new Progressive organization crowded the Republicans into third place in the popular vote and almost entirely out of the electoral college. The questions are, What will be the future of the Progressive party? and, What of the future of the Republican party?

Colonel Henry Watterson of the pert political history, declares that the Republican party has been "annihilated," adding, "Its defeat is even greater than that sustained by the old line Whigs, in the days before the civil war. President Taft, on the contrary, asserts that the party will remain its ground. The chairman of the Progressive national committee, Senator Dixon, has called a meeting of the body in Chicago for December 10 to take up the question of the Progressive representation in congress and what is to be done to increase the congressional delegation two years hence. Chairman Dixon declared that "the fight has just begun." State Chairman Ketchikiss of the

New York Progressive committee asserted that the returns showed that the Progressive party to be "the principal party in opposition, and that the Republicans had now become the "third party."

Other students of politics prophesy an eventual alignment similar to that prevailing in Great Britain and elsewhere, the division being between the conservative elements and the radical or "progressive" camp.—The Continent.

STATE LIFE INSURANCE.

Wisconsin's plan of state life insurance no doubt will act as a model for other efforts along the line of interesting people in the matter of insuring their lives, because many will have more confidence in an institution backed by the state, than in companies on the stockholding plan.

At the same time the old line companies do not fear any loss of patronage, because they do not believe that any insurance system will become popular without a large number of solicitors, and the state will employ none.

Two years ago the Wisconsin legislature passed the act providing for this, the first state life insurance fund law ever put in operation. The provision was made that two years should be given to perfecting the system, and hence the law has just been put into effect.

The act provides only for citizens of the state of Wisconsin. The applicant must be between the ages of 19 and 50, inclusive. Straight life, 20 year payment life, 10 year endowment endowment at the age of 65, and term to age 65 have all been provided for. The American table of mortality has been used, and the rates are no lower than those of the regular insurance companies.

There will be no agent's commissions to pay, since applications will go direct to the state insurance department. The medical examiners are provided for and will be appointive officers under the direction of the state board of health. Each year there will be a refund of savings and gains—the same as is now the case with regular companies writing participating insurance.

Whether the state will be able to do a very great volume of business by a mail application system is, of course, a question.

THAT LIGHT QUESTION.

Citizen Advocates Municipal Plant to Make Light.

La Grande, Oregon, Nov. 15.—To the Editor:—I noticed in your paper a few days ago a communication from Mr. Slough, in which he suggests a municipal electric light plant, and shows that other towns similar to La Grande get their light for less than two-thirds of what is paid by our people. I am one of those who believe in municipal ownership of public utilities, and have advocated this ever since I have been in La Grande. Accordingly, when we were about to bring in our municipal water supply from the mountains several years ago, the question of a municipal light plant in connection with the water system was advocated, and it was understood that if the people would elect bonds sufficient to bring the water from Beaver creek, a municipi-

al lighting system would be inaugurated in connection with the municipal water system. It was then shown that for \$160,000 we could pipe from Beaver creek 300 miners inches of water, and that this water would not only be sufficient to supply the city of La Grande when it had attained a population of twenty-five or thirty thousand people, but that it would also develop 450 horse-power at the point where it would be discharged into the reservoir, and that this power could either be used by the city for a municipal electric light plant or be sold for a sufficient sum to pay the interest on all the outstanding water bonds, and create a sinking fund for the purpose of retiring the bonds. And it was then declared by our city officials that within 20 years the system would pay for itself, and be thereafter a perpetual source of revenue, sufficient to meet the ordinary expenses of city government. This was somewhat Utopian but thoroughly sound in theory, and with this end in view the bonds were voted. Did the people get what they voted for? No!

A contract was let WITHOUT COMPETITION, and the proceeds of our bonds were exhausted in bringing about one-third of the water from Beaver creek that was contemplated by the people who elected the bonds. And this was brought in a flimsy pipe not anchored so as to sustain a pressure for power purposes, and although we have perhaps 150 horse-power flowing into the city reservoir which is easily worth \$40 per horse-power per year if it could be utilized a large part of the pipe line will have to be constructed over again before it would be possible to use this power in competition with any company having a franchise from the city; but we ought to use this power at least to the extent of lighting the streets and public buildings of the city. It belongs to the city and should be utilized, and there is sufficient power to light our public buildings and streets more brilliantly than any other town in the state. Can we not do it? It is folly for us to be supplied on our backs and say that because we were disappointed when this water was brought in, that we will not now incur the additional expense necessary to utilize what we have.

Respectfully, TURNER OLIVER

COUNTY COURT PROCEEDINGS.

Table listing county court proceedings for November Term, 1912, including bills audited and allowed, and various court cases with amounts.

Table listing grand jury members and their terms, including names like J. K. Lantz, I. A. Bingham, J. J. Conley, etc.

Table listing grand jury members and their terms, including names like vs. Christiansen, Elmgr. Helmick, C. H. Chattin, etc.

Table listing grand jury members and their terms, including names like T. H. Graves, A. C. Rollins, J. R. McLaren, etc.

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IF YOU CHOOSE HERE YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF SELECTING FROM THE LARGEST AND BEST ASSORTED LINEN STOCK AND YOU WILL FIND OUR PRICES VERY ATTRACTIVE.

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Table listing linen products and prices: Lunch cloths 90c up, Lunch Sets \$2.45 up, Table Cloths 50c to \$12.50, Napkins 60c to \$9.00 Doz., Piece Linens 45c to \$2.00 yd., Round Cloths \$3.50 to \$6.50

THREE BIG SPECIALS ON TABLE CLOTHS

Table listing three specials on table cloths: 90c A regular \$1.50 satin cloth in full size and several pretty patterns; 15 An all linen cloth of extra quality finish and weave. Sells regularly for \$1.75 each; 60 A regular \$2.25 cloth in extra quality and size. Beautiful patterns.

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Hair Receivers, Paper Knives, Nail Files, Powder Jars, Photo Frames, Jewel Trays 35c to 65c.

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(To Be Continued.)