

THE OBSERVER

BRUCE DENNIS
EDITOR AND OWNER.

Entered at the postoffice at La Grande, Oregon, as second class matter.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.
Daily, single copy 5c
Daily, per week 15c
Daily, per month 65c

WILLIAMS PAYING CONVENTION DEBT.

It looks as though Ralph Williams was about to pay his debt to Thomas McCusker, the Benedict Arnold of Oregon politics.

When the Republican national convention was held McCusker was on sale. He was elected by the people to do a certain thing and failed to make good. He used the franchise of the people of Oregon to barter and trade, corrupt the delegation and re-elect a political harlot like Ralph Williams as National Committeeman for the Republican party of this state.

Now it is announced that Tom McCusker is to be postmaster of Portland. If this is pulled off the final deal has been consummated by Williams and Bourne which shows each of them up as cheap, trading, trafficking politicians who, after receiving prominent positions at the hands of the people have seen fit to join hands with the lobbying hypocrite, McCusker, thus traducing the voters of Oregon and making a sham and a farce of the offices they hold.

If Bourne and William deliver this piece of pie they deserve the label of such patronage peddlers as Bill Barnes and Boies Penrose. They deserve a public rebuke by the people of this state in a way they will remember.

PEARE FOR POSTMASTER.

President Taft will send in the name of J. H. Peare for postmaster of La Grande. It appears there is no question but what this will be done. The appointment of "Jack" Peare is but a recognition of long, active party loyalty for which until now there was no recompense. Peare has been one of those Republicans who does not quit. The ticket was always his ticket. He belongs to the old school of politics which teaches to fight hard within party lines but at all events keep within those lines.

This reminds the writer of the happenings during the last campaign, when after long training together Mr. Peare and the writer broke politically over the action of the Republican national committee. We "flew the coop," as it were, and joined the "political outlaws and pirates," yet the man we had always worked with stood "pat." He was for the ticket and the party regardless of any condition that arose. He fought the fight along those lines. He was for Taft throughout and now that there is a political plum to give we are glad to see the reward go where it belongs, and glad to offer congratulations to Jack Peare on his success.

The question has been asked "What will the Democrats do about confirming Peare?" If the Democratic

party has the strength it will probably not let him be confirmed. However, at the present time democracy is not so thoroughly entrenched in the United States senate. Besides Bourne serves until March and the confirmation may be made before that time. In that case Mr. Peare would serve the full four years and doubtless go into the Wilson civil service program of postmasters for life jobs. But, be that as it may, Peare will have the honor of being named, which in itself is an honor and a recognition. What the senate does about confirmation is an after consideration, and why should anyone cross dark bridges before they get to them?

THE HODGIN-KIDDLE CONTEST.

The counting of votes having finished the Hodgin-Kiddle contest is now up to the legislature. All the count just finished could possibly mean was that the legislature should become possessed of a pure recount. Pure because the recount was made before the circuit court and every irregular ballot was detected. But the court has no jurisdiction other than to prepare the facts for the legislature's consideration.

How the legislature will handle the matter is but a guess on the part of anyone. Many of the members have little interest in Eastern Oregon affairs and in most cases when Eastern Oregon tries to take the attention of the working body it is cut off with short words like it was an adopted. If this course is followed quite likely the legislature will demand to know why an entire recount of the counties was not made. When Mr. Hodgin makes his claim of gain in the recount quite likely some member will inject the question, "How do we know that in the precincts which were not counted the second time Mr. Kiddle did not have the best of the count, etc.?"

Then, too, there is the party line proposition. In all probability there are still some Republican members who view party lines as amounting to something and they will be inclined to take the last election returns as they were reported, which showed Mr. Kiddle elected, thus giving another Republican a seat in the senate.

When you get into election contests you get in deeper and deeper into complex questions, the result of which can only be problematical.

IT'S A GAY LIFE.

Competition is really the life of trade.

This has been proved by a most ingenious letter just issued by President Percival S. Hill of the American Tobacco company, in which he seeks to impress upon people his sense of gratitude to the government for dissolving that unholly corporation a short time back.

Now that the gigantic octopus has ceased to exist, according to President Hill, the men at the head of affairs who had grown staid and matter of fact in their demeanor, are kicking up their heels and disporting in great glee over the prospect of putting things over their competitors.

For instance, there is the little matter of silk inserts in packages of cigarettes. Formerly these cost 50

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much real money that the wife or sweetheart of an ordinary purchaser of five cent packages never had a chance to gratify her womanly craving for a sofa pillow made from sewing these gayly colored strips together. As a matter of fact, it was a real stroke of genius that made one of the members of the Lorillard company ever think of such a thing, anyway, and the company gayly expended thousands of dollars just to gratify his little whim.

But the judicious use of inserts proved a profitable venture. So much so that once the American Tobacco company was dissolved, so much so they say, the managers of one of the companies making five cent packages immediately decided to try using inserts in the cheap packages. Again the company gayly acquiesced and has the fun of spending \$300,000 annually for the tags used in one brand alone.

Yes, it is a gay life the tobacco manufacturers are leading. They are invading all the magazines, something they did not need to do in the good old days. But the old boys like the fun and the sales have jumped until it's a great game and a paying game.

Incidentally the stock holders have lost millions in dividends, again referring to the frank statement of President Hill. But he still avers that "competition has increased the volume of business" and, in that case the supreme court may feel that it has done one worthy deed by its decision ordering the corporation to cease to work in restraint of trade. And, seemingly, the public will try to reimburse the American Tobacco company as rapidly as possible.

WATER IN HIGH COST OF LIVING.

We all know that one of the biggest items in the high cost of living is railroad transportation charges. Generally, for instance, when we drink a glass of milk we pay something for railroad transportation. But what would you say to getting your milk in powder, weighing about 87 per cent less than the liquid milk? You would pay no freight on the water Mrs. Moo-cow put in it—in fact, you would add the water yourself when you wanted your glass of milk.

Millions of dollars a year could be saved in freight charges alone if we took the countless tons of plain water out of the things we eat. A start has been made by a Chicago concern which is drying out 87 per cent of the weight of milk. The powder which results is at present used only by bakeries.

The department of agriculture in a forthcoming publication is to proclaim its support of this plan of lowering prices and has selected as an example the immensely important German industry of potato drying, believing that conditions in this country are more than ordinarily favorable for the rapid adoption of an European expedient of economy. Only 20 to 25 per cent of the potato is solid matter and upon every ton shipped freight is paid upon 75 to 80 per cent water and the cost is borne by the farmer from his profits and the consumer from an already over-taxed pocketbook.

The optimism of the exponents of the potato drying industry is based upon the fact that the same machinery used for drying sugar beet leaves and pulp can be employed at other seasons for drying potatoes. As sugar beet growing is already an important industry in about 16 states, but little extra expense would have to be incurred to test the practicability of this plan. Most of the important beet sugar states are also great potato growing sections and the two industries can go hand in hand, as they have in Germany, where the great development of the beet sugar industry has led to a tremendous development of potato growing. It has been found, moreover, that the cultivation of sugar beets increases the yield of all other crops grown in rotation with them, this increase carrying from 25 to 50 per cent with different crops and amounting to 46 per cent in the case of potatoes.

The sugar beet itself is one of the products to which this process of economy through extraction of surplus water has been applied and a business of \$2,000,000 a year has been built up in the past few years in the dried beet pulp for stock feeding.

Another advantage that will come from the introduction of the drying industry in connection with such a

crop as potatoes, as is pointed out by the department of agriculture, is that the present uncertainties of the crop would be removed and both the producer and consumer would be benefited. The grower would have a more reliable market and the present wide fluctuations in prices would be avoided.

The New York supreme court has handed down a decision that a woman can dress and look well on \$44.00 a year. No doubt that court had been reading the January sale ads.

President Wilson says big business is all right so long as it grows big against competition. But he might have given his inward opinion of the business that grows big by swallowing competition, forming trusts and selling watered stock. That is the kind of business the new president must deal with.

Over in Provo, Utah, a woman is suing a corn doctor for \$1200 because the corn doctor caused her to have two toes amputated. Another case of pulling the lower extremity.

Perhaps Elbert Hubbard will be a little more cautious with his rough language now since the supreme court indicted him on five counts for sending improper literature through the mails. Hubbard had the idea that he was a privileged character along that line, and in many instances his sayings were so applicable to the situation that they probably resulted in good even though the language used was rough.

The legislature must remember that the people have not forgotten the question of high taxes. Even those legislators who want Pacific highways and large exposition appropriations might do well to keep the man who pays the cost in mind for a few moments at least.

After Wilson's cabinet is chosen the gang back of the stove in the corner grocery won't have a thing to do for four years.

Mr. Taft certainly is the ultimate consumer of secretaries. He is now on his fourth.

There is some talk of reviving the kerosene torchlight processions this year. If this is done John D. ought to be willing to contribute a little bit to all the parties.

A ninety-pound woman in London thrashed her husband, who weighs 200. Of course, in such a case, a man has to stand and take it.

The Mt. McKinley searchers who only reached two-thirds of the way to the top failed to see even a footprint of old Doc Cook, but it was just as cold up there as Doc Cook said it was, which proves something.

We'll wager that Pittsburg man who got the envelopes mixed and sent to his best girl a letter intended for another sweetheart wishes he had that bad habit of forgetting to mail letters.

A Cadillac Michigan woman wants a divorce because her husband has not taken a bath in 18 years. Well, Bryan hasn't been elected yet, has he?

A Japanese has defeated the American billiard champion. And Captain Hobson apparently is away on a vacation.

There is going to be an extra session of congress. Well, the last one wasn't anything extra.

Hyde Trial Resumes.

Kansas City, Mo., Jan. 13.—For the third time Dr. B. C. Hyde will be tried for the murder of Colonel Swope, his father-in-law. The trial was set for today but has been postponed until Wednesday at the request of the counsel for the defense. The defense will enter a motion for dismissal on the ground that the prisoner has once been in jeopardy of losing his life through the action of court.

Prisoners Face Delay.

Leavenworth, Kans., Jan. 13.—Bonds for the release of two laborites sent here with an order for the release of the men designated, have been held up because they were not signed in the presence of the federal commissioner here.