

TO CAUCUS OR NOT TO CAUCUS: WHICH?

Question of Speakership of House Much Discussed by State Solons.

FIRST CAUCUS PLAN OFF

McArthur's Followers Said Now to Plan Gathering of 31. While Statement Men Claim to Hold Balance of Power.

When it comes to figuring their relative strength, the rival forces that are contending for the organization of the House in the Oregon Legislature have a skilled mathematician looking like a beginner in the A. B. C. class. McArthur and his friends assert that there will be a caucus of the Republican members of the House, and are willing to back up their predictions with substantial wagers. The statement men, however, declare categorically that at no time since the election last June has the question of the organization of the House been more up in the air than it is right now.

McArthur and his friends realize that his hope of being made Speaker lies in a caucus, and it is for that plan of organization they are contending. The caucus plan having been abandoned, McArthur's supporters are now working to secure a caucus of 31 members, realizing that with such a following the other 22 Republican members of the House will be forced to come in. That there will be a caucus called in response to at least 31 signatures the McArthur forces insist is assured.

Expect Statement Aid.

They figure that eight statement men have agreed in, and will go into, a caucus when it can be shown that by their presence the necessary 31 votes will be insured. Those eight, according to the McArthur camp, are: Frank Richardson and Doody, of Eastern Oregon; Eaton, of Lane; Abbott, Brady, Clemens and McDonald, of Multnomah. The McArthur people do not claim that this double quartet will support the Multnomah County man, but it is positively asserted that the eight will come into a caucus when by doing so a caucus of a majority of the members of the House can be effected with their assistance.

At the same time the McArthur forces are relying on at least 23 of the 27 anti-statement Republicans to join in the caucus, which would insure a membership of at least 51. Brady and McDonald, of the Multnomah County delegation, yesterday formally announced that they would support McArthur. With the addition of these two men, McArthur reports a following of 22. In going into the McArthur fold, McDonald yesterday issued the following signed statement:

"After consultation with friends I have decided to act independently of a written agreement to act in concert with 12 other statement men who have agreed to stand together in the matter of a candidate for Speaker of the House in the coming session, because they have ignored me; have held chamber meetings to which I was not invited, and, according to press reports, have attempted to 'deliver' my support to candidates of their own choosing."

No Surprise Caused.

The announcement that Brady and McDonald would support McArthur did not produce any great consternation among the statement people, who did not hesitate to say that it had been expected before. They charge that Brady never was sincerely with them, and at no time intended to play their game. They declare further that Brady's only object in coming out as a candidate for Speaker was, if possible, to create further inharmonious in that organization and contribute so far as possible further obstruction to a consummation of its plans as to organization.

As to the desertion of McDonald, the statement forces are not losing any sleep. They declare that before many days pass McDonald, who was one of

the original statement signers of an agreement binding him to support only a statement man for speaker, will be forced to recognize that pledge and return to the statement camp. It is understood that the statement people have some hope of McDonald's will exert a powerful influence in controlling his movements.

Speaking for the standpat members of the Multnomah County delegation, A. V. Orton, Representative-elect, yesterday said that he and his colleagues had not abandoned Bean, who, he said, was still a total race in a Speaker. While Orton would not say whether or not he and the other standpat men from this county would refuse to participate in a caucus, he did say that either Bean or Campbell would be elected Speaker. He would not concede to McArthur a greater following than a dozen votes, although the anti-statement map has for some time been claiming 22.

Says Agreement Exists.

Orton reports that there are 13 statement men who have agreed positively to stand together and to act as a caucus in by no means a caucus. In addition to that number the statement men throughout the state would give five others throughout the state while they have not signed any agreement, have given positive assurances that they will join with the original standpat men when the proper time comes. In their right to defeat McArthur, either in caucus or on the floor of the House, the statement men declare they have the upper hand. The statement men dispute the claim of McArthur and his friends that they can organize a caucus of 31 members, and, having effected such a caucus, can deliver the nomination to the Multnomah County candidate.

The statement people say that they will succeed in preventing McArthur's nomination in caucus or his election on the floor of the House. In figuring this out they present the following claim of strength: Original standpaters, 13; unsigned supporters, 8; anti-statement men who will not sign 21-caucus call, at least 7, total, 28. In a caucus of the 52 Republican members of the House this following would prevent the nomination of McArthur.

"There is no question but that we have the situation well in hand," concluded Mr. Orton. "We propose to stand pat and bring about the organization of the House, which undeniably is in our power."

PROVISIONS FOR THE POOR

WHITE TEMPLE BIBLE SCHOOL HAS "GIVING CHRISTMAS."

Great Stock of Goods Donated and Will Be Distributed Among Worthy Poor.

The illustration represents, in part, the result of the "Giving Christmas" service of the White Temple Bible School, as observed last Sunday. At the close of the morning preaching service, the great doors between the main and Sunday School auditoriums were opened and the morning congregation was given an opportunity to see so much of the great pile of gifts as had up to that time been delivered. The superintendent of the school then took charge of the session and after the usual opening service, a roll call, beginning with the primary department, and including 17 organized classes, was had.

The primary department marched to the platform, headed by a small express wagon drawn by one of its members and loaded with gifts of provisions from the officers and to others of the department, while each child of the department followed with his hands full of fruit, or other gifts, which he deposited upon the platform as he marched along. All the classes from the youngest to the oldest responded with liberal gifts of provisions, clothing and other useful articles, which are to be distributed to the worthy and needy poor of the city. The largest contribution was that of the Temple Men's Bible Class, which consisted of 20 sacks of flour and a large sack of potatoes.

The great evening congregation responded heartily to an opportunity to make a Christmas contribution for the benefit of the Strayer Union City Mission at Fourth and Couch streets, something over \$40 being contributed.

The regular Christmas exercises of the Bible School will be held Friday night at 7:30 o'clock.

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LIGHT BILL PROPER

City Attorney Writes Opinion Justifying Company.

INITIAL CONTRACT STANDS

Although New Arcs Use Less Current, Better Light Results—City Said to Have No Just Cause for Complaint.

Having consented to a change in the type of arc lamps to be maintained by the Portland Railway, Light & Power Company, the Executive Board is in duty bound to pay the bills for municipal lighting, although the amount of current required by the original contract is not consumed by the lamps now in use. This is the gist of a liability-important opinion furnished to the City Council committee by the Mayor and members of the Board is without legal authority, and that a suit at law will result in the collection of the entire sum from the city. This opinion will form the basis for a report to the Council by the lighting committee, of which Councilman Collins is chairman, and which will meet at 10 o'clock this morning at the City Hall.

A controversy arose eight months ago between Mayor Lane and the officials of the contracting company over the amount of current furnished. An investigation by the Executive Board followed, with the result that the committee on lighting of the Executive Board reported that but two-thirds the amount of current called for in the contract is being furnished, and recommended that the monthly bills to be paid be reduced, which has been done since. The controversy has continued, resulting in an attempt by the Mayor and Board to hold off awarding a new contract for lights for the next five years, and finally an investigation by the Council's lighting committee.

Following is the most important portion of the opinion:

"This controversy does not relate, in my opinion, to the failure to supply light of certain intensity and duration. If the contract required the company to furnish light of a certain degree of brilliancy and illuminating standard, it is not material in other words, if less light was furnished than was contracted to be supplied, the question would be whether the company did not consume the required amount of current, and the question of actual illumination is apparently waived. In the original contract the company agreed to install and operate arc lamps of so-called 2000 candle-power, consuming 50 volts and 10 amperes of electrical energy. A lamp of such capacity was then in use, and was continued under the contract without objection as to the character of light furnished, so far as the record discloses. Objections were argued on account of outages, but no objection appears to have been made to the character of light, while the arcs were lighter. Then the change was made, with the city's consent, to a new arc of different and improved type, operated under a new system. Less electricity is actually consumed by the arc, but it appears that a better light is furnished. I am not an expert and do not attempt to determine the actual saving to the company in current, but I am advised that this saving is small on account of the waste of energy in the transforming and rectifying processes essential to an arc system. There is probably considerable reduction in the cost of maintaining the system, but the city cannot take advantage of improvements in that respect.

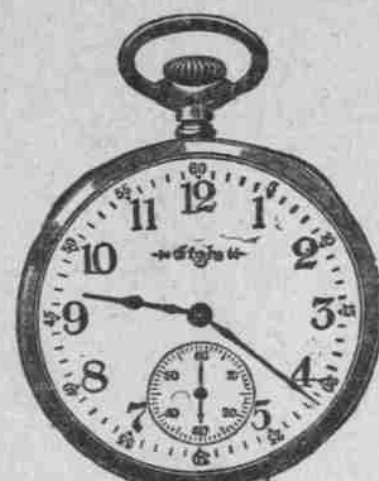
"I am persuaded, from a careful consideration of the question, and a review of the authorities, that the courts will not construe the specifications to require the company to consume 50 volts and 10 amperes of current in each new arc, but that they will construe this provision of the specification as relating to the arc then in use. It appears that the present arc cannot be operated under the quantity and pressure of current provided by the specifications, and the city having consented to its use, and the service proving satisfactory, it would be deemed to have consented to the use of the current appropriate to the operation of the new arc. If the new arc is operated within its capacity of current, I am of the opinion that this would be held a compliance with the existing contract. It does not enlarge or diminish the liability of either party.

"It is essential that the city insist upon a faithful compliance with all its contracts. I have endorsed this principle with uniform insistence and will continue in that regard. It is equally important that the city treat its contractors fairly, as suggested by the lighting committee of the Executive Board. It is also important that the officials be scrupulous of the probable result of contemplated litigation. This opinion is based upon the assumption that the installation

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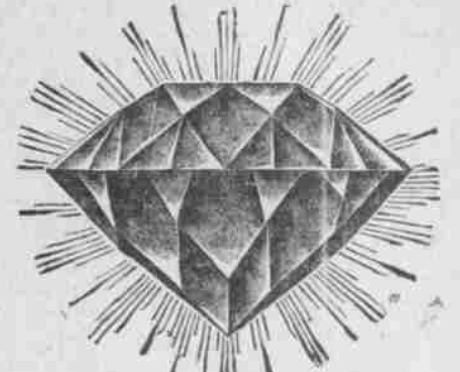
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of the new arc improved the public lighting service. The question submitted to me assumes that condition, and if that be the fact, I am unable to discover a legal defense to the bills rendered.

The committee is, therefore, advised upon the first question that in my opinion the city would call in an attempt to escape payment of the amount deducted from the lighting contract. If the facts be as assumed by this opinion.

CLUB WANTS WARM CARS

Mount Scott Organization to Confer With Streetcar Company.

The Mount Scott Improvement Club met last night and took up the question of heating cars on that line. The club had the correspondence of General Manager Fuller with the State Railroad Commission on the subject, in which he said that he does not think that the people on that line want the cars heated. The club went on record as wanting the cars

Cleland yesterday dismissed the complaint and gave the attorney a judgment against Austin for the amount claimed by him.

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