LIGHT ORDINANCE VETOED BY LANE

Mayor Considers It Inadvisable for City to Sign Five-Year Contract.

FAVORS MUNICIPAL PLANT

Council Will Probably Insist on Passage of Measure Which Provides for Continuance of Electric Lighting System.

Mayor Lane yesterday vetoed the ordinance, passed at the last session of the Council authorizing the Executive Board to advertise for bids for electric lights for all municipal lighting purposes for a term of five years. In his message to the Council, the Mayor declares that he believes the city should not be bound for so long a contract, as he thinks better rates can be secured soon by means of competition. He also holds that the Council has exceeded its authority in ordering bids for electricity only. The charter he says provides that the Executive Board may ask for bids for lighting by other means.

The Portland Railway, Light & Power Company now holds the contract for city lighting, and its contract will expire December 31, 1908. When the matter of a renewal of contract was up for discussion, Mayor Lane and other city officials advocated the construction of a municipally-owned electric plant, and the lighting committee of the Council held three meetings to talk over the feasibility of the plan. After hearing all arguments, the committee recommended awarding another contract of five years for electric lights, gas lights being objectionable to the majority of the members of the Council. Because of the absence of competition, it is virtually certain that the same company will receive the award for lighting again.

Veto Will Be Overruled.

That Mayor Lane's veto will accomplish nothing beyond the exploiting of his own views on the matter, seems certain, as the large majority of Councilmen is opposed to him in the matter. Those who will probably vote to sustain his veto are Councilman Vaughn, Kellaher, Cocannon, Rushlight and Cottel; those who will probably vote to pass the ordinance over his veto are Councilman Annand, Baker, Belding, Menefee, Dunning, Driscoll, Wallace, Cellars, Bennett and Wills. Thus it will be seen that the required two-thirds majority for passage of an ordinance over the veto of the Mayor is at hand, if the members maintain their original position on the question.

Mayor Lane's veto message containing his reasons, follows:

I herewith return ordinance No. 17,534 not approved. This is an ordinance which directs the Executive Board of this city to enter into a contract for lighting the public buildings, streets, avenues, parks, public grounds and places within the city.

The price to be paid is not to exceed $5.41 per month for each arc lamp, which is about the rate which is now paid, and the contract is to run for a fixed period of not less than five years.

In respect to this ordinance I have to say that I do not consider its terms to be favorable to the city for several reasons, some of which are as follows:

Competition Might Arise.

I do not deem it advisable to enter into a contract for lighting the city for so long a period as five years, there being at this time no opportunity to secure the advantages of any competition for the service to be rendered, whereas within a period of one, or at most two years, it is my opinion that new plants furnishing power will be in the field ready to bid upon such a contract. It is a fact, too, that the cost of producing light is at this time being greatly reduced owing to more efficient methods both of producing electricity and by means of improvements in the construction of arc lights.

With about one-half the lights which are really needed, it is costing, say $108,000 a year to light the city at present, and at this time some provision should be made looking to the establishment of a plant owned by the city, which plant would prove a profitable investment, the present cost being out of proportion to the benefits derived.

Advise Against Long Contracts.

The journals devoted to municipal affairs are publishing articles from good authority strongly advising against long time contracts for municipal lighting, and giving statistics favorable to municipally owned plants. This ordinance, however, allows no choice in respect to a time limit less than five years, but arbitrarily fixes it for that specific period upon the city if a contract is entered into under it.

It is my opinion that this ordinance, if it becomes a law, will tie the city up with a contract continuing for a period too great to be in the interest of the city; also that it practically will result in placing the city's lighting in the hands of the present company, no competition being possible at this time. Also that it will operate to delay the acquisition of a plant owned by the city, which is the end most to be desired, and for these reasons I view it as a measure directly inimical to the true interests of the people of this city.

Cost Has Been Reduced.

It is stated upon good authority that the cost of illuminating streets by electric arc lights has been reduced some 20 to 25 per cent of late through the use of the new magnatite lamps, and there seems no reason why the city should not be allowed to participate in such reduction of cost, there, however, being no assurance of any such reduction in cost being contemplated in this ordinance, which fixes the maximum rate of $5.41 per month for each arc light, as against $5.20, the amount now being paid by the city. All benefits derived from the lower cost of operation accruing solely to the contractor. It is my opinion that the city is entitled to its just share of all benefits to be derived from any just source, and that it should be allowed the opportunity to participate in them where possible.

It is my belief, likewise, that your honorable body has made the ordinance too specific in its terms, inasmuch as the last paragraph of section 208 of the city charter provides "that it shall be competent for the Executive Board to contract for lighting the public buildings and any part or portion of the city by different means or systems," whereas in this ordinance they are confined to but one means, and practically to but one bidder, upon such contract.

A NEW INITIATIVE PETITION

Proposal to Reduce Extravagance in Dress.

The Dalles Optimist.

Old Man Bennett starts out today with a new and fresh initiative measure, and it is hoped everybody will sign it, for it is of the greatest importance, not only to Oregon, but to the country at large, in fact to humanity generally.

The new act is entitled "An Act to Reduce Extravagance in Dress," and it provides that hereafter all coats shall be made one inch shorter than heretofore, and that all dresses of women shall have one less breadth in the skirts than heretofore. It is estimated that this reform will result in a saving of at least $2,000,000 per year in this state, and will surely do nobody any harm.

It is true that this measure is not new with me. Flyspeck and his crowd of reformers had the measure under advisement last year, and again this year, only they went a little further and prohibited buttons on men's coat sleeeves, and curtailed the length of women's apron strings. But while the reformers were cogitating we got in ahead of them and have our bill all ready for signatures. There is no doubt of its passage, for we are ripe for reform along the lines of the bill.

If it passes all right, and by a fair majority, we will have another great measure to bring up two hence. This will establish a state menagerie and a state mattress factory. To the former must be taken all snakes, rats, devils and all other "varmints" found in men's boots as a result of too much booze, when they have what is known as delirium tremens, and to the latter must go the surplus hair of the women of the state, no woman hereafter to allow her hair to be over one yard in length.

We will have two new state officers, a state barber and a keeper of the menagerie, and they will both be nice, soft and remunerative berths. But the menagerie will be very remunerative, as it will be such a novelty that the admission fees will produce a big revenue. The mattresses also will bring in a lot of money, for it is well known that hair mattresses are the best ever, beating the oystermere brand to a standstill. We will have four grades—blond, brunette, auburn and Schenectady (just beyond Auburn).

It will be seen that these measures will be highly beneficial to the state, and the only wonder is that the flyspeckers have overlooked them.

Denver Pesthouse Burns.

DENVER, March 7.—The city pesthouse at Sand Creek, just north of the city limits, in Adams County, was burned today. There was a panic among the 15 patients, one man and 14 women and children, when the fire was discovered at 10 o'clock in the women's dormitory, but the strong helped the weaker ones and all escaped safely. The patients are without shelter, but amply supplied with bed clothing, and are now camped on the prairie.

Read Sharkey's add today.

CANDIDATES PUT BAN ON "LINEUPS"

Each Man to Fight His Own Campaign Before the State Primaries.

MAKE NO DEALS THE WORD

Aspirants for Office at Olympia on Record That They Will Observe Letter and Spirit of the New Primary Law.

OLYMPIA, Wash., March 7.—(Special.)—The eleven known candidates for state office who, by virtue of their present state offices are residing in Olympia, are almost unanimous, this early in the political game, in declaring that each man must fight his own battle in the primary election campaign.

The matter of deals between this candidate and that has been discussed to a considerable extent in the last few weeks, and the letter of Congressman W. L. Jones to his North Yakima campaign managers instructing them to make no deals for support with other candidates in the effort to send him to the United States Senate, has brought out similar resolutions from the men aspiring to other positions.

"Line-ups" Are Frowned On.

The ban is on "line-ups," but whether it can be made effective is a matter of speculation with the primary law in the experimental stage in this state.

Governor Mead is practically the only candidate for office who fights shy of the question.

The other candidates who are residing temporarily, at least, in Olympia, are John D. Atkinson, candidate for Governor; Samuel H. Nichols, candidate for Secretary of State; J. H. Shively, candidate for Insurance Commissioner; C. W. Clauson, candidate for State Auditor; E. W. Ross, candidate for Commissioner of Public Lands; H. B. Dewey, candidate for State Superintendent of Schools; T. D. Rockwell, candidate for Congress, and Justices H. E. Hadley, M. A. Root and Herman D. Crow, candidates for Justices of the Supreme Court.

Jones Wants No Promises.

Congressman Jones, who has started the every-man-for-himself movement, says:

"It is my intention and desire to have my campaign conducted with the strictest regard both for the letter and the spirit of the primary law, and the committee must not make any promises of any kind relative to future appointments or any communication with any other candidate or any deal of any kind to secure support for me."

Attorney-General Atkinson, seeking the Governorship, says:

"I am positively not 'lined up' with any Senatorial, Congressional or other candidate in any manner whatsoever. It would be only the friends of other gubernatorial candidates who would suggest such a thing. I have always kept free from factions and I always shall be my own political and official regulator. I am a candidate for Governor and shall be a candidate for no other office under any possible circumstances."

Said Secretary of State Sam H. Nichols:

Every Man for Himself.

"As I read the law, every man should stand for himself and no one else. I may have preferences as to the other candidates, but I shall keep them to myself; neither shall I throw a straw in the way of any man's aspirations. I shall plan and carry out my own campaign."

"It should be the policy of every man seeking nomination in the direct primaries," said J. H. Shively, "not to work for or against any other candidate on his primary ticket. It is the spirit of the law and good politics. After the primaries every candidate defeated or successful should work for the whole ticket of his party. That shall be my plan."

"I do not intend to be a party to any primary election deals," said State Auditor C. W. Clausen.

"I have not fully determined to become a candidate for State Superintendent," said Deputy State Superintendent H. B. Dewey, "and if I do announce myself, it will not be before April or May. For each man to work out his own plans appears to me to be the only thing to do."

Judges to Make No Campaign.

Land Commissioner E. W. Ross, who has been out of the city for two weeks, is known to have written to numerous friends throughout the state that he is thoroughly opposed to deals with other candidates or with any faction for support in the primaries.

If the three judges of the Supreme Court, whose terms expire next January, carry out their intentions, they will not even engage in a primary election campaign on their own account, let alone any other candidate's.

The attitude of the other judges is expressed by Judge Crow, who said:

"I do not intend to do any campaigning throughout the state. I shall simply file my declaration of candidacy as required by law and go back to my work."

Difficulties of Smaller Candidates.

It is undoubtedly true that the candidates here, without exception, are sincere in their declarations and resolutions, but it is likely to prove a difficulty for some of the minor candidates to stick to them. According to the present outlook, the primary campaign will resolve itself into a double-headed contest, with the Senatorship and Governorship occupying the principal attention of the voters. As between the Governorship and the Senatorship, it is difficult to see how there could be any alignment. For instance, in the southwest, Atkinson and Jones appear to be stronger than Mead and Ankeny. In Mead's stronghold in Whatcom County, Jones is said to have the better of Ankeny. On the other hand, in Ankeny's strongholds, Atkinson, Meade and Cosgrove strength predominates in different localities.

But some of the minor candidates, if there is as much noise of battle as is now predicted on the two main issues, may have to align themselves with a Senatorial or Gubernatorial candidate in order to get themselves noticed.

Finds Locked School Doors.

PORTLAND, March 7.—(To the Editor.)—Permit me to corroborate the comment made by J. P. Newell in last Thursday's Oregonian in regard to locked doors of schoolhouses during sessions.

It was true, so far as the Sunnyside School is concerned. I have, on two different occasions when calling to see a little granddaughter attending there, found the outer doors locked. I was obliged to rattle the door handle and knock upon the panels to attract attention. A small boy ultimately came and unlocked the door. My daughter had a similar experience. After rattling and "pounding," and finally by tapping upon a window, a small boy was sent to unlock the door. Possibly there are others who can give like testimony.

This was during the Fall term. I am told by pupils that since the Gollingwood horror, the doors of the Sunnyside School have not been locked during sessions.

MRS. E. U. SCHERER.

LARGE MAIL DELIVERY

If any of Portland's mailcarriers are complaining of the large amount of mail they have to deliver the past few days, don't scold them or make remarks about their getting tired of their jobs, for they have a "kick" coming and a good sized one at that. Last Thursday the John P. Sharkey Co. delivered to the postoffice 40,000 letters to be delivered, at once, as Mr. Sharkey explained to Postmaster Minto, "It's important." When the genial Postmaster caught his breath, he informed the dirt dealer that it would take at least 3 days to deliver this amount of mail with the present force of carriers, as Sharkey was not the only letter-writer in the city. The Mayor sometimes writes letters, also the preachers, then there were the sweetheart's letters, to say nothing of the bills, papers, magazines, etc.; but 40,000 from one firm at one time probably is the limit and sets a new high-water mark that will make the pen-pushers with a record sit up and take notice, if they do not want to be foiled as letter-writers.

The fact is, since Sharkey has quit politics and is paying strict attention to business, he is making more money than he knows what to do with, so he just sat down and wrote a letter to each of his 40,000 friends, asking them to come to his office and get their share of it. If you did not get a letter, don't blow Sharkey—blame the postman.

Witnesses in Land-Grant Case.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 7.—Southern Pacific officials here yesterday were served with a Federal summons to appear in the U. S. Circuit Court at Portland in the case of Snyder vs. the Oregon & California and the Southern Pacific, two of the Harriman roads. The case involves the legality of railroad land grants in Western and Southwestern Oregon.