

7/31/37

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.  
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OLD AGE PENSIONS TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT. On July 6, 1936, the Old Age Pension Law became effective in Illinois. A set up was made to administer this act and the old folks anxiously awaited the time when they could make application and obtain a pension. From time to time, the Social Security Board in Washington studied the operations of the Illinois law and the actions of the State Board. In June 1937, the Social Security Board sent notice of a suspension of Federal payments to Illinois and set a date for hearing. The notice of hearing was sent on June 16, 1937. The hearing was set for July 16, 1937. Three state officials attended the hearing. On July 27, 1937 the Board in Washington released its decision and its findings. The decision is a scathing indictment of the way old age pensions have been administered. Two things are of unusual interest. In Jo Davies' County, about 14 out of every 100 persons over 65 get pensions, whereas down in Alexander County, 71 out of every 100 persons over 65 get pensions. What do you make of this? In Washington County, the average pension is \$9.96 while in Rock Island County, the average is \$17.96 and in Cook County the average is \$20.90. Can it be that the aged folks in Rock Island Cook get twice as hungry as those in Washington County. For those who made a request for increased pensions, it will be of interest to know that on June 30, 1937, 15,934 such requests for changes of award, all of which had been approved by the County Boards, were lodged in the State office without receiving action by the State Board. Any aged person eligible for a pension, who reads that decision will get mad from the top of his head to the tip of his toes. Hats off to Arthur J. Altmeyer, Frank Bane, and other officials of the Social Security Board in Washington for a courageous piece of work that will bring a housecleaning.

WHEN GAS MEETS GAS there should be a gas-quake. But there isn't. In fact, it's a dud. But wait. If you don't know it, under the soil of this fair land lie 50,000 miles of large pipes which carry natural gas from the gas fields of Texas and Oklahoma to some 8,000,000 consumers. This gas travels across state lines and is therefore in commerce and subject to the jurisdiction of Congress. Comparatively little regulation of gas lines has ever been maintained. Yet everybody seemed in agreement that there should be regulation. The House of Representatives without a dissenting vote therefore passed a bill to regulate these gas carriers. Now it goes to the Senate. But, behold, that august body, despite the torrid heat is doing a bit of gassing itself on the Court plan. Tempers are short. The lines are drawn for battle. The late Senator Robinson the Majority Leader dusted off an old rule on the first day of the Court debate whereby the foes of the Court reorganization bill could permit no interruptions in debate except for a question - and only a question. Court foes were miffed and decided to retaliate. Since a multitude of things are pending in the Senate that require action, consent was requested to file some of these things so Senate Committees could proceed. There was objection by foes of the Court plan. Hence, for all practical purposes, all business in the Senate is dead except for the debate on the Court bill. And therefore the bill to regulate the gas lines in interstate commerce must wait until the Senate has stopped \_\_\_\_\_ excuse us, but we almost said "gassing".

DEAR UNCLE SAM, PLEASE REMIT. Thousands of claims are pending against Uncle Sam for every conceivable kind of injury or damage from the breaking of contracts on ship building to the death of citizens by mail trucks. Hundreds are approved each session of Congress. Thousands are disapproved. Since a citizen cannot sue Uncle Sam, he must in case he has a claim, secure redress from Congress or have Congress give him permission to file his claim with the Court of Claims for disposition. If they approve it, Congress then appropriates money for payment. It is a long, tedious, disappointing process. In a group of six claims passed on recently, five were nearly 20 years old and one was 40 years old. In one case, an inspector in the Federal Grain Inspection Service seems to have misgraded a carload of wheat and for 20 years the shippers having been trying to collect \$279. In 1921, a postmaster in Osceola, Iowa received an abstract of title to be sent by registered mail. It was lost and for 20 years, the sender has been trying to collect \$225. Nineteen years ago, a man was killed in El Paso, Texas through apparent negligence by some employees of the U. S. Reclamation Service and for 20 years the widow has been seeking damages. In 1895, the Government contracted for the building of a revenue cutter. During the construction, the U.S. Engineers seemed to have changed the specification. This apparently damaged the construction company to the extent of \$19,000. Since 1897, they have been trying to collect. Uncle Sam is a hard customer when it comes to paying claims.

HISTORY OF STAMPS. The first adhesive postage stamps were placed on sale in New York on July 1, 1847. Prior to the use of stamps, the postmaster who had a letter, paper or parcel to forward would merely write thereon whether the postate had been "Paid" or whether it was "Due". There appear to have been but two stamps in this 1847 series - a 5¢ stamp with the likeness of Franklin and a 10¢ stamp with the likeness of Washington. From that day on the Post Office Department has authorized the striking of millions of stamps of all sizes, shades, and colors, bearing the portraits of officials and prominent men or depicting scenes in American history.

In the last few years, the business of providing commemorative stamps has grown into an amazing industry and has found response among collectors everywhere in the country. Little America, Mother's Day, Flight of the Zepplin, Century of Progress, the Olympic Games, Susan B. Anthony, California Exposition, Boulder Dam, Texas Centennial - all have been commemorated with special postage stamps. So fascinating has stamp lore become that Post Master General Farley has caused the publication of a 120 page book entitled "A Description of United States Postage Stamps" which is complete with factual information and reproductions of all stamps ever issued since July 1, 1847. This volume will doubtless be sought by stamp collectors everywhere, because it is an authentic history of our stamps.

THE GREAT DARKNESS. Cancer has been dubbed "The Great Darkness" because it continues to slay its thousands and is still cloaked in mystery. Much research has been done and millions of dollars have been expended and yet, we seem no nearer to a definite cure than we were 3000 years ago. Historians observe that cancer existed thirty centuries ago and is still here. Not only that. Deaths from cancer increase year after year. Of the 1,392,752 recorded deaths in the U.S. in 1935, 137,649 were indicated as due to cancer. This is one out of every 10 deaths. It varies with age. In those under 45, the ratio of cancer deaths to the total is 1 in 28. In those over 45, the ratio is one in eight. Complete records of ten states indicate that cancer has marched steadily ahead as a slayer in the last five years. For the entire country, the cancer death rate is nearly 108 per 100,000 of population. In a general way, it might be said also that the cancer death rate is much higher in Europe and America than in the Orient. After a survey of facts and figures relating to this dread and malignant disease, it is difficult to generalize. Only one thing is certain and that is that it is becoming the Great Slayer. It has taken a long time to crystallize public opinion on this great problem but Congress has now taken an initial step by appropriating funds for the establishment of a Cancer Center in Washington D.C. for a determined study of this disease. The findings shall be available to the public. Here then is a ray of hope. It gives promise that even as other maladies have been conquered.

COMPARING TWO GREAT COMMONWEALTHS. Illinois and Pennsylvania are two of the leading states of the union. In point of population, development, industrial activity, agriculture, taxes paid and area, they are in the forefront. A comparison is interesting. The population of Pa. is about 9 2/3 millions, of Illinois about 7 2/3 millions. Pa. therefore has about 2 million more folks. Pennsylvania has 15 cities over 50,000 and Illinois has 9. The area of Pa. is about 45,000 square miles, of Illinois about 56,000 square miles. The Pa. legislature which recently closed its books appropriated about 338 million dollars for the next two year period for operation of the state functions. The Illinois legislature appropriated about 468 million for the same period. State expenses for Illinois will therefore run about \$650,000 a day for all purpose. This is \$180,000 a day more than is to be expended in Pennsylvania. But Pa. has two million more people than we. So what?

FARM TENANTS BILL IN BRIEF. In final form, here is the Farm Tenancy Bill as set up By Congress. Sets up a Farmers Home Corporation managed by a board of five directors. Capital stock of the Corporation to be \$10,000,000. Give the Corporation broad powers to carry out the act. The Corporation shall have power and authority to assist in the establishment of farms and farm home, stocked and equipped for farm tenants, farm laborers and sharecroppers. Preference given to married persons or to those having dependents. Eligible persons desirous of being established on a farm must make application to a county committee to acquire an available farm. County committee will investigate character, ability and experience of applicant and recommend to the Corporation whether application should or should not be approved and in what amount. The Corporation, in event of approval then arranges to make a loan to purchase such farm. Corporation may loan 100% of the purchase price. Corporation then takes a mortgage on such farm. Such mortgage may run for 40 years. The rate of interest would be 3%. The purchaser will have to agree to that he will conform to such farming practices as the Secretary of Agriculture may prescribe during the life of the loan. The Borrower must pay taxes, and assessments and pay cost of insurance. Borrowers may also acquire loans not exceeding five years at 3% for the purpose of acquiring livestock, equipment and implements. For 1938, 10 million dollars is authorized to carry out the act. For 1939, 25 million. For each year thereafter, 50 million. Not to exceed 5% shall be used for administrative costs. If loans to acquire farms and equipment averaged \$5000, only 1900 tenant farmers could be helped the first year. This would be less than one tenth of one per cent of the tenant farmers in the U.S.