The Sun.

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What Do Business Men Think of Him?

The *Manufacturers' Record*, devoted to Southern industrial, railroad and financial interests, has this to say of the Mayor of a leading city in Alabama who, in a letter to a Northern banking house, declared that his city could not meet its December coupons on a bond issue "because of the New York gamblers-bankers' panic":

"Any man who could write such a letter is not fit to be Mayor of a crossroads village, much less to be the chief executive of an important city. Of all the banks in the country which have struggled the hardest to meet recent financial conditions, surely the banks of New York have more than done their duty."

If the Mayor of a Southern city, whose name is not disclosed for its own good, is dismissed thus contemptuously as a scandalmonger and enemy of his people, what shall be said of the President of the United States, who sends this message to the West by a Democratic national committeeman:

"Tell the boys out in Omaha that if I am responsible for this money panic, which showed up the rotten foundations on which the finances of the country were built, I am glad of it. I don't care what Governors and Judges say, this panic had to come sooner or later."

If that Mayor is not fit to rule a crossroads village, what should be said of a President of the United States who expresses these sentiments?

Dutchmen.

We call the attention of all who are interested in the progress of Governmental rate regulation to the unimaginative manner in which that fine art is practised in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands Government exercises authority over private railroads to the extent of supervising all tariffs, for the transportation of either passengers or freight. When it sees fit, the Government decrees that the freight rates shall be reduced.

Sometimes this reduction may occasion loss to the railroads, that is to say, to their owners or stockholders. In that case what happens? Read the provision of the royal decree on rat fying, as communicated to Mr. ROOSEVELT's Administration by Consul-General SOREN LISTOE of Rotterdam and published yesterday by our Department of Commerce and Labor:

"At any time we can order the freight tariffs to be reduced. When, in consequence thereof, the net earnings of the railroad companies decrease, *they are indemnified from the Government treasury*. In such case the amount of indemnification is fixed by a court of justice whenever the matter cannot be arranged by mutual agreement. Under no circumstances is this indemnity fixed at a higher sum than is required for the net earnings to amount to 8 per cent. of the company's capital during the year or years that such reduction is by us prescribed."

Indemnity to a railroad corporation, even up to 8 per cent. of its capital annually, for any loss occasioned to the owners by Government interference in the matter of rate fixing! And this is the official language of the royal decree.

What stolid, unprogressive rulers, with preposterously archaic notions of the Government's responsibility for damage done to private interests! Where in our own enlightened ruler's writings on this subject can be found even a lingering trace of the old fashioned ideas of equity that seem so important to these Dutchmen?

Are There Two Kinds of Consumption?

A Blue Book lately published in London sets forth the report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis. The document is of great importance not only to physicians but also to the general public, by reason of certain facts brought out by Dr. COBBETT, who has conducted elaborate experiments at experimental farms, where the virus of the disease has been administered to animals.

The outcome of the experiments was that the various strains of tubercle bacilli obtained from man are sharply marked off into two classes. The first group causes rapidly fatal tuberculosis, while the second, even when given in far larger doses, has only a slight local effect, and the disease tends to undergo a spontaneous cure. The strains that proved highly virulent for oxen were found to be also highly virulent for rabbits, while those that showed a low degree of virulence for one kind of animal very rarely caused progressive or fatal disease in another. Dr. COBBETT claims to have demonstrated that oxen respond to the two different strains of human tuberculosis virus exactly as other animals do, and that the two strains "breed true" in cows as they do in man. It is obvious that in the face of this demonstration Professor KOCH's assertion that bovine and human tuberculosis are different maladies is untenable. There should therefore be no relaxation of the effort to stamp out tuberculosis in cows, because this is an important source of infection to man.

The bearing of Dr. COBBETT's discovery on the prevention and cure of consumption is patent. From the outset it is necessary to determine from which type of virus the patient is suffering. At present the only method of reaching promptly a definite diagnosis is by performing inoculation experiments with the virus of the sufferer. In this way it is practicable to ascertain betimes whether his disease belongs to the hopeless or the hopeful type. It is manifest that until cases of tuberculosis are thus discriminated all conclusions as to the expediency of applying this or that mode of treatment may be vitiated by a fundamental fallacy. Some of the experiments conducted by Dr. COBBETT indicate that eventually even the virulent type of tuberculosis, popularly known as "galloping consumption," may be averted by inoculation, for it is found that the bacilli of this disease, like those of smallpox, lose their deadliness after passing through the system of certain animals. For the moment, however, the victim of galloping consumption cannot be saved, whereas the mild and comparatively innocuous form of tuberculosis distinguished by Dr. COBBETT is treated successfully by the open air method and other means of cure.

One thing seems certain, that Dr. COBBETT has averted the mischief that would have been caused by the general acceptance of Professor KOCH's theory that bovine tuberculosis is incommunicable to man. We can now see that the Koch hypothesis, had it been accepted even temporarily, must have brought about an appalling slaughter of innocents.

French Literature and Machine Made Taste.

No doubt the plans of reformers are paved with good intentions; therefore we need not impugn the motives of M. HUGUES LE ROUX and his associates in their matured scheme to teach America the values of pure French literature.

It is a holy and wholesome ambition to open a nation's eyes to its shortcomings; to show us that France, Paris particularly, is not all Latin Quarter or Montmartre; that such writers as ZOLA, MAUPASSANT, PRÉVOST, PIERRE LOUŸS or BOURGET misrepresent their countrymen and women. Home life we are assured by M. LE ROUX really exists in France, though the American tourist discredits the fact after perambulating the glittering grand boulevards. Good literature, sound fiction, is to be supplied by the new agency.

The curious part of the matter is that there are those among us who take all this seriously. We are in no pressing need of a propaganda for "good" French literature. For one reader of ZOLA in America there are a hundred for VICTOR HUGO—and ZOLA is not so black as he is painted. Mr. SIMON BRENTANO of the well known firm of publishers and importers of foreign literature has denied emphatically that we read only evil French books. As an authority his words must be respected. He has his finger on the pulse of the reading public. We do not believe, for example, that the noble, sonorous prose of BOSSUET's sermons is read with the same avidity as BOURGET; yet BOSSUET as well as FÉNELON's "Télémaque" is in the curriculum of most French students in this benighted land. We read BAZIN, too, and admire the socialistic (in a broader sense) novels of J. H. ROSNY; we admire the silken subtleties of ANATOLE FRANCE—possibly M. LE ROUX has him on his little list—and the golden hours we have spent in company with old DUMAS, can they ever be forgotten? And we are free to say that MONTESQUIEU, VOLTAIRE and ROUSSEAU are household names.

Nor is the list at an end. America reads FLAUBERT (unluckily, too often in translation); reads BALZAC, giant of them all; reads the charming ALPHONSE DAUDET; has read the now innocuous GEORGE SAND, and reads and admires COPPÉE. The generation past of MALOT, DROZ, HALÉVY, THEURIET, FERDINAND FABRE, whose studies of clerical life are little masterpieces—FEUILLET, CHERBULIEZ, these, we admit, are voted old fashioned. But we enjoy a pinch of MAUPASSANT's Gallic salt, are touched by the tenderness and amazed by the virtuosity of PIERRE LOTI, and even savor the ironic flavor of HUYSMANS. Then there are LA BRUYÈRE, SÉVIGNÉ, GAUTIER, SAINT-SIMON, PAUL HERVIEU, the brothers MARGUERITTE. And what of the ever astonishing PAUL ADAM? He is making literature. MONTAIGNE and RABELAIS have legions of readers. Possibly they are considered unfit. MÉRIMÉE is always read; so are the author of "Paul and Virginia" and ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN. GONCOURT has had an audience few but fit, and STENDHAL is coming, after half a century, into his own. In fiction, therefore, America, it appears, has been reading of the very best. CHÂTEAUBRIAND is an antique, yet only the other day another translation of "Atala" was brought out. And we refer principally to masterpieces that have been translated. French reading Americans have naturally a much wider field in which to edify themselves.

Now, where are the "pure" works of art that M. LE ROUX proposes to show us? In "La Nouvelle Literature," by GEORGES CASELLA and ERNEST GAUBERT, there is a complete winnowing of the field from 1895 to 1905. Is it from this list the reformers would have us take our pick? Or must we again fall back on the pasteurized works of Pastor WAGNER? We enjoy MAETERLINCK, who may be called a moral writer, though to "Monna Vanna" a performance in London was forbidden. And there is RODENBACH or SAINT GEORGES DE BOUHÉLIER, BOYSLEVE or PAUL CLAUDEL, EDOUARD DUJARDIN and his remarkable "La Source du Fleuve Chrétien"; the brilliant RÉMY DE GOURMONT, GUÉRIN, CHARLES HENRY HIRSCH, and MYRIAM HARRY—whose novel was crowned by the French Academy. But why prolong the list? Where are the authors that M. LE ROUX would have us read? Where are the novels of yesteryear?

Nor is America in the darkness of ignorance as to the French classics. We have heard of RACINE, of MOLIÈRE, of CORNEILLE. Wandering French players even before the days of RACHEL and down to SARAH BERNHARDT's only yesterday have enlightened us about the ways of dramatic literature from RACINE to SARDOU. In philosophy and history DIDEROT, PASCAL, VICTOR COUSIN, GUIZOT, TAINE, THIERRY, NISARD, MICHELET, RENAN, are known to American readers. In criticism SAINTE-BEUVE and TAINE, BRUNETIÈRE, CARO, ROD, FAGUET, LEMAÎTRE and again GOURMONT need no introduction. And we have only skimmed names. The works of these writers are in all the principal cities of the country to-day and have a steady sale. French poetry may be less popular, yet HUGO, LAMARTINE, DE MUSSET, DE VIGNY, BAUDELAIRE, VERLAINE are occasionally quoted.

Certainly there are stupid people and people unenlightened who believe France to be the wickedest country on the globe. But French writers are not to blame alone for this belief. French literature has always been franker than English. The hypocrisy that weakens the latter can never be found in French letters. Besides, doesn't charity begin at home? Are not some English writing ladies showing the world that to the boulevard not all racy situations belong? Do Mesdames "FRANK DANBY," VICTORIA CROSS and ELINOR GLYN portray truthfully the "home life" of the English? And if not, then why not organize a league for the propagation of pure English literature in Paris? Fancy the despair of France if the scales should fall from its eyes and Great Britain should stand forth as its rival, possibly its superior, in wickedness!

The study of literature in sermons or the teaching of morals by compulsion is not agreeable to the temper of our times. It will take more than M. LE ROUX to convert America from its liking of "Vie de Bohème" (which is as innocent as an operetta) and make it read the literature of M. LE ROUX—who certainly is a respectable writer, and about the only one for whom MAX NORDAU ever had a good word. He attacked the Symbolist movement at a time when its acknowledged leader, PAUL VERLAINE, sneeringly alluded to it as "les Cymbalistes." By all means weed out evil fiction; weed it out whether it is French, German or English. We hold no brief for the vile so-called "realistic" novels that find their way across the Atlantic. There is plenty of good French literature, and for M. HUGUES LE ROUX and his associates to visit us with the idea that America is not acquainted with this same literature is almost insulting.

A South Seas Real Estate Sale.

The sale for $125,000 of Fanning and Washington Islands at Suva, Fiji, by order of court to Father BROUGIER of the Society of Mary should have a certain interest for the old whaling port of Stonington, as Fanning was named after Captain EDMUND FANNING of the American ship Betsy of Stonington, who discovered it in 1798. A low coral atoll that was revealed to the American whaleman only by its fringe of palms, the island appeared to have no particular value, especially as untenanted islands were not uncommon in those tropical seas. Captain FANNING ran up the colors of the new republic, but the American Government, knowing little of its own territory west of the Ohio River, paid no attention to his discovery.

Washington, some seventy miles east of Fanning, has always been associated with it, because an American named OWENS squatted on Washington about fifty years ago and sold half his interest for $616 to the firm of English & Co., which at the time owned Fanning. HENRY ENGLISH, a British subject, had bought the rights of one WILSON, another subject of her Majesty, in Fanning Island in September, 1852, and later he admitted to partnership Captain WILLIAM GREGG and GEORGE BICKNELL. As ENGLISH sold a third interest in the island to each for $6,000, the price put upon Fanning by WILSON was probably a bagatelle. In January, 1861, English & Co. induced OWENS to part with his remaining half of Washington for $770, and OWENS disappears from the chronicle; at last accounts he was looking for a less civilized home among the Pacific atolls, where he could be monarch of all he surveyed or make another turn in real estate.

ENGLISH retired from the guano and copra trade in the islands in 1864, receiving $10,000 for his third. As the half breed descendants of GREGG and BICKNELL began to multiply the South Sea paradise was invaded by the lawyers and Fanning and Washington have been in the courts ever since. The sale to Father BROUGIER presumably winds up the Fanning Island Estate and ends the litigation over undivided interests. But the new owner takes over the property subject to the jurisdiction of his Majesty King EDWARD VII. and the right of eminent domain. Should it please that ruler, who in 1895 selected Fanning as a station for a new Pacific cable to connect Canada and Australasia, he will take and appraise both islands. At the present time the buildings and grounds of the cable station occupy a space 600 yards by 400.

Although Fanning is almost under the equator it is a salubrious and pleasant place of abode. Coral filtered water, which would satisfy the test of the most exacting board of health, is obtained by digging shallow wells; the seas abound with fish and the shores with luscious shellfish; breezes balmy by day and cool by night temper the tropical heat; man's ar has made the thin soil green with pasture and crops; and once every two months a Canadian liner calls on its way to Australia, and the cable staff entertains the officers on the island tennis courts and cricket ground laid out among the palms. Out of the world and yet learning all its big news at the telegraph key the men of the Pacific Cable Company find life pleasant enough on Fanning. The Gilbert islanders call it Tapi i rangi, which means the heavenly footprint, the island, nine miles long and slender, taking the native name from its shape. By comparison Washington, with its elevations of 300 feet, is mountainous. Besides copra in large and guano in diminishing quantities, the islands produce bananas, melons, figs and garden stuff, and such large tracts are now under cultivation that Father BROUGIER in paying $125,000 for Fanning and Washington has probably made a good investment.

From the First Directory.

Professor CHARLES GEORGE HERBERMANN has subjected the first directory of New York city to an analysis with some interesting results. The directory was printed by DAVID FRANKS at the corner of Wall and Water streets in 1786, and Mr. HERBERMANN made his studies in the reprint published in 1874 by F. B. PATTERSON of 61 Liberty street. Although Mrs. LAMB's "Memorial History of New York" puts the population of the town at not more than 24,000 at any time between 1783 and 1787, and the first United States census, taken in 1790, showed 33,000 inhabitants, Mr. FRANKS gave the names of only 768 persons, from which Mr. HERBERMANN believes his aim was to produce a business directory.

In the list of saint days given in the calendar no mention is made of St. GEORGE, an omission to be accounted for on the supposition that three years after the evacuation of the town by the British the patron saint of England was not popular in the community. Already WASHINGTON's birthday was marked as a date to be remembered, indicating conclusively how early his character and deeds impressed themselves on the public mind. Oddly enough, the day given is March 11, showing the persistence of the old style calendar and the ever present typographical error. The Gregorian calendar had been adopted in England in 1752, or twenty years after WASHINGTON's birth.

Mr. HERBERMANN has taken the trouble to classify the names in the directory as far as possible according to their racial significance. Of citizens presumably of Irish blood he finds these:

"WILLIAM BYRN, Esq., —— BRYNE (merchant), G. BURKE (grocer), JAMES CEARY [CARY?] (lodging house), JOHNSON COSTIGAN (tavern keeper), —— CONNELLY (tavern keeper), Mrs. DALY (shop keeper), TIM DONOVAN (tobacconist), JOHN DALTON (surgeon), MICHAEL FALLUM (grocer), —— CARTHY (merchant), JOHN GILLELAN (grocer), JAMES and THOMAS GILLESPIE (merchants), M. KELLY (inn keeper), D. LEARY (tailor), WILLIAM LEARY (grocer), DOMINICK LYNCH (merchant), ARTHUR LAUGHERN (merchant), JOSEPH LEARY (chocolate maker), H. MULLIGAN (merchant), WILLIAM MAHON (merchant), MURRO and MCGRATH (merchants); ROBERT MACGILL (book seller), WILLIAM MOONEY (upholsterer), MARY MURPHY (tavern keeper), B. MOONEY (hatter), —— M'GUIER (tailor), —— M'QUIN (habit maker), M. ROGERS (merchant), LEON ROGERS (breeches maker), ROGERS and LYDE (merchants), MICHAEL ROBERTS (goldsmith), ROBERT REILEY (shoemaker), GEORGE SHEA (merchant), JOHN KEEFE (lawyer), JAMES M. HUGES (lawyer), JOHN KELLY (conveyancer, land and money broker), DAN MCCORMICK, (grand treasurer of Masons), PETER HUGHES (bank accountant), MICHAEL BOYLE (bank runner), WILLIAM MAGEE SETON (discount clerk), J. STEWART, HUGH WALSH (secretary of the General Society of Mechanics and Trademen)."

Applying the same system of selection and warning the reader of the extreme probability of error in such a compilation he presents these as probable Germans:

"JOHN BICKERS (carpenter), JOHN BURGER (goldsmith), J. JAMES BECKMAN (merchant), THEOPHILUS BECKMAN (merchant), JOHN BAUPELL (grocer), S. BAUMAN (grocer), G. COON (grocer), CATHERINE EICKERT (gentlewoman), LEONARD FISCHER (surgical barber), JOHN GOODBERLAT (tailor), JOHN GESNER (grocer), G. ROSEN (ale and porter house), DANIEL RYTTER (tailor), Mrs. RYLANDER (shop keeper), JOHN RITTER (tailor), RICHARD ROSEUMEN (tinman), MICHAEL RITTER (goldsmith), J. RESLER (tallow chandler), HENRY SPERING (shoemaker), G. STESTRICH (baker), JOHN SHATTEL (shoemaker), JAMES SAIDLER (merchant), HENRY SHRUPP (tavern keeper), HENRY SPINGLER (grocer), GABRIEL TIERMAN (tavern keeper), JOHN THURMAN, Esq., RICHARD WENMAN (upholsterer), SAMUEL ZELLER (baker), the Rev. JOHN D. GROSS, professor of German and geography at Columbia College; the Rev. Dr. KUNTZE, professor of Hebrew at Columbia College; OTTO DE PERIZANG (silversmith), HENRY BECKER, JOHN CLITS, CHARLES ORTZEN (peruke maker)."

The French names number twenty-one, as follows:

"DAVID CAUTON (windsor-c. m.), JOHN COLINAC (merchant), JAMES DESBROSSES, FAT and LA FORGUE (furriers), JOHN GRANDINE (shoe maker), Mrs. MILLINER GOURLAY, CATHERINE LABEC (shop keeper), LECOCK and INTLE, JAMES MONTANTDEVERT (merchant), JAMES MUISSON (apothecary), ANDREW MERCEIN (baker), Dr. MILER, —— DUMONT (merchant), JOHN RAMAGE (miniature painter), JOHN VACHER (doctor), ANTHONY LATOUR and MAREY LORRENT (peruke maker)."

Only fourteen Jewish names are given in the directory, indicating a proportion that has changed in the century and a quarter that has elapsed since this book was made. Here they are:

"SOLOMON COWEN, ISAAC FREDENBURGH (shoemaker), MOSES GOMEZ, BENJAMIN JACOBS (merchant), S. BENJAMIN JUDAH (merchant), RAYMAN LEVY (merchant), JACOB MORDECAI (vendue and commission store), ISAAC MOSES (auctioneer), PHILIP and JACOB MARK (merchants), SIMON NATHAN (merchant), ISAAC JOSHUA (merchant), A. ISAAC (tailor), MYER MYERS (goldsmith) and CARMEN HENDRICKS."

Continuing his examination further, Mr. HERBERMANN calls attention to the curious fact that in the list of members of the Society of the Cincinnati of New York State, which is printed in the directory and includes 168 names, four or five can be identified as German, while only one, that of JOHN CONNOLLY, is Irish The St. Andrew's Society had a membership of 110 regular and fourteen honorary members, including six LIVINGSTONS, one of whom was the famous Chancellor.

There is something illusively attractive in the thought that New York spends $60,000,000 a year in street car fare and takes in $120,000,000 for beer; that, statistically speaking, it requires two glasses of beer to fortify a citizen for a street car ride; that if all walked instead of riding and spent the money thus saved for beer we could not walk though we would; that if, on the contrary, all went beerless and spent the money thus saved in car fares the cars could not carry us; that between two anomalies forced to normality by total abstinence and regular exercise we should save $180,000,000 annually and each be $45 richer at the end of a year.

The Lavender Postage Stamps.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I suppose it is none of our business, but it does look a little odd to see some women of New York, who always use lavender stationery, buying three cent instead of two cent stamps to go with it, because the purple threes combine so much more harmoniously with the lavender than do the pink twos.

POST OFFICE CLERK.

NEW YORK, December 14.

Thrice!

Cæsar had thrice refused the crown.

"And I didn't demand the right to pick my successor, either," he boasted.

Thus we see that ancient rulers were modest.

WITH ROOSEVELT OUT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The retirement of the President from further effort for a renomination offers an opportunity to the Southern Democracy to use persuasion and even pressure with Mr. Bryan to take a similar step.

Abandonment of the field by Roosevelt has left Bryan a weaker opposition candidate than he would have been with Roosevelt a competitor, and for the reason that with two rival aspirants advocating substantially the same policies many voters, preferring to try a new man in the White House, would deposit a ballot for him.

The probabilities of what the Supreme Court may utter before next November in regard to corporations and the arteries of interstate trade are also to be taken into account. The court may say that it is the duty of Congress not to exclude innocent articles therefrom or deny to any persons or corporations rights therein, but to keep interstate trade moving in its appointed channels. "Step lively and move on" may be the order of the day in interstate trade. The commerce must not be hindered by the States or by Congress! Everybody must have freedom to cross the bar, subject always to the right of Congress to forbid, and that not arbitrarily, the transit of noxious articles like diseased animals! Free trade is to be really the rule, subject only to a restraint that is reasonable and in conformity with that uniformity of custom embodied in the common law to be expounded by the courts!

The probability is that when Roosevelt has left the political field his policies to the contrary of existing custom and the common law will soon go with him When that shall have happened, the issues debated during the last half dozen years by Roosevelt and Bryan will be as flat and dead as the War of 1812, and its embargo, the Mexican war, the war of secession, the greenback and legal tender issue and free silver coinage.

Perhaps Southern Democrats will think of the old rule when Democracy was victorious, that no candidate be nominated who has no chance in his own State. That severe test will permit only fourteen States, including the newest, from which a Democratic candidate can be taken next year.

Yearly increasing Democratic decay in Nebraska is fatal to her Democratic aspirations. Thirteen thousand Republican plurality on the gubernatorial vote of 1906 and more than 61 per cent. for Roosevelt of all the votes in 1904 are serious figures. It is its small electoral vote, and till 1904 not the small popular vote, that confronts the Democracy. In the popular vote in 1896 McKinley only had a plurality of 601,854 over Bryan, but he got ninety-five more electoral votes. In 1900 Bryan was beaten again by a plurality of 849,790, but McKinley had 137 more electoral votes. In 1904 Democratic defeat was so thorough that Roosevelt had a popular plurality of 2,545,515 and an excess of electoral votes amounting to 196.

Looking over the record from Bryan's first candidacy, whence are the ballots to come in 1908 that will give to him 242 electoral votes? The Republicans may win without New York, but is it possible for Democrats? Ten or a dozen years of uniform Republican pluralities for President and Governor in New York cannot be easily overcome.

It is unfortunate that it is so, but the treatment of Cleveland's administration by Bryan in 1896 has left yet many open wounds in New York. It may be said that the South generally disapproves the conduct of Cleveland's last administration, but is it good politics to bring the resentments and difficulties of 1893-96 into the affairs of 1908 by nominating Bryan if New York is to be the pivot? And why revive the memory of Bryan's treatment at Chicago in 1904 of Governor Hill, Chief Justice Parker and the New York Democratic convention? If Bryan shall be the Democratic candidate in 1908, the Republicans are quite certain to use that Chicago speech by Bryan as they did in 1904, and thereby inflame the friends of Cleveland and Parker. New York Democrats do not ask for a Cleveland or Parker nomination. They concede the candidate to the South. Does good feeling or good sense prompt Southern Democrats wantonly to disregard the admirers of Cleveland and Parker?

The Democratic problem is not any worse now than when Tilden took it in hand in 1874, and at the same time in Grant's day, as now in Roosevelt's day; but Tilden did not offensively alienate Democrats. B.

NEW YORK, December 15.

FREIGHT RATES.

Facts That Impress a Shipper of Half a Century's Experience.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It is refreshing to know that one newspaper has the courage of its convictions. I refer especially to THE SUN's article on the Roosevelt panic and particularly to the article of December 6, which expresses the sentiments of all candid, sensible men. The attacks on our industries, especially on the railroads, are entirely uncalled for, not to say vicious. Personally I have been a shipper over railroads for more than fifty years, have shipped more freight than any hundred men in our town, and I have always been treated by the railroad officials and employees in a strictly honorable, fair and honest manner.

The first car of wheat I ever shipped I bought in Cleveland, Ohio, fifty-one years ago this month. I shipped it to Deposit on the Erie at a rate of 53 cents a hundred, drew it with teams from Deposit to Rockdale, a distance of thirty miles (now on the O. & W.) at a cost of 25 cents a hundredweight, making it cost 78 cents a hundredweight from Cleveland.

We are unloading to-day a car of bran and more running on track from St. Louis, Mo., delivered within half a mile of my farm at 19½ cents a hundredweight. The same rate prevails at Sidney at our feed store, which is on the D. & H., and so on through to Albany. This is one-quarter what it cost from Cleveland to our door fifty-one years ago, and this is everybody's rate. I have not had a special rate in forty years, and this is a rate made without any assistance from Roosevelt. Twenty cents a hundredweight has been the rate to every one for years.

The attack on the men who have made this reduction possible is an outrage. Had it not been for their brains, energy and push we should still be drawing oil from the oil fields in ox carts, and it would be costing around $1.50 a gallon. I paid that for the first I ever bought. The men who have brought the price to what it is I call public benefactors. H. G. PHELPS.

SIDNEY, N. Y., December 13.

Forty-two.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* What is the game of "forty-two"? I see frequent reference to such a game in the society of the towns of the Middle West through the newspapers of that section. "Forty-two parties" seem to be all the go in the best circles. Have we had it, or do we have it, or will we have it in this town? NEW YORKER.

NEW YORK, December 14.

Grateful to Mr. Black.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Thanks are due and should be warmly rendered to ex-Governor Black for his timely and forceful utterances, as reported in to-day's SUN. Would that we could have more expressions of the same sort from thoughtful public men who have backbone—a quality sorely lacking at the present day.

NEW YORK, December 13. E. T. W.

Her Sunny Smiles.

From the Daysboro Doings.

The sunny smiles of Miss Aquilla Haddix of Grassy were seen in our midst Sunday.

New York's Azure Thoroughfare.

I learned much to my sorrow
A fact that's sad but true,
On Sunday I discovered that
The Great White Way was Blue.

F. P. P.

THE BUILDING CODE.

A Defence of the Newly Proposed Restrictive Provisions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* R. C. Babbage, vice-president of the United States Realty and Improvement Company, says that "the tendency of the proposed new Building Code is to increase the value of property upon which high buildings have already been erected and to decrease the value of properties which have not as yet been improved." This same criticism was made of the provisions of the tenement house law prior to its passage. It was true then and it is true now; but the result of the passage of the tenement house law has been to give New York's population better housing than it ever had before, even if a few owners were favored. The result of the passage of the proposed code will be to give to New Yorkers who pass their lives in other types of buildings equally good housing.

New York's fire loss is $3 per capita, against about 30 cents in the six principal cities of Europe. An owner may now build up the greater portion of a block solidly with certain classes of buildings without regard to the light and air absolutely required by his neighbors. Our large buildings are of such height and area that the Chief of the Fire Department declares he cannot hope successfully to cope with the fire hazard. Scarcely a day passes without deaths due to our faulty fire escape system. The high building of twenty stories has given way to the monstrosity of forty-five.

Where will these things end, and must New York's entire population continue to suffer from all these dangers and abuses because some few properties will "suffer greatly by the restrictions imposed by this code"? Incidentally, many properties of the class referred to can be improved under the provisions of the new code at a much less cost and with a larger rental area on account of the sensible provisions for the walls of skeleton buildings. CHARLES H. ISRAELS.

NEW YORK, December 13.

The Million and a Quarter Futilities Commission.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The Public Service Commission for the First District—Greater New York—has recently made requisition upon the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of this city, as provided in the law, for an appropriation to cover its estimated expenses for the coming year. Opportunity is thus given to taxpayers and others to judge whether present or prospective relief obtained from the charges made and from the inferior service alleged to be afforded by our public service corporations is commensurate with the cost of the commission.

The principal evidence of the activity of the commission is the issuance of orders to the prominent traffic lines that they shall give increased accommodation to their passengers, requiring the running of a greater number of trains, a larger number of cars to a train and the consequent enlargement of passenger stations. Inquiry has also been made as to the possibility of relieving the congestion of street traffic at busy centres.

A large part of the time of the commission has also been devoted to inquiries whether the principal corporations engaged in passenger transportation had permitted in recent years any improper issuance of bonds or stocks. As these companies with but few exceptions are not now paying dividends upon their shares the question of "water" in their capitalization is not of great public interest. The main question is whether the service rendered is reasonably adequate for the charge made therefor.

As to the estimated cost to taxpayers for the service of the commission, we have recently had fairly detailed information through application for an appropriation for payment thereof.

This estimated cost is stated at $1,095,000, to be paid by the city, and an addition of $150,000 thereto, to be paid by the State Treasurer, making a total cost for the coming year of $1,245,000.

The amount to be paid by the State Treasurer—$150,000—is to cover, as provided in the law, the salaries of five commissioners at $15,000 each; of counsel, at $10,000, and of secretary, $6,000—a total of $91,000. The excess required, $59,000, seemingly would provide for a liberal amount of contingencies.

The details of the remainder of the requisition, $1,095,000, have been published and cover rentals, salaries of employees and all estimated expenditures incidental to the work of the commission.

They are stated as follows:

Office and telephone rental and lighting	$50,000

With the recent great increase in office buildings with enlarged floor space in our city this would appear to an ordinary business man an excessive rental for a commission of five members, their necessary number of clerks and filing room for their papers.

Salaries required	$850,000

This is for payment of "clerks, inspectors, experts and employees of the commission and persons appointed by counsel to the commission." At a liberal average rate of salary for such employees this amount would provide for upward of 400 employees. There are, however, the following requisitions made for incidental expenses and properly chargeable to cost of clerical service:

Disbursements of employees and of counsel	$15,000
Compensation of special commissioners	10,000
Contingencies and rapid transit studies	50,000
Special service and investigation	50,000
Extra charge, employees	$125,000
Salaries, employees	850,000
Total, employees	$975,000

The indirect charges of the offices are these:

Printing, stationery and supplies	$25,000
Maps, plans and photographs	5,000
Engineering instruments and supplies	10,000
Real estate search and appraisal	2,500
Advertising [why?]	25,000
Incidentals	$67,500
Finally:	
Furniture for the $50,000 offices	$2,500

Thus the total direct charge to the city is $1,095,000. To this add the $150,000 paid by the State Treasurer, but which the city will be obliged to reimburse ultimately by its contribution to State taxes. This makes the total estimate of $1,245,000 for the services of the commission for one year.

Truly, Father Knickerbocker will have to pay heavily for political relief from alleged corporate abuses. W. H. GRANBERY.

NEW YORK, December 14.

The Coming Day.

Give to it, seasons four,
The treasures of your way,
The best you have of all your hoard
To make a Christmas Day.

Save for it, winter brave,
Cool judgment of the snow
Which charitably covers all
In whiteness here below.

Store for it, summer fair,
The warmth for hearts of men
To fuse the countless broken links
In brotherhood again.

Reap for it, autumn rich,
The sign of toil's release,
The garnered gold of harvesting,
The mellowness of peace.

Pluck for it, laughing spring,
All promises of earth,
The guerdon of the better age,
The Mystery of Birth.

MCLANDBURGH WILSON.

BEAUTIES OF RURAL LIFE.

Benefits Business Men, Their Families and the Nation May Get From It.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* How very few men in this city who can well afford to lead the life of a country gentleman ever stop to think what advantages such a life offers in comparison to that which they are leading to-day!

Life spent in the country is not only prolonged from a physical standpoint but also makes possible the enjoyment of details outdoors and at the domestic hearth heretofore undreamed of, thereby adding so much to its attractiveness as to lengthen each day and night—if not actually, at least literally.

The benefits of life in the country are no less for the business man's family, for although in the case of the younger members the attractions of a great city may have a fascination, still it is at best a frivolous life, breeding rather vanity and a low standard of morals, as against evidences of gentility acquired through close contact with nature which is possible only in the country, not to mention the opportunity for intellectual advancement in the city destroyed by social obligations.

Many will smile and say the country is all very well in the summer but has few attractions in the winter. Without going into the details of the beneficial results derived from walking or driving in the bracing country air, and such winter sports as sleighing or skating, which are almost unknown in the city, I will go to the other extreme and inquire if there is any household in the city that can boast of such cheerful cosiness as is imparted by the open logwood fire in the humblest country home on the bleakest and most disagreeable day in winter?

I should hesitate to deliver myself of the foregoing were the advantages pointed out to benefit simply the business man or his family, but the country at large would profit as well, for the absence of grave business cares is very likely to give way to a serious interest in politics and restore to him his chief function of citizenship, a function heretofore permitted to go by default to another type of business man, one who does not allow business to interfere with his politics but who makes politics his business, makes it his business to see that the business man is not burdened with such details as selecting candidates or shaping policies and has to do nothing more than cast the ballot which elects the politician's candidate. No necessity for calm consideration of grave political questions; the politician attends to that for all those who are hampered from doing so by business. A. V.

NEW YORK, December 14.

Permanent Opera for Boston?

BOSTON, Dec. 14.—A permanent opera in Boston is promised. It is announced that a certain citizen of this town will build a house seating 2,500, that the boxholders will guarantee expenses, the other seats selling below the Metropolitan Opera House Company's road prices, and that Henry Russell of the San Carlo Opera Company, now performing in Boston, will direct the enterprise. The singers, we are told, will be of distinction, but probably not of the widest celebrity, and the resources of the New England Conservatory of Music will be so drawn upon as to make the relation reciprocally advantageous to the opera house and the school.

No North American city but New Orleans has ever imitated New York long in the maintenance of its own opera. New Orleans, like Havana, Rio Janeiro and Buenos Ayres, has among its well to do people a numerous element who either through frequent sojourns in Paris or through the influence of others addicted to the Paris habit have a trained taste for opera and support the operatic tradition. Boston's population is much greater than that of any of the French or Spanish American cities, and incomparably richer. The Puritan temperament was inhospitable to the fine arts, but has mellowed with time and with the civilizing admixture of other stocks, especially the Irish. The music industry, both the manufacture of instruments and the performance, appreciation and teaching of music, has given some local critics courage to place Boston first in this country as a musical centre.

If students are to be attracted to any city in greatly increasing numbers, good music adequately performed and plenty of it must be available, not excluding a reasonably comprehensive season of grand opera. In Boston the concerts of the Symphony Orchestra are celebrated. Excellent chamber recitals abound. Several choral societies give oratorio. But for grand opera the city has had to depend upon the caprice of fortune, the whim of a travelling impresario, or the 1 o'clock train to New York. Two years ago Herr Conried declared that a people who, like the Bostonians, would not attend his performances of "Parsifal" after having already just previously been filled with what he intimated were the bogus presentations by Colonel Henry W. Savage's talent, was hopelessly barbarous, and had been stricken off his map. Performances since, however, alike by the Metropolitan, the San Carlo and the Savage companies, have demonstrated that Boston is determined to hear opera, even if she must go to it straight from the office just as she is.

To maintain musical entertainments of various kinds so that students will find that part of their education at hand, it is not enough to make both ends meet if the students alone buy tickets. Local support is necessary. An individual, Major Henry L. Higginson, has for many years met the deficit of the Symphony Orchestra. The boxholders' guarantee would distribute a little more equitably than this any losses of the proposed opera house. Perhaps the time is near when both orchestra and opera will be supported by the public without asking alms, and when not only Boston but Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington may enjoy what the more highly organized though smaller and "slower" cities of French and Spanish extraction have long maintained. A leaf might be taken from Boston's book in the matter of cultivating artistic thirst under glass. The Municipal Music Commission, probably infected with the current Boston enthusiasm for boosting local industries, has this winter provided a lecturer to go along with the city orchestra and explain the free public concerts. It is hoped thus to foster the grace of appreciation in many who are not to acquire the art of performance. This new body of understanding listeners will incidentally become ticket takers for all kinds of musical occasions, and by the same token carry corn to the hoppers of all who have anything to sell students, from instruction and fiddle strings to broiled live and the marcel wave.

Work for Ex-Senator Stewart.

Washington correspondence Boston Herald.

Ex-Senator William M. Stewart of Nevada, who is taking a little vacation from the Bullfrog mining camps, is one of the most distinguished looking men in America. He is of commanding height, a physical giant, and a pair of kindly blue eyes beam from a fine face, which is surmounted by a crop of snow white hair and fringed around the chin by a set of ermine whiskers that would take a prize 'most anywhere.

He was walking down F street in the shopping district the other day when the manager of the toy department of one of the big department stores, who was out for luncheon, rushed up to him:

"Excuse me," said the toy man, "I don't want to offend you, but if you will come up to Blank's store and play Santa Claus in the toy department until Christmas Eve we'll pay you $50 a week. All you'll have to do will be to dress up in a fancy costume, put a pack of toys on your back and sit upon a platform for the people to look at you."

"My friend," said the old pioneer miner and statesman, who has just made another fortune. "I've been playing Santa Claus to the children for three-quarters of a century, but I never got anything for it—it always costs me money. Sorry I can't accept your offer, but I'm glad that an old man like me is worth $50 a week."

Petroleum.

Whereas in 1905 the United States produced 134,717,580 barrels of petroleum, in 1906 the production was 126,493,936 barrels, a decrease of 8,223,644 barrels.

The world's productions were: In 1905, 213,983,524 barrels; in 1906, 211,411,178 barrels; decrease, 2,572,351 barrels.

Thus the United States decrease was more than three times as much as the world's decrease.

Russia gained about 4,000,000 barrels and Rumania about 2,000,000.

Mathematics.

Teacher—Now, Johnny, why is it more blessed to give than to receive?

Johnny—Because when you receive you've got to give something better.