The Call

THURSDAY.....FEBRUARY 15, 1900

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AMUSEMENTS.

Columbia—"The Viceroy."
Orpheum—Vaudeville.
Tivoli—"The Idol's Eye."
Grand Opera-house—"Alladin Jr."
Alhambra—Jeffries-Sharkey Contest Pictures.
California—"An Unconventional Honeymoon."
Alcazar—"Oh, Susannah."
Chutes, Zoo and Theater—Vaudeville every afternoon and evening.
Olympia, corner Mason and Ellis streets—Specialties.
Mechanics' Pavilion—Prize Masquerade, Saturday Night.
Western Turf Association—Races to-day.

AUCTION SALES.

By New York Auction Co.—Tuesday, February 20, at 11 o'clock, Government supplies, at 316 Washington street.

TO AMEND THE CHARTER.

BY the subtle skill of Attorney Pillsbury the new charter was drawn up in such a way as to deprive the municipal government of authority to supervise and regulate telephone companies. Flushed with gratification at the success of the trick and sanguine of their power to defy the people, the telephone companies have announced a determination not only to maintain their present exorbitant rates and old abuses, but to shirk their taxes by shifting them upon the patrons of the line. "We shall put the taxes in the bill," said the secretary of the company, "and then we shall see some lively kicking."

It is one of the good things of this world that the law of compensation works out redress for almost all evils. "He that roars for liberty faster binds the tyrant's power, and the tyrant's cruel glee forces on the freer hour." The ululation of the telephone men over their "cinch" upon the public has aroused popular indignation, and there is a bright prospect ahead of a redress that will be drastic and lasting.

The people have two avenues of redress against the exactions and the tax-shirking of the telephone company. By one they can appeal to the Legislature. By the other they can take the matter in their own hands and amend the charter so as to restore to the municipality its rightful power to supervise all corporations operating under municipal franchises and controlling public utilities. The first avenue can be resorted to only when the Legislature meets next winter. In the meantime, therefore, it will be worth while to make use of the second.

The charter provides that whenever 15 per cent of the voters at the previous municipal or State election shall petition the Supervisors to call an election for the purpose of amending the charter, it shall be the duty of the Supervisors to do so, and to make all provisions for it. Under that clause it is in the power of the people to restore to the municipality the power of which it was cheated by the cleverness of the telephone attorney.

Since the telephone company appears determined neither to put a stop to its exactions nor to pay its taxes, it will be well for the people to take steps at once to call for an election for such an amendment. The issue is one of the highest importance, because if the telephone company be permitted to shift its taxes upon the public, other corporations will follow the evil example. The attention of public-spirited citizens should be given to the issue at once. As it stands the charter is gravely defective in exempting one corporation from a rule that applies to all others, and the defect should be remedied without delay.

AIR AS A LUBRICATOR.

ACCORDING to one of our Scotch exchanges there has been recently tested on the Tay an invention which promises to be of even more advantage to ocean transportation than the famous Turbina, of which so much was heard a year or so ago. The latter invention is one of mechanism, and can be made use of in a steamship only by displacing a considerable part of the machinery now employed. The new one can be used in any kind of a steamship and with any kind of machinery, since it consists solely in providing a lubricator, which will permit the ship to pass through the water with little or no friction.

It is well known that when a steamer is propelled through the water she meets with a degree of resistance that varies with her speed. As the inventor, R. S. Baxter, is quoted as putting it: "It is a case of one body being forced to slide upon another without the intervention of a suitable third body between them to act as lubricator." It is said the only substance that can be profitably used between the ship and the sea as a lubricant is air, and the inventor claims to have devised a means by which its use is made practicable.

The "aspirator," as the machine is called which supplies the air, is described as being self-acting and without any moving parts. It is a V-shaped air channel, which passes down the vessel's stem as far as the keel, and in most cases goes a certain distance along the keel. This channel may be either inside or outside the vessel, and is provided with certain protected openings or ports constructed in such a way that the water rushing past them produces a minus pressure within them, and consequently draws out a continuous stream of air, which, passing along the submerged surface of the ship, cuts off the immediate contact with the water, and therefore the water friction.

It is the claim of the inventor that by means of his process a steamer makes her voyage in a continuous air jacket. The air of course ultimately rises to the surface of the water, but if the ship be going at a fair degree of speed she will pass her whole length through the air current before it escapes. It is said that in the experiments made with steamships on the Tay there was an increase of speed amounting to from 21 to 26 per cent of the ordinary speed of the ship, and it was noted that the greater percentage of increase was in ships that had the greater speed to begin with.

The tests made in the Tay can hardly be taken as sufficient demonstration of the usefulness of the invention. It appears, however, to be one that can be easily tried and without great cost on ocean steamers. If the claims of the inventor, therefore, be well founded it will not be long before the air-jacket will be used on almost every steamship that crosses the sea. We shall then have not only air-brakes on our railroads, but air lubricants on our ships, and perhaps, ere long, condensed air or liquid air to run the mechanism of both.

THE POLICE COMMISSION.

MAYOR PHELAN has been baffled in his effort to turn the Police Department over to Andrew M. Lawrence and the gamblers, but he has found under the charter a means of revenging himself upon the man who baffled him, and William J. Biggy has been dismissed from the Police Commission. For the present the issue rests with the reorganization of the commission by the appointments of William T. Wallace and D. I. Mahoney, and the election of William P. Sullivan Jr. to the position of Chief of Police. With the new order of things the public will be fairly well satisfied. The new Commissioners and the new Chief will be given the confidence of the people to start with, and they will not lose it unless they betray it.

Out of the controversy Mr. Biggy emerges with honor. Long ago the Examiner said of him: "He is the sort of man who could make himself felt whether he stood with eleven or alone. If he were in a minority he would meet every corrupt scheme with an opposition so vigorous, persistent and disturbing that he would attract the attention of the whole community." As a Police Commissioner Mr. Biggy fulfilled the literal and plain meaning of those words, but the false journal that published them is now reviling him because he did not give the lie to its commendation.

Before the subject is dismissed from public consideration it is well that due attention be given to certain features of it which are of permanent interest because of the light they throw upon the character of the principal persons involved. In the first place, let Mayor Phelan be judged by the evidence of his own statements, made not in the carelessness of private conversation, but in the deliberateness of public documents.

In his communication to the Board of Supervisors setting forth his reasons for removing Commissioner Biggy the Mayor refers to the cause which led to his appointment, and says: "In appointing the Police Commission I had it at first composed of Messrs. Thomas, McNutt, Newhall and David I. Mahoney, subsequently named as a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners. The day before the appointments were announced Mr. Biggy made a personal application and appeal to me for this place, to which I yielded."

Contrast that statement of the Mayor with this, which he made in an open letter to the Examiner, published January 17: "I think the character of my appointees is a sufficient guarantee to the public of the sincerity of my intentions. I had canvassed their names in common with others and found them free from entangling alliances. William Thomas was at the head of his profession. Dr. W. F. McNutt stood in the same relation to his profession. W. J. Biggy had an irreproachable public record, and George A. Newhall was a leader among merchants of the city."

Such are two of the statements of the Mayor concerning the appointment. In the one he asserts he had thoroughly canvassed Mr. Biggy's fitness for the office and found him a man of irreproachable public record. In the other he asserts he had not considered Biggy at all, but at the last moment gave the office at Biggy's personal solicitation.

Both of these statements cannot be true, for the truth is ever consistent with itself; but both can be false, for falsehoods are not bound by consistency. Both of them are false. The truth is given by Mr. Biggy himself in the announcement that he was given the appointment to the commission not by Phelan, but by Lawrence, to whom the Mayor had given the four Police Commissionerships to be filled by Lawrence's friends.

With that evidence now fairly before the public the statements of The Call concerning Phelan's ante-election pledges have been proven beyond further gainsaying. The reformers, moreover, have now a full revelation of the character of Phelan and of the kind of men to whom he was and is willing to intrust the police affairs of the community. In the exposure of this shameful agreement and conspiracy we have no desire to linger. It may be that in politics as in other matters "all is well that ends well," and in some respects this fight has ended to the satisfaction of the public. The Lawrence bargain has been defeated and the scheme of the gamblers baffled. For that good result the public is indebted to William J. Biggy, who retires from office with an unstained honor and the satisfaction of having saved the city from disgrace and the people from the corruptions of a wide-open town.

Congressman Sulzer has astounded his friends by an unexpected exhibition of common sense. He says he has troubles of his own and positively declines to be yoked to William Jennings Bryan in the Presidential race.

THE SHIPPING BILL.

COINCIDENT with the report from Washington that the shipping bill may not be taken up at this session of Congress comes the announcement that the trans-Atlantic mail service is seriously affected by a lack of steamships to carry it. The British have withdrawn a good many Atlantic steamers for the transportation of troops to South Africa, and the United States has none to take their place.

Commenting upon the situation the Boston Transcript said on February 1: "The taking off of the Etruria for transport service has led to various irregularities in our foreign mails. The Pennsylvania has been held to take her mails from this side, and the Germanic has suffered a similar fate in taking the mails of the Umbria." To that statement of fact is added: "Postal authorities are agreed in the opinion that an American line of mail steamers given a proper subsidy would bring about an improvement at once in mail service, not only by the actual carrying of mails from this country on Wednesdays and Saturdays of each week, but by stimulating the British lines to activity and toning up the foreign service. At present the mails for this country from England are taken at Liverpool, although the last land touched is at Queenstown. Were the foreign mails carried by the American line, for instance, they might be taken on at Southampton, some nineteen hours later, affording another business day's mail an opportunity to be forwarded quickly to this country. From the point of view of the postal service, and of course this is more or less the point of view of every business house with foreign correspondents, an American mail subsidy would prove of immense value."

That is but one of the many evidences the time affords of the urgency of the upbuilding of our merchant marine. It is an important phase of the issue, but by no means the most important, for we need a merchant marine to carry our commerce as well as to carry the mail. It is, however, a pertinent subject for consideration, since it has happened just at the time when Congress is apparently hesitating to enact the shipping bill the country demands.

To neglect to provide for our merchant marine at this session would be upon the part of the Republicans of Congress a blunder in party politics as well as in statecraft. In 1896 the Republicans pledged themselves to re-enact a protective tariff, maintain the gold standard and provide for American shipping. Two of those pledges have been fulfilled. The gold standard has been firmly upheld, a comprehensive protective tariff is in force, and, despite the efforts of Kasson to weaken it by one-sided reciprocity treaties, will continue in force. There remains the shipping industry of the country to be provided for, and that duty should be attended to before the Presidential campaign opens.

In a broader view of the case, it will be unfortunate for every industry of the nation if the shipping bill be not passed, for at this juncture in our affairs the welfare of all is dependent upon the expansion of our commerce and the transportation of our surplus products to foreign markets. The protective tariff itself will be hardly more beneficial to the country than this measure, which is designed to supplement it by giving protection to our industries on sea as well as on land.

The opposition is powerful. The subsidized steamship companies of the Old World dread the menace of American competition, and they find not a few allies in our own country to co-operate with them in their efforts to prevent such competition. Added to their strength is all that of the inveterate free traders, who oppose anything in the way of governmental aid to industry. It is a formidable force to overcome, but the strength that supports the bill is strong enough to master it. Republicans who are resolute in the contest will find the people with them on election day.

If there be any set of people who are fully and truly opposed to the Hay-Pauncefote treaty it is Panama canal boomers. The project of the Nicaragua enterprise under the treaty reduces their scheme to the limbo of dead hopes.

WAYS THAT ARE DARK.

SHOULD the Supervisors carry out the recommendation of the Finance Committee, this city will for some time to come be literally a community of "ways that are dark." The recommendation is that from March 1 to July 1 the street lamps shall be unlighted. That means that during the four months of March, April, May and June the city is to have no lights except such as shine through the windows of shops and barrooms. At least two of these months are within the rainy season, when the nights are apt to be clouded and even the starlight obscured. Thus for many nights we are to have the blackness of Egyptian gloom, and a carnival time for all the criminal classes that prowl in the dark.

The excuse for this outrage upon the community is that of economy and reform. The people put trust in the loud vauntings of the reformers at the last election, and now they receive the reward which never fails those who are credulous enough to believe the professions of that class of politicians. It was in a condition of mental darkness that the suffrages of the people were given to the reformers, and it is in four months of physical darkness they will have to repent their folly.

It is now conceded by the reformers themselves that it will cost more money to conduct the municipal government under the new charter than under the consolidation act. They are ready to make that concession, for they are now in office and have no further use for misrepresentation and buncombe. More money is needed and more money will have to be forthcoming, and until it is forthcoming the city is to be in darkness and the people are to stay at home at night, carry lanterns, or take their chances with thieves, thugs and hoodlums in the gloom.

Some of the reformers have grown weary of the consequences of their folly and have begun to devise ways and means for avoiding them. Assessor Dodge is one of that class. He recently concocted a scheme to raise the assessment of property in San Francisco to the extent of $100,000,000, and requested the State Board of Equalization to connive at the fraud without taking advantage of it. His request was that the State Board should cut down the assessment he proposes to make by $100,000,000, so as to prevent San Francisco property from being taxed to that amount for State purposes, while the tax was collected for municipal purposes.

It is to such a condition we have been brought by the Phelan reformers. The Assessor is to put us up to tricks that are vain, and the Supervisors are to reduce us to ways that are dark. In the nights of gloom when the taxpayer wends his way home through the unlighted streets he will have ample opportunity to meditate upon the ways of political reformers in general and the Phelanites in particular, and if he escape the dangers of the dark he will know how to vote when the next municipal election takes place.

For the present there appears no remedy for the evil. At the very threshold of the new era, at the very time when the expanding commerce of the Pacific Ocean is likely to attract most attention to San Francisco, we are to exhibit ourselves as a back-number town—as the only city of its size in the civilized world without street lighting at night.

The Great West will hail with delight the latest news from Washington. It is to the effect that the House Committee on Mines and Mining has decided to report favorably on a measure providing for a Department of Mines, with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet. Score one for the miners.

Edward Dunne of Chicago has a get-rich-quick scheme that he claims to have brought out for the benefit of the world at large. His main object, however, seems to be to take in the daily increasing family of suckers under the name of "done." The postal authorities are looking into his case.

The Supervisorial inquiry into the subject of water rates has revealed the fact that William F. Herrin is a consulting attorney for the Spring Valley Water Company. With whom he consults, however, is left as a matter for interesting speculation.

It was necessary for the Paris police the other day to quell a riot, smash several heads and make wholesale arrests in order that a nihilist might be buried. This may be another instance of the force of one's opinions continuing after death.

The German Agrarians have declared they will not vote for the Kaiser's naval programme unless the Kaiser will shut American products out of Germany, but perhaps the Kaiser can find a way of persuading them to be reasonable.

The tariff on lives in our local Chinese colony will now probably be reduced to meet the demand. The penitential season of New Year is over and the hatchetmen are returning to town ready for work.

If the Chinese continue to hide the bodies of their dead in Chinatown, it might be a measure conducive of health for the Board of Health to appoint a graveyard inspector for the district.

TWO ASPECTS OF IMPERIALISM.

—Rocky Mountain News.

WHY GREAT BRITAIN CANNOT WIN.

Original Views of an Influential Boer Who Has Studied the Transvaal Situation.

THERE is a strong suspicion that the defection of the Cape Afrikanders to the forces of the two republics is much more general than the censored news received in Europe would lead one to suppose. Middleburg, Paarl, Victoria West, Worcester, Wellington, Malmesbury have not yet been invaded by the Boers, but the population is in a state of ferment, as the English correspondents inform their papers. Members of some of the best families have joined the Boers. The son of Mr. Theron, member of the Cape Parliament, wired to his father: "Farewell! I'm off to the front." Theron sent the message to Sir Alfred Milner with the short remark: "This is my only son!"

We summarize the following from the Gotha Petermann's Mittheilungen, as to the relative strength of the Dutch and Anglo-Saxon elements:

The official British statistics furnish no clew as regards the number of Dutch, but the church registers of the three great Dutch churches do. They have a registered membership of 350,000. All these may be reckoned as sympathizers with the Boers. Dutch Afrikanders of the towns and mines who have been Anglicized are not included in this estimate. But even with these, the English element number hardly 140,000, exclusive of the troops, as there are 10,000 to 20,000 of other nationalities. Of the white population in the republics, 280,000 are Boers, 60,000 British and 40,000 other "Uitlanders." Throughout all South Africa there are 645,000 Boers, 245,000 British and 90,000 other whites.

* * *

It is claimed that illiteracy is less common among the Boers of Cape Colony than in England, and that although the wealthy Boers prefer on the whole to lead the life of country gentlemen, the percentage of highly educated men is greater among them than among the same class in England. The ideas that this class entertain concerning England are probably fairly well represented in the following communication addressed by an Afrikander, then resident in London, to the London Times several weeks ago:

We are not as ignorant as British statesmen and newspaper writers, nor are we such fools as you British are. We wanted delay, we got it, and are now practically masters. We know facts, such as the following:

1. The powers do not intend you to get possession of the Transvaal gold. After encouraging you to believe that they will not interfere, they will assist us directly or indirectly to drive you out of Africa.
2. We know that you dare not take the precautions necessary to prevent this, as your lazy, dirty, drunken working classes will not allow themselves to be taxed sufficiently to preserve the empire.
3. We know that you are permitted to exist as a power only on suffrance. You must truckle to the United States or starve. If the Americans stop your food there will be rebellion, for patriotism does not exist among your working classes.
4. For fifty years you have been too prosperous. There is no nerve in you. Your hired soldiers are the dregs of the population, deficient in all physical, moral and mental qualities that make good fighting men.
5. Your officers are either pedantic scholars or frivolous society men. Even the Afridis were more than a match for you.
6. Your men are so weakened by loathsome diseases that they cannot endure the hardships of war.
7. Your whole race is decaying.
8. Your statesmen lack will power and shirk responsibility as much as possible.
9. Your big navy is corruptly administered.
10. We know that your men are inferior as marksmen not only to the Germans, French and Americans, but also to the Japanese, Afridis, Chileans, Peruvians, Belgians and Russians.
11. We know that the British people would rather be conquered than be compelled to serve as soldiers.
12. We Boers know that it is not our destiny to be governed by British curs, but that we will drive you from Africa, leaving the other manly nations to divide the rest of your empire.

Talk no more of Boer ignorance. In a little while you will be imploring the great German Emperior to help you, for your humiliations are not yet complete. Three hundred thousand Dutch heroes will trample you under foot. We can afford to tell you the truth now.

A DAILY HINT FROM PARIS.

VELVET AND ERMINE MANTLE.

The carriage mantle represented is absolutely new. It is composed of a tight-fitting jacket of black velvet, with stole collar of ermine, partly concealed in front by a full pelerine of drab velvet, bordered and lined with ermine. Nothing is visible behind but the pelerine.

PAPER DRESS AND MASQUE

Dance, Tea, and Luncheon Keep the Swell Set Busy.

Novelty and originality were the two striking features of the paper dress masque given by Miss Charlotte Ellinwood at the home of her parents on Pacific avenue last evening. It was madly merry, as all entertainments of its ilk should be, and the informality which characterized the affair added not a little to the jollity. The decorations of the home were exceptionally beautiful, and wild bridal wreaths, ferns and grasses were utilized in the production of the pleasing results.

Mrs. Ellinwood received the guests, some seventy-five young people, each one of whom seemed costumed in more gorgeous paper array than the others. Miss Ellinwood made a fascinating red paper poppy, and her friend, Miss Blakeman, wore a similar gown. These two charming girls, with their paper dresses alike in every feature, added not a little to the general merriment by the clever way in which they succeeded in mystifying the guests.

General dancing and a cotillon, for which dainty valentines were distributed as favors, made up the pleasures of the evening.

Mrs. W. D. O'Kane gave a delightful tea at her home on Broadway yesterday afternoon complimentary to Mrs. Dupeny and Miss Tillie Feldmann. The hours of the tea were from 4 till 6, during which time about 100 ladies called to pay their respects to the charming hostess and her guests of honor.

The elegant home, so splendidly adapted for entertaining, was gorgeous with golden acacia and violets, with palms, ferns and long grasses for a background. In the drawing-room red was the prevailing tone and brilliant carnations and dainty valentines were used with delightful artistic effects.

Ten young ladies assisted Mrs. O'Kane in receiving her guests, and in the evening the receiving party were joined by an equal number of gentlemen at dinner.

Miss Therese Morgan gave a dainty luncheon yesterday at her home on Clay street. It was a strictly informal affair, but nevertheless charming.

Lieutenant Lyman Welch and Miss Edith Knowlton were married yesterday afternoon at the apartments of the bride's father, Major Joseph Knowlton, in the Hotel St. Nicholas. It was a very quiet affair and only relatives and immediate friends witnessed the ceremony, at which Dr. Mackenzie officiated.

The bride wore an exquisite white satin gown trimmed with rare old lace. There was no bridal party. Lieutenant and Mrs. Welch left last evening for the south, where the honeymoon will be spent.

The ladies of the Forum Club listened yesterday afternoon to a delightful lecture on Shakespeare's Portia by Howard Malcolm Tichnor. Mr. Tichnor's paper was voted an interesting and delightful success by the club members, who finished the afternoon around the tea table.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BRITISH SOLDIERS—A. O. S., City—There is no conscription law in England, consequently there cannot be any drafting of citizens for the army.

BONDS—E. U., City. United States bonds are not exempt from execution on an attachment—that is, if the officer holding the papers can lay his hands on them.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR — The Spanish-American war commenced Thursday, April 21, 1898, at 7 a. m. On Friday, August 12, 1898, at 4:23 p. m. the peace protocol was signed and armistice proclaimed, which was virtually the end of the war. The treaty of peace was signed at Paris, France, Saturday, December 10, 1898.

THE VOTE FOR HAIGHT—M. B., City. At the election held in this State September 4, 1867, Henry H. Haight, candidate for Governor, received 49,905 votes; George C. Gorham, 40,359, and Caleb T. Fay, 2088. At the succeeding election, September 6, 1871, Newton Booth received 62,581 votes and Henry H. Haight 57,520.

NAVIGATION—C. A. E., City. A young man who desires to study navigation, "but does not desire to remain before the mast all his life; to tread the quarterdeck being his ambition," can study navigation in schools for that purpose. The department of Answers to Correspondents cannot advertise schools that teach navigation.

NAVIGATION SCHOOLS—C. A. E., City. If you were the "careful reader" you declare you are you would have noticed that this department does not advertise private institutions nor any business whatever, and consequently could not, through the paper, give you the names and addresses of navigation schools. Had you been a close reader you would have noticed in this department that if you had sent your name and address with a 2-cent stamp for reply by mail, you would have received the reply long ago and would have saved yourself the trouble of writing a second letter of inquiry.

Cal. glace fruit 50c per lb at Townsend's.*

Guillet's Ice Cream and Cakes, 905 Larkin st.*

Special information supplied daily to business houses and public men by the Press Clipping Bureau (Allen's), 510 Montgomery street. Telephone Main 1042. *

Postal Changes.

A. R. Imbrie, clerk, and I. C. Gross, first-class carrier in the San Francisco Postoffice, have been detailed for duty in the Philippines at the Manila Postoffice.

Personally Conducted Excursions

In improved wide-vestibuled Pullman tourist sleeping cars via Santa Fe Route. Experienced excursion conductors accompany these excursions to look after the welfare of passengers. To Chicago and Kansas City every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. To Boston, Montreal and Toronto every Wednesday. To St. Louis every Sunday. To St. Paul every Sunday and Friday. Ticket office, 628 Market street.

No buffet should be without a bottle of Dr. Siegert's Angostura Bitters, the South American appetizer and invigorator.

The Fastest Train Across the Continent.

The California Limited, Santa Fe Route. Connecting trains leave at 5 p. m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Finest equipped train and best track of any line to the East. Ticket office, 628 Market street.

John Mulholland Fails.

John Mulholland of this city filed a petition in insolvency yesterday in the United States District Court. His liabilities are $1217 10 and he has no assets.

ZARINA
No. 1.
RUSSIAN
CIGARETTES
With Mouthpiece
10 cents for 10
Monopol Tobacco Works