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AMUSEMENTS.

Central-"Siberia." Alcazar-"We Uns of Tennessee." Columbia-"The Case of the Maxim's." Grand Opera-house-"Faust." California-"Yon Yonson." Tivoli-"The Geisha." Chutes, Zoo and Theatre-Vaudeville every afternoon and evening. Fischer's-Vaudeville. Oakland Race-track-Races to-day.

FIGURES VERSUS FACTS.

THE uniform increase in the volume of business which has prevailed throughout the country for many months was broken last week by a falling off of 9 per cent at Boston and one of 1.7 per cent at Baltimore. These are small losses, and are noteworthy only because not one of the important cities has shown any decrease for a long time. The total clearances, too, were smaller, falling to a gain of 6.1 per cent over the corresponding week of 1900, while the increase at most of the large centers was considerably lighter than of late, that at New York, for instance, amounting to only 7.4 per cent, against 50, 60, and even as high as 100 per cent for some time back. These figures would seem to indicate a decreasing volume of business throughout the country, but the commercial reports from the different sections show no falling off in the movement of produce and merchandise, if a decline in provisions, accompanied with slowly accumulating stocks, at Chicago be excepted. There is the same complaint of the scarcity of cars to handle the freight offered, the same flattering reports from the iron trade, the same mention of the large re-order demand from jobbers almost everywhere, and a general report of a large demand for holiday goods. In the iron trade, especially, the call for pig iron has caused another advance of 50 cents and \$1 per ton at almost all markets, while the Chicago steel rail mills, which produce one-third of the national output, are sold one year ahead. Locomotive works are also sold far in advance, while Central Western mills will not promise deliveries of steel bars under sixty days; and structural material is hard to get. The New England boot and shoe factories are so busy that the usual slowdown between seasons will be generally omitted this year. All this does not look like any falling off in trade, as indicated by the steadily decreasing bank clearings.

Most staples stand about the same as a week ago. Hides are easing off somewhat and are quoted quieter at a number of points, and several grocery staples have declined during the past week. The tendency in provisions, as mentioned above, is downward, though the decline is slight and very slow. A large increase in the American visible supply of wheat, coupled with liberal supplies on passage to the European consuming countries, has checked the advance previously noted in this cereal, though wheat is being fed to stock in large quantities, not only in this country but in Europe, owing to the light supplies of corn and oats, both of which are in urgent demand all over the West. The woolen and cotton industries remain as before.

Wall street is running along without much excitement these days. The stock market is in strong hands, and any decline is promptly checked by the enormous corporate interests, which will not permit the market to go down, even if brute financial strength is required to hold it up. If values recede to-day they recover to-morrow. The banks are watching this business carefully and are wondering how long the great moneyed interests of the country are going to remain on the long side of stocks. They are getting conservative about their loans on the industrial, too, but have plenty of funds for good securities, nevertheless, at normal rates of interest. Exports of gold from New York to Europe last week attracted general attention, but nobody seemed to know why the gold was going there-whether to restore some scattering balances or to meet a European demand for funds, or for investment. Various causes were assigned, but even Wall street itself professed ignorance as to the real definite cause. At any rate, the shipments produced no effect of consequence, as the country has plenty of gold.

Our local situation remains without change, general activity and prosperity being reported throughout the city and State.

A recent snowstorm covered the whole central region of New York with ten inches of snow, and the foolish people began to get ready for sleigh-riding instead of taking the first train for California.

More and more it is becoming evident to Congressmen that the people are satisfied with the condition of industry and trade and are opposed to any one-sided reciprocity treaties or any tinkering with the tariff.

THE OIL RATE HEARING.

WHEN the Railroad Commission, after having made a small reduction in oil rates, suddenly set the decision aside and called for a rehearing the public expected something funny to happen. The expectation was increased by the statement of the Commissioners that the rehearing was granted at the request of the railroad in order to permit the oil men to make a better showing. As it was the first time on record that the loser in a suit ever asked for a new trial for the purpose of giving the winner an opportunity to get a bigger verdict, it was recognized that the commission had introduced a novelty in its business and that the vaudeville stage was no longer to have a monopoly of original stunts.

The rehearing is now under way, and enough has been already brought forth to satisfy the expectations of comedy. In the first place, to the surprise of the commission, the oil men have really strengthened their case by producing evidence from Traffic Manager Bissell of the Santa Fe road to the effect that while the Southern Pacific charges the general oil traffic from \$5 to \$7 per car for hauling over the Kern district switch, it charges the Santa Fe road only \$1 50 per car for the same service. Here is a gross discrimination in rates and a proof that the Southern Pacific makes a charge of as much as \$7 for a service it can afford to render and does render to certain parties for \$1 50.

It was when the witnesses for the Southern Pacific came to the front, however, that the comic stunts began. These witnesses one and all gave solemn seeming and high sounding reasons in support of the doctrine that cheap freight rates would be injurious to producers and to consumers. If that view be correct then the world walks in darkness and the Southern Pacific has the true light. From immemorial time it has been believed that anything which cheapened transportation was a public benefit. In that belief men of all times and all nations have labored to improve their roads, to construct bridges and in every way to facilitate traffic. It was for that they substituted the locomotive for the stage coach and the steamboat for the sailing vessel. Now it is argued they were all wrong. High freights are a public blessing.

The witnesses who were brought in by Mr. Herin to sustain his new contention were from Los Angeles. They admitted that cheaper rates would admit the Kern wells to compete with the Los Angeles wells, and possibly that fact may have had something to do with their opinion that high freight rates are necessary for the welfare of Kern. One of the witnesses said: "In my opinion a low freight rate tends to reduce the price of oil and brings no benefit to either the producer or the consumer." Another said that if low rates were established "consumers would hesitate to install an oil plant for fear the price of oil would go down." A third witness declared the oil men ought to form a combination to store and control the output, that the present way of doing business is a waste of \$20 gold pieces. Lastly there was a witness who declared that even if the railroad and the producer were equitably compensated lower freight rates and lower prices of oil to the consumer would not benefit the community.

It would appear from all that testimony that the reason we have not developed manufacturing enterprises in California is because fuel and freight rates have been too cheap. Were we to make them still cheaper nobody would install an oil plant. The discovery of oil is a menace to the industries of the State, and the only way we can save ourselves is to apply to the Southern Pacific Company to act the philanthropist and fix freight rates so high that oil cannot be furnished to the consumer for less than present prices.

Had such statements been made by Bill Nye or Mark Twain or Martin Dooley they would have been greeted with roars of laughter. They turn all established principles of economics topsy-turvy and upside down. They excite yearnings for an abolition of railroads and a return to ox teams. They give rise to a suspicion that the reason why the Southern Pacific hauls oil for the Santa Fe at \$1 50 per car while charging oil men \$7 is an expectation that the cheap haul and cheap fuel will ruin the Santa Fe and thus rid the Southern Pacific of competition. The rehearing is to be resumed to-day. There is no telling what doctrines will be sworn to before the day is over.

It is to be noted that Commissioner Edson, who made the motion and voted for the rehearing, is a candidate for nomination for the office of Governor of California.

From the frequency and the ardor with which the British are now declaring their love for Americans and their desire for an Anglo-Saxon alliance it would not be surprising if some day they should send in an application for admission as a State.

THE FIGHT FOR RECIPROCITY.

DISPATCHES from our special correspondent at Washington are to the effect that the failure of the foes of the protective system to control the reciprocity convention at the capital has had no other effect than that of increasing their activity. He reports that some of the large exporters of manufactured goods have not given up the fight and that efforts are being made to induce the President and the Cabinet to believe that public sentiment favors the reciprocity system.

It must not be supposed that the men who are making this fight are sanguine of success at the coming session. In fact, our correspondent reports that Mr. Kasson, who negotiated the treaties now before the Senate, admits that he has no hope of their adoption at this session and is even of the opinion that the clauses of the Dingley tariff providing for reciprocity treaties may be done away with. Furthermore, it is known that many of the most influential leaders in both houses have declared their opposition to the treaties and that these men are well assured of the support of the Republican majority.

The real fight of the opponents of protection is to make up in Congress this winter an issue on which to appeal to the people at the next Congressional elections. The whole course of the reciprocity agitation tends to that conclusion. The New England Free Trade League, which has transformed itself into "The National Free Trade League," is warmly advocating reciprocity as a step toward breaking down the protective system. With the free traders will be joined the whole varied mass of so-called tariff reformers. "Reciprocity" will be their battle-cry for the present, and so far as they can do so by a vigorous campaign of education they will form a public sentiment to support them when the elections take place.

Despite the strength of the protective sentiment in Congress and in the country at large, it is not to be denied that the free traders have in the present situation of political parties much to encourage them to

renew their fight. In the first place the Democratic party has long been seeking a new issue and a new leader. Free silver is an obsolete idea and Bryan has lost his leadership. There are needed for the party a new platform and a new candidate. A free trade campaign under the mask of reciprocity offers them an opportunity to attain both. It is therefore fairly certain they will lend the party machine to aid the fight, and the potency of that machine is well known. Another important factor in the problem that will count on the side of the promoters of the new movement is the giant manufacturing element which is willing to sacrifice many American interests for the sake of obtaining foreign markets for its own products. That element is not strong enough to control the manufacturing interests as a whole, but it is strong enough to maintain a powerful lobby at Washington and to contribute liberally to a reciprocity agitation.

All signs, therefore, point to the conclusion that the country is in danger of having its industries disturbed by another free trade agitation. It is a fairly safe prediction that if any sort of success be accomplished by them either in Congress this winter or in the elections next fall the free traders will so develop their agitation as to make a repeal of the protective system the chief issue of the next Presidential election. There is no serious danger that such an appeal will be sustained by the people, but the agitation would fill the country with uncertainty and seriously interfere with trade and industry. It is therefore desirable that the movement be decisively checked at once. To accomplish that we must rely upon the Republican majority in Congress. The protective system must be maintained whether its enemy take the name of free trade or of reciprocity.

The Panama Canal Company has not yet given up the fight. It is said the company will appeal from the Isthmian Canal Commission to Congress and make an offer that will seem like putting the Panama enterprise on the bargain counter. The suggestion is interesting, but as Congress is not composed of ladies a bargain counter proposition ought not to stampede them.

JAPANESE FINANCES.

FINANCIAL reports are to the effect that the Japanese Government has for some time past been trying in vain to place a loan of 50,000,000 yen in New York or in Europe. The negotiations are said to have failed because both the American and the European bankers believe that Japan ought to pay 6 per cent interest, while the Japanese financiers think their country should be able to borrow money at rates not much, if any, in excess of what are paid by European nations.

The statements concerning the desired loan are the more interesting because of the recent publication in this country and in Europe of the financial showing made by Japan during the past five years. According to the reports the revenue for the last fiscal year was \$138,748,000, while the expenses were \$137,946,000. The surplus was small, but it is to be borne in mind that of late years very few European nations have escaped a deficiency.

A notable feature of the report is the extraordinary increase in both revenues and expenditures during the last five years. In 1896 the revenues were about \$50,000,000 and the expenditures \$43,000,000. Since that time taxation has been augmented for the purpose of providing mainly for the army and the navy. Large as the increase of taxation has been it has not been sufficient for all the expenditures of the Government, and the national debt has within ten years increased from \$135,000,000 to \$260,000,000. The debt does not seem large to Americans, among whom there are private citizens who could probably pay it off, but it is to be remembered that in Japan wages are low and profits are small. The debt, which seems slight to us, is a heavy burden to them.

When we turn from the finances of the Government to the report of business enterprises a much brighter situation appears. According to the figures given there are now in Japan 873 industrial companies, with an aggregate capital of almost \$100,000,000; 2518 commercial companies, with a capital of almost \$240,000,000, and fifty-five railway companies, with an aggregate capital of \$135,000,000. It is also stated that there are 2356 banking companies, with an aggregate capital of \$250,000,000.

Another interesting set of figures are those relating to the export and import trade of the country. From these we learn that of the exports of the last fiscal year Japanese produce to the value of 50,000,000 yen was sent to Great Britain and Hongkong, 52,500,000 yen to the United States, 31,870,000 yen to China, 19,150,000 yen to France, and 3,550,000 yen to Germany. Of the total imports 82,000,000 yen came from Great Britain and Hongkong, and 23,500,000 from British India, 62,760,000 from America, 29,950,000 from China, 29,199,000 from Germany, and 8,095,000 from France.

With such a showing as that Japan ought certainly to be no suppliant borrower of either the United States or Europe for so small a sum as 50,000,000 yen, which is approximately in our money about \$25,000,000. It would seem that she could borrow it for less than 6 per cent at home.

Senator Plunkett, one of the Tammany leaders, in an address to his constituents after the overthrow of Tammany by Seth Low, said: "How are we going to get through the next two years? Speaking for myself I can say that no Tammany man in my district will suffer for coal. I've got lots of patronage outside of politics. I've got 300 men on the street railroads and I've got a pull with big corporations that employ thousands of men, and they will take care of Plunkett's followers until we get back into office." The frankness of that statement is not more interesting than the light it throws on the situation in New York. When big corporations allow a politician to name their employees it is not strange that it takes something like a revolution to overthrow the Tammany regime.

Because the Pennsylvania football team was defeated by Harvard the Pennsylvanians were so much aroused they held a mass-meeting and resolved to raise \$500,000 to provide their university with the best gymnasium in America. Scholarship may come or scholarship may go, but Pennsylvania is going to keep even in athletics.

One of the results of the great railroad combination between Hill and Morgan is an increased demand for the speedy construction of the isthmian canal. It is admitted that the combination may be helpful, but shippers prefer to have some kind of competing line in case the unexpected happens.

The summer season statistics of Alpine climbing in Switzerland this year show 119 fatal accidents, and it is doubtful if the American football record will make anything like such a strenuous showing.

NEW YORK ZOO OWNS DOUBLE-HEADED SNAKE



TWO-HEADED REPTILE RECENTLY ADDED TO THE NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL PARK. IT IS SAID THAT WHEN FOOD IS OFFERED ONE HEAD FIGHTS THE OTHER.

A TWO-HEADED snake has recently been placed in the Zoological Park, New York. The keeper says that when food is offered to the reptile one head fights the other, and each tries to bite its rival. The writer has not seen the snake fed, but the necks do not look long enough to allow the heads to bite each other. Then, again, the snake is not poisonous; but, of course, the snake does not know that. It does not seem as if the fight ought to prevent either head getting anything. If either managed to swallow food it would probably be just as nourishing as if both had done so, though, of course, one throat might be left feeling hungry.

What will probably prove the snake's salvation is that he does not refuse to drink. If one of the heads had to pay for the drinks there might be trouble, but as long as the Zoological Society sets them up the two heads drink together as cheerfully as if they belonged to separate drunkards. And one can live for a long time without food if only one has plenty to drink, as many an expert in serpents can testify.

The snake recently had some trouble in shedding his skin. Ordinarily a snake wiggles his nose till he cracks the skin at the tip of it, and then crawls out through the hole, but for this snake to do that is like a man trying to take off his trousers over his head. The snake accomplished the feat somehow, but nobody knows just how.

PERSONAL MENTION.

M. R. Plaisted, proprietor of the Fresno Democrat, is at the California. E. L. Barkis, a merchant of Oakland, registered at the Lick yesterday. Adolph Fishman, an extensive fruit grower of Los Angeles, is at the Palace. C. H. A. Warfield, Sheriff of Merced County, registered at the Grand yesterday. A. T. J. Reynolds, an extensive fruit grower of Walnut Grove, is among the arrivals at the Lick. George M. McMullen, accompanied by his wife, returned from Valdez, Alaska, and is at present at the Grand. Colonel A. B. Hotchkiss arrived from New York yesterday en route to his home in Los Angeles. He is at the Grand. William Wood, one of the leading insurance men of New York City, arrived here yesterday and is a guest at the Palace. W. Gibson, United States Consul of Salvador, arrived here yesterday and has made his headquarters at the Occidental. Charles Tullock, a cattle man of Oakland, is in the city on a short business trip and has made his headquarters at the Lick. Miss Minnie Seligman, the well-known actress, is staying at the Palace. She is here to fill an engagement at the Grand Opera-house after the Grau season. Charles M. Hammond of Upper Lake, Lake County, is at the Occidental with his wife. Mrs. Hammond's maiden name was Miss Alice Lee and she w. a sister of President Roosevelt's first wife.

A CHANCE TO SMILE.

Keeping Them Busy-"There is one way the young Edward can keep his chaplains busy." "What way?" "Praying for a long reign."-Cleveland Plain Dealer. "That boy of ours is a little too clever." "What is his latest freak?" "I have just found out that he can whistle out of one corner of his mouth, and at the same time stuff jam into the other corner."-Cleveland Plain Dealer. Millionaire (to his daughter)-Why is it that the Baron insists upon your being married so soon? His Daughter-I'll be frank with you, father. The tickets for his coronet and family jewels expire next month.-Brooklyn Life. "People are always content with their children," said Mr. Custy. "Yes," answered Mr. Dusty, "if a boy is different they say he is naturally refined, and if he is holier than they say he is sure to make his way in the world."-Washington Star. Mrs. Noozy-I think it's the most ridiculous thing to call that man in the bank a "teller." Mrs. Chumm-Why? Mrs. Noozy-Because they simply won't tell at all. I asked one how much my husband had on deposit there, and he just laughed.-Philadelphia Press. "The plan of this building is all right," observed the critical stranger, "but it seems to me to be poorly executed." "I knowed the Buildin' Department had condemned it," replied the red-nosed loafer, leaning against the lamp-post, "but I hain't heard of no execution yet." And his mocking laughter jarred disagreeably upon the ear.-Chicago Tribune. "Look at the stuff that goes to waste in the grocery business," said the loafer in the store, "and think of the small margin on most of the goods. Where does the profit come in?" "The profit," said the impatient man with the basket on his arm, "comes from having only one clerk to wait on thirty-five customers."-Chicago Tribune. "One of the Boston police officers has invented a scheme for finding Blondin, the bowlegged suspected murderer." "How does it work?" "He has found a narrow passageway between two brick buildings, and everybody will be invited to walk through." "Yes." "The first man who gets stuck will be Blondin."-Plain Dealer. HOTEL DEL CORONADO, the choicest Winter Resort in the world, offers the best of everything. Best living, climate, boating, bathing, fishing and most amusements. E. S. Babcock, manager, Coronado, Cal.

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM.

J. R. City. Referendum may be defined in general as the referring of legislation to the people for final rejection or acceptance. According to the initiative and referendum laws now generally advocated no law, save a strictly defined class of urgent measures for the public peace, health and safety, which require a two-thirds or three-fourths majority to pass, would go into effect without waiting a fixed time, say ninety days. If during such time a part of the voters, say 10 per cent, sign a petition for the referendum on that law, it would not go into effect until the next regular election, when the people would vote upon it, and if a majority vote no it could not be a law. The Initiative-If a certain percentage of the voters, say 10 per cent, sign a petition for a law and file it with the proper authorities it must come before the Legislature, and perhaps be referred to the people. This is called compulsory referendum. When the referendum is taken only when a certain number of people petition for it, it is called the optional referendum. Together the referendum and the Initiative furnish direct legislation.

BRITISH NAVAL CONSTRUCTION TO BE RETIRED

THERE are persistent rumors of the early retirement of Sir William H. White, director of naval construction in the British navy. The reason assigned is that of ill-health, which, no doubt, is the result of worry over the fiasco in the design of the new royal yacht. Sir William is 56 years of age, and has had a phenomenally distinguished career as the foremost warship designer in the world. He entered the Devonport dockyard in 1859 as an apprentice, and was appointed eight years later on the admiralty staff under Sir Edward Reed. In 1881 he was advanced to chief constructor, and resigned in 1884 to accept the position of naval constructor to the Armstrong firm at Elswick. Two years later the admiralty invited him to accept the office of director of naval construction, offering a salary of \$12,500 a year, and Sir William returned to the admiralty. During this service of sixteen years he has designed 174 vessels, aggregating \$81,000,000, representing an expenditure of \$350,000,000, besides a couple of hundred smaller vessels, such as destroyers and torpedo-boats. The unfortunate climax to such a highly successful career in the building of the royal yacht was the disaster in calculations by a subordinate for which Sir William has accepted the blame, and the British navy loses an official which it will be difficult to find an equally competent successor.

Another one of the frequent changes in French naval policy has been announced. The special committee appointed to examine the naval estimates has refused to allow the appropriation for building more heavy battleships. It also recommends that all old sailing vessels and steamers, whether armored or not, which are unable to take their place in the fighting line, should be either sold or destroyed. The opposition to battleships is a debatable question, but the recommendation to remove vessels that have become obsolete from the navy list is in the interest of economy and efficiency. Most of the naval powers expend vast amounts upon vessels of doubtful utility, which money could be expended with better results on new construction.

Some amusing incidents are reported from Toulon, which indicate how difficult it is to obtain in practice the results aimed at by a theoretically perfect organization.

At L'Orient those in charge of the torpedo-boats for not to embark their ammunition. The mechanics taken on board were so careless in their work, and several accidents were caused from this. At Toulon torpedo-boat 62 was sent to sea in a leaky condition, and its crew, unaccustomed to the erratic behavior of the boat, became seasick.

The French submarine boat Triton had an experience while being tried off Cherbourg last month which its crew will never forget. When in about seven fathoms of water a new plunging apparatus was tried, which acted so promptly that the boat struck bottom and sustained considerable damage. The water began to flow in, but the engineer, with rare presence of mind, had the detachable weights cast adrift, and the boat rose to the surface, where the pumps were set to work, and a tug towed the boat into Cherbourg.

The Bouassaque, a new French sea-going torpedo-boat just completed at Normand's yard, Havre, made an excellent run October 25. She left Havre at 10:45 a. m. and arrived at Cherbourg at 1:15 p. m., making the trip at an average speed of 23 knots. The Bouassaque is 100 feet long, 12 feet beam, and 5 feet draft. 11.7 feet length, 18.7 feet beam and 3 feet draft.

Henri IV, a second-class battleship in course of construction for the French navy, is still far from completion, although the ship was intended to be ready for sea in 1900. The delay is owing to non-delivery of machinery and guns. The keel was laid at Cherbourg July 15, 1897, and the launch took place August 23, 1899. Her general design has been severely criticized by foreign experts, the general opinion being that the ship would be a failure, and it is possible that a consideration of this possibility may account for the delay in completion.

Navy building in Germany is progressing at a rate highly creditable to the officials and contractors. With the launch of the Mecklenburg, November 3, there are now 20 battleships afloat and 10 are on the stocks. The United States has 12 battleships afloat, including the Maine and Ohio, which are not to be completed within eighteen months, and 6 are building. It is quite certain that the 10 German battleships will be completed within three years from date, and also most likely, judging from past experience, that our ships will not be ready within contract time, and that, therefore, the German navy will have 30 battleships ready for service by January, 1905, against 15 in our navy under the most favorable circumstances. The strength of a navy exists in its actual available number of battleships rather than in the number on paper, and the United States navy is therefore not entitled to the present time taken for fourth place in the rank of naval powers.

Russia is evidently not satisfied with home-made guns of large caliber, as the Minister of Marine has ordered batteries of 12-inch guns from France of the Canon type. A torpedo-boat was launched last August from the Neva shipyard at Port Arthur, being the first of a number to follow. The vessel is 120 feet in length, 21.25 feet beam and displaces 330 tons on a draught of 7 feet. The engines are of 6000 horsepower, to give a speed of 21 knots, and the armament consists of one 2.5-inch and three 1.8-inch rapid fireers.

A mammoth shipyard for the construction of vessels of war and other purposes has been completed at Palermo. It has five slips, ranging in length from 323 feet to 500 feet; the latter length being capable of a further increase to 655 feet. The buildings, labor-saving appliances and machine tools are all up to the latest modern standard.

The British battleship Formidable made her commission trial of three hours October 2, and averaged nearly 17 knots. The British battleship Mars recently scored 11 hits of 26 shots from her big guns and 62 hits out of 112 rounds from her 6-inch quick fireers.

The Japanese cruisers Nataka and Tashushima are to be fitted with Niclausse boilers. The vessels are the first of Japanese design, and are building in home yards.

Walnut and Pecan Panoche. Townsend.* Choice candies. Townsend's, Palace Hotel.* Cal. Glace Fruit 50c per lb at Townsend's.*

The only thing worse than losing a woman's love when you want to keep it is keeping it when you want to lose it. Best eyeglasses, specs, 10c, 40c. Look out for 31 4th St., front barber and grocery.* Just don't forget that there are whole lots of things in the world worse than this world's worst. There are whole lots better than the best we know.

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