

# The Call

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A NEEDED STIMULUS.

SHOULD the activity of J. J. Hill in his efforts to obtain the army transport trade for Seattle succeed in arousing the energies of San Francisco, we will have no reason to denounce it as a pernicious activity. This city has been for too long a time sitting "indifferent to fate."

Within a time comparatively short the Pacific cable will be in operation, and then speedy communication with the world to the east of us will be possible. That will mean something like a revolution in our commercial situation.

The cable will bring us prompt news from the markets of the Orient, and our merchants will thus be enabled to carry on traffic to much better advantage than formerly.

We shall learn of opportunities for trade in time to profit by them, and the inducements to enterprise will be greater than ever.

There is, of course, no little gratification in knowing that in the contest we shall have powerful allies in the great transcontinental railways that have their Pacific termini at this port.

That alliance will count for much more than assistance in maintaining our hold on the army transport traffic to the Philippines. In fact, that traffic is but a slight thing in comparison with the great commercial traffic at stake.

Were the army transport trade taken from us it would count for much as an addition to the annual trade of a small town like Seattle, but it would hardly be missed from the general trade of San Francisco.

Our interests are much larger than that, and the main importance of the struggle to us is that it may rouse us to a realization of the value of those larger possibilities.

San Francisco has indeed no more reason to fear the competition of Seattle than New York has to fear that of Boston. In fact, the growth of Seattle or Tacoma, like the growth of any other Pacific port, will be to our benefit just exactly as the growth of population and wealth along the Atlantic Coast has been beneficial to New York.

This city is now and will always be the American metropolis on the Pacific, and the only question is how rapidly it will be advanced by its own energies.

Mr. Harriman has told us there is no need to worry about the transport business, adding: "We will come out all right." That, of course, does not mean that we are to sit still and do nothing.

It is a good assurance, however, that if we are properly active in support of our interests we shall win. What we need much more than the transport business is a system of freight rates that will be fair to our city in competition with all rivals, whether on this coast or elsewhere.

With proper freight rates between here and the East we could easily begin a new era in our commercial life that would assure commercial supremacy in the future beyond all rivalry.

We need also better docking facilities and a lightening of the general port charges. Rivalry in that regard is now going on among all the great ports of the world. The British are arranging to expend many millions of pounds sterling in improving the docks and the river at London, and they are also discussing the advisability of abolishing all port charges upon foreign shipping.

If the greatest commercial city in the world is forced to take such steps to conserve her trade, we may be sure San Francisco cannot advance and increase her commerce without following the example.

There is no need for the adoption of a comprehensive system of changes in freight rates or port charges or for harbor improvement. Issues of that kind can be dealt with most effectively by taking up each as it rises in the practical affairs of trade. The main thing is to rouse public sentiment on the subject and set to work the minds and the energies of those who are in control.

When once that has been done, improvements will be effected as they are called for. Mr. Hill's aggressive fight for the army transport business promises to serve as a stimulus to both the railways and the city, and in that respect we may welcome it as a benefit.

An Italian Marquis has landed in New York with no other worldly recommendation than his astounding assurance and has advertised himself as ready to marry an American heiress. It is such incidents as these which make us feel that, whether we merit it or not, we still have the contempt of our European friends.

## STATE CONTROL.

THE engineer in charge of the Contra Costa Water Company in Alameda County has introduced a novelty in the history of his office by entering upon a discussion of the water question that is not addressed to a City Council or Board of Supervisors.

In this discussion he acquits himself with every appearance of impartiality. He considered three plans for the control of a water supply—first, by unrestricted private ownership; second, by private ownership under public control; third, by municipal ownership.

Unrestricted private ownership is not permitted by law, and this leaves two plans, private ownership under public control, and municipal ownership. At this point he makes a suggestion that is in line with a contention often made by The Call to the effect that many difficulties would be overcome and misunderstandings eliminated if the constitution enforced the auditing of water accounts by the State.

If there were a system of uniform public accounting, extended to all public service corporations, and of necessity including the value of plants as a factor in considering and fixing the rate and income, the long and vexatious, and always imperfect, examination of those questions by Supervisors and City Councils would disappear. It would then be easily practicable to test the relative merits of public and private ownership as to cost by an infallible basis of calculation, and the admitted evil of corruption in local politics would exist no longer.

Such a comparison gives results that do not justify the rosy anticipations of the advocates of public ownership. Public control of private plants can be so exerted as to equalize cost where conditions are equal. If, for illustration, it be found that two cities, under equal conditions as to the expense of plant and administration, are found to pay an unequal price for light the common system of accounts makes it possible to compel equalization of price without incurring the accusation of injustice.

Such a system is especially necessary in order to administer a water system. Physical conditions differ so widely as to peculiarly affect the cost of such a supply. Plants in a country of constant, regular and abundant rainfall, like that of Glasgow, are incomparable with plants under California conditions, with a definite wet and dry season and with the constant recurrence of rainfall less than normal, requiring immense storage and extra attention to the physical condition of the supply.

In order to secure equality of control and to properly differentiate the price of a supply according to the conditions under which it is provided, the engineer advocated State control, auditing and accounting, and private ownership under exclusive State jurisdiction. Against this is set the municipal ownership of all water supplies. But even if that be generally entered upon the need of a uniform system of public accounting, in charge of the general authority of the State, instead of being removed, is made greater.

As our readers are already informed, the system of water accounts in such vast municipal systems as New York and Chicago is so involved, complex and defective that expert accountants, employed by civic associations, have been unable out of the chaos to find anything further than evidence of extravagance, corruption and waste in municipal administration, amounting to a sum annually greater than corporate profit would be in the working of an equal system.

This being the case, in order to approximate expected results from municipal ownership this waste must, if possible, be eliminated. If this cannot be done, there is no preference for public ownership. Uniform accounting is the only means by which it may be hoped that waste can be prevented. The opposition to this, wherever it has taken definite shape, comes from the advocates of municipal ownership. Just why this should be so it is hard to determine. The only reason that may be suggested is that the movement for municipal ownership is thus far largely under the control of organized Socialism and is therefore political in its nature, and does not get its inspiration from strictly business principles.

The aim of Socialism is to put all business under the commune, trusting to luck and haphazard for proper administration. If light and water can be passed to communal administration and advantages can be apparently shown, whether real or not, a long step will have been taken toward communizing everything else. But the practical part of the community will want to know whether the surrender of individualism is to have compensating advantages before taking the plunge which revolutionizes our entire scheme of government.

Now, whether the revelations and results of uniform accounting under public supervision will justify Socialism or not it is entirely desirable. It will favorably affect the cost of government and the results of administration now, with our system unchanged.

So far, then, the suggestions of the Contra Costa engineer are in line with proper public policy, and the system of audit and accounts which he advocated is highly necessary and most useful, whether plants for supplying water and lights be under private or municipal ownership.

Here is a postoffice story from Ohio: On one of the rural delivery routes complaint was made of a loss of mail. There was a long investigation, which resulted at last in the discovery of the missing letters scattered about in a distant field. Further search revealed the fact that a jaybird had made a nest in a mail box, and when letters were dropped into it it would take them out and fly off with them to some distance and then drop them.

## THE FRANCHISE DECISION.

THE Supreme Court, in its decision on the Alabama franchise case, in effect affirms the action of the Circuit Court in refusing to take jurisdiction. The Supreme Court could not take original jurisdiction and could only have ordered the court below to do so. The important part of the decision is rather in the dictum to the effect that the question is political and must go to the political rather than the judicial branch of the Government. This means that Congress must construe the effect of the Alabama constitution upon the apportionment for representation in the Electoral College and in Congress.

The constitution provides that when a State excludes from suffrage any of its people on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude its representation shall be reduced according to the population so excluded. There seemed reason for believing that whether the exclusion provided by the Ala-

bama constitution was for the reason specified in the Federal constitution is a judicial issue purely. But the court decides that the issue presented is political, and the court avoids always the determination of purely political questions.

Soon or late, therefore, the issue is sure to be made in Congress. Mr. Moody, now Secretary of the Navy, while representing Massachusetts in the House, raised the issue. After his promotion to the Cabinet it was renewed by Mr. Crumpacker of Indiana, but was permitted to drop without action.

Of necessity it is a sectional issue, and there is general aversion to the renewal of sectional controversy. However, it is a question of imperative interest to the Northern States. They have their rights under the constitution, and the gravest of these is the right to equality of representation. Either the constitutional provision to secure this equality will be amended out of the instrument or it will be enforced, for it is not thinkable that, if these peculiar provisions in the constitutions of the Southern States violate it, it will be permitted to lie dormant.

Of course, it is easily possible that Congress, adjusting it as a political question, may decide that the State constitutions do not violate the Federal constitution. The question cannot well arise until after the next census, which must be followed by a new apportionment. As that census is seven years away, there is time for much to happen meanwhile which may obsolete the whole issue. In this view the decision of the Supreme Court puts the issue in repose, and is likely best for the interests of the country, which require sectional peace and quiet.

According to a recent statement of the banks of the city of New York, compiled for members of the Clearing-house Association, the net profits of the forty-two banks enumerated increased from \$105,889,000 to \$110,830,300 during the two months previous. As the capital was reported at \$100,850,000, the net profits amounted to about 5 per cent for the two months, or about 30 per cent per annum. Evidently the banking business is good in the big city, and there is no reason why a banker should do kowtow to a steel trust magnate.

## THE ST. LOUIS FAIR.

WHEN the dispatches brought the announcement a few days ago that the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce had adopted resolutions opposing a British exhibit at the St. Louis Exposition it was believed the action represented merely a local sentiment and was of no great significance. It now appears, however, that the extent of British opposition to the enterprise may be much greater than was supposed, for the Prince of Wales, who is president of the British commission to the exposition, has deemed it necessary to make an urgent appeal to Chambers of Commerce throughout the kingdom for support. While he would have made such an appeal under any circumstances, it is not likely he would have made so elaborate an argument on the subject had he not felt that he has a spirit of opposition to overcome.

In the course of his address the Prince frankly recognized the existence of an opposition and said: "The idea is sometimes put forward that it is not much use for British manufacturers to exhibit in the United States, as the high customs tariff of that country tends to militate against the sale of British products. It should, however, be remembered that there is a considerable market for high-class goods in the United States, and that the exposition will afford an opportunity for showing our manufactures to customers from South America, Canada and other countries."

While the argument may not be convincing to the opposition, the address will undoubtedly have the effect of stimulating British interest in the fair. Royalty has more than one kind of influence in Great Britain, and wherever the Prince of Wales leads the way we may be sure there will be no lack of followers nor any lack of money. A first-class British exhibit may therefore be counted on, and Birmingham will send her products with the rest. Upward of \$50,000 has been already appropriated by Parliament for the work of the commission, and the Prince intimates that more may be expected provided the merchants and manufacturers take up the work in earnest and resolve to make a comprehensive display of the industries of the kingdom.

It is gratifying to find that the irritation of British manufacturers at our protective system is not going to mar the international aspect of the fair. The exposition has been planned on a vaster scale than any of its predecessors, and in point of magnitude will unquestionably far exceed the greatest of them. Moreover, so rapid is the advance of science and mechanical ingenuity in these days it will be able to present industrial arts and products never before displayed at a world's fair. As it is the first exposition of the kind for the new century, it would be a disappointment to all should any great people be unrepresented in the grand collection of its exhibits. The United States has invited all the world to share in the enterprise, and the desire of course is that each should do its share with cordiality and even with enthusiasm.

It is, of course, not to be expected that Europe will look at the fair from the same point of view as ourselves. To the people of the Old World it is nothing more than another international exhibition, while to us it is a celebration of the acquisition of the Louisiana territory, the extension of the boundaries of the republic from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and the settlement of that vast area by an energetic people, who have made it one of the richest portions of the globe, abounding with flourishing cities and laced with a network of railways that have brought almost every square mile of it within easy reach of settlers and markets.

It is a striking proof of the wealth of the territory that the exposition which is to be held in celebration of its acquisition will cost nearly three times as much as the sum paid for it when bought from France. The city in which the fair is to be held was but a remote trading post at the time of annexation, but is now more populous than all American cities put together at that time. Such evidences of growth on the part of the republic are to Americans the most significant features of the fair, and so notable are they that even if all European nations should give halting aid to the enterprise the American people themselves would make it a record-breaking exposition, and glory in doing it.

The grave-diggers of Montreal went on strike a few days ago, but no one has recognized in the affair a conspiracy to keep people alive. We are so accustomed to inconveniences these days that most of us are willing to wait until the grave attendants are ready to receive us.

The absolute inability, even of nature, to prevent things American from moving was demonstrated the other day when an island in Lake Garfield aroused itself to activity and floated away to a distance of half a mile.

## EARLY MORNING WEDDING UNITES POPULAR COUPLE



DAUGHTER OF PROMINENT ATTORNEY AND SON OF WELL KNOWN BUSINESS MAN WHO WERE MARRIED YESTERDAY MORNING BY ARCHBISHOP RIORDAN, AND DEPARTED FOR THE SOUTH.

A quiet wedding yesterday morning Miss Adelaide Dibble, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Dibble, became the bride of Nathaniel Thayer Messer, son of Mrs. N. C. Messer. The ceremony was performed by Archbishop Riordan at his residence at 7:30 in the presence of relatives of bride and groom. Mrs. Messer wore a gray and white traveling gown with hat of the same color. There were no attendants. Judge Dibble gave his daughter into the keeping of the groom. Mr. and Mrs. Messer left on an 8:30 train yesterday morning for their wedding trip, expecting to return in ten days, after which they will reside in this city. Mr. Messer is a rising young business man and received his early training at the Tamalpais Military School at San Rafael. The bride is charming and accomplished. She is a graduate of the Academy of Sacred Heart in this city.

The ceremony. The church was prettily decorated with white hawthorne, bridal wreaths, white azaleas and foliage. The bride was attended by her sister, Miss Lena Werner, and Miss Annie O'Callaghan, sister of the groom. Fred de Peyster Teller was best man. The bride wore white crepe de chine with a tulle veil and carried lilies of the valley. The bridesmaids were gowned in cream white with chiffon hats to correspond. They carried pink roses. Only relatives and a few intimate friends were entertained at the bride's home after the ceremony. Mr. and Mrs. O'Callaghan will spend three weeks in Southern California, after which they will reside in this city. They expect to occupy in the near future a residence which the groom will build on Fell street, near Webster.

## DIRECTORS OF ORPHANAGE FARM MEET INFORMALLY

Mrs. Huffman's Residence Crowded With Guests Interested in Cause of Practical Charity.

In pursuance to a general invitation from all the pulpits of the Presbyterian churches in this city a large company of ladies and gentlemen met at the residence of Mrs. Charles H. Huffman at 2100 Broadway, yesterday afternoon, in the interest of the San Francisco Presbyterian Orphanage and farm, located at sea Arselmo.

The meeting was entirely of an informal nature, devoid of any business details, its object being to work up interest in the orphanage and to gain the general support of all who cared to assist in its maintenance. Rev. Mr. G. G. Kidder opened the meeting, and then Mrs. N. D. Ridout gave a history of the founding of the institution, of the splendid work it was accomplishing in fitting its proteges for practical domestic service that being the object of the orphanage. At present there are 120 children under the age of fourteen years being cared for there. The value of the property is now about \$200,000 upon which there is a mortgage of \$100,000, which they are endeavoring to pay out. At this conclusion of Mrs. Ridout's report, Mrs. Huffman, Mrs. C. Mel, Miss H. N. Nichols, Mrs. E. W. Shank and Mrs. J. Kemp, after which the hostesses served delicious refreshments from a beautifully decorated table in the dining hall.

## WILL UNITE TO HONOR NAME OF WASHINGTON

Sons of the American Revolution to Celebrate Date of His First Accession.

The one hundred and fourteenth anniversary of the first accession to the Presidency of the country's first President, George Washington, will be made the occasion of a commemorative banquet to be given by the California Society of the Sons of the American Revolution this evening at the California Hotel. One hundred and forty members will sit down to the banquet.

## "WILLING WORKERS" ENJOY AN AFTERNOON MUSICAL

Listen to Songs, Instrumental Solos and Readings by Members and Friends.

A delightful entertainment was given in the hall of the Bush-street Synagogue yesterday afternoon by the members of the "Willing Workers." The occasion was the monthly gathering of those connected with the society, and a large number was in attendance. The first part of the programme was devoted to literary and musical exercises. Miss Sallie Ehrman and Master S. Rosenberg played violin solos, accompanied on the piano by Miss Theresa Ehrman. Miss Hazel Leszynsky sang selections from "Faust." Cantor Solomon sang "The Song of the Lark" and the ballad "Good-Bye" and Miss Julie Misch recited "The Obligatory Hat in the Pit" and "Peggy on High Art."

After the musical entertainment the "Willing Workers" resolved themselves into a hospitable circle for the rest of the afternoon.

## WEEK'S BILLS AT THE VARIOUS PLAYHOUSES

Mr. Crane and "David Harum" are very popular at the Columbia Theatre. Mr. Crane's portrait of Westcott's shrewd old countryman is a finished piece of work.

"Zig Zag Alley" with its roaring knock-about fun, is at the California. The bicycle riding by Schrock and Rice, a combined spectacular and comedy act, is well worth going to see.

The second week of "Zig Zag Alley" begins on Sunday night, when a new lot of songs and jokes will be introduced.

"Julius Caesar" is being given a magnificent interpretation at the Grand Opera-house by R. D. MacLean, Emmett Corrigan, Herschel Mayall, Odette Teler, and a strong supporting cast. In fact, it is difficult to suggest how it could be improved upon artistically or scenically.

Next week Emmett Corrigan will appear in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," a dramatization of Robert Louis Stevenson's famous novel.

The capital programme on at the Orpheum is serving to draw the customary big houses. Some of the cleverest vaudeville performers ever seen in San Francisco are now performing at this house.

"The Man from Mexico," with Frank Bacon as the monumental liar, is so successful at the Alcazar that it will be continued for a second week, except on Wednesday evenings next, when it gives way to a single special performance of "We-uns of Tennessee."

There are only a few more performances of "Heller Skelter" at Fischer's Theatre, for next Monday "Fiddle Deo Dee" will be put on for a second week. Everything in the play will be entirely new, even the specialties, but the famous "Florodora Sextet" will be retained, and all the very funny sayings.

"The Toy Maker" is repeating its time success at the Tivoli. Annie Myers as the doll is making a hit so great as when she first appeared in the part.

"Caught in the Web," which abounds in thrilling incidents and contains plenty of good comedy, is filling the Central.

After the regular performance at the Chutes to-night, which is an excellent one, the amateurs will appear.

Miss Olive Mead, violinist, will appear at Steiny Hall to-night, assisted by Mrs. Cecilia Decker Cox and Fred Maurer.

PERSONAL MENTION.

Dr. W. R. Dillon of Tacoma is at the Lick. H. Markarian, a jeweler of Fresno, is at the Grand. George Sylvester, a grocer of Seattle, is at the Grand.

D. D. Galters, a merchant of Phoenix, is at the Palace. W. M. Fisher, a fruit packer of Napa, is at the Palace. E. W. Oliver, a stationer of Los Angeles, is at the Grand.

Philip J. Kelen, a mining man of Phoenix, is at the Palace. S. Leak, a merchant of Santa Cruz, is at the California. Charles M. Mack, a merchant of Sacramento, is at the Lick.

Robert Sherer, a contractor of Los Angeles, is at the Grand. W. H. Garretson, a merchant of Benicia, is at the Occidental. W. H. Leeman, a hop grower of Sacramento, is at the California. C. C. Boyce, a wealthy rancher of Chico, is at the California.

John H. Maughany, a mining man of Mexico, is at the Palace. J. W. Fox, a manufacturer of Chicago, and wife are at the Palace. A. J. Blomquist, owner of a big shingle mill at La Honda, is at the Lick.

James McLaughlin, who is engaged in mining near San Francisco, is at the Palace. J. J. McSorley, a mining man of Mokelumne Hill, and wife are at the California. Colonel Charles H. Blinn and wife will leave this morning for Europe on a brief visit to their son, Holbrook Blinn, a distinguished actor of London. Colonel Blinn is employed as adjutant of duties in the Custom-house where he has held a position for twenty-six years, and this is his first real vacation in that length of time.

Californians in New York. NEW YORK, April 29.—Californians in New York: San Francisco—W. S. Leake, A. J. Healey, ex-Governor Bond, at Waldorf-Astoria; A. J. Hunt, at Herald Square; Mrs. Kingsbury, W. G. Britton, G. Robinson, Mrs. W. Chalmers, R. Dalziel and wife, J. D. Foley and wife, Dr. W. H. Kellogg and wife, A. M. Smith, at Grand Union; H. E. Law and wife, Marcus H. Rosenfeld, Miss L. Mills, at Broadway Central; C. K. Kirby and wife, at Cadillac. Marion de Vries and wife leave Saturday for San Francisco. Mrs. de Vries will spend the summer with relatives in Stockton. Mr. de Vries will return to New York immediately. Los Angeles—F. J. Keeler, at Everett; Mrs. A. Lettis, at St. Denis. San Jose—F. A. McFarland, at Bartholdi.

"Our Boys" Well Presented. The sterling comedy "Our Boys" was presented by the Beta Sigma Dramatic Club at the Native Sons' Hall last evening for the benefit of Portia Council No. 476 of the Young Men's Institute. It was a very clever performance. The leading parts were taken by F. W. Erlin, Ernest Vincent, F. W. Bolman, E. C. Fritz, Miss Loretta Nolan, Miss Lorraine Linn, Miss May Sullivan and Miss Katherine Arnold. Recalls were numerous and the large audience was thoroughly in rapport with the players. The Beta Sigma Orchestra, conducted by Miss Evelyn Sresovich, played excellent music.

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