

The San Francisco Call

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THE SURLY ABALONE AND THE GRIM INVADER

It seems a pity to spoil a good story or slight the enterprise of a contemporary which has discovered "a speck of war" with the help of Major Frank McLaughlin's abnormal appetite for shell fish. Major McLaughlin suspects certain Japanese fishermen of being spies for their Government because they failed to produce results in the way of abalones after spending a summer pottering about Monterey Bay.

The great univalves had invaded the department of literature, and stories were told of how careless wanderers along the shore had been trapped by the closing of the shells, and held until the rising tide had blotted out their lives as tragically as the ending of the career of Gilliat, Victor Hugo's hero in "The Toilers of the Sea."

Some of the people of Santa Cruz, led by Major Frank McLaughlin, endeavored for a long time to secure abalones for their tables from the Japanese company, but their endeavors were in vain.

There is no objection to anybody's consumption of his own smoke, but it may be suggested that if the Japanese want the soundings for Monterey Bay they can get them by going to the United States Hydrographic Bureau and paying 25 cents or thereabouts for a chart—without engaging in any sort of perfunctor or taking chances of assault by the malignant and dangerous abalone.

NOTABLE NEWSPAPER ACHIEVEMENTS

It has not been the practice in San Francisco for newspapers to say much but evil of one another, but this newspaper has divorced itself from that as well as from sundry other practices and traditions. The new Call does not hesitate to condemn its neighbors and rivals when it believes them to be in the wrong; it does not hesitate to commend them when they are conspicuously in the right or when they distinguish themselves and serve the best ends of their—and our—public by legitimate journalistic achievement.

That such editions as those of the Examiner and Chronicle should be published in such a place and at such a time witnesses most convincingly the remarkable recuperative power of stricken San Francisco. Both these editions reached a degree of mechanical perfection that might well have been the occasion of complacency in a city that had not suffered the ultimate pains and pangs of misfortune; that they should have been possible in such circumstances as attended their production must seem little less than superhuman to those publishers elsewhere who know what San Francisco has endured.

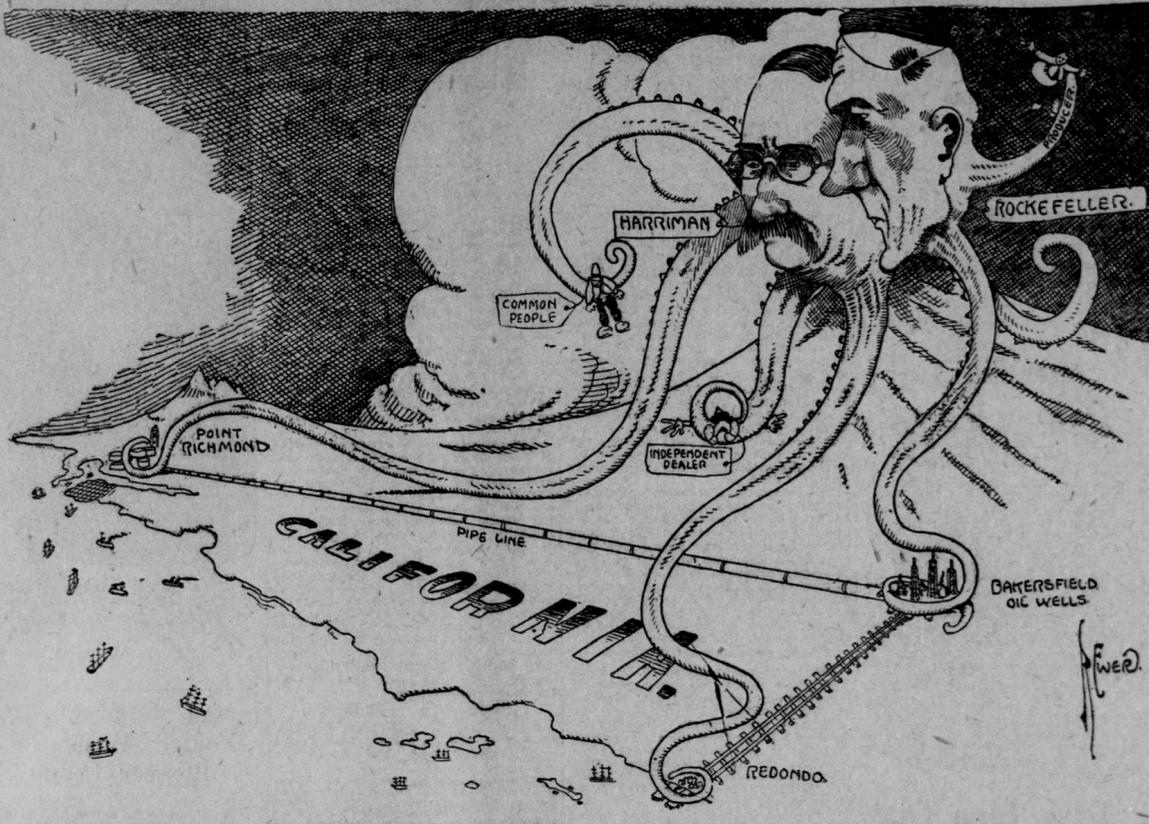
But the best thing about these editions is the spirit of them—their unshaken faith in the city's future, their contemplation, bold yet calm, of the greatness that is to come out of calamity. That is the right kind of talk. It puts heart and hope into all of us who prove our love and faith by renewed effort and redoubled energy. It is the kind of talk of which there cannot be too much. It is the kind of talk that goes to make up constructive journalism. It is The Call's kind of talk.

For these two editions the Examiner and the Chronicle deserve strong commendation and high compliment, and these earned tributes The Call heartily and cordially tenders them. You do well, neighbors.

JERE BURKE'S EXCLUSION ACT

THE CALL does not desire to assume an attitude of captious opposition to the grant of necessary or desirable transportation privileges or franchises, but it does desire to see such grants made within the law and with due regard for public rights. The Southern Pacific Company and the Santa Fe are asking for some-

In the Grip of the Octopus



thing that they call "a spur track permit" for a railroad along the northern water front of the city. Obviously, this is not a spur track in any sense that these words may be made to bear. The companies are asking for a franchise of the greatest value, and if it is to be granted at all it should be under all the safeguards that the charter provides. Moreover, no such franchise should be given without provision for due compensation to the city, coupled with an option for condemnation by the municipality on payment of construction cost.

The railroad companies complain that they are unjustly suspected of a desire to "bottle up the water front," and protest their willingness to permit all railroads to switch cars on the proposed line. Very well; if the corporations are under suspicion, they have themselves to blame, and no others. The general public is familiar with the dubious activities of Mr. Jere Burke in the Supervisors' lobby. It is not forgotten that Mr. Burke was very busy at the time the spur track ordinance was under consideration. The most important clause in that ordinance gives exclusive rights over spur tracks any part of which is laid on private ground.

With Mr. Burke's exclusion act staring us in the face, the Southern Pacific people need not complain because they are under suspicion or because the public is not ready to take at its face value General Manager Calvin's promise that all railroad companies will be allowed to use the proposed belt line. A specific provision to that effect should be included in the grant.

In the meantime, the merchants who are moving in this matter should take steps to initiate direct legislation covering the whole question of spur tracks, and the first thing to do should be to eliminate Mr. Burke's exclusion act.

NOTE AND COMMENT

Mayor Schmitz may be "clamoring" for a speedy trial, but the "clamor" is a noise suggestive of that produced by a pig under a gate.

It is not the way the President spells, but the amount of it, that is making the American public stretch and yawn.

The Washington administration people tore a magazine writer to pieces because he found enough in a stay of twenty-eight hours on the isthmus to make a sizzling article. Roosevelt tarried seventy-two hours and brought home a message as heavy and almost as long as his best previous performance.

Gossip in Railway Circles

Peter Harvey, general agent of the Baltimore and Ohio, who has been in Los Angeles, is back in this city.

The Southern Pacific will in future supply free meals to "revenue passengers" on trains which have been delayed by washouts or accidents, after two meal periods have elapsed. Passengers on trains 1, 2, 19, 20, 25, 26, 43 and 44 will have meals valued at \$1 furnished free. On other trains the free meal value will be 75 cents. Mr. Harriman is careful to announce that neither beer nor wine nor whiskey cigars will be furnished free.

The operating department of the Southern Pacific and the general agent of the Armour car lines for the State do not agree as to the number of fruit cars delivered. McClymonds said last Tuesday that the Armour people were delivering to the Southern Pacific at the Ogden gateway something like 100 cars a day and from forty to fifty at the El Paso gateway. The officials of the Southern Pacific say they have received from the Armours 178 fruit cars during the last seven days at Ogden, and the record for the past seven days at El Paso is 35, 28, 29, 25, 30 and 16. The Southern Pacific has wired to the Armours in Chicago frequently for more cars, and the belief is expressed that the fruit cars which should be here are employed to carry beef from Kansas City to Chicago and from Chicago to New York.

I. L. Hibbard, general superintendent of the valley division of the Santa Fe, who has been seriously ill at his home in Alameda, is on the rapid road to recovery.

It is rumored that the Louisville and Nashville Railroad will appoint a Pacific Coast agent in this city, and it is also asserted that the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western is about to appoint a Pacific Coast freight agent here. The passenger department of this line is represented by J. F. Fugate. There is also some curiosity as to who will succeed M. M. Stern as general agent of the Canadian Pacific. The report is

that the agency will be divided, one man being appointed to look after freight and the other after passengers.

Frank L. Miller, who for the past five years has been the district passenger agent of the Rock Island and Frisco lines in Los Angeles, has resigned to accept a position in one of the banks in that city. His resignation will take effect on the first of the year, and General Agent F. W. Thompson has appointed J. L. Stanton, who has been the traveling passenger agent in that district, to succeed Miller.

The passenger department of the Southern Pacific received a call the other day from the Rev. John G. Spelcher, M. D., whose card still further carried the inscription, "Divine Healing Mission." The reverend gentleman is a representative of Zion City and is in this State for the purpose of acquiring 2000 acres of land on which to plant a colony of Zionists. It appears that several Zionists are tired of the troubles with Alexander Dowie and are desirous of seeking a locality with an agreeable climate in which to practice their religion and carry on agricultural pursuits. Dr. Spelcher says there are good farmers in Zion and that he will bring out West as a starter 100 families. Quick returns are wanted and he thought the Zionists will elect to settle in the Sacramento Valley and raise alfalfa. Dr. Spelcher is in Los Angeles.

H. R. Judah, assistant general passenger agent of the Southern Pacific, is back from a trip to Japan. Mr. Judah says there is considerable excitement in Japan over the school question. Among the better classes and officials the matter is understood, but the ignorant classes have had their minds inflamed by the utterances of the native press and look upon San Francisco's stand as a gross insult to their nationality.

Henry Avila of the passenger department of the Union Pacific will spend the Christmas holidays with relatives at Fresno.

The Lesson of Conflagrations

At the time when the unparalleled catastrophe which destroyed over half of the beautiful city at the Golden Gate is still fresh in our memories and still exciting the sufferers, both assured and insurers, it would not seem out of place to reflect on the causes which lead to such disastrous consequences. It seems to be generally accepted that the great calamity was beyond human power to foresee. While this may be true of the primary cause of the catastrophe, it is equally true of the conflagration which followed it.

The conflagrations of Portland, Me., in 1866, Chicago in 1871 and 1874, Boston in 1872, Oskosh and Virginia City in 1875, Galveston in 1884, Seattle, Ellensburg, Spokane, Boston and Lynn in 1889, Milwaukee in 1892, Hoboken in 1900, Jacksonville in 1901, Waterbury and Paterson in 1902—not to mention a hundred other smaller conflagrations with their own individual tragedies—have thrown their blight over the places swept by them, and lastly San Francisco in 1906, all owe their extent and destructiveness to inflammable construction. None of these conflagrations would ever have started, or if started, would ever have produced such disastrous results if attention had been paid to proper and safe construction.

Is there any one who believes that there would have been such destruction in San Francisco, notwithstanding the earthquake, if there had been no shingle roofs, no frame rows—if its brick buildings had not been studded with wooden bay windows, wooden additions and wooden trimmings? If there had been no buildings higher than the width of the street on which they front? Fallen or wrecked buildings, would, no doubt, here and there have taken fire from gas escaping from broken gaspipes, or from broken electric wires, or cracked flues, overturned stoves and lamps, but they would, in all probability, have burned themselves out in the time of their origin without spreading to adjacent property.

In the absence of water, the Fire Department would have found other means to extinguish the fires and circumscribe their extent, if there had been no inflammable material in its immediate vicinity to feed upon, nor any to ignite from flying sparks blocks and miles away. The remedy, therefore, would seem to be the "ounce of prevention," that is to say, in better government from the start. The State should prohibit in every village, town and city the construction of inflammable roofs, or the erection of any wooden building upon a superficial area over twenty-five hundred feet square, and not then unless such wooden building has vacant space all around it at least equal to its height, or else is protected on the exposed side by entire "fire walls."

In addition to this, the State must require every fire—however great or small—to be immediately reported by the occupant and owner to the nearest magistrate or Chief of the Fire Department, with such data regarding cause, ownership, value, insurance and loss as is known at the time, and by said officials to be reported monthly to the State authorities.

For further protection against the frequency of fires the State should cause such reports to be classified according to causes, localities, direct and exposure and conflagration loss as a basis for intelligent legislation on the subject of fires and the protection of property. Such statistics would lay the foundation of wise and intelligent laws for the construction and protection of property and would be instrumental in producing the lowest rates at which it could be safely insured. It would then obviate the necessity of all the foolish anti-trust laws as applied to the insurance companies, because, then, every citizen would have, as a basis for his calculations, the same information as the insurance companies. If it were shown that most of our fires originated from matches that will ignite wherever they happen to light, large fire departments and fire companies, and mechanics, who are in any way responsible for the construction of a defective flue, fireplace or chimney, or unsafe setting of a stove, heating furnace or boiler, should upon conviction, be likewise liable to fine or imprisonment. Under such laws, conscientiously enforced, the regular annual destruction now going on of one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy-five million dollars, exclusive of extraordinary conflagrations, would be cut down to one-half, if not one-fourth, and the ratio of fire loss might be reduced from an average of over \$3 per capita to that of the average European cities, which is about 50 cents per capita, and the number of fires reduced from 4.5 to each thousand population in the United States to 0.86, the average of those in European cities, and the cost for large fire departments and fire companies would be immensely reduced and yet afford ten times greater security.

I trust I have succeeded in showing that only those who teach the public how to protect their houses and contents, and not those who clamor for more water, more fire apparatus and conflagration breeding "fire limits" laws, without first having taken into consideration the "ounce of prevention," which will make the tons of cure unnecessary, are the benefactors of the community.

GOOD GOVERNMENT.
WEALTH—Reader, City. According to the census of 1850 the wealth per capita was \$307.60; in 1891 it was \$779.33, and in 1890, \$1235.86.
THE FLAG—Subscriber, Oakland, Cal. It is proper for the patriotic American citizen to display the American flag at all times, but the special days on which he should do so are all holidays.
THE LADY'S SIDE—A. Q. City. It is always in good taste for a gentleman to give a lady the inside of the sidewalk when walking with her. If the sidewalk be narrow, but in the day time he should not give her his arm, unless she be his mother or one of advanced age. In the evening a gentleman should give the lady his right arm when walking with her, though he may give the left if more convenient. Indoors, at parties and balls, the lady invariably takes the right arm of her escort.
DEBATES—R. J. C. This department does not furnish debaters with ideas as to what to say. If you are to debate on the exclusion of Japanese from your individual ideas on the subject, and if you are not conversant with the facts, read the files of The Call for a month past; then you can apply your ideas to the facts.
LAUNDRIES—S. H. E. City. There is an ordinance of this city that reads as follows: "No person or persons owning or employed in the public laundries of public wash houses, provided for in section 1 of this ordinance, shall wash, iron or mangle clothes between the hours of 7 o'clock p. m. and 6 o'clock a. m. nor upon any portion of any day known as Sunday." This applies to all laundries.

The Smart Set

A HIGHLY successful dance was given by Captain Henry B. Clark, Lieutenant Guy E. Manning and Lieutenant Clarence Carrigan at Fort Baker on Wednesday evening, about 150 guests being present. The affair took place in the gymnasium, which was artistically decorated and, as the hosts are in the artillery corps, red was the color most in evidence. In the center of the room was a huge red lantern and dozens of red-shaded electric lights were suspended from the rafters. Long ropes of red berries and spicy redwood foliage were garlanded about the rooms. The walls were draped in flags, and elsewhere were ferns, redwood boughs and clusters of Christmas berries. It was an unusually pretty dance. It nearly all of the men present were in uniform, either of the army or navy, and these, with the soft-hued gowns of the young women, were most effective. A number of guests went from this side and from the various army posts around the bay, some going and returning on the Government boat, while others were entertained at house parties at the post. Among those present were Major Adam Sliamkin, Colonel and Mrs. Cooke, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Porter, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shields, Captain and Mrs. Humphrey, Lieutenant Commander and Mrs. E. P. Jessop, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Carrigan, Mrs. and Mrs. Clarence Percy Nicholas, Mrs. Gaston Ashe, Mrs. H. Clay Miller, Mrs. Walcott-Thomas, Mrs. James W. Sperry, Miss Maizie Langhorne, Miss Julia Langhorne, Miss Jessie Wright, Miss Elsie Sperry, Miss Mabel Watkins, Miss Edith Miller, Miss Margaret Thompson, Miss Alma Bottoms, the Misses Jewell, Miss Pickering of Alcatraz, Miss Reynolds, Miss Helen Thomas of Sausalito, Miss Julia Thomas, Miss Constance Bortow, Miss Etelka Willard, Dr. Ernest K. Johnstone, Paymaster Gray Skipwith, James Cameron, Ramon Reynoldsen, Lieutenant Thomlinson, Lieutenant Test, Lieutenant McCammon, Paymaster Hope, H. Clay Miller, R. H. Henderson, Dr. Jurnell, Willard Sperry, Jack Carrigan, Joseph Carrigan, Thomas Miller, Wayne Patterson, Lieutenant Robert Arns, Mr. E. W. Tombs, Herbert Bonfield and Mr. Schenck.

Mrs. Eleanor Martin entertained at a theater party on Tuesday evening at the Maxine Elliott performance. Those present were Mrs. William G. Irwin, Mr. and Mrs. Dixwell Hewitt, Miss Helene Irwin and Count de la Rocca.

Mrs. Charles G. Lyman was hostess at a luncheon at the Palace Hotel several days ago. Among her guests were Mrs. Charles Farquharson, Mrs. William Gerstle, Mrs. Mark Gerstle, Mrs. Bray, Miss Baldwin and Miss Castle.

Mrs. Robert Browne was hostess at a luncheon yesterday at the Palace Hotel in honor of Miss Whitaker of Los Angeles, who is visiting friends here. The table was decorated with carnations. The guests were Mrs. Joseph Charles Meyerstein, Mrs. Frank H. Kerrigan, Mrs. Gustave Umbson, Mrs. A. J. Raisch, Mrs. Marshall Hale, Miss Bias, Miss Nora Oliver and Miss Frances Stevens.

Miss Cornelia Kempff and Rear Admiral Louis Kempff, who have been in the East for several weeks, are expected to arrive here before Christmas.

Mrs. Robson and Miss Helene Robson, who have made their home in Berkeley since the fire, have returned to this city and will spend the winter at the Hotel Lillenthal on Franklin and Clay streets.

Miss Elsie Tallant, who has been the guest of her aunt, Mrs. J. J. Brice, in Sonoma County, has gone to San Rafael, where she is staying with her aunt, Mrs. George Hellman. Miss Tallant is far from well and has thus far been seen but seldom at society affairs of the winter season.

Mrs. Charles Krauthoff, who has been at the hospital for several weeks, is recovering from illness and has returned to the Knickerbocker, where she will spend the winter.

Mrs. Heppburn, whose husband, Lieutenant Heppburn, U. S. N., is on the Albatross, is expected to arrive within a few days from the East, where she spent the summer during Lieutenant Heppburn's absence in the north.

Miss Pierce of Sacramento is the guest of her cousin, Miss Edith Miller, in Sausalito.

Personal Mention

Alexander Lilley and wife of San Rafael are guests at the Palace.

Senator Flannagan and wife of Reno are at the Jefferson.

S. M. Gray of Seattle is at the Jefferson.

N. S. Patterson of Los Angeles is at the Savoy.

F. F. Pierce of Santa Clara is at the Savoy.

Mrs. A. H. Mowatt of Fresno is at the Dorchester.

Lieutenant A. M. Shipp, U. S. A., is at the Savoy.

Dr. and S. T. Zimmerman of Toronto, Canada, are at the Dorchester.

H. S. Ricks, a big lumberman of Eureka, is at the Dorchester.

Captain Lloyd of the steamer Senator is at the Jefferson.

E. L. Howe, a prominent merchant of Chicago, is at the Jefferson.

C. Frederick Kohl and wife of San Mateo, are at the Palace.

E. C. Merritt, a well-known merchant of Santa Rosa, is at the Palace.

J. E. Johnson and W. Clark of Los Angeles are at the Palace.

H. L. Valley Jr. of the United States Bureau of Fisheries, from Washington, D. C., is at the Savoy.

H. Knight of Tonopah is at the Savoy.

W. H. Barney of Seattle, accompanied by his wife, is at the Imperial.

Dr. F. M. Archer of Redding is at the Imperial.

Miss Florence McCullough from New York, who is touring the world, is at the Imperial.

C. F. Connell and wife of Daggett, Cal., are at the Majestic.

T. H. Clifford of New York is at the Majestic.

W. T. Kent of Washington, D. C., is at the Dorchester.

Consul General R. P. Skinner writes that the sea-level canal from Marseille to the Rhone River is to be completed seven years hence at an estimated cost of \$15,000,000. A large amount of work has been done chiefly under the head of developing detailed specifications. Mr. Skinner's complete report can be consulted at the Bureau of Manufactures.

Townsend's California Glace Works, 1250 Sutter st. near Van Ness ave.; the Emporium and at factories, 1220 Valencia st., near 22d.