

The San Francisco Call

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THE JOYOUS BOSS IN DURANCE

RUEF is cheerful, even jocular. He exhausts the potentialities of song and humor in aid of a stiff upper lip. "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage." His durance is not vile, but is attended by all the modern conveniences. The prisoner of the St. Francis does not languish in a dungeon. He is nourished on pate de foie gras and truffles, or their equivalent, but all these caters and frills may not obscure the fact that he is a prisoner. His cage is gilded, but the bars are there. Not yet does his portrait appear in the rogues' gallery, but he is on his way.

But yesterday Ruef was boss. Today there is none so poor to do him reverence—unless it might be his man, the companion of his fight, Myrtle Cerf, who was eager to engage the whole Grand Jury and all the minions of the law in personal combat, a warrior singled from the stew. It may be that the argument of fists is the last resort available for Ruef and his heels.

There is, for instance, Mr. S. M. Shortridge, usually the most peaceable and respectable of citizens, albeit troubled with a flux of language. Mr. Shortridge appears to have fallen among thieves, and suffers by the association. Evil communications corrupt good manners. So says the copybook moralist. Mr. Shortridge should take heed and warning, for, in truth, he conveys a great moral lesson for the first time in his life without saying a word. Just watch him busy trying to keep out of jail and wearing a muzzle for self-protection. Too late comes repentance. Like his famous prototype, he talked too much.

It is reported from Sacramento that Ruef's gang of assorted disreputables in the Legislature is meditating some sort of grotesque foray intended to blacken Judge Dunne and whitewash Judge Hebard. The tale is scarcely credible, but it is to be hoped that they may try it. It would be quite of a piece with the silly and impotent tactics that have characterized the defense of Ruef, which, in fact, has been no defense, but merely a continuing process of evasion that reached its logical conclusion in flight. The verdict of a crew of political blacklegs, delivered between intervals of robbing the State henroost, would simply be read backward. Most of them will be lucky if they keep out of jail.

It is timely to offer a humble suggestion that the Legislature before adjournment get together and deliver a certificate of good, moral character to Ruef. It is never too late to mend a reputation with a splash of mud.

It is right to hold the shifty boss in custody. Like his evasive exemplar, George D. Collins, he became a fugitive from justice on the eve of trial. He sees the same fate before him, and may shortly be competing with Collins for the law business of his cellmates. But he should not neglect the opportunity of the dying session to bring forth a counterblast from the Legislature. A verdict from that body on the morals of the judiciary would at least promote the gayety of the commonwealth and make the ten commandments look silly.

THE PONDERABLE SOUL

THE researches of certain Boston doctors who claim to have ascertained the weight of the human soul should be regarded as another triumph of science—if you believe the doctors. Dr. Duncan MacDougall, who conducted the experiments in company with four other physicians, describes the process of weighing the soul. The consent of the moribund subject was not obtained, apparently, and it may be that the subsequent proceedings interested him but little. Dr. MacDougall's account of one experiment runs thus:

Four other physicians under my direction made the first test on a patient dying with tuberculosis. This man was one of the ordinary type, of the usual American temperament, neither particularly high-strung nor of marked phlegmatic disposition. We placed him, a few hours preceding death, upon a scale platform that I had constructed and that was accurately balanced.

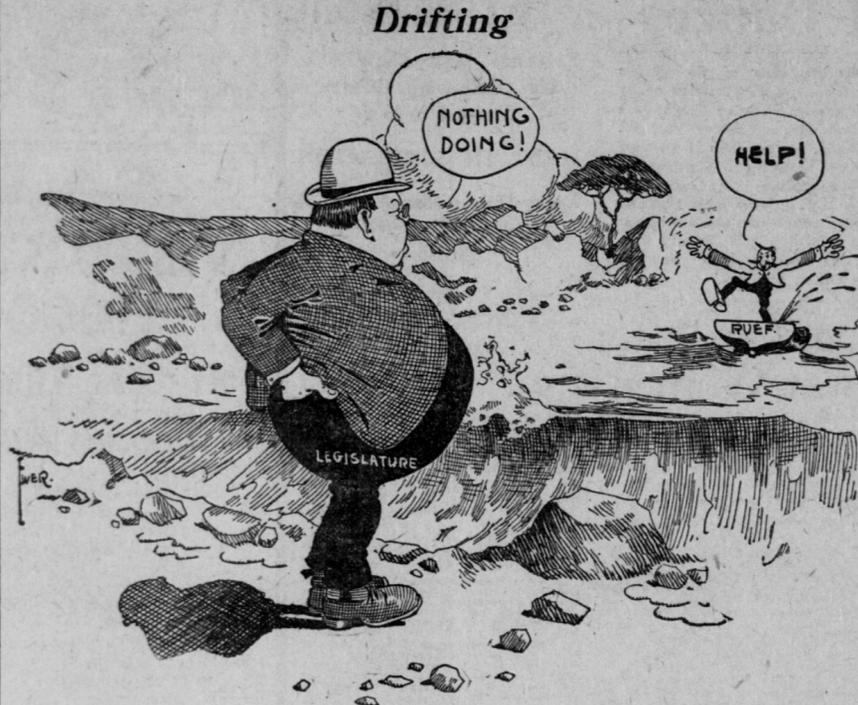
Four hours later, with five doctors in attendance, he died. The instant life ceased the opposite scale pan fell with a suddenness that was astonishing—as if something had been suddenly lifted from the body.

Immediately all the usual deductions were made for physical loss of weight, and it was discovered that there was still a full ounce of weight unaccounted for. The question then arose as to what the loss meant. It was a loss of substance that could be obtained in known figures, and was also such a singularly appreciable loss as to place it beyond all doubt that it might be due to any error in calculation.

All this makes a very odd and suggestive revelation of the scientific attitude. Having sentenced the patient to death without inconvenient delay they put him on one end of the scales to weigh his soul as he gives up the ghost. Fiat experimentum corpore villi. The dying man was just so much material for research and nothing more. Admitting the truth of the change in weight, they have proved nothing about the soul. Its existence remains as much as ever a matter of faith and wonder, not of proof. But as for these doctors, it is doubtful if they have an ounce of soul among all five of them.

YOUNG-MAN-IN-A-HURRY

DANGEROUS are the uses of impetuosity in the digging of canals. Dr. Roosevelt chose a kindred soul in Chief Engineer Stevens, another Hotspur, who would make the tropics sizzle and the dirt take wings. That was very well and well planned, but—Mr. Stevens, like the President, is impatient of restraint and resentful under criticism. All manner of Congressional busybodies began poking impudent noses into the conduct of operations at Panama, and then there came a question of taking the work out of the chief engineer's hands and giving it to a contractor, while



Stevens was to be nothing more than a looker-on, in receipt of salary.

Now, Stevens wanted glory as well as pay. He hoped that history would point an admiring finger at him as the man who joined two oceans and subdued the turbulent tropics to his will.

He wrote a message. It is a sovereign cure for the mental distemper, although it sometimes comes back hard at the writer. At any rate, Stevens felt better after he had written his message to the President. It was hot stuff, and although its text is withheld, the general tenor is known. The chief engineer wrote that in the preceding thirty days he had broken the record for digging, and he strongly objected to letting in a mere contractor on the job. He would share the glory with none. Neither would he be dictated to or cross-examined by any committee of Congress, nor hampered by petty and annoying legislation by men who did not know a shovel from a pickax. Finally he told the President that his resignation was ready if his wishes were disregarded, and this ultimatum was fraught with the implication that his retirement would be little short of a national calamity. Promptly came back the answer, "Resignation accepted."

We trust the military gentleman selected to fill the place—we cannot pronounce and with difficulty spell his name, but we know he is a major—we trust that the major is not impetuous. We cannot afford to have more than one Hotspur on the job, unless we want it to cost a billion. A Boston editor of confiding temper, commending the selection of the army engineer corps to carry on the work, allays our anxiety. He says "they are often accused of deliberation." Wherefore accuse? Say, rather, Well done, thou slow and faithful servant, who made the dirt crawl.

"They are often accused of deliberation!" La-la-la! What is slower than a seven-year ditch? Why, the Panama canal, of course.

Gossip of the Doings of Railroad Men

The northern part of the State is receiving from the East about 1000 persons a day, and if this ratio be kept up till the last day of April San Francisco, to which the majority of the travelers are coming, will have a respectable addition to her population. The numbers that have been taking advantage of the colonist rate is far in excess of that of other years and it is interesting to note that the Northwest, which had quite a boom in population in the last two years, is getting but little patronage this year. The general offices of the Southern Pacific give out the following figures for a single day Saturday: Ogden 445, El Paso 401, Portland 72, Los Angeles 7. These, with 129 reported by the Santa Fe, make a total of 995 persons, and this is the smallest number since the colonist rate went into effect on March 1.

Monday morning reports from Oakland to the operating office of the Southern Pacific read like those of a general action. There are always some killed and injured to be reported, and it seems as though on the second day of the week men were more anxious to cross the path of speeding trains than on any other day. The summary yesterday was as follows:

J. Southern, brakeman, was struck and sent to the hospital; struck while crossing in front of a railroad train which was running at the rate of twenty miles an hour.

Geep, Chinese, head cut and otherwise bruised. Geep tried to cross in front of a moving train which was going at the rate of eight miles an hour.

Thomas Fernando, left leg cut off below the knee. He said he had no idea the Southern Pacific could move trains so rapidly.

P. Murphy, trackwalker for the Southern Pacific; killed by Santa Fe extra, traveling at the rate of thirty miles an hour. Murphy was dead when picked up.

There was high water at the foot of Broadway, Oakland, yesterday morning and several ladies and Carleton C. Crane objected to leaving the train at J. Southern and swimming to dry land. By common consent Crane was selected as chairman of the grievance committee to wait upon Conductor Nutting and ask him to devise ways and means for the passengers to get ashore without being drowned.

"Get a plank," said Crane, who was regarded as a whole life-saving crew. "Make fast the bow line," he commented, as Conductor Nutting placed the plank in position.

"Let go there, aft," shouted Crane, and as he stepped on the plank it was deftly withdrawn. Had it not been for his athletic training he would have been precipitated head foremost into the muddy pool.

"Did you ever see such a lot of landlubbers?" remarked Crane, as he gazed at the grinning trainmen.

Captain A. H. Payson returned on Sunday evening from Santa Barbara where he had been, as he explained, not on railroad business, but to give President Ripley his revenge at golf. Payson again proved his prowess by defeating Ripley. His success possibly was the reason for W. A. Bissell having left for Santa Barbara yesterday morning. Bissell, however, intends to go as far as Los Angeles on business for the company.

C. E. E. Usher, assistant passenger traffic manager of the Canadian Pacific, arrived in this city yesterday and will make a tour of the coast before returning to his home at Winnipeg. It is said he will appoint a district passenger agent with headquarters in this city before leaving for the East.

A meeting of the Transcontinental Passenger Association is scheduled for May 8 at the Glenwood Tavern, Riverside. The passenger agents in this city expect that the congress will be largely attended by the passenger traffic officials throughout the country.

Spillman J. Marks, who has been passenger agent in the Union Pacific offices in this city for three years, has been ordered to Los Angeles as city passenger agent in that place. His position here will be taken by G. Lowry.

H. P. Anewalt, assistant general freight agent of the Santa Fe, who has been in Arizona and the Southwest on business for the company, returned yesterday.

F. A. Jones, who has been the general freight and passenger agent of the Santa Fe for many years at Prescott, Ariz., has resigned to engage in private business and will be succeeded by Paul R. Hastings, who has been the auditor of the Santa Fe, Prescott and Phoenix.

The Smart Set

INVITATIONS have been received here from Mrs. Edith Syle to the marriage of her daughter, Miss Elizabeth Biddle Syle, to Arthur Edward Madison on March 24 at noon in the Church of the Angels, Los Angeles. Miss Syle is the daughter of the late Professor L. Du Pont Syle of the University of California, and is well known here and in Berkeley, although of late she has made her home in Southern California. She is a charming girl, clever and popular, and her friends are rejoicing with her and sending the heartiest congratulations to Mr. Edwards as well. He is one of the rising young business men of Santa Barbara and it is there they will live.

Mr. and Mrs. William G. Irwin, Miss Helene Irwin and Miss Julia Langsome, who went down last week to Coronado for the polo tournament, will stop a few days at Santa Barbara on their way home this week.

Mr. and Mrs. James Pollis, who have spent the winter at the Hotel Rafael, expect to move into their beautiful new home in San Rafael about the end of this month.

Mrs. Rosenstock and her daughter, Mrs. J. R. K. Nuttall, left yesterday morning for New York, where they are called by the serious illness of Mrs. Rosenstock's mother. They expect to remain in the East for a month or six weeks, although their plans are of necessity rather indefinite.

Mrs. George Tilghman has arrived from Switzerland, where she had been for the past two years, and will arrive home, Mrs. Hal Tilghman, who crossed with Mrs. Tilghman, did not come West, but is at present the guest of her brother-in-law and sister, Rev. and Mrs. Charles J. Mason, in Stonington, Conn.

Mrs. Marguerite Hanford expects to leave in about two months for Canada, where she will spend some time visiting relatives.

Miss Ardella Mills and Miss Elizabeth Mills returned yesterday from New York, where they have been during the winter months. They came by way of New Orleans, spending a day or two there and enjoying their leisurely trip homeward greatly.

The many friends of Mrs. E. Walton Hedges will be delighted to hear that she has taken her pretty apartments on Broderick street for another month and will remain here until May 1. She will then go East to rejoin her family and will pass the summer with them on the Maine coast. It was hoped that Mrs. Hedges would decide to remain in the West during the summer months and there is much disappointment over her latest decision.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hammond have returned from Boston, where they had spent the winter, and have gone to their ranch in Lake County.

Much sympathy is felt for Mrs. Edward Polhemus, who has been quite ill for the past week at her home in Clay street, and, although she is now better, is still far from well.

Miss Rowena Davidson has sent out announcements of the marriage of her daughter, Miss Florence Ethelberta Davidson, to Brockbridge David Mars Greene on Thursday, March 7, in Berkeley. They will be at home after August 5 at Hill Top, Garber street, Berkeley.

Mrs. H. M. A. Postley is expected to arrive from Santa Barbara for a visit to her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Erskine Richardson, who have an attractive home on Walnut street.

Personal Mention

H. F. Spenser of Goldfield is at the Hamill.

Monroya Sharpe of Santa Cruz is at the Dorchester.

F. C. Smith of Reno and his mother are at the Majestic Annex.

J. L. Bryson, with mining interests at Stent, Nev., is at the Savoy.

W. Riedlinger of Jerex de la Frontera, Spain, is at the Palacio.

George W. Sill, a fruit grower of Watsonville, is at the Majestic.

O. P. Posey and his son, O. W. Posey, of Goldfield are at the Majestic.

J. G. Cummings and wife of Crankroot, E. C., are at the Hamill.

J. H. Brinesfield, prominent in real estate circles at Hanford, is at the Savoy.

L. Gerlinger, a capitalist of Portland, Ore., accompanied by his family, is at the Palacio.

Smith Crowder, vice president and manager of the Los Molinos Land Company, is at the Dorchester.

Rev. Father Thomas F. Cashman of Chicago and his sister, Miss Helene Cashman, are at the Dorchester.

David D. Seerle and his brother, Peter Seerle, prominent in business circles of Denver, are at the Hamill.

James B. Brady, familiarly known as "Diamond Jim" Brady, of the Standard

In the Joke World

Friend—You never had much trouble, did you?

Cynic—No, that's it; I never get my share of anything.—Milwaukee Journal.

Knicker—Jones says he is a Yale man.

Booker—Yes; he never went himself, but he paid his son's way through.—New York Sun.

"Do you believe an infant that dies unbaptized can be saved?"

"Um, I dunno. What does Roosevelt say about it?"—Chicago Record-Herald.

"How do you know that strange doctor you called in is a bachelor?"

"Because he picked up all the magazines that were lying on the floor and carefully laid them on the table."—Detroit Free Press.

Steel Company of New York, is at the Palacio.

H. L. Pittock, business manager and half owner of the Portland Oregonian, is at the Jefferson with his wife. They are on their way to Santa Barbara.

J. B. Powles and wife and daughter, Miss Olive R. Powles, of Seattle, who have been touring Southern California in their automobile, are at the Dorchester on their way northward.