

The San Francisco Call

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NO INCREASE IN GAS RATES

NO adequate reason is advanced for increasing the price paid for gas. The present rate of 85 cents per 1,000 feet is ample and, indeed, excessive. The cost of distributing gas should not exceed 30 cents per 1,000 feet, and could not possibly be inflated beyond that figure were it not for the supposed necessity of paying interest on a fictitious capitalization of the result of a long series of consolidations effected to kill competition.

The maximum rate for electric current at 9 cents per kilowatt hour is absurdly extravagant. It is pointed out that the actual rates charged to consumers are regulated by competition for large consumers, and that is true. But the rate allowed by the board makes a pretext for the extortion practiced on small consumers, who are powerless to protect themselves.

We are not now discussing or asking for a reduction of the maximum rate for electric current; but we have stated the known facts as they bear by analogy on the situation of the gas consumers.

There is competition in the sale of gas covering certain parts of town, and such competition is likely to remain a constant feature of the situation, even if the present competitors should be bought out and consolidated. The result, then, of increasing the maximum rate for gas would be to mulct the consumers wherever they are not protected by competition.

The fact is that the investigation of lighting and water companies' finances by the board of supervisors is little better than a farce. They hear statements from the smooth and plausible agents of the corporations. These gentlemen, having the matter at their finger ends, are easily able to puzzle and confuse supervisors who have no special knowledge of the business.

The truth is that the gas company, like the water company, wants the people of San Francisco to recoup its losses by the fire. The gas company even makes threats of taking the matter into court; but this is a cheap bluff. They know that the fictitious capitalization of the concern would not stand judicial investigation as a basis for fixing rates.

MONEY NEEDED FOR SANITATION

THE CALL hopes that the people of San Francisco as a whole will come forward liberally to the financial support of the sanitation work now in the hands of the federal health authorities. The larger concerns and corporations interested in this city have given and are giving in a generous and public spirited fashion; but we should like to see the movement made more general. It is everybody's business and the sanitary authorities need the money.

The whole country is watching with interest the sanitation work in progress here, and we cannot afford to let it lag for want of funds. We hope that every patriotic and public spirited citizen of San Francisco will contribute according to his means. All subscriptions will be publicly acknowledged, except where the donor wishes otherwise.

BURTON ON THE FOWLER BILL

THE minority report of the house banking and currency committee on the Fowler bill for reform of the currency written by Representative Burton of Ohio commands attention. Mr. Burton approves the principle of the bill in common with the best authorities on finance, but regards the proposed changes as too radical. Besides, he distrusts the plan to guarantee deposits. Indeed, his criticism of the bill follows very closely the general lines previously set forth in these columns.

The Fowler bill would amount to a financial revolution, substituting the European plan of a central bank, or, rather, organization of bankers, which would have control of the issue of notes and the security thereof. This is really an extension of the clearing house system that carried us through the financial stringency with so much success. Commercial credits would be available as security for note issues, and the expansion of the currency by such notes in time of stringency would be regulated by the associated bankers. The present makeshift plan of "doping" the currency by loans from the treasury and the unnecessary sale of bonds would be ended. We doubt whether the country is ready for so radical a change.

Such a provision places upon the same level the banker of prudence and honesty and the one who is careless and ready to resort to questionable methods. If there is any line of business in which care and conservatism is essential it is banking. This proposed regulation places those very qualities

The Guest of Honor



at a disadvantage and gives a premium to those who are guilty of reckless and dishonest management.

Under a guaranty of deposits the money of depositors would inevitably gravitate to banks or financial institutions in speculative centers because higher rates of interest could be obtained, though the result would be that capital would be invested in a manner which would be sure to lead to speculation and to unsuccessful undertakings.

These are the conclusions of enlightened bankers everywhere. The speculative itch is the overshadowing danger that attends banking and bankers. The failures are almost invariably due to the gambling spirit that sometimes gets hold of bankers. We do not want to encourage that spirit.

"THE KEY OF THE PACIFIC"

CONGRESS is beginning to realize the importance of preparedness in Pacific waters and is considering active work on fortifications for our outlying possessions by way of supplement for the presence of a great fleet. A beginning has been made in the fortification of a naval base on Manila bay, and now the naval affairs committee is discussing the making of a large appropriation to make Pearl harbor in the Hawaiian group impregnable.

An enemy in possession of Hawaii could harass our entire western coast; on the other hand, with our fleet operating from a well equipped base at Pearl harbor, no fleet from the orient would find it practicable to threaten our coast because of the stronghold left in the rear and the prohibiting distance from its coaling base.

The equipment of Pearl harbor is a matter of national prudence and not of extravagance. It affords the nation's least expensive way of defending our Pacific coast. It will constitute one of the strongest factors in the prevention of war with any power in the far east.

It is recommended that \$700,000 of the appropriation shall be made immediately available, and notwithstanding the prevailing disposition in congress to economize, it is believed that the money will be provided. President Roosevelt has given the measure his strong endorsement. The plan is merely the logical development of the policy which is based on the sense that the Pacific ocean is the chief theater for the maintenance and exercise of the national sea power.

Pearl harbor is said to be the best natural harbor in the world. It is absolutely landlocked, and its entrance can be protected by sunken mines, so as to make it impregnable. Ships lying within its recesses are protected by high mountains so steep that guns could not be dragged to their summits. It comprises ten square miles of waters, with a depth of sixty feet. The harbor has been described in strategic phrase as the "Key of the Pacific."

By Kathleen Thompson

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Harold Bauer, Last of Great Pianists, to Appear Here This Season

By Walter Anthony

THE procession of great pianists which has filed across the San Francisco concert platform this season, marshaled by Manager Greenbaum, will end with the appearance of Harold Bauer, who in many respects is the most important and interesting person at the piano. Like Fritz Kreisler, whom he resembles in versatility and broad musicianship, Bauer plays unusual programs. He goes far from the beaten track and gathers little heard selections and quaint treasures from the world's garden of music.

Again, like Kreisler, he is a Bach enthusiast and has carefully studied not only that master's works for all instruments, but he has also delved deeply into Bach bibliography. "This is ever occurring to you," remarked in a recent interview, "that there is a marked Hungarian element in the music of Bach? There is every reason that there should be. He came as by old in Prussburg, the former capital of Hungary. His mother was a Hungarian. All his ancestors for a hundred years had been musicians."

Further we know that many of his compositions were written for the cymbalum, the typical Hungarian instrument that has survived 500 years without undergoing the slightest change. We hear it today in the Hungarian orchestras and we know what style of free recitative it best lends itself. From this free recitative of the Hungarian peasant sprang many of Bach's wonderful, spontaneous melodies. We find them even in his most serious compositions.

At his first concert Sunday afternoon, March 29, Bauer will play Edward MacDowell's dramatic sonata, "Eroica." Various selections from Schumann's "Fantasiestücke" will be played for Bauer will be the first to play the entire group. An original adaptation of Caesar Franck's prelude, fugue and variations will be still another novelty on Bauer's Sunday program.

Beethoven's sonata, op. 81, will be presented at Bauer's second recital in this city and at his farewell concert the great pianist will play the deathless "Sonata Op. 10, No. 3." For his Oakland concert at Ye Liberty playhouse Friday afternoon, April 3, Bauer announces that he will play Schumann's sonata, op. 22, one of the most beautiful works in the entire library of piano music.

And then after the last of the pianists, comes Jean Garard, violinist. He is scheduled to play three concerts in San Francisco and one in Oakland next month. His opening recital on the instruments of the orchestra for Bauer will be the first to play the entire group. An original adaptation of Caesar Franck's prelude, fugue and variations will be still another novelty on Bauer's Sunday program.

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Answers to Queries

FINDING TREASURE—Reader, Chico, Cal. If a man unearths treasure on his own property and there is no evidence of the original owner, can the state confiscate the same?

ATTORNEY—Z. S. Santa Cruz, Cal. Can an individual practice law in the justice or superior court without having been admitted to the bar?

PROBLEMS—W. L. M. City. If a round ball was dropped through a hole bored from one side of the earth to the other, would it reach the other side, etc.

A POEM—Subscriber, City. Who wrote the poem in which are the following lines: Midnight past! Not a sound of sleep...

TROTTER HORSE—A. S. A. Caliente, Nev. Please state the price Sanford received for the trotting horse Arion; also when sold.

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Indian Railway Earnings

Consul General William H. Michael of Calcutta states that the half yearly report of the East Indian railway, which has just been issued, makes the following showing:

The company has in operation 2,204 1/2 miles of road, of which 1 1/2 miles are quadruple, 2 1/2 miles are triple, 534 1/2 miles are double and 1,665 miles are single line. The total length is 41 1/2 miles more than it was at the previous half year, due to the opening on April 15, 1907, of the Kurjahlipur branch. In addition to the above, the Delhi and Amritsar, 152 1/2 miles; South Bohar, 73 1/2 miles; and Tarakesur, 22 1/2 miles, were worked by the company, making a total length of 2,469 1/2 miles.

The total capital outlay was \$185,617,250, giving an average cost of \$80,875 per mile on 2,204 1/2 miles. Since the last report there has been a further issue of debenture stock to the extent of \$10,000,000, bearing interest at 3 1/2 per cent, at a discount of 5 per cent. The expenditure during the past half year was \$2,173,490, of which \$2,173,490 was for rolling stock and works for the open line. The gross receipts during the same period amounted to \$4,838,950, and the working expenses to \$5,378,311, leaving \$9,209,169 as the net earnings. After paying interest and other charges against the net earnings there was a surplus of \$3,539,447. The gross receipts are the highest on record, being an increase of \$54,972 over last year's figures.

Of the expenditures, salaries and office expenses amounted to \$44,690. Of this general administration cost \$1,417,187, including \$1,141,113; traffic, \$180,443, and audit and account, \$79,140, the balance being distributed in other directions.

The earnings are about as much now as before the strike. For the week ending December 31, 1907, the earnings amounted to \$557,333, against \$544,333 for the same period in 1904.

Despite Approach of Woman's Clubs' Election Dates Few Candidates Are Announced Owing to Great Demands of Work

By Kathleen Thompson

THE spring is the season for elections in all the women's clubs, and suggestions and nominations are beginning to creep into all the meetings. A few years ago, when the office of president only demanded spare time and one or two handsome gowns, there were plenty of candidates, but now it is rather hard to find a woman who will undertake the responsibility of this position. She knows that she must read and think and plan and study hard for the term of her office.

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club Thursday was a brilliant affair and was attended by nearly 300 members and guests. The Corona is one of the most enterprising of all the women's clubs and has increased in membership during the year. A splendid musical program was rendered Thursday and tea was served during the late afternoon hours. Some of the musicians were Miss Ellen Page, Miss D. Griswold, Miss Barbara Nachtrieb and Edwin Boyson. The next meeting will be held March 26, and a fine civic program has been arranged. Among the speakers will be Dr. Howard, Dr. Minor Kibbe, Dr. J. R. Hurley, Rev. Bradford Leavitt and Mrs. Jean Sinclair. These talks will be preceded by a clever little play, "The Home Club."

The members of the Corte Madera women's club are rejoicing in the establishment of a park at Corte Madera station, which was secured entirely through their efforts. The ground was donated by M. F. Fixley, in whose honor the first tree, an orange, was planted in the park. Other trees and shrubs were given by various friends, and altogether the little space is beginning to look well filled. Some of the speakers when the members and friends of the club first met at the park were the club's president, Mrs. Mary E. Hart, E. C. Chapman, W. B. Bradbury and Rev. J. S. Macdonald.

The members of the Mill Valley women's club listened to some very interesting speakers a week ago when the plague question was discussed in the clubhouse. Dr. Hurley, who is of Dr. Blue's staff, was the first speaker. The next speaker was Mrs. Jean Sinclair and J. Minor Kibbe, Mrs. Jean Sinclair and J. Knight also spoke. Knight interested the members in a pure milk dairy that he hopes soon to establish in Marin county.

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character building of its future men and women were the topics discussed at an interesting meeting at the California club last week. Mrs. E. L. Baldwin, who has for many years been an interested worker for parental homes and probation courts in the city, was chairman, and among the speakers were Dr. A. A. d'Ancona, who spoke of the possible change in the plan of certain streets; Miss Julia Morgan, one of the most successful women architects in the world; who spoke of the beauty of public buildings, fountains and parks, and Professor Hugh of Berkeley, whose topic was citizenship as taught in the public schools. One of Miss Morgan's ideas, which was warmly clapped, was that every public building—schools, libraries and civic offices—should be distinguishable by certain features in the architecture and by their gardens and window boxes.

Under the auspices of the social science department of the California club an interesting program will be given tomorrow afternoon. Thomas E. Hayden will speak of "Uniform Divorce Laws" and Dr. Jessica Plexotto on "Woman and Work."

Thursday afternoon an interesting program will be given in the California club house for the members of the Optimistic League. Mrs. James Crawford will preside and the speaker of the day will be Dr. John Fryer, professor of foreign languages in the University of California. The subject will be "The Teachers of China," and the talk promises to be a very interesting one, especially at this time. Dr. Fryer was for many years a resident of China and was one of the teachers of Minister Wu. Many guests have been asked to attend this lecture, and large audience is promised. Dr. Fryer.

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