

The San Francisco Call

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BUSINESS OFFICE: Market and Third Streets, San Francisco
Open Until 11 o'clock Every Night in the Year
EDITORIAL ROOMS: Market and Third Streets

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LONDON, England
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Subscription Rates:
Delivered by Carrier, 20 Cents Per Week, 75 Cents Per Month, Daily and Sunday Single Copies, 1 Cent

Terms by Mail for UNITED STATES, including Postage (Cash With Order):
DAILY CALL (Including Sunday), 1 Year
DAILY CALL (Including Sunday), 6 Months
DAILY CALL (Including Sunday), 3 Months

Entered at the United States Postoffice as Second Class Matter
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The Last Stand of The Standpatters

THE indecent scramble of greedy interests which congress calls "revising the tariff" emphasizes the need of a permanent commission of experts, not packed with politicians, and engaged in formulating schedules based on legitimate principles of protection.

It is the business of the standpatters to cultivate the prevailing ignorance of tariff matters. They like to make of it some esoteric mystery beyond the reach of any common understanding.

Mr. Taft has expressed himself in favor of some such commission. He feels as much as any one the need of exact knowledge on the questions in dispute.

But the president, as far as Washington advices permit us to know, appears to have stopped at that point. If his position is correctly stated, Mr. Taft has asked for nothing on behalf of the ultimate consumer and nothing to relieve the excessive cost of living.

The schedules for cotton and woolen manufactures afford the most oppressive example of sordid greed in the whole tariff. If any definite demand for their reduction has been made the country has not been advised on the subject.

The dry goods merchants go into the subject in detail. They submit elaborate figures showing that on one class of goods the increase would be 48 per cent, on another 51 per cent, on another 46 per cent, and on another 121 per cent.

We are reduced, therefore, to a situation where one man's word is supposed to be as good as another's, and the public is left in doubt for want of expert judgment of a disinterested sort.

This is exactly the situation that the standpatters desire to create and the notorious scramble of greedy interests serves to explain the reason why. The consumer is left at the mercy of the professional standpatters and this revision of the tariff as at present managed.

PUBLIC opinion in favor of taking the judiciary out of politics on some such plan of nonpartisan nominations as that advocated by William Denman of this city makes steady advances.

For a Nonpartisan Judiciary

The grounds of that decision are thus stated in the dispatches:

The chief objection of the court was to the provision requiring that of the 1,000 names to be on a petition for judge, not more than 500 could come from one county.

The entire court declared the provision denying the right of party conventions to indorse candidates for the offices affected by the act was without force and void.

The soundness of this decision is not disputed, and it is not unthinkable that the defects in the law were put there by its secret enemies, a favorite line of tactics by the professional politician. The law can not constitutionally forbid political parties indorsing or recommending candidates, for that would be an interference with the right of free speech and comment.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES

UNION JACK—Subscriber, Ctr. Why is the origin of Union Jack as applied to a flag? Prior to the revolutionary war, the flag under which the colonies were ruled was the English standard with its mutations from the white banner quartered by the red cross of St. George, and the New England flag, brought by Governor E. Andros, from James VI, with a cross of broader stripes bearing an imprinted crown surmounting the letters J. R. the "King's Union" flag, adopted when England and Scotland were united.

KNABENSHUE, H. M. W., Hollister, Cal. What is the address of Roy Knabenshue? He is a peripatetic individual, here today, there tomorrow, but a letter directed to him at Toledo, O., will, in time, reach him.

JAPAN—Subscriber, Fruitvale, Cal. To whom should one write for information about obtaining a position as teacher in the grammar grade in Japan? Write to United States ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary at Tokyo (Yeddo), Japan.

BOARDING SCHOOLS—Z. M., Upper Lake, Cal. Are there any boarding schools in California? There are many, but as has frequently been announced, this department does not advertise private institutions.

HUNTING—Subscriber, Halfmoon Bay, Cal. Can any one hunt quail or rabbits on his own land in the open season without a hunter's license? As the law stands he must take out a license.

TO MANILA—J. F. Betteveris, Cal. Is the captain of the United States army transport permitted to take his wife on a trip to Manila, P. I.? Generally under the rules of the war department, he is not, but in some extraordinary case a permit has been granted.

ROUNTY—W. C. M., Los Gatos, Cal. Is there a state or county law as to bounty for crows, wildcats and possums? There is a state law that authorizes all county boards of supervisors to

fix and determine the bounty for the destruction of coyotes and other destructive animals. To ascertain if any particular county has such a law, address the clerk of the county.

The Smart Set

SOCIETY is taking joy in a revival of summer gaiety that looks a little like a lively season in town. Several affairs that give promise of pleasant diversion have been planned.

There is a bridge party to be given this afternoon, when Mrs. Jessie Bowie Detrick will preside as hostess for a score of guests and then there is the dance at Blithedale this evening, which always attracts the young people from the city, from San Rafael and from Ross.

Out at the Presidio social affairs have a delightful swing and jollity to them, as if the season had just begun instead of being, as it truly is, at the sad and languishing end. Mrs. Sterling P. Adams is responsible for most of the delightful affairs at the post, and her bridge party one afternoon recently with Mrs. W. S. Scott, the wife of Major Scott, as the complimented guest was no exception to the rule. Mrs. Adams has an interesting young house guest just at present in the person of Carlos Adams, the nephew of Captain Adams, who is visiting here from his home in Eufaula, Ala.

The hop which is on the calendar for Wednesday evening at the Presidio is another event to be anticipated by the young people from town and society at the post.

Mrs. Walter E. Dean, who is passing the summer at the Hotel Rafael, was hostess at one of the most delightful of the recent bridge parties. Another hostess who entertained friends from town at luncheon and bridge was Mrs. William Thomas. Mrs. H. C. Holmes was among those who entertained during the week at the popular diversion for less than a dozen friends.

Mrs. James Potter Langhorne has returned after a pleasant stay at Santa Barbara and is again at her home in Pacific avenue, but Miss Julia Langhorne, after visiting friends in the southern part of the state, is now at the summer home of the Richard Hammonds in Colorado Springs. Miss Langhorne will remain out of town for a few weeks longer and is the incentive for a series of informal affairs at the pretty country house where she is a guest.

Rev. and Mrs. John Nichols, with their little daughter, are expected home next week from Shanghai, and a cordial welcome is in preparation for the popular young clergyman. His wedding took place about two years ago in the orient, and his friends here have not had an opportunity of greeting his charming wife, who has made many friends wherever she accompanied her husband. They will be the guests of Nichols' parents, Bishop William Ford Nichols and Mrs. Nichols, at the family home in Webster street, and it is anticipated that they will enjoy an extended visit in this city. A number of the last summer affairs will be in compliment to these visitors.

Mrs. Richard Derby and her daughter, Miss Winona Derby, have returned from Santa Cruz, where they have been enjoying a brief outing with Mrs. M. H. Huntington and Miss Marian Huntington, and are again at their home in Washington street. Miss Derby, however, will be away from town this season as the guest of friends in Mill Valley, where she is a favorite with the younger set, but Mrs. Derby will be in town for the remainder of the summer. Mrs. Derby has recently returned after an interesting trip to Tahiti with Mr. and Mrs. Jordan.

Miss Merritt Reid, who has been a visitor at Menlo Park for several days, has been delightfully entertained by the Perry Moores and before her return to town she will be the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pringle for a brief visit. Miss Reid has passed the season on a succession of these enjoyable trips.

Miss Marie Churchill, who has been passing the summer at Brookdale, returned to town yesterday with a party of friends and enjoyed a theater party, but will return to the country this afternoon after a brief stay in the city.

Rev. M. B. W. Gallway and Mrs. Gallway are at Tahoe and have been entertaining Miss Woodward at their house guest. The Gallways will remain for an indefinite stay before returning to their home at San Mateo.

Mrs. C. G. Noble is in town again after an enjoyable visit with friends in Sausalito.

Albert Fries has joined his brother, William Fries, at Hotel Rafael and will be out of town for a fortnight or more.

Charles A. Gibson sailed a few days ago for Honolulu to join his family, which has been passing the summer in the islands.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Carrigan are out of town for a delightful visit, being the guests of Captain and Mrs. Fenner at Fort Baker.

Mrs. George Gardiner, who was Miss Edith Findley, is coming here for a visit and her friends are greatly pleased that this attractive young matron is to arrive within a few days to be the guest of her mother, Mrs. Eric Findley, in Sausalito during the later season. Mrs. Gardiner's home is in Boston, and her visits here are not as frequent as her friends here desired.

Letters From The People

CRITICISES POLICE BOARD

Editor Call: The edifying spectacle was presented to the hangers on at the regular meeting of the board of police commissioners last Tuesday night of a peaceable, highly respected and well known citizen of San Francisco making an appeal to the board for permission to carry a weapon to protect himself from the footpads and thugs which infest the city and his being refused the desired permission.

The gentlemen constituting the police board, excepting Leggett, who is recognized as too old and a sturdy head, are decidedly aggressive when it comes to anything touching their individual or collective wisdom upon matters connected with the police department. It will spend much time bantering with some hapless applicant for mercy for being a peaceable citizen on duty, but when it comes to protecting the populace against the footpads who lurk in the parks and on the thoroughfares after dark they turn a deaf ear to all expostulations.

The citizens in question pointed out to the board that it is becoming necessary for honest and worthy citizens to protect themselves against assault at the hands of the footpads who are overlooked or undetected by the police, and that he had narrowly escaped being

The Insider

Discusses the curious story which crops up from time to time to the effect that Oscar Wilde is still alive, despite burial in Cimetiere des Bagneux

Says Sibyl Sanderson Was at Wilde's Funeral

THE transferring of the remains of Oscar Wilde from the obscure Cimetiere de Bagneux to Pere Lachaise in Paris has served to revive that curious story which crops up from time to time to tell with marvelous circumstantiality that Wilde is still alive.

One admirer of Wilde has told how he met the great wit long after the funeral in Bagneux, while passing through Palermo. But the strangest story is that which is supposed to have been told by Miss Mary Garden, the operatic star, on the authority of Sibyl Sanderson. According to this tale Sibyl Sanderson, who like Sarah Bernhardt was a great friend and admirer of Wilde, was one of the mysteriously veiled women who followed the coffin from the miserable little hotel in the Rue des Beaux-Arts to Bagneux. She is supposed to have confided to friends that the coffin did not contain the body of Wilde at all, but that the poet was still alive and would continue his literary work under the closest concealment.

Ever since that story has been in circulation Wilde has turned up in Europe and America under the most remarkable conditions. In fact, he seems to have been endowed with a sort of physical immortality. The cruder will recall that there was a Neronian cult, after the death of that imperial esthete, which persisted in believing that he was still alive.

As a matter of fact, however, the details of Wilde's death are pretty well ascertained. Robert Ross, the most faithful of his friends and Wilde's literary executor, could probably give them to the world if he chose. It is known that up to the end, which came November 30, 1900, Wilde retained his mental brilliancy, although the treadmill had killed his capacity for work. He was stricken with meningitis and suffered such intolerable pain that it was decided by his few remaining friends that an operation was imperative. A surgeon of the highest standing was spoken of as the proper man to perform the operation and the large fee which he would exact was discussed.

"Ah, well," sighed Wilde, "I suppose that I shall have to die beyond my means." That Wilde knew of his approaching end is proved by the fact that he expressed a wish to receive the last sacraments, which were accordingly administered, and also by a remark which came with peculiar appositeness from one who was distinctly the embodiment of "fin de siecle" tendencies: "If another century began and I were still alive it would really be more than the English could stand."

The little plot in Bagneux was leased for five years and a modest headstone was placed over the grave, with this epitaph from the Book of Job, in Latin: "Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence for my counsel. After my words they spake not again."

The vindication of Wilde's literary memory has been going on slowly but surely during the last five years and it is now practically accomplished. First editions of his books command almost fabulous prices in the London book shops. And yet, when the audience called for Wilde on the first brilliant night of "Lady Windermere's Fan" and he appeared before the curtain with a cigarette in his hand, London was almost as much shocked as it was later when the scandal broke about his name. Small wonder that Wilde scorned the ways of Londoners and wrote "Salome" in French so that they might not read it.

Wrecked Yosemite Was Once a Racer

"Hey, you water front reporter," exclaimed the old purser, "you've overlooked a good story. I see the Yosemite has piled her ancient bones up on the beach on Puget sound. That reminds me of what was, perhaps, the most exciting steamboat race ever witnessed in those waters. Strange to say the two vessels that contended are both wrecks, the Olympian's bones whitening in the straits of Magellan and the Yosemite's still in a watery grave in the north.

"This is how it came about: The Oregon Railroad and Navigation company had brought out to the sound two magnificent steel hull slide-wheelers, the Olympian and the Alaskan. They cost about \$300,000 apiece, and for those days were truly palatial. As for speed, nothing could approach them. The Olympian plied between Tacoma and Victoria, and as she skirted along the gulf of Georgia, way down in the straits of Fuca, she often met the steamer Princess Louise of the Canadian Pacific navigation company coming down from Vancouver. It was a shame to see the Olympian run rings around that vessel and then dash away for Victoria.

"This sort of thing finally got on the nerves of Johnny Irving, head of the Canadian company and master of the Princess Louise, to such an extent that he couldn't sleep, for Johnny was a sportsman, and to be beaten like that every day was exasperating to the limit. So Johnny called his board of directors together and told them that for the honor of the British flag the thing had got to stop. He said that in San Francisco there was a steamer, the Yosemite, which could be bought for a song, and he knew she could beat the Olympian a mile. So they bought the Yosemite and took her up to the sound.

"I remember when she had been put in order Irving came down to the dock where the Olympian was discharging cargo, and his face wore a broad grin. 'Now I've got you,' he said, 'and I've bought a new broom and you fellows can look at it on the Yosemite's masthead when you follow us into port.'

"Captain Wilson of the Olympian was a little fellow, but game to the core. 'You know, Johnny,' he replied, 'that my company won't allow me to race. The orders are very strict, but I can beat you without racing.' Then the war was on.

"I was the purser on the Olympian and I wrote to George Ainsworth, superintendent of the company, and told him of Irving's brag. I also said that the weather was fine and suggested that he make a trip to Victoria. I was not surprised on the next trip to find Captain Ainsworth and his family at Tacoma en route to Victoria.

"By this time the whole Puget sound country was excited over the prospect of a race between the Yosemite and the Olympian, and for some reason the idea was abroad that it would be on this trip. In fact, Irving had invited the residents of Victoria to go out to Beacon hill and see the Yosemite show her heels to the Olympian.

"That night just before we left Seattle Captain Ainsworth said to me: 'I hope the Yosemite won't beat us.' That was all the tip I wanted, and I passed the word to the crew from captain to coal passer.

"It was an hour behind our time when we left Port Townsend, so we had given up hope of meeting the Yosemite, but I was sure that Irving would wait for us. He not only did that, but he came several miles out of his course to intercept us. Finally when we sighted each other a tremendous cloud of smoke began to pour out of the Yosemite's smokestack and she leaped ahead like a greyhound. That settled it, for Captain Ainsworth, looking up to the pilot house, said: 'Captain Wilson, beat her if you can.'

"With a bound Captain Wilson was at the speaking tube and shouted down to Engineer Lawson: 'Tear her wide open and keep her there.' You could feel the Olympian quiver as she settled down in the water and then shot ahead with a bone in her mouth that threw the white smother up to her smokestack. With every turn of the great paddle wheels she took on fresh speed and was plainly overhauling the Yosemite, which was skimming the waves like a gray coyote. The day was gorgeous with sunshine and the only clouds to be seen were the black torrents of smoke from the racing vessels. Now we were abreast of the Yosemite and could see her passengers waving handkerchiefs, and once we heard them cheer. With my glass I could see Johnny Irving in the pilot house, his face fierce and stern, for it was beyond question that the Olympian was walking away from him.

"Captain Ainsworth walked to the rail, took a look at the Yosemite, and in his quiet way, remarked, 'Captain Wilson, now that you have violated the company's rule, beat him so bad that he will forever keep his mouth shut.' And we did.

"With all our colors flying and with a broom at every masthead we ripped the water in front of hundreds of spectators assembled on Beacon hill and glided into Victoria half an hour ahead of the vanquished Yosemite.

"Captain Ainsworth is dead. Captain Wilson is dead—died of heart disease. The Yosemite is a wreck and the Olympian is no more. Sic transit gloria mundi!"

held up on two occasions recently—once in Taylor street near Geary and once in the south road in Golden Gate park—both within a period of three weeks. The board, with such wisdom as it possesses, and that does not seem to be much, knows that every footpad, every burglar and thief carries a pistol and carries it for the express purpose of using it when occasion requires in his nefarious pursuit. But a decent, self-respecting citizen, who has resided in our city for a quarter of a century, and who during that long period has never been chronicle or known as a disturber of the public peace, is curiously refused the right to defend his property and his life from the miscreants who may take away either at any corner and at a moment's warning, because, foolishly, the board does not wish to encourage the granting of permits to carry concealed weapons.

MR. TAFT'S economic infant, the tax on corporation dividends, is born into a troubled world and finds few friends. The corporations most interested are preparing to slay it with an injunction club, and the general body of citizens who favor an income tax regard Mr. Taft's plan as a merely halfway measure of uncertain efficacy and quite possible futility. It is announced, for instance, that the validity of the tax will at once be contested in the courts, and the Springfield Republican states some of the ground on which it is believed to be unconstitutional:

While the great lawyers attached to the administration profess belief in the constitutionality of the tax, other great lawyers are not wanting to think it would be held invalid. There are strong reasons for holding to the latter view. The proposed enactment provides "that every corporation, joint stock company or association organized for profit... shall be subject to pay annually a special excise tax with respect to the carrying on or doing business," etc. Congress thus presents the levy in the guise of an excise tax. Now the United States supreme court has defined an excise tax as "not a tax upon property as such, but upon certain kinds of property having reference to their origin and intended use." The proposed tax, however, falls not upon certain kinds of property, but upon all kinds embraced in a general form of conducting business or production and trade and exchange; and it thus falls without any reference whatever to the origin and intended use of all kinds of property, but with sole reference to the business form or agency employed in the production or distribution of property.

Thus there is strong ground for believing that the courts may find the proposed tax not what it pretends to be, and consequently invalid. But if it be accepted as within the definition of an excise tax as established by judicial precedent, the further question arises whether congress has power to levy a tax in this or any other name upon the mere right or privilege of doing business in corporate form, which privilege has been created by the states and not by the national government; for it must be that a tax "with respect to the carrying on or doing business" is a tax upon the privilege or right rather than upon the property.

The layman is not competent to pass on the validity of this reasoning and it may be added that the opinions of lawyers are of small value. If jurisprudence were an exact science the opinion of Mr. Taft or Attorney General Wickersham would be accepted without question or doubt. But jurisprudence is not science in that sense. The uncertainty of judicial conclusions has made all forecasts of action by the courts unsafe. What an appellate court will do with a given set of circumstances is largely guess work. There is only one way to find out, and that is to bring suit.

The certainty that suit will be brought and the uncertainty of the result make Mr. Taft's experiment look like something of very doubtful value. As an immediate source of revenue it would certainly be held up by injunction process during the pending of the suits and if the decision went against the government it would fail altogether.

THE Philadelphia North American indulges in some sardonic humor suggested by a passage from a recent speech of Senator Beveridge concerning the obligation to fulfill promises and the subsequent discussion that followed upon the senator's remarks.

A Senatorial View of Promises

Senator Beveridge is thus quoted: The people's demand and the party's pledges as to the tariff were for such a revision, according to protective principles, as would meet changed industrial conditions and the requirements of justice. That pledge was voiced by our party's candidate and leader, in the party's name, in the phrase since famous of "revision downward," which became the republican tariff battle cry of the campaign. That promise, Mr. President, and the people's absolute faith that it would be kept, was one of the three principal reasons why the people made our candidate their president and gave our party greater powers in government. To keep that pledge has been the effort of those republican senators who have battled against increasing rates when unnecessary and for such reductions as the facts demanded.

Mr. President, the millions who ask such a reduction are protectionists; the great man who promised it is a protectionist; republican senators who have been fighting for it are protectionists. I want to preserve that historic American system so dear to our hearts, and we know that history tells us that the only danger to such a system, and we know that it has been unjust. We know that history declares that the way to preserve a policy is to keep it just, and the way to preserve a party is to keep its faith.

Any promise, Mr. President, is a serious thing and never should be made except to be kept; but a promise to a people is sacred. It has been the pride and the glory of the republican party that it keeps its promise; and its promise always has been the people's settled and mature demand.

It will be noted that Senator Beveridge did not advance any startling doctrine, merely stating certain obvious truths that the world accepts as commonplaces and axiomatic. The unexpected arrived when that superfine exemplar of Boston morality and priggishness, Senator Lodge, replied to Beveridge's appeal for the sanctity of a solemn promise. "There was nothing to it, nothing at all," said Lodge.

Is that the Massachusetts rule? It may be Lodge's rule, but we doubt if it finds much acceptance in his home state, if one may judge from the tone of the local press.

But Lodge's queer doctrine did not get very far, for Dooliver of Iowa came back. "No, no, there was nothing to it. He merely said we had made some promises and ought to keep them—that's all." In the view of Lodge and Aldrich we made some promises and they carried no obligation of fulfillment. But Mr. Taft dissents.