The San Francisco Call

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The Law Of Terminal Rates

THE interstate commerce commission, which meets here next week, has the job of its life on hand. What are "terminal rates" and what cities are entitled to them? The whole subject as it now stands is involved in the wildest confusion, because no principle has ever been laid down to govern the assignment of such rates, and the whole matter has been left to the caprice of railroad traffic managers. For instance, a late dispatch from San Pedro says:

> In an effort to secure terminal freight rates for San Pedro a suit has been filed by the Harbor City commercial company against the various railroad companies entering this city. According to advices received from Interstate Commerce Commissioner Lane the case will be heard October 25. The fact that the associated jobbers of Los Angeles is in favor of the suit and assisting it in every possible manner has led the shippers here to believe that the suit will be decided in favor of San Pedro.

It is an entirely reasonable aspiration that San Pedro entertains if the word "terminal" means anything in this relation. There is, or will be, a harbor at San Pedro that may be expected to float something bigger than a launch, and when the mud is removed even ships may come there and discharge. The underlying reason for terminal rates is chiefly water competition, and San Pedro has that, or will have it when some more mud is removed. But the dispatch quoted offers an example of the mental confusion that prevails on this subject. It is intimated that the interstate commission will grant the petition of San Pedro, because the Los Angeles jobbers will not oppose the concession.

This theory, of course, is based on the conception that terminal rates are granted purely as a matter of favor in response to an exercise of influence. This condition has obtained in the past, and the traffic managers gave the low rates to the communities that could exercise the strongest pull, and on no other principle whatever.

The result is confusion, which the interstate commission is now called on to clarify. The commission, in fine, must lay down some logical and reasonable rule that will determine by its operation and application what cities are entitled to the reduced rates. In the formulation of such a rule the favor or disfavor of the Los Angeles jobbers will cut no figure.

Prunes And Grand Opera

TRAFFIC MANAGER McCORMICK of the Southern Pacific company quite understands the fallacy of the ancient saying that "there is no sentiment in business." Mr. McCormick, in pursuit of his valuable missionary labors the other day, explained to the Riversiders their own prosperity, which stands on a moral as well as a material basis. "You live," said Mr. McCormick, "in an atmosphere of delicious sentiment and you can't help mixing it with business. You couldn't raise an ugly structure here. Oranges, lemons, grape fruit and flowers, all these have beauty, and beauty is divine." Mr. McCormick talks beautifully and on his lips truth becomes poetry. Continuing, the Riverside Press gives this synopsis of his address:

> Mr. McCormick referred to the fact that with the added production of oranges must come enlarged markets, and he urged that sentiment have its place in advertising our fruit. He told of a campaign which he managed for the prune growers of Santa Clara county. He was told that the growers could afford to pay $250,000 to market the crop. He was given the contract to sell the crop and used $35,000 in doing this. Pictures of pretty girls making prune pies appeared in the magazines and in newspapers, and in Kansas City alone the prune consumption was increased 66 per cent by the campaign. He said that in the east in the summer physicians permit children to eat oranges alone of all fruits and they prescribe orange juice as a medicine. He believed that if Californians would make known the benefits of the fruit there would be an ample market for all the fruit raised in the state for years to come. The speaker paid a glowing tribute to California and said he couldn't tell the truth about it without lying. The highest and lowest inhabited elevations are here in this land, where the fruit ripens first in the north rather than in the south. There is not a single fruit in the world that can not be grown within 100 miles from Sacramento, from cotton to the edelweiss of the snowy mountains.

The pretty girls gathering fruit or making pies thereof, the lofty mountains, the deeps of Death valley, the chime of mission bells upon the foreshores, the cattle on a thousand hills, the purpling grape—Mr. McCormick khows them all. It is selling a box of prunes with a setting of grand opera.

Reports From Street Railway Companies

CERTAIN citizens of San Francisco some time ago requested Secretary of State Curry to demand of street railway companies annual reports of earnings and operation on similar lines with those required from steam railroads under section 480 of the civil code. Mr. Curry submitted the question to Attorney General Webb whether the law makes such requirement in the case of street railway corporations. Mr. Webb decides in the negative on these grounds:

> Having considered the two sections of the civil code from the standpoint of the early legislation that led to their enactment, their relative location in the codes, the construction placed upon the word "railroad" by our supreme court, the words used in their construction and the purposes of the sections, I am of the opinion that section 480 of the civil code does not apply to street railroad corporations, and no obligation is placed upon them under the provisions of the same.

Mr. Webb explains that steam railroads are under the control of the state for purposes of regulation and taxation, but that street railways are subject to the jurisdiction of municipalities.

This opinion leaves things in the air. Shall we assume that a municipal governing body has power by ordinance to require annual reports from street railway companies, or is it necessary that the legislature shall pass an enabling act expressly delegating that and other powers in the same relation to the cities? It is obvious that reports of earnings and operation by these corporations should be made public in official form, but, apparently, under Mr. Webb's ruling there is no means to compel the fulfillment of this duty. The matter is one that demands legislative attention.

President Taft and The Philistines

THE Chicago Tribune publishes a symposium contributed by newspaper correspondents who have accompanied the president on his journey across the continent. They sum up their impressions of the general effect of the journey and the condition of popular sentiment as it concerns Mr. Taft in the several states he has visited. The New York Sun correspondent, reviewing the sentiment of eighteen states, puts it thus:

> Out of it all the one thing that stands conspicuous is the fact that the president has joined hands with the Aldrich-Cannon machine, in the belief that through it he will be able to place on the statute books the program of legislation to which he stands committed. The president has acknowledged that he accepted a tariff bill that fell short in some of its details of the pledges of the party. He did this, as he has said, for the sake of party solidarity. He did it to save the rest of his program of legislation, to which, in his opinion, the republican party and himself are as firmly pledged as they were to the downward revision of the tariff.
>
> The questions that Mr. Taft has faced in the middle west and in other states that are less aroused over the tariff issue are: "What are you going to get in return for your tariff concessions?" and "Will you be able to carry out the Roosevelt policies by reason of your sacrifice?"
>
> Upon the final answer of these questions depends President Taft's future in the west. Up to this time the west, with the possible exception of the insurgent states, has been content to accept Mr. Taft's alignment with the Aldrich wing of the party, but it will demand results. The president's friends say he expects to get his entire program of legislation from congress; that he is counting on the support of Mr. Aldrich and his followers as well as on the insurgents. They add that while the president looks forward to some trouble on the tariff question from the insurgents he believes that their efforts will be overshadowed and finally lost to view in the popularity of the new reform legislation and the general prosperity of the country.

That is a reasonable program if we concede equal skill in the game of politics to Taft and Aldrich. Unfortunately the premise does not hold. In the hands of such skillful and unscrupulous politicians as Aldrich and Cannon, the president is at a grave disadvantage. They humbugged him once on the tariff, and they will do the same thing again on every measure that the president hopes to carry. These men do not understand the meaning of good faith in politics. With them it is always a game played for the advantage.

Mr. Taft's conception of politics is rudimentary. He announced it offhand in his speech at Berkeley. "Purely a matter of compromise," he declared, and this is true as far as it goes, but up to date the compromises of this administration that have meant anything were made by Taft. The compromises made by Aldrich all have a string to them. He accepted, for instance, the corporation tax, which is merely enacting a lawsuit, and he permitted the submission of the income tax amendment, which he hopes to defeat by the customary political tactics in the legislatures. In the meantime Mr. Taft, good, easy man, thinks his greatness is aripening. We wish him well, but we fear he has fallen into the hands of the Philistines.

We Shall Have Hetch Hetchy

SECRETARY BALLINGER talks reasonably in relation to the Hetch Hetchy and Lake Eleanor projects. No one should object to the requirement that a full development of the Lake Eleanor supply shall be made before a beginning is made on the Hetch Hetchy reservoir. All that San Francisco asks is that the Hetch Hetchy watershed shall be reserved for the future use of the cities on this bay. That will be the ultimate disposition of this water supply whether Ballinger stands in the way or not. Secretaries come and secretaries go, but the city of San Francisco is a permanent institution that not even a convulsion of nature can destroy. Sooner or later, whether by act of congress or the order of some administrative bureau, the demand of the bay cities for the use of this resource will be recognized as a settled thing. Bureaucrats may get in the way and red tape may be employed to hamper progress, but the final disposition of the matter is certain and inevitable.

Neither the sentimentalists on the one hand nor their dubious allies, the attorneys and agents of the Spring Valley water company, will be able to defeat or prevent this reasonable concession demanded by a population of a million people resident on the shores of San Francisco bay. It would be a monstrous thing should the needs of that population be denied for trivial or even less creditable motives. We may not want the Hetch Hetchy reservoir this year or next year or for ten years to come, but ultimately it will be needed for the supply of the bay region, and we shall have it.

The Islais Creek Controversy

WHAT is to be done about Islais creek? The question is not as simple as it might appear on the first glance. The lumbermen, who ask for certain concessions, are under suspicion by reason of their treacherous and injurious policy of the past. Anything that they ask for is properly subject to the most severe scrutiny. They need not complain if the people of San Francisco are disposed to hold them at arm's length.

The lumbermen now are understood to submit a proposition that the state shall fill in an area of some five acres at the head of the basin which it is proposed to excavate, the land so made to be leased to lumber firms. It is argued that by this plan the state would gain a permanent income from its investment in harbor improvements, whereas if the state owns no frontage on the basin the transaction will be all outlay, with no direct return.

The plea is plausible on its face. There may or may not be "jokers" concealed in it, but if that sort of doubt persists in the public mind the lumbermen have themselves to thank.

The Call recognizes that it will be well if the opposing factions in this controversy can come together on some reasonable ground of agreement. If we persist in fighting each other there is every chance that nothing else will be accomplished. But there must be open and above board disclosure of the terms and concessions which the lumbermen desire.

How Oklahoma's Banking Law Works

OKLAHOMA, with a bank failure for $3,000,000, is having its first important experience with the guarantee law. The fund already raised by taxation for the guarantee of deposits is completely wiped out, and the balance must be met by an assessment on the solvent banks of the state. That is to say, the prudent and honest banker is penalized to pay the debts incurred by the gambler and wildcat speculator.

The Oklahoma law is a direct encouragement to dishonest banking. Under its operation the careful and conservative banker can not compete with the dishonest operator, who is ready to take reckless chances to secure deposits. The speculator can offer all sorts of favors and inducements to gather in depositors, because he does not intend to pay if he loses, and will let the state and his brother bankers take care of his debts in case his ventures go wrong. As the natural consequence, banking has become unsafe in Oklahoma. There is no sort of justification for the recent big failure, because times are good in Oklahoma and the people are prosperous. In a season of panic it is certain that there would be dozens of failures in that state, with the result that the guarantee law would be impossible of enforcement. The Oklahoma law is merely a survival of populism and Mr. Bryan's crazy notions of finance.

OLD "WEBSTER" MUCH IMPROVED

New Edition Supplants Most Famous Dictionary of English Language

TO review a dictionary; to sum within the rigid confines of a newspaper column the features of the most stupendous thesaurus of intelligence ever compiled by human effort; to attempt even the most inadequate description of an achievement wrought through years of labor by a score of the world's most eminent scholars! What a task to be allotted one! What a result to be compassed in an hour!

Yet this is the demand made by the arrival of a first copy of Webster's New International Dictionary, the twentieth century successor of the most famous compendiums of the English language. The new dictionary, under publisher's date of 1910, is at hand. It is the younger brother of the old "Unabridged" and the later "Webster's International," bearing a general family resemblance and character to these notables of former years, but more lusty, more modern, more precocious, mayhap, than either of them were in their infancy.

Yes, it is precocious, for in some respects it is revolutionary. It is almost a twin in binding, size and general makeup of the old "International" of 1890, but even the most cursory inspection startles one with a glimpse of radical changes and innovations. Chief among the physical differences is the amount of matter the new dictionary contains. Where the old "International" found room for a vocabulary of approximately 175,000 title words, the new book has compressed within its 2,700 pages a total of more than 400,000 words and phrases with their definitions, together with 6,000 illustrations. It is the product of the G. & C. Merriam company of Springfield, Mass.

The compilation of the new dictionary has been under the general editorial supervision of Dr. W. T. Harris, former United States commissioner of education, who was editor in chief of the International supplement of 1900 and who is a scholar and metaphysician of the highest rank. With him have been associated more than 20 departmental editors, chosen from among men of the highest standing in their particular spheres.

A new arrangement of the vocabulary gives one, at first inspection of the book, a feeling of strangeness. Several of the special vocabularies formerly treated separately under the general headings of foreign names, scripture names, quotations and the like have been eliminated and their contents included in the general vocabulary, so that each page contains all the titles that fall alphabetically between the first and last title words with the exception of biographical and geographical names. Moreover, the pages are divided into an upper and lower section, in the former of which are included all words of general usage and importance, while foreign phrases, abbreviations, obsolete words, scientific terms of rare occurrence, dialect and words of most infrequent use are relegated to the lower section. The upper half is printed in the old style of nonpareil type, but the lower is dressed in fine pearl type. The novelty is disconcerting at first, yet familiarity with the new feature should make the change most handy and acceptable.

Slang has at last come into its own in this new dictionary. The book is intended as a guide and teacher for every student, be he school child, newspaper reader, scientific investigator or the most erudite savant. The keynote of the work is genuine utility. So the editors have bowed to the acceptance of slang and colloquialisms accorded by general usage and have incorporated words and phrases of such origin in the text. "Rough house" is given as exact a definition as the most technical scientific word. One learns that a "graft" is, colloquially, "a snap."

Websterian traditions have been retained in the policy adopted toward spelling and pronunciation. Simplicity is given the preference where two forms of spelling are about equally divided in current usage. "Theater" is more acceptable than "theatre," "program" preferable to "programme," "traveled" takes preference over "travelled," "wagon" over "waggon." But spelling reforms have been treated gingerly and the recommendations of the board of spelling reform accorded scant courtesy. The preface explains that a general acceptance of such innovations is too much a matter of doubt.

More than being a mere dictionary, the New International is encyclopedic; it is Titanic, complete and modern—a publication that promises to become a necessity in every literary workshop of the English speaking world. Only one criticism suggests itself on the spur of the moment, and that is one that would not appeal, possibly, outside of San Francisco. This newest and greatest of all linguistic authorities does not decide that mooted question—the proper pronunciation of Portola. Don Gaspar's name does not appear.

Wireless in Brazil

Consul General George E. Anderson of Rio de Janeiro reports that the Brazilian government has made a compact with a French telegraph company for the construction of a wireless station on the island of Fernando Noronha, 200 miles east of the coast of Rio Grande do Norte and 400 miles from Pernambuco, the nearest large Brazilian port, with auxiliary stations at Pernambuco to connect with the island station with the Brazilian telegraph system, and at such other points as may be needed.

The island station will have a radial activity of 1,000 miles, approximately half way across the Atlantic from that point, and reaching as far south as Bahia and as far north as Maranhao.

The Brazilian government is extending its telegraph service to reach outposts in unsettled portions of the country. At the beginning of 1908 the government lines extended 41,853 miles, with 523 stations, while the railway telegraph stations numbered 1,342.

'De Portola's Own Letters Describing Discovery Found

Stanford History Professor Comes Upon Record In Mexican Archives

The letters written by Gaspar de Portola, describing in his own words how he discovered San Francisco bay in 1769, have been found at last!

This is the most important historical discovery of many years. It brings to a successful termination a long search which at times has been carried on as zealously as the search for the elusive north pole. That the announcement of the important discovery should come upon the eve of the Portola celebration in San Francisco makes it of the greatest interest. It is almost as if the brave Spanish governor himself had come back after a century and a half to tell those who would do his memory honor just how he accomplished the feat.

The man who found the letters written by Portola— a full score of them—is Herbert E. Bolton, professor of history at Stanford university. The letters were found in the very hiding place which had so often been searched in vain for them, the archivo general y publico in the Palacio Nacional, City of Mexico.

"It is not surprising," says Professor Bolton, "that it has not been known that in the central archives of Mexico there is a fire of a score or more of original letters written by Portola during his three year career in the Californias, between December, 1767, and the autumn of 1770, for the archivo general y publico is a vast wilderness, little frequented until recently, of manuscript materials bearing upon the history of the Spanish provinces in America and, later, of independent Mexico. This archive, curiously enough, was said by Bancroft to consist of 32 volumes! The truth is that it contains not less than 35,000 volumes of manuscript records already bound, and material enough to form as many more.

"Here it was that I found the Portola letters. They are addressed to the viceroy of Mexico, then the marquis de Croix, and with them are filed minutes of several replies by the viceroy to Portola, and other documents relating to California, including the original record of the act of taking formal possession of Monterey by Portola in the name of the king of Spain, on the memorable third of June, 1770. So far as is known, no one has been apprised of or has made use of these letters except an eastern historian, who secured the transcripts of them through me for use in the preparation of a forthcoming history of California."

Professor Bolton is a thorough Spanish scholar and the translation of Portola's letters was to him a task of rare delight. Primarily, the letters prove that Don Gaspar was not the weakling, lacking in courage and zeal, which several historians have pictured him. The reader of these letters beholds Portola as a man of sturdy mold. It has been said that Portola never knew the significance of his discovery. The letters show that such was not the case. Portola describes his expedition from the beginning and he measures its fruits with keen intelligence. The heroisms of himself and his men are to be seen between the lines.

As a matter of fact, the discovery and publication of these letters will cause a revision of practically all the histories of the man and his work, which have had as their basis information of the most meager character. And as if the Portola letters were not sufficient in themselves, with them were found letters written by Father Crespi, a priest of the expedition, describing in even more detail the wonderful bay which they found.

At the request of The Call Professor Bolton has embodied the most interesting of these letters in full, and epitomized others, in a most interesting and enlightening article, which will occupy two pages in The Call next Sunday. The significance of this article, appearing at the very beginning of the Portola festival, can not be over estimated. These letters, written by Gaspar de Portola, and Professor Bolton's intelligent comment and explanation, must arrest the instant attention, not only of students and writers of California history, but also of every person who desires an intelligent insight into the meaning of the great celebration in which he or she is about to participate.

Answers to Queries

REPORTER—Subscriber, City. What qualifications should a young man have to become a reporter on a daily paper?

If he seeks to write for an English paper, he must be able to write good English, without being prosy; must be able to know news when he sees or hears anything that will work up into a news story; must be patient, courteous and persistent, even at times insistent, have some sense of humor and a knowledge of human nature.

* * *

CRIBBAGE, M. D. V., City. In a game of cribbage A holds three sixes and a tray with a tray turned up. How many points does he make? (2) A plays a 3, B a 5, A a 3 and B a 4; is there is a double run of 3?

He makes 20. (2) There is only one run of three.

* * *

A BUILDING—T. S., City. We are two strangers in San Francisco and before coming here saw in a paper in the east a picture of a 23 story building to be put up for the Examiner. Where is it located?

So far, on paper.

* * *

AMENDMENTS—F. K., City. Has the United States constitution been amended so as to permit of the election of United States senators by the direct vote of the people?

It has not.

* * *

TECHAU—T. S., City. How is the word "Techau" pronounced?

As if written tek-ow.

SOCIETY TURNS TO SPECTACLE

Absorbing Interest in Passion Play Eclipses Round Of Gayeties

THE round of frivolity that society has been credited with making the sole food and substance of a season has been displaced this week by interest and one might almost say reverence for the wonderful passion play that is being presented at the Coliseum. The great religious spectacle has been witnessed by box parties and the guests have been entertained by several of the most prominent hostesses in town. Last evening Mrs. Eleanor Martin, who has been a faithful attendant, had the following guests at dinner and later at the passion play: Mr. and Mrs. J. Downey Harvey, Miss Nellie Grant, Miss Mollie Phelan, James D. Phelan, Major Hale, U. S. A.

Mrs. James Shea and her sister, Mrs. Anna Farrell, with Miss Kathleen Farrell, have been attending the play. Mrs. William Boericke with her daughters, Misses Ruth and Dorothy, and many others of the smart set have been present each evening at the religious drama.

* * *

The hop at the Presidio this evening will attract many of the girls from town who count these affairs at the post as among the most delightful events of the season. The army set, of course, will be fully represented at the interesting reunion. The hop is the first announced for several weeks and the vacation has made the dancers more than anxious for the party this evening.

* * *

The wedding of Miss Edith Hoefler and Albert Vance has been set for an early day in December, although the exact day has not been disclosed by the parents of the bride to be, Mr. and Mrs. Ludwig M. Hoefler. The announcement of the engagement was a surprise to the friends of Miss Hoefler, as she has just finished school and was supposed to be contemplating her debut this season. Miss Hoefler recently returned after a summer passed in Portland and other northern cities, where she traveled for several months, accompanied by her parents.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Eugene de Sabla will remain at their home in San Mateo during the winter, but it has been almost definitely decided now that their younger daughter, Miss Vera de Sabla, who is to be a debutante this season, will be presented to society at an elaborate tea to be given early in November at the Fairmont.

Peter Martin left last evening for Portland and the northern cities, where he will travel for a few weeks and visit the exposition before his return to this city. It is possible that Mrs. Martin, who remained in New York, will join her husband in Seattle and that the couple will return together for a visit in the later season.

* * *

Mrs. Sterling P. Adams entertained at a card party yesterday afternoon at the Presidio and about 25 friends assembled for the game and tea afterward. Among those from the Presidio were:

Mrs. O'Neill	Mrs. Hess
Miss Troupe	Mrs. Gibner
Miss Phister	Mrs. Kennedy
Mrs. Pfeofe	Mrs. Ashburn
Mrs. Faulkner	Mrs. Crissy
Mrs. Davis	Mrs. Knight
Mrs. Stopford	Mrs. Abbott
Mrs. Wheeler	Mrs. Browning

* * *

The funeral yesterday morning of Mrs. Willis Davis brought many sorrowing friends to the family home in Scott street and the sympathy of every one was extended to Willis Davis and his two daughters, Miss Sydney Davis and Mrs. Pierre Moore. Since the death of their mother in Boston several days ago the two girls have been at the F. W. Van Sicklen home in Alameda, where they will remain until their plans are formulated for the later season. The death of Mrs. Davis occurred at the home of her sister, Mrs. Hodges, in Boston, and immediate after the sad event Willis Davis and F. W. Van Sicklen left for the eastern city, but returned Monday evening with the body of Mrs. Davis.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Alden Anderson entertained at dinner last evening at the Fairmont and a score of friends enjoyed this reunion—one of a series, by the way, that the Andersons are giving this season at the hotel.

* * *

Mrs. Jack Casserly entertained at an informal tea and musicale yesterday afternoon at her home in El Cerrito, and several of the girls from town enjoyed the delightful affair. The Casserlys will pass the winter probably in their country home, but will be frequent visitors here for the larger social affairs of the later season.

* * *

Lieutenant Frederick D. Griffith, U. S. A., will be at the Presidio this winter, and the friends of the popular officer and his charming wife are pleased over the announcement. Mrs. Griffith, however, is traveling in the Hawaiian islands with her parents, Colonel and Mrs. G. K. Hunter, who may occupy her home for the holidays.

* * *

Miss Laura Smith, whose engagement to George J. Dempsey of Washington was one of the announcements of the season, has been the complimented guest at any number of informal afternoon affairs recently. She will again receive the honors at a bridge party to be given this afternoon by Miss Elena Brewer at the home of the hostess in Mill Valley. The bride to be passes most of her time with her mother at the country home in Mill Valley, where she is a favorite with the younger set. The wedding will take place in January, and probably at the family home in Broadway, but the plans for that event are indefinite.

* * *

Miss Ruth and Miss Dorothy Boericke will be the complimented guests at a theater party this evening, when Ralston White will entertain several guests.

* * *

M. de Loynes and Mme. de Loynes, who are visiting here from Montreal, Can., are at the Fairmont, and have been extensively entertained, since M. de Loynes is the French consul, and is a favorite in diplomatic circles.

* * *

Mrs. California Newton entertained a dozen friends at luncheon at the Fairmont, and among the interesting events today at the same hotel will be the luncheon that Miss Elsa Schilling will give for Miss Ialeen Johnson of Oakland. Several girls from across the bay will enjoy the affair and a theater party in town.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. G. Pencin, who have been at the Fairmont for some time, will leave October 20 for the orient and will be accompanied on the trip by their niece, Miss Birdie Wood. The party will travel leisurely through India and will pass some months in Europe visiting Paris and London among the larger cities abroad.