

The San Francisco Call JOHN D. SPRECKELS Proprietor CHARLES W. HORNICK General Manager ERNEST S. SIMPSON Managing Editor

Misusing the Name Of the Sierra Club

It has been no secret in San Francisco for more than a year that a certain busybody clique in the Sierra club was seeking to use the prestige and influence of that organization to secure a withdrawal of the Garfield grant of rights in the Hetch Hetchy region to San Francisco for the purposes of a municipal water supply.

It was quite well understood that this effort did not command the support of a majority of the membership. In fact, the policy pursued by this clique prompted more than one resignation from the roll of the club, and some of the letters written with this purpose would make very interesting reading could they be published.

No doubt it was this sense of imperfect authority and representation, so far as the Sierra club was concerned, that inspired the official clique to describe themselves by an alias. Under the thin disguise of the "Society for the Preservation of the National Parks" they have been masquerading. It is a high sounding title, but it means nothing more than the official clique that has contrived to get hold of the management of the Sierra club.

If they would fight fair there could be no particular objection to their campaign, but they do not hesitate to misrepresent the facts in the grossest way. The literature they are sending out conveys the idea that the grant of Hetch Hetchy would destroy for park purposes half of the Yosemite reservation.

They ignore the fact that the only change proposed is the conversion of a meadow into a lake, which would not in the slightest degree obscure the scenic features of the valley, and would, as many people believe, increase their attractiveness. It is altogether a very paltry piece of business.

It is regrettable that John Muir should misuse his talents in promotion of this campaign of misrepresentation. It will not help his reputation at all.

ACCORDING to the statement of facts submitted to the state fruit growers' convention by R. D. Stephens of Sacramento the overland railroads received an income of \$483,000, while the shippers lost \$189,000 on 1,092 cars of deciduous fruit sent from Sacramento to New York in eight days.

This may have been an exceptional instance, but the fact that such conditions were possible at all shows in what grievous straits the fruit growers find themselves in consequence of the unreasonable rates made on such freight by the railroads. If the roads are able to make a longer haul on oranges for \$72 a car less than the rate charged for deciduous fruit the injustice done to the latter industry is manifest.

In addition to this unfair discrimination deciduous fruit pays an extra charge of \$97.50 per car for refrigeration.

Official figures given out by the California fruit distributors, the organization that handles most of the deciduous fruit shipments to the east, support the conclusions drawn by the committee of which Mr. Stephens is chairman. Some of these we quote relative to sales in New York, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia:

On August 9 there were sold in the four cities named 127 cars—1 brought \$1,498, 1 \$1,337, 1 \$1,223, 4 averaged \$1,333, 11 \$1,052 and the 18 cars averaged \$1,120, which amount gives a small profit to the grower, but leaves 109 cars, or 86 per cent sold at a loss to the grower.

On August 10, 71 cars were sold, of which 2 averaged \$1,230, 1 \$1,215, 4 \$1,122 and 11 \$1,042, an average of \$1,094 for the 18 cars. This result left 53 cars, or 76 per cent sold at a loss to the grower.

On August 11 91 cars were sold, of which one brought \$1,252, 6 averaged \$1,129, 13 \$1,051, or an average of \$1,089 for the 20 cars, leaving 71 cars, or 78 per cent, sold at a loss to the grower.

On August 12 there were 83 cars sold, of which one car brought \$1,100 and 12 cars averaged \$1,034, or an average of \$1,039 for the 13 cars, which left 70 cars, or 84 per cent, sold at a loss to the grower.

As we understand it the growers will be content to receive equal measure with the citrus fruit shippers in the southern part of the state. Their product is carried a longer distance for a materially lower rate, and the facts disclose a manifest case of discrimination of which the interstate commerce commission should take notice. But that process of remedy is slow and clumsy.

It would seem that in their own interest the railroads might understand that they are killing a business which has been paying them an enormous revenue.

If it should happen that Zelaya is able to crush his enemies in Nicaragua the United States will be put diplomatically in a rather awkward position. The note transmitted by Secretary Knox to the Nicaraguan representative in Washington was a remarkable document that broke all the accepted rules of diplomacy.

That is to say, it told the truth in the plainest possible language. Of course, diplomacy considers such speaking a public offense, although plain people are disposed to welcome plain speech and are only amused by the roundabout obscurities of the "trained diplomat."

It is a reasonable surmise that, although it was the hand of Secretary Knox that held the pen, it was the voice of William Howard Taft that spoke those words to Zelaya. Mr. Taft is slow to anger, but once aroused for a good cause his anger rises to a white heat. Mr. Knox wrote what the newspaper people like to describe as "a redhot roast," but he would never have done that had he not had a direct and specific order in that purpose from the president.

The American people will like Mr. Taft all the better because he is stirred to anger that flouts the slow processes of diplomacy by resenting injury and wrong done to citizens of this republic.

By yet Mr. Knox's undiplomatic emotions are mitigated by a certain caution. They have a string to them. The Nicaraguan envoy is told that should he stay in Washington the state department will be "happy to receive him unofficially." This permission is of the less value because Zelaya, on the issue of the letter, promptly stopped the envoy's salary, which is quite the most awkward thing that can happen to a trained diplomat.

Furthermore, the secretary's wrath is partly hypothetical. The facts regarding the execution of Cannon and Groce need further "careful consideration" and some of the charges remain to be verified.

On the whole, the affair presents a remarkable episode in diplomacy and it would seem that the most comfortable way out should be to find some means of getting rid of Zelaya.

Duel With a Tiger

Three Jakums (aborigines) and a Malay chanced to be together in the jungle in Johore when the came across a tiger. They were only armed with parangs, and the Malay, wisely deciding in favor of discretion, took to his heels. Not so the Jakums, however, for they at once determined to give battle, not utilizing their numerical superiority, but in the most sportsmanlike manner arranging for the combat in a series of duels, if necessary.

As might have been expected, the series was necessary, and the end was not long in coming. The first man who entered the fray missed his blow and was at once struck down, and the same fate befell his two comrades, all three being killed—Singapore Free Press.

Byron on Airships

Now that Latham is preening his wings for flight across the channel, it is interesting to remember that the successful navigation of the air was predicted by no less a prophet than Lord Byron. The passage is contained in Medwin's "Conversations of Lord Byron."

"Here," Byron said, "is a savant of Bologna who pretends to have discovered the manner of directing balloons by means of a rudder, and tells me that he is ready to explain the nature of his invention to our government. I suppose we shall soon travel by air vessels; hake air instead of sea voyages; and at length find our way to the moon, in spite of it appears, however, that it was a 'dirigible' rather than an aeroplane that Byron contemplated."—Westminster Gazette.

Letters From the People

PENSIONS ARE ONLY JUST

Editor Call: Will you kindly give me space in your valued paper for the publication of a few words apropos of an editorial in The Call of December 10 on pensions for civil service employees? The civil service employees of the government have not asked nor are they asking for pensions. They wish to have the government hold out from salaries sufficient to provide suitable annuities when old age comes. The big problem is to provide for the present superannuated and those to be, until these retentions from salaries have made a fund sufficiently large to allow for the payment of annuities without government assistance.

It might be asked why the superannuated employees of the government have not saved enough from their salaries to provide for old age. The pay of the government clerk (minor employe) was fixed in 1853 and has not been changed since. It may have been good pay then, but it is not now. At that time the man who worked at a trade was getting \$1.75 or \$2 a day. What is he getting today? What was the cost of living then? What is it today? The government employe formed no union—made no demand for an increase of pay and received none. Now they are organized for the specific purpose of effecting retirement legislation.

When the pay of the government clerk was fixed in 1853 a congressman was paid \$5 a day with no perquisites. Now he gets \$7,500 per annum with 20 cents per mile for travel; furnished quarters, \$1,500 for clerk hire and other perquisites. In 1853 secretaries of departments were paid \$6,000; today \$12,000. Then the highest officers in the army and navy were paid \$4,500; now \$13,500. Farragut sailed through fire on a salary of \$4,000—and Dewey in time of peace gets \$13,500. The pay of every one in the government service except clerks (minor employes) has been increased 50 to 500 per cent since 1853. The clerks' pay remains the same.

The government ought to have the very best men in all branches of its service, but it is hard to get such men and harder to keep them, because the ability which makes them valuable in the public service is sure of a better reward in private employment.

The United States and two others are the only countries in the world that have made no provision for their superannuated employes. All the large corporations and many of the business concerns in this country provide for those of their employes who grow old in service. Relief to old employes is not charity. It is business, good business, because the government's failure to provide for the superannuation of its servants is the case of Henry Vignaud, late secretary of the American embassy at Paris. This is from a press dispatch:

PARIS, Feb. 16.—Henry Vignaud, first secretary of the American embassy, who has resigned after 34 years of service at the age of 73, will be asked to provide for his remaining years. He has drafted a letter of appreciation to the Roman-American Congress, headed by Lévy, Morton and Grey. The letter is signed by J. Pierpont Morgan, whose generosity in subscribing a fund of \$20,000 insures the last days of the veteran diplomat against want.

Mr. Vignaud lived modestly, yet his mind scarcely sufficed to meet expenses. Municipalities give pensions to policemen, firemen and school teachers. Why? Because it is just and humane. Give the government employes a retirement pension, and many of the business concerns in this country provide for those of their employes who grow old in service. Relief to old employes is not charity. It is business, good business, because the government's failure to provide for the superannuation of its servants is the case of Henry Vignaud, late secretary of the American embassy at Paris. This is from a press dispatch:

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Apples Good for Digestion

"Do you know what you're eating?" said the doctor to the girl. "An apple, of course."

"You are eating," said the doctor, "albumen, sugar, gum, malic acid, gallic acid, fiber, water and phosphorus."

"I hope those things are good. They sound alarming."

"Nothing could be better. You ate, I observed, rather too much meat at dinner. The malic acid of apples neutralizes the excess of chalky matter caused by too much meat, and thereby helps to keep you young. Apples are good for your complexion; their acids drive out the noxious matters which cause skin eruptions. They are good for your brain, which those same noxious matters, if retained, render sluggish. Moreover, the acids of the apple diminish the acidity of the stomach and combine with the food in indigestion. The phosphorus, of which apples contain a larger percentage than any other fruit or vegetable, renews the essential nervous matter of the brain and spinal column. On the scientists were not wrong when they esteemed the apple the food of the gods—the magic renewer of youth to which the gods resorted when they felt themselves growing old and feeble. I think I'll have an apple," concluded the doctor.—New York Tribune.

Rare Dyeing Secret

The Shetland islanders seldom use any dye, and their homespun are generally made in the plain drab color which is natural to the sheep, or in browns, with a variegated design of the diamond herringbone patterns on simple plain brown and white wools.

In contradistinction to this ignorance of the art of dyeing among the people of the Shetlands, the inhabitants of the contiguous Fair island, although not famous for any quality of cloth comparable to that made in either Harris or the Shetlands, possess a secret of dyeing an indescribably rich crimson, recalling associations of the early Spanish dyers. It is historically known as one of the gallions of the Spanish armada was wrecked on this island, and it is probably correct to assume that this crimson is the reminiscence of an art taught the islanders by the Spaniards.

Within recent years efforts have been made by travelers living on the island with a disguised purpose to discover this valuable secret, which has so long been perpetuated among them and which they put to so little use, but so far secretiveness has been more than a match for cunning, and all that is known regarding the process is that the body of the dye is ox blood and its components vegetable admixtures.

A TIMELY EXPOSURE

The San Francisco Call has published a number of articles exposing the bad condition of the living and sleeping quarters for the crews on the steamers engaged in the bay and river traffic. The exposure has been more than hoped that it will result in the reform which is badly needed.—Coast Seaman's Journal.

Clubwomen and Their Work

By MARY ASHE MILLER

CHRISTMAS shopping is filling the hours of the clubwoman as well as every one else just now, but there are a few hours of each week at least devoted to clubs. This week will not be a particularly busy one in feminine organizations, but there are a few Christmas festivities planned which will be entertainments at which other than the members will be welcomed.

The Pacific Coast women's press association will meet this afternoon for Whittier day, those in charge being Miss Ina Donna Coolbrith, Mrs. Laura Young Pinney and Mrs. Sara Mayo Bunker. The program will be as follows:

"Introductory to the Day's Thoughts," Mrs. Laura Y. Pinney; "Recollections of a Day With Whittier and Selections From His Poems," by Ina D. Coolbrith; "Whittier, the Reformer," Mrs. Sara Mayo Bunker; vocal selections, "Whittier's Poems," Mrs. Cecil Mark, Mrs. Paul Partridge at the piano, as follows: "Among the Hills," music by Hother Wismer; "All as God Wills," music by Mae Silsby; "Mia Picciarella Deh," Carlos Gomez. In closing Mrs. Norman Martin will speak.

The work of the following absent members will also be considered: Mrs. Emma A. Summers, Miss Elizabeth Gregg, Mrs. Mary E. Hart and Miss Ruth Comfort Mitchell.

The Daughters of California Pioneers will hold their regular business meeting this afternoon at 3 o'clock and the topic for discussion for the day will be "Men Prominent in the Early History of California."

The Clifton club will meet tomorrow afternoon and the meeting will be devoted to a lecture by Prof. T. V. Moore on "The Reformation," including the reign of Henry VIII. Guests will be invited for this occasion.

The San Francisco musical club will hold its regular meeting Thursday morning next at 10:15 o'clock, the composers whose works will be on the program being Gluck, Haydn and Handel. Among the members participating will be Miss Augusta S. Gillespie, Mrs. Ernest Hueter, Miss Carolyn Nash, Mrs. Albert E. Phelan, Mrs. Thomas Inman, Mrs. Horatio F. Stoll, Miss Florence Nachtrieb and Miss Corinne Goldsmith.

Laurel Hall club is preparing for a particularly elaborate celebration Wednesday evening and the members have changed the hour of their meeting for the occasion from the afternoon to the evening. Each member will receive two guests' cards, including escorts, and the reception will be at 8:30 o'clock.

The Council of Jewish Women held their regular meeting Thursday last at the California club, the program opening with the melodrama, "The Lady of Shallott" (Tennyson)—the music composed and played by Albert I. Elkus and the poem read by Miss Alice Colman. H. J. Brodsky then delivered an address on "Educational Efforts in Behalf of the Oriental Jew," and Mrs. Etta Coleman read a paper on the origin and observances of "Hanukah."

Answers to Queries

PORTUGAL—M. M. Sacramento, Cal. When was Portugal formed? When did it become independent of Spain? Who was the first king? How many kings have there been since then? Did any Portuguese discover any land?

Portugal is the ancient Lusitania. The present name is derived from Porto Celso, the original capital of Oporto. After a nine years' struggle under Viriathes, the Lusitanians submitted to the Roman army about 137 B. C. Portugal underwent the same changes as Spain on the fall of the Roman empire, and was conquered by the Moors in 739. Alfonso Henriques defeated five Moorish kings in July, 1139, and was proclaimed king. Since then Portugal has had 38 kings and rulers. Magellan discovered the straits that were named for him, the south Pacific ocean and islands in the Pacific.

SILVER—F. R. City. If I recollect right, silver dropped very low about the middle of 1897. Can you give the figures of that time for the white metal? Has there been any rise?

In a dispatch to The Call, under date of July 28, 1897, appears the following: "London—Today silver bars touched 26 1/2, the lowest figures on record. New York—Bar silver was quoted here at 27 1/2, a decline from yesterday, and Mexican dollars went down to 45 1/2. The quotation used for bar silver represents the price for which it can be laid down in London, so that if freight charges and insurance were deducted it would make the real value of bar silver fractionally lower."

SPEECHES—Subscriber, Newark, Cal. What are the requisites for making speeches in public?

Thomas Wentworth Higginson in "Hints on Writing and Speech Making" says: "The first rule for public speaking is to have something to say, that you desire very much to say; and the second is always speak in a natural key and in a conversational manner. The days of pompous and stilted eloquence are gone by and it was Wendell Phillips, more than anybody else, who put an end to it. This country and substituted a simpler style."

SHORTEST DISTANCE—C. F. D. City. What is the shortest distance between San Francisco and Yokohama, Manila, Sydney, N. S. W., by steamer tours, also between San Francisco and Yokohama via Honolulu? The same for the Pacific.

The hydrographic office furnishes the following figures: San Francisco to Yokohama.....4,536 miles San Francisco to Hongkong, via Yokohama.....5,842 miles San Francisco to Manila.....6,248 miles San Francisco to Sydney, N. S. W., via Honolulu.....6,447 miles San Francisco to Yokohama via Honolulu.....5,490 miles Seattle to Yokohama.....4,252 miles Seattle to Hongkong via Yokohama.....5,983 miles Seattle to Manila.....6,227 miles Seattle to Yokohama via Honolulu.....5,792 miles

FLOWERS—I. K. Bakerfield, Cal. What is the meaning in the language of flowers of a bunch of white roses, a bunch of red roses, one of each, to a lady from a gentleman?

A red rose signifies love; a white one, I am worthy of you; yellow, desire of love or jealousy, and a black prince, bashful shame. A white and a red rose tied together signify unity. If the gentleman intended a message by this bunch he got somewhat mixed in his language.

ELECTRIC PIANO—Subscriber, City. Who invented the electric piano?

According to "Moore's Encyclopedia of Music," edition of 1882, the inventor was Thomas Havenport of Salisbury, Vt., who in 1851 produced such an instrument.

CENSUS ENUMERATORS—I. D. S. King City, Cal. To whom should be made for appointment as a census enumerator in this state?

Communicate with the secretary of the board of examiners, civil service commissioners, Postoffice building, San Francisco, Cal.

HUNTING—B. Martinez, Cal. Can one, without a license, hunt on his own grounds?

The Southern Pacific Annual Report

Table with 4 columns: Year (1909, 1908, 1907), Gross earnings, Operating expenses, Net earnings, Other increases, Net increase, Fixed charges, Surplus for dividends.

THE annual report of the Southern Pacific company for the fiscal year ending on June 30 last shows that, while business is not yet equal to the boom conditions in the fiscal year of 1907, the system is doing a good business and is actually making about as much money for the stock holders. We quote the comparative returns:

These returns relate to the several years ending on June 30 and it appears, therefore, that while the gross earnings of the system for the last fiscal year were some \$5,000,000 short of the boom period there was nearly as large a surplus available for dividends.

This condition may be due to a concurrence of several causes. Chiefly, of course, it is due to the fact that, as the report shows, the road saved \$3,000,000 in maintenance appropriations and \$4,958,000 in the cost of conducting transportation. These economies are not a permanent factor in estimating the value of the property, and the return of a full tide of business will necessitate the restoration of the former scale of appropriations.

In a word, the Southern Pacific has been living on its fat during the lean years, cutting down expenses and avoiding heavy repair work. That plan works all right for a while, but it can not last very long, for a big railroad is constantly being rebuilt.

Supplementing the report, it may be added that the first three months of the present year since July 1 show an increase of \$3,624,000 in gross earnings compared with the corresponding period last year. It is to this fact that the recent boom in the price of the stock is attributed. But it should be noted that the increase in net earnings for these three months is less than half the gain in gross, which is proof that the company is finding that its policy of economy in appropriations can on earnings it will be necessary to meet the interest on \$82,000,000 of 4 per cent convertible bonds issued this year.

These facts must be taken into consideration when estimating the future value of the stock as a dividend payer.

A Tax Without Friends

THE corporation tax has few friends, but perhaps the same thing might be said of other taxes. The treasury department estimates that it will pay a revenue of \$25,000,000 annually, but its opponents declare with epigrammatic emphasis that the law does no more than "enact a lawsuit." That it will be fought in the courts is certain and all the newspaper lawyers are busy demonstrating its unconstitutionality.

Another corps of skirmishers on the same firing line declares that the provisions of the law constitute and call for a book keeping impossibility. They complain that inventories of stock and material on hand will be required, and complicated calculations of depreciation and such.

William Dolge, a certified public accountant of this city, does not share this view and has published a short monograph to support his reading of the act. Without attempting to pass on the legal questions arising Mr. Dolge holds that the definition of "net income" in the act is clear and definite, and he gives this description of the operation of the law:

To make a proper return, it will be necessary only to consider the transactions of the corporation with reference to receipts and disbursements. There is to be determined first, "the gross amount of the income received within the year from all sources" (cash receipts) and thereafter the disbursements, segregated as prescribed in paragraph 3 of the corporation tax law. The questions of inventories, the fiscal year of the corporation, expenditures as distinguished from disbursements, accruals as distinguished from payments, and many other items that are considered by an accountant in arriving at a proper statement of profit and loss for a corporation, are not material to this return.

A concrete illustration will show the application and the workings of the law. For example, the John Doe company buys merchandise for \$50,000 on December 1, 1909, payment for which is due on March 1, 1910. During the month of December, 1909, \$25,000 worth of goods purchased are sold for \$30,000. Eliminating all other receipts and disbursements on this particular transaction, there would be due the government 1 per cent of \$25,000 or \$250, i. e., \$30,000 receipts less \$5,000, deduction allowed by the law.

During the year 1910 the remainder of the goods costing \$25,000 are sold for \$30,000, and on March 1 the goods purchased in December are paid for, \$50,000. Again, considered by itself, here is a case where the disbursements are \$50,000 necessary expenses actually paid out of income (receipts) within the year, or \$20,000 more than the income (receipts) and therefore no tax is due the government.

With regard to the constitutionality of the law Mr. Taft has more than once said that he is convinced it will stand the test of the courts, and in this judgment Attorney General Wickersham concurs. The uncertainty of jurisprudence is such that they may easily be mistaken, but as the matter stands their opinion will be preferred to that of the newspaper lawyers who insist that the tax will be thrown on the scrap heap by the supreme court.