

The San Francisco Call

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both NEW and OLD ADDRESS in order to insure a prompt and correct

compliance with their request.

THE governor of California finds himself placed in a peculiar

situation by apparent necessities arising out of the investigation

of charges against the president of the Chico normal school.

The governor is practically prosecutor in this

matter, and in pursuance of his purpose has

found it necessary to employ a detective to

work up the evidence bearing on the case.

The state provides no machinery to meet a

contingency of this sort. There is no state police nor detective

agency, and the governor was compelled, or believed he was com-

pelled to secure the services of an operative of the Southern Pacific

company's detective agency.

The fact that employees of this agency call themselves "state

police" does not make them such. They get their pay from the

railroad company and owe obedience to no other. We do not know

who will pay for the services of the detective employed in the Chico

case, but the state makes no specific provision for that purpose.

The fact that the detective engaged by the governor in the

present instance is an employe of a public service corporation is not

especially important so far as this case is concerned, but it is easy

to imagine affairs in which affiliations of this character might be

dangerous. It seems clear enough from the facts that the state

should have a police agency of its own and free from outside

influences.

It might be interesting to know to what extent Southern Pacific

detectives have been used in the past by the state government and

how far this practice prevails.

THE early completion of the Orland irrigation project in the

Sacramento valley means a great deal more for agricultural

industry in that region than the actual extent of the territory

covered might imply. The Orland project

was designed by the government as a sort of

object lesson to show what can be done by

irrigation in California and more especially in

the great Sacramento valley. For lack of

irrigation facilities immense areas in that region have been suffered

to lie fallow ever since the time when the wheat industry declined

in this state. There was water in plenty, but it took money to put

it on the land.

The government took up the Orland project, covering a matter

of 14,000 acres—a mere flea bite of the available territory—to show

what can be done in the Sacramento valley with water. Now the

dam is nearly complete and bids are asked for the construction of

twenty-four miles of ditches.

All this is only a beginning, and the investment in similar

enterprises has proved so attractive that another project of the same

character has been set afoot in Glenn county by private enterprise,

and it is proposed to create in that neighborhood a great irrigation

system constructed throughout on scientific principles.

The eminent commercial success of the Modesto and Turlock

irrigation districts of Stanislaus county is destined to be repeated

on a great scale in the Sacramento valley.

IT is announced that the mechanical difficulties in the way of

smelting iron ore at the hydro-electric works on the Pitt river

have been overcome, and there is here promise of an important

industry that may yet be the cause of a manuf-

acturing revolution in California. There are

practically unlimited deposits of iron ore in

the state, but they have remained untouched

because of the lack of fuel for smelting.

The Pitt River works is smelting the ore with heat gen-

erated by electricity, and, after many years spent in experiments,

the process is declared to be mechanically a success. The works

has been turning out twenty tons of pig iron every day for some

two weeks with the help of a powerful electric current applied on the ore.

It has taken some three years and a large investment of capital

to perfect the plant. At first the tremendous heat burned out the

backing of the furnace, but this and other mechanical difficulties

have been overcome. It remains now to demonstrate the commercial

possibilities of the venture, and every confidence is expressed that

there will be no difficulties on this score.

With that fact proved, the extension of similar plants on a great

scale is assured for California. We have the iron ore and the

electricity in quantity.

SENATOR ALDRICH gravely announces that he will pay no

attention to the charges made by Senator Bristow of Kansas

relative to Aldrich's part and interest in the making of the

rubber schedule in the tariff. Mr. Aldrich is

perurbed that his lofty attitude of what he

would doubtless call "dignified silence" will

settle the matter as far as he is concerned,

but in this he is mistaken. It is more likely

to be regarded as a confession.

The charges made by Bristow are thus summarized:

"Under the leadership of these men (Senators Aldrich, Elkins and

Penrose), instead of revising the tariff, as promised, duties were fixed for

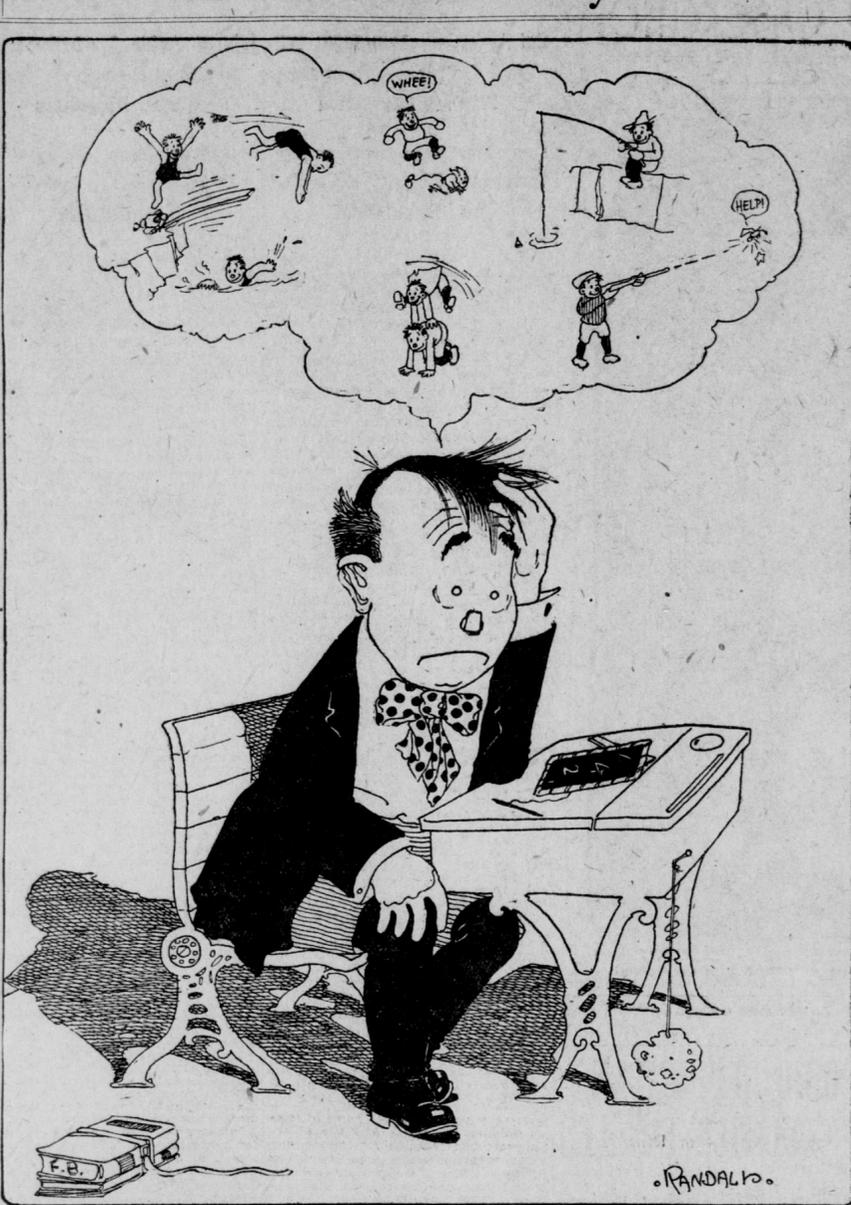
the purpose of promoting the financial interests of certain individuals,"

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The Kansas charged that in the finance committee room of the

senate, where Mr. Aldrich was supreme, the tariff rates of duty on manu-

The First Day



factured articles of rubber were increased from 25 to 30 per cent. Crude rubber remained on the free list, as it was in the Dingley law.

Bristow also said that during the first nine months of the operation of the new tariff law the imports of manufactured rubber fell off, making a loss in revenue to the government, while the imports of crude rubber greatly increased.

Bristow adds that Aldrich and his son are interested in the manufacture of rubber. The tariff gives them the raw material under favorable conditions and protects the manufactured article by prohibitive duties.

It is this sort of manipulation that created the tremendous scandals that attended the making of the Payne-Aldrich tariff.

Bristow declares that in this instance Aldrich used his power to put money in his own purse. He will not clear himself of the charge by keeping silent, whether with dignity or impudence.

THE jingoes on the other side of the world would be pleased to embroil the United States in the Nicaragua mess and break down or weaken the Monroe doctrine if they could.

Efforts are making to incite interference by Germany, and the kaiser's recent note addressed to Madrid is made the text and inspiration for more or less incendiary utterances.

Thus the Berlin Tages Zeitung, which has persistently denounced the Monroe doctrine, writes in answer to the question whether Germany should wait until the United States recognizes Madrid:

Our answer to this question, in accordance with historic precedents, must be in the negative, because it is to our interest to give our countrymen in Nicaragua and our trade with that republic as soon as possible that protection which can only be guaranteed by the immediate restoration of order at the hands of the regularly recognized government.

America, which likes to play the policeman among the Latin republics, does not help us when we are in trouble there. We must, therefore, help ourselves.

On the other hand the English newspapers make the kaiser's note the occasion for hostile comment directed at Germany. We quote from the London Morning Post:

No more unfortunate way of dealing with the claim of the United States to quasi suzerainty in South America could have been devised than that which commended itself to the diplomatists at Berlin. It is perfectly useless and rather dangerous to attempt to infringe in practice upon a right claimed by a foreign power which one will not oppose in principle.

It need not be doubted that these newspapers are, as we say in this country, "doing politics." The kaiser's note to Madrid can not fairly be construed to have any other than a purely formal diplomatic significance as an interchange of compliments and was so characterized by the Berlin foreign office.

THE attitude of the interstate commerce commission in relation to suspensions of increased rates is evidently a surprise to the railroads. The hottest fight in the recent session of congress took place over this grant of power to the commission, and the result was a compromise that gives power to suspend rates pending investigation for ten months.

When the railroad magnates had their famous conference with Mr. Taft they seem to have gathered the impression that the commission would not exercise the power of suspension except in rare instances. Now the commission announces a policy of general suspension.

This power lies at the very root of any effective regulation of the railroads. The commission has in the past been invested with a nominal power of rate fixing, but this merely meant a tedious and expensive lawsuit, while the roads in the meantime went on collecting the higher rates. The commission's power to fix rates was in fact nugatory and did not in any effective way limit the arbitrary power of the railroads to tax at will the industries of the people.

When Mr. Taft flatly told the railroad magnates that they must come under the rule of law they submitted with an ill grace, hoping that the commission would prove susceptible to influence. They were mistaken, and they find that in the case of every important advance in rates the burden of proof is placed on them to show that the increase is reasonable. They will get justice but not favor from the commission.

RAILROADS Surprised by Commission's Stand

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