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San Francisco Chronicle.
Published daily by The Chronicle Publishing Company
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Thought and Comment

LEADING NEWSPAPER OF THE COAST

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 1916

THE MAIN THING IN ECONOMICS

It Is Wise to Consider Results and Not Bother About Minor Details

A FEW days ago a man called up the editor of The Chronicle and asked him if he had heard that the price of lemons had been advanced by the California Fruit Exchange, supplementing the inquiry with another to the effect whether under the circumstances it would not be a good idea to remove the duty from that fruit.

Evidently, the inquiry was suggested by the appearance in The Chronicle of an article calling attention to a suit now being tried in the courts of New York in which a lobbyist is seeking to recover from the agents of a foreign exporting trust a sum of money which had been promised him as payment for his services in securing a reduction of the duty on lemons.

Of course, it is evident to everybody that the foreign fruit trust is backing out of its bargain because war conditions have made it difficult if not impossible for the Sicilian growers to take advantage of the beneficent act of the American Congress; but the circumstances have been different, had the trust been able to occupy the markets of the Atlantic seaboard to the exclusion of the California product, it would have cheerfully paid the lobbyist who is suing and everybody who had assisted it in securing the reduction of duty.

It is reasonably certain also that when in control of the markets referred to the foreigner, as in the period before the California lemon became a factor, would have availed himself of the opportunity presented by the increased demand during the hot months to cinch the consumer. If the domestic producer is following the usual practice of raising prices when the demand warrants doing so, it is well to keep in mind that it is the American grower and his help who benefit, and not the foreign producer, who, under the Democratic system, pays nothing for the privilege of entering our markets, and who does not contribute to the support of this Government.

But, after all, this is a mere detail and weighs little in the scale when the advantages of protection are being measured against the opposite system of holding out inducements to others to do for us instead of doing for ourselves. The important thing to be considered, taking the lemon as an object lesson, is: Has the effect of the protective duty on lemons made that fruit more accessible to the American people?* If it has accomplished that object, if it has succeeded in making it possible for Americans to get three, five or ten lemons where they got one before, then the consumer is benefited, no matter what the nominal price of lemons may be.

That this result has been achieved is undeniable. Before California growers were stimulated to produce lemons on a large scale they were as scarce as hens' teeth in all parts of the country except on the Atlantic seaboard, and there they were used sparingly, for when the market was controlled by the foreigner he took good care through his agents in this country to secure the highest price attainable.

What is true of the lemon is equally true of every other product, whether of the field, farm or factory, the production of which has been stimulated by an adequate protective duty. The undisputed fact that by means of protection we have created a steel and iron industry which enables us to consume twice as many pounds per capita of those products as any other people settles the matter. Whether we pay $20 or $10 a ton need not concern us; the thing is to get the steel and iron, and we get them.

The failure of the arguments in favor of the protective policy to appeal to some people is largely due to the obscuration of its main accomplishment, namely the promotion of productivity. If attention is concentrated on the fact that the result of stimulating peoples to do for themselves is to increase the volume of products for consumption, the arguments prompted by selfish considerations will be dissipated. Protection is often spoken of as a national policy, but its adoption by all peoples capable of doing for themselves would result in universal benefit. Even the incapable nations, if there are such, would be beneficiaries, for it is easily demonstrable that under existing conditions the abundance of one country mitigates the evils of scarcity in other countries. Our thirty million tons and more output of pig iron has resulted in making iron cheap throughout the world.

A LASTING PEACE

It Cannot Be Secured by a Mere Revision of the Political Boundaries of Europe

IF this is the war that is to end all wars, its worst evils will seem light in the eyes of posterity enjoying permanent peace. But what are the reasons for believing that this great conflict is to burn and purge away all those animosities of the nations and races which in the past have invoked the fierce arbitrament of the sword? It cannot be the mere immensity of the area of bloodshed. We speak of the greatest battles of all time, but relatively to the total population there were contests in previous centuries every bit as big. The Romans did not let out all the bad blood of the nations when their spears were carried to the ends of the earth; Attila, "The scourge of God," who devastated Europe, left it with more bitterness than existed before he began his murderous marches; Napoleon, the all-conquering, bequeathed a legacy of hatreds and desires for revenge. What, then, is the mystical, magical force in this encounter which is to work the wonder of an enduring peace?

Some people profess to find it in the better education of the modern democracy. They mark the soldiers in the trenches reading almost unlimited quantities of that literature which is supposed to be more elevating because it is classed as non-fiction. They see whole armies, now serving their countries faithfully, but preparing to reassemble under the international banner of universal liberty and justice. The soldier is seen to be making ready for a grander service in the revolution to dethrone militaristic monarchies and bureaucracies and to abolish that secret diplomacy which is as the serpent in a possible paradise.

Much is to be hoped for from the fact that the modern warrior will go back to where he can use the ballot and will not dissipate his fine enthusiasms in the darkness of the taproom. The trench has made warfare slower, but it gives the soldier time in which not only to read, but to think.

For all that, it must be remembered that the forces engaged in Europe are not equally educated. Millions of them are almost as ignorant as the Negroes who fought under or against Attila, and certainly as little informed as the majority led to their deaths by Napoleon.

Yet others are of the opinion that finance is a new factor making for peace, and because warfare today more speedily exhausts the resources of a nation. There is something in this. Europe will be for many years bankrupt and so burdened with taxation that many an insult may be endured solely for the reason that there are not the funds with which to avenge it.

Some pin their faith to such a redistribution of the territories that there will be a balance of power insuring peace. This might be well enough if all nations continued to grow at an equal rate, or if every accession of strength by any one power could be neutralized by an automatic addition to the forces of a rival combination. The balance of power is the most unstable of all peace factors, while the endeavor to adjust it has led to many wars.

What is there left but the root of the matter—excessive navalism and militarism. Napoleon was a self-centered man. He saw all humanity as merely his plaything, yet there were times when even his interests squared with those of the world and he saw the truth. He saw it when he said: "Peace ought to be the result of a system well considered, founded on the interests of the different countries honorable to each, and ought not to be either a capitulation or the result of a threat."

That is to say a triumphant victory and a crushing defeat no matter which side scores the one or suffers the other cannot be the basis of a permanent peace. The victor would grow vain and insolent of his victory and the vanquished revengeful for his defeat.

But if there should come a halt and peace be thought out in terms of a well considered system, there would need to be no change of boundaries. Each could have that which is rightfully his own, and where disputes upon this point should arise let the people of the territory concerned decide the question of allegiance or independent self-government. Then let them arrange to form or otherwise destroy their warships, ship for ship; blow up or demolish their fortifications and throw equivalent quantities of their armaments on the scrap heap, each and all consenting to disband their armies.

If this is impossible then so is the dream of a lasting peace, since you cannot go on forever preparing for war without making it inevitable. Education and other factors may in the course of time establish lasting peace, but these should be begun at the close of the present war if only the nations would move away at once to reduce to a minimum the implements of destruction.

OVER SANDY TRAILS TO THE OLD CLIFF

By WALTER J. THOMPSON

ONE naff still find a sandy trail over the hills to the beach and Seal Rocks, but in following it the pilgrim is likely to discover that it is very much like that serpentine avenue which was supposed to lead to the barn of one Robin Hood of "Merrie Greenwood"; notoriety, an edifice, by the way, that in the blaze of publicity has the same substantial existence as the stately pleasure-dome of Kubla Khan.

Once upon a time there were half a dozen trails to the old Cliff House, and they were all sandy—pshaw, let's be honest! They were nothing but sand. The big cliff trail was the long yellow road following the line of thoroughfare now held in partnership trust by gray and green trolley cars. It was the bus road in the days to which we are harking back.

It had an official beginning on Cemetery avenue, later Central avenue, and now Presidio avenue, where Post street ends. There was the entrance of Calvary's cars that ran out Bush and California streets. There, too, at the head of Post street was a flight of steps connecting the grades and giving one the impression that some Herculean-hoofed giant with a grudge against Mr. Cemetery Avenue had kicked the family residence off its foundations, leaving only the kitchen stairs standing. At the foot of these stairs the cars of the Central Railroad Company unloaded their bands of beach-bound passengers. That was a busy corner.

There stood the Cliff House stages. They were a sort of cross between the old Concord coaches such as Overland Kit and worthies of that sort used to hold up on lonely Sierra paths and the brick-red Casebolt chre that were afflicted with St. Vitus' dance as they bobbed over the uneven tracks.

The stages were of clayey yellow aspect, with a "scene in oil" on each side, a representation of the Cliff House, according to neighborhood gossip, but resembling more, if artistic criticism be credited, Daniel Boone's old Kentucky Home pitched on the castled crag of Drachenfels by an artist's magic wand or brush. But I'm casting no aspersions on these busses. They were comfortable affairs, and once tucked away in the straw at the feet of the whirlwind slung at a good four-horse clip and whizzed through a pair of toll gates, the tariff at which would, if you were in a fig of your own, be twice the value of the whole stage ride.

There was all the languor of dissipation in the lurchings of the vehicles' bosses. And why think for a moment that there was any chance of "whipping behind" on the steps. No, indeed. A polished oval coverture lifted over those steps as the door closed, making the whole appear as if it was the royal coach of a grand sachem of the braver tribe who was bundled up inside of it, the royal caudal appendage, which, being an eccentric monarch, he allowed to hang out in negligee, to the happy-day-we're-having fashion.

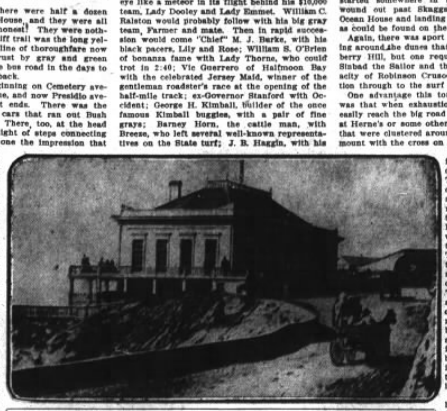
When Captain Junius G. Foster arrived here in 1860 as purser on one of the "Pacific Mail steamers, the old Point Lobos road stopped at the city cemetery. Beyond to the beach was a bleak and sand-bound district. Foster suggested to a friend, C. C. Curtis, the idea of erecting a house on the cliff, with the seals as an attraction. Curtis caught the idea and put up the means. The cutting of the road through the sand dunes followed, and soon all San Francisco was on its way to see Captain Foster and his partners, the seals, with Big Ben Butler on the great of the main rock.

Between the two toll gates on the road commencing at what is now First avenue and terminating about 500 yards beyond the half-mile track was a speed road on the right-hand side and a macadam carriage drive on the left.

On the north of the old Cliff road should be written in snappy, sport-smacking phraseology, in order to be true to life and its traditions, which mean distinctively of the sporting sort, resonant with the patter of equine hoofs, the objurgatory, or otherwise, exclamations of excited drivers and the whizzing of varnished spokes gleaming like polished metal in the sunlight or throwing out faded flashes by moonlight as the gay life of the growing city dashed to the beach.

It was the era of the horse, and San Francisco was the paradise of liverymen.

Is it any wonder racing was in the air? The makeshift race course at the Mission by the Nightingale was deserted for the new half-mile track on the cliff road through the western sands. It was speedily eclipsed by the nobbler Bay District milk track. The road itself was often a track for wager events in the speed line.



The old Cliff as it appeared in the sixties and seventies, when it was ruled over by Captain Junius G. Foster, who there entertained all San Francisco and all distinguished visitors to the city, and whose circle of friends was world-wide.

Every one of any prominence in the city was seen on the road in a rig.

"Don't ask me if he went through here," First Toltgate-keeper Blake used to say to inquiries, hopping about to the merry jingle of a bushel or so of silver quarters and halves concealed about his person. "If he lives in San Francisco, he is out here. They're all out today."

Watch them whirl by.

Ex-Governor Milton S. Latham dazzled the eye like a meteor in its flight behind his $10,000 team. Lady Foster and Lady Stanford. William C. Ralston would probably follow with his big gray team, Farmer and mate. Then in rapid succession would come "Chief" M. J. Burke, with his black pacers, Lily and Rose; William S. O'Brien of bonanza fame with Lady Thorne, who could trot in 2:40; Vic Guerrero of Hallidie Bay with the celebrated Jersey Maid, winner of the gentleman roadster's race at the opening of the half-mile track; ex-Governor Leland Stanford with Decident; George H. Kimball, builder of the once famous Kimball buggies, with a pair of fine grays; Barney Horn, the cattle man, with Breese, who left several well-known representatives on the State turf; J. B. Haggin, with his speed mare Monarch; Reuben H. Lloyd astride of one of his fine single-footing saddle horses, and so the list swells beyond handling as the field pours into the homestretch of memory.

A pampered pal of Father Time up to several weeks ago aired its weather-beaten front on the line of the city cars and gazed along at a good four-horse clip and whizzed through a pair of toll gates, the tariff at which would, if you were in a fig of your own, be twice the value of the whole stage ride.

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Come we now to two famous paths to ocean delights—the "Hooker Trails." When the light of stolen freedom from schoolroom tasks illumined the hooker trails they could only have been discussed in whispers. Publication of these secrets! Horrors! Treason! But, now that the hooker trails are all dead or retired on pensions (peace to 'em, wherever they are) and we're all grown up, one can talk about these mystic paths. Schoolboys don't play hookey any more, anyhow, I am informed by a responsible young person—so it is all right, as far as the moral point of view is concerned.

There were two hooker trails to the Cliff. They had no official starting places. One would converge to them from any part of the city, along several streets. One was the Mountain lake hatters, the stocks, the astrologer, Ralph and Hudibras, it will remember. John Swett's denunciations of greed, and hypocrisy and the vain and foolish pride of partial learning.

To his task as a satirist Butler brought unusual qualities. He was far better read than the men who sought to exalt mere learning above every other human accomplishment, and was much more subtle than those casuists at whom he aimed in such lines as:

He could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and southwest side.

For oratoric he could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope.

For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools.

Or be by geometric scale
Could take the size of pots of ale

And wisely tell what hour of the day
The clock does strike, by algebra.

But those that write in rhyme still make
The two vice versa for the other's sake.
For one for sense and one for rhyme,
I think's sufficient at one time.

Then again so many of life lines contain so much poetry, more sound like the most atrocious rhymes. They may have been perfect in the pronunciation of his day, but we say they are execrable and one gets along better even with Chaucer. For all that there are parts of Butler's doggerel which will live to the end of the language in which they are written. Long after the world has forgotten the knight and his squire, the barbers, the astrologer, Ralph and Hudibras, it will remember John Swett's denunciations of greed, and hypocrisy and the vain and foolish pride of partial learning.

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That famed wanderer of old, Ulysses of Ithaca, never met with any more glorious adventures on his ten-year holiday than the modern hooker trailer. Ulysses may have had his fierce and cruel Cyclops, but he did not have the fishermen at Harbor View, hauling in their nets and scattering over the strand an infinite variety of finny freaks from the depths of the briny deep; he may have had a Polyphemus to fear, but he did not have an extensive quarry (and it's in that city park hill yet) where one could sit down, in a cozy clefty and, pulling out some well-thumbed and treasured volumes, figure out how the tactics of "Big Foot Wallace and his pardner, the "Giant Trapper of the Brazos," as applied to defeating the wily trickery of "Lone Wolf," the Comanche chieftain, could be applied to the eternal undoing of all efforts of vigilant hookey officers.

That Scylla and Charybdis game of Ulysses was not a marker to the excitement of running the gauntlet of the vegetable producers whose gardens beapangled the Richmond district and escaping with an armload of carrots and turnips; nor could his Sirens hold a candle to the frogs of Mountain lake, which were worth $3 a dozen at the French restaurants.

No, Ulysses wasn't so much, not half the hero Jack Harkaway was. Poor fellow, it's a pity he didn't have a press agent like Ned Buntline or Captain Mayne Reid and a publisher by the name of Beadle. The only drawback to a complete sense of triumph over Ulysses was the dread shadow that always hung like the sword of Damocles over the hookey trail—the grim rattan of the morrow.

In the perspective of time the shadows gather over all the old trails that led through the sand dunes where the purple and yellow lupin grew in such profusion.

It was over a land of shadows and one is inclined to yield to the gloom of the realization that so many of those who participated in its former gayety sleep to the right and left of the old cliff road and that even the Homestead arch, the Rusty Remnant and the "sip-sip" of Captain Chauncey Kane blowing down the wind, have gone their way, until suddenly the mellow sunshine of the "hookey trail" breaks in a golden shower and a step carries one over the sandy ridge, and there in glory shines the old beach with its lacework of white surf and the broad Pacific stretching westward as fair as the dawn of another day.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

NEEDED NO EXPLANATION

"Charley, dear," said young Mrs. Torkins, "they have dog tents in the Army, don't they?"

"Why, yes. You see, it's a sort of technical term."

"You needn't trouble to explain. I guessed I understood words of one syllable. What I wanted to say is that I'm glad our faithful four-footed friends are provided for. Only I suspect the S. P. C. A. made them do it."—Washington Star.

REALLY PATHETIC

"Ah! A package of old love letters, I see," noted with a faded pink ribbon. I could shed tears at the sight of them.

"Pitiful! Yet true pathos nothing surpasses a bundle of canceled checks."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

AN ETERNAL TRUTH

Music lovers rightly contend it must be when a singer realizes that she has lost her voice.

Critics say, but much more distressing it is when she doesn't realize it.—Puck.

THEN THE ICE FORMED

Her—No doubt you think I am older than I really am.

Him—Not at all. I'm sure you are not as old as you look.—Indianapolis Star.

PREPARED FOR IT

"So Bibber got canned?"

"Yes; the boss found him picked."—Boston Transcript.

WAS A REAL EXPERT

"Why do you call Bilgrim an expert accountant?"

"Because of his assumptions of extraordinary wisdom. There isn't any phenomenon in the universe that he doesn't assume to be able to account for."—Washington Star.

REMEMBER THIS

"Will you have me for your wife?" said the leap year maiden, sweetly.

"Since you have suggested it, I will," he replied. "But just remember, Mamie, if I don't turn out to be all you expect, you have only yourself to blame."—New York Globe.

DOOMED

Anxious Mother—Young Millyuns seems to be quite friendly with you of late. Do you know what his intentions are?

Pretty Daughter—No, and I don't care; but I know what mine are.—Philadelphia Ledger.

TOO AMBITIOUS

"Is your new motor car a good hill climber?"

"Fine," replied Mr. Chugging. "I only wish it would draw the line at hills. Sometimes it wants to try a tree box or a telegraph pole."—Washington Star.

UNEXPLORED REALMS

Actor—There is such a thing as acting too much.

Peel—So I have heard. I wonder what it is like?—New York Times.

THE OLD LOVE SONG

Play it slowly, sing it lowly,
Old fashioned tune
Once it ran in dance and dimple,
Like a bright rill soon;
Now it sobs along the measures
With a sighful air
Dear old voices echo through it,
Vanished with the years.

Play it slowly—it is holy
As an evening hymn;
Morning glories have twined to sadness
Fills it to the brim.
Memories come within the music,
Stealing through the bars:
Thoughts within its quiet spaces
Rise and set like stars.

Ripple, ripple, goes the love song,
Till it sinks and dies.
Early sweetness grown complete.
Ends its years rhyme:
Who together learn the music
Life and death unfold.
Know that love is but beginning
Still love is old.

Singing, singing through the roses
Went our lovers twain—
Was it but an hour or some times,
Could there be again?
Now they tell us, "Five-and-twenty
Jones we've seen them blow;
Every June's a repetitor, sweeter—
Well, we lovers know!"—Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph.

VERY LIKELY

Wed love to go vacationing,
But fear when we get back
The dogyone lawn would have grown so,
We could not find our shack.—Houston Post.

BOOKS MORE TALKED ABOUT THAN READ

SAMUEL BUTLER'S "HUDIBRAS"

By GEORGE DOUGLAS

THIS book that is to "Hudibras" is known to countless thousands who have never opened a book by Samuel Butler. There is no escaping it, for not only are its passages so frequently quoted they are of a kind which once read can never be forgotten. Statisticians who have included the domain of literature rank "Hudibras" with "Hamlet," Pope's "Essay on Man" and Gray's "Elegy" as leading all other English compositions in frequency of quotation. But if ever there was a book more talked about than read it is this same seventeenth century satire. A line from "Hamlet" will often serve as the stepping stone to a Shakespearean student; a couplet from the "Essay on Man" has incited many to wade through the whole of Pope, and a stray stanza has led legions to the worship of the 'immortal "Elegy"; but there is little or no temptation in Butler's most brilliant flashes—certainly not enough to carry the average man through the ten thousand verses of "Hudibras."

There is no great difficulty in gaining the entrance, and though many of the episodes are diverting they owe their interest more to the author's comments than to anything remarkable in incident. Keys to the characters are furnished in many editions, but they are superfluous, and for the double reason that Butler was more intent upon satirizing typical characteristics than particular characters, and that not one bit of enjoyment or understanding is added by the information.

Butler's bestowing on one of the curvilinear and redundant Muses. He was himself a victim of the vice he rebukes in the lines:

But those that write in rhyme still make
The two vice versa for the other's sake.
For one for sense and one for rhyme,
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Then again so many of life lines contain so much poetry, more sound like the most atrocious rhymes. They may have been perfect in the pronunciation of his day, but we say they are execrable and one gets along better even with Chaucer. For all that there are parts of Butler's doggerel which will live to the end of the language in which they are written. Long after the world has forgotten the knight and his squire, the barbers, the stocks, the astrologer, Ralph and Hudibras, it will remember John Swett's denunciations of greed, and hypocrisy and the vain and foolish pride of partial learning.

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For be by geometric scale
Could take the size of pots of ale

And wisely tell what hour of the day
The clock does strike, by algebra.

Whatever skeptic could foretell
For every why he had a wherefore.

And with as diligent a hand,
Could count as tough a rope of sand,
And weave fine subtleties, fit for gnat
That's canty when the moon is full;
Such as take lodgings in a head
That's to be let unfurnished.

This latter, by the way, is even earlier than the Dickens anticipation of the popular phrase, "Nobody home."

W. E. Henley, that master of modern critics, said of Butler: "He had an abundance of wit of the best and truest sort; he was an indefatigable observer; he knew opinions well, and books even better; he had considered life acutely and severely; as a rhymist he proceeded from none and has had no successor; his vocabulary is of its kind incomparable; his work is a very hoard of sentences and saws, of vigorous locutions and picturesque colloquialisms, of strong sound sense and robust English."

By a strange coincidence the last century produced another Samuel Butler, with an almost identical cast of mind and of many similar life experiences. Indeed there are high literary authorities who credit the recently departed Butler with a satirical quality as rich and great as that of his illustrious namesake. But they differ in that while the author of "Hudibras" was instantly recognized the author of "The Way of All Flesh" is only now and slowly coming into his own.

Though the original Samuel Butler is now more talked about than read, he was in his measure popular in his day and for many years after it was imitated by at least a dozen hundred-and-seventy hacks who managed to get into book form. Some idea of the latter may be obtained from the diary of Pepys, who never could bring himself to admiration of the satirist. On December 26, 1662, we find this entry:

"Hither came Mr. Bettersby, and in talking into discourse of a new book of drollery in imitation of 'Hudibras,' I would needs go find it out and met with it at the Temple; cost me 5s. (5 cents, Chaucer. For all that I came to read it; it is so silly an abuse of the Presbyter Knight going to the wars I am ashamed of it, and by and by meeting at Mr. Townsend's at dinner I sold it to him for what cost me 18d. Pepys tried it again in a few months but with no better result."

Like Cervantes, by whom he was greatly influenced, Butler originated many sayings, which have become as common pegs to hang ideas on that author. There is only space for a few:

He that compiles against his will
Is of his own opinion still.

What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a year.

And that which was proved true before
Proved, false again? Two hundred more.

For what is worth in anything
But so much money as 'twill bring?

Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to.

Butler was born in 1612 and died 1680. He held some good positions, but as a satirist he made more enemies than friends, and was often in poor circumstances.

THE PEOPLE'S SAFETY VALVE

NOTE—The Chronicle disclaims responsibility for the views expressed in this column. It is an open forum for discussion. Short contributions have the preference. Anonymous communications on one side of the paper only.

THE PARK AVIARY

Editor The Chronicle—Sir: On my weekly visit to our beautiful Golden Gate Park today, among other places I went to the aviary and was amazed to find it in such a deplorable condition from lack of care and water. The willow and shrubs are almost dead and the little streams where the birds drink and bathe are filled with dirt and slime. The birds look sick and seem to be fast disappearing. It seems a pity that, at one time one of the most interesting and beautiful spots in our much-visited and talked of park, should be so neglected. A lover of the park.

L. L. B.

San Francisco, July 19, 1916.

CIVIL SERVICE MACHINE JARS

Editor The Chronicle—Sir: I dearly love to read the daily news in the "Safety Valve," because I am sure of reading the candid opinion of your numerous contributors, where abuses existing within our municipality are rallied to the attention of the taxpayer and the public in general. Were it not for the "Safety Valve" these complaints, sent to the different heads of departments, would be buried and never heard of. In your issue of The Chronicle of June 18, mention is made of the fact that the plotting carmen of the Municipal Railroad met in a body, owned by a civil service carman on "leave of absence." Why is this leave of absence abuse allowed by the Mayor or his Civil Service Commissioners? It is running rampant throughout the different departments, and one of Mayor Rolph's greatest promises to the people of this city was that he would see that civil service was carried out in its true spirit and meaning. And what is he doing toward making that promise good. There are about 150 civil service employes holding positions other than what they took their examinations for. They secure the so-called year-to-year leave of absence, and nothing is said. The matter or spirit of civil service never figured on any leave of absence, unless there was sickness or a departure from the seat of government. The idea of allowing anyone to take an examination for a certain position and after successfully having passed such examination, to allow him or her a "leave of absence" from such position to accept an entirely different one, but with a little larger salary. This surely does not seem just or fair. A person taking an examination for a certain position should be compelled to fill that position or his name should be stricken off the civil service list, later on, as an absentee. Jobs killed. Mayor Rolph is a good business head, and I am satisfied that when he sees fit to give to the people some of his business tact that he is using in his private enterprises such abuses as these would not exist very long. Now, Mr. Mayor, you have a golden opportunity of making good your promise to the people of this city regarding civil service. Give them a chance to express your valuable time, and have such state of affairs corrected and have our civil service the same as everywhere else—locked up tight—and not as it is at present—a simon-pure farce.

OBSERVER.

San Francisco, July 18, 1916.

A MUNICIPAL MOVING PICTURE

Editor The Chronicle—Sir: Yesterday I had occasion to go out the Mission road and observed a gang of men resetting basalt blocks between the tracks and the curb on the viaduct. I counted nine men in working clothes. Of these one was leaning against the concrete fence talking to a man with all his clothes on and a third man was standing without the aid of the fence; seven were standing in a row with a half basalt blocks leaning on their weapons; one man was digging out and and setting basalt blocks—one man out of nine actually working for a half hour later I returned and found exactly the same picture, the same industrial setting as if they had been wax figures, with the exception of the one live man still working.

TAXPAYER.

San Francisco, July 18, 1916.

$5 YEARS AGO TODAY

It was announced that new buildings for the California School of Feeble-minded Children would be completed in October at Glen Ellen, at a cost of $125,000.

Graduating exercises of the class of '91 of the San Francisco Training School for Nurses were held. Dr. W. W. Kerr delivered the address.

Rev. Edward B. W. Browne of Toledo, O., one of the most distinguished Hebrew theologians in the country, visited this city.

A concert was held in the hall of the Church of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe on Broadway.

YES

I. N. Kwiasitive—Did you ever get something for nothing?

L. M. P. Xentence—Yes, a pocket-book.—Browning's Magazine.

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