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TELEPHONE CHARGES.

A Comparison With the Rates in Many European Cities.

SHOULD REDUCE ONE-HALF

American Cities Far Behind in the Control of Corporations.

Yeiser Case Before the Board.

Hon. John O. Yeiser is making an effort to secure a reduction in the telephone rates charged by the Nebraska telephone company. He has very carefully prepared his complaint and filed it with the secretary of the board of transportation. A few days ago the case came up before the board for hearing in Omaha. Mr. Yeiser appeared himself in defense of his complaint. He is an attorney, well versed in the law, was a member of the last legislature and was in the House when the act under which he seeks to compel the telephone company to reduce their rates was passed. He is a good speaker and understands his subject. In the legislature he was the best known anti-monopolist. The corporations could invariably count on his opposition. He will give the board of transportation an opportunity to reduce the rates and they will undoubtedly do so unless the company can have the law held unconstitutional. The election of Judge John J. Sullivan, which now seems certain, will make it more difficult for the company to get the courts to hold the act unconstitutional. It would therefore appear that there is a possibility for some relief to the overburdened and corporation ridden public.

In addition to claiming that the act is unconstitutional because it is an amendment of an old act which did not specifically name the attorneys for the company deny the jurisdiction of the board on the ground that the act was only intended by the legislature to apply to messages "delivered" and that the telephone company does not write out and "deliver" its messages the board has no jurisdiction over it. Mr. Yeiser plainly pointed out the fallacy and the nonsense in that kind of argument. He contended that the rental paid by the user of a telephone was a time charge for "delivery" of messages. He argued that the company did not deliver messages by human agency but by electrical agency, that although a man did his own talking the corporation's electrical current carried and delivered the message; that the act of delivery was performed by the agent of the corporation when the young lady in the central office connects one telephone with another. This is "delivery" in the sense intended by the legislature. Every member of the legislature knew that telephone messages are not written and delivered, but that they are talked over the wire. The delivery part of the law was intended to apply to telegraph companies and telephone systems were placed under the control of the board and the law specifically states that the board shall have power to fix and regulate the charges for service.

That the charges for the use of telephones in Nebraska are exorbitant is plainly apparent when compared with the charges made for a similar or better service in foreign countries. The charge in Omaha is \$60 per year, in Lincoln \$48 per year, and there are extra and additional charges for each and every connection with a telephone out of the city.

In Stockholm, Sweden, the charge is 4 E, 8 s, 11 d, or about \$22 per year for a business telephone, and 3 E, 6 s, 8 d, \$18 per year for a telephone at a residence. Stockholm is a much larger city than either Omaha or Lincoln and has 12,000 telephones in use. Omaha has only about 2,500 in use. In the telephone business the more telephones in use the greater the expense for each telephone for operation, as each phone must be connected with every other phone. The managers of the Nebraska Telephone company explained to the committee on telephones in the last legislature that that was the reason charges were higher in Omaha than in Lincoln and higher in Lincoln than in smaller towns in the state. According to the explanation made by the officers of the telephone company the charges in Stockholm should be greater than in Omaha or Lincoln, while as a matter of fact the charges are less than half as much. In Chicago the charges are \$120 per year, or nearly six times what the charges are in Stockholm. The population of Stockholm at the last census was 243,500. The population of Omaha is about 150,000. The service in Stockholm is as good as it is in the United States. They have all of the latest improved instruments, the best quality of material, surpassing in durability and neatness the telephones in use in this country.

All the towns and villages in Sweden have telephone systems and all are connected over the entire country. In many of the smaller towns the charges are as low as 25 or 30 shillings, (\$9 to \$12.50) per year. The charges for connections with other cities depends upon the distances. The charge for a connection 100 kilometers (63 miles) distant is 2 d (4 cents). The charge made by the Ne-

braska Telephone company for connection between Omaha and Lincoln (about 60 miles) is 50 cents. The charge in Sweden for a connection 100 to 200 kilometers is 4 d (8 cents). In Norway the rates are 4 E, 8 s, 11 d for a distance of 1,500 meters and 8 s, 4 d for each 500 meters thereafter. A second person may use the same instrument and have his name in the telephone directory the same as any other subscriber for 11 s, 3 d (\$2.75) per year. The Nebraska Telephone company in Lincoln charge \$36 per year for the same privilege. In Norway messages are written out and delivered to a nonsubscriber. The charges for their service depends upon the distance the message must be delivered by carrier. A message of thirty words will be written out and delivered within a distance of one kilometer (about three-fifths of a mile) for 4 d (8 cents). A reply of thirty words will be brought back at one-half the first charge.

In Portugal the rate is from 5 E 12 s 6 d (\$28) to 7 E 17 s 6 d according to distance. In addition to this low rate the company is required to pay 8 per cent of its gross receipts to the government for its franchise. In Holland the rate is 2 E 9 s 7 d. In Italy in Rome the charge is 5 E 10 s 5 d, Naples, 9 s and in Milan 5 E. In Belgium the rate is 6 E. In Bavaria, in the city of Munich population 350,000 with 5000 subscribers the charge is 7 E 10 s (about \$37.50) per year. In cities of similar size in the United States the charges range from \$80 to \$120 per year.

In Germany in Berlin, population 1,679,000, which is larger than the population of Chicago, the charge for a telephone is about \$57.50 per year. In Austria the system is operated somewhat differently. Each new subscriber is required to pay an appropriation of 4 E 3 s 4 d to pay the proportionate cost of the original construction of the line and system, and after that he must pay a rental charge of 4 E 3 s 4 d, which is used to pay the operating expenses and keep the lines in repair. The admission fees are used in constructing new lines and extending the system. The total cost for the use of a telephone in Austria the first year is about \$42, after that about \$21 per year. Enterprising cities in enlightened America would do well to pattern after some of the European cities in the matter of telephone systems. The populist platform declares for municipal ownership of public utilities. The same principles applied in European cities have met with remarkable success.

JUDGE TULEY ON INJUNCTIONS.

Says the Use of the Writ of Injunction Has Been Abandoned.

That eminent Chicago jurist, Judge Tuley replying to the question as to the use of the writ of injunction in the recent coal strike in Pennsylvania says that under the law a judge has no authority to use an injunction to settle a labor dispute or even to quiet an inaction. That power belongs to the executive department of government. He said:

"To use the writ of injunction to disperse an unlawful assembly, or to patrol a public highway with armed deputy marshals, is a usurpation of power by the courts. When labor disputes endanger the public peace or render the destruction of property imminent, no good citizen can object to the executive branch of the government using its 'iron hand' to prevent either, but no amount of legal quibbling will satisfy the people that the writs of injunction of the federal courts in the coal strike have not been issued and used for the purposes and object above stated. The courts in so using the writ are usurping powers and functions devolved by both federal and state constitutions upon the executive branch of the respective governments. Such use of the writ of injunction by the courts is judicial tyranny, which endangers not only the right of trial by jury but all the rights and liberties of the citizen."

The Chicago Record, in commenting on the above opinion speaks the sentiment of the American people when it says:

"The opinion will be upheld by the common sense of the masses, which teaches them that the practice which makes a single judge the sole arbiter of the merits of a controversy, wherein he himself has established by injunction a temporary law of his own making, is a dangerous usurpation of executive and legislative power.

There can be little doubt of the correctness of Judge Tuley's position, which rests primarily upon the supposition that the injunction power is a menace wherever it is so used as to deprive citizens of their constitutional rights. There are already in law abundant remedies and preventives for the kinds of trespass which have been enjoined in the recent labor troubles. The work of enforcing those laws rests properly with the executive branch of government. An injunction will be where there is no remedy at law or where the act of which complaint is made, is not lawless in itself. Where, as in the recent miner's case, a court proceeds by injunction to detain what a citizen may or may not do, and then arbitrarily fixes punishment not for lawlessness, but for violation of the courts order, a precedent of political tyranny has been established. Why should not a judge with equal justice enjoy a man for committing murder—an offense already provided for in law—and then himself punish the man, not for murder but for contempt of court, thereby depriving him of his right to trial by jury?

Congress should be called upon in the next session to take radical steps toward defining the power of injunction and curbing its reckless use.

ABOUT NEW ZEALAND

Something of the Great Progress the South Sea Islanders are Making.

THE TRUE POPULIST DOCTRINE

A Land Tax, Graduated Income Tax, and Postal Savings Banks.

Women Allowed to Vote.

Mr. P. Ailsop for many years a resident of New Zealand and thoroughly acquainted with the government of the islands and the condition of the residents in an interview recently published concerning the prosperity of the islands says:

The problem of providing for the unemployed in New Zealand is about solved. In fact, the unemployed are very, very few. The same may be said of the tramp question. Tramps are becoming very scarce there now, though six years ago they were as numerous as they are in the United States. The few remaining are the incorrigible cases. When they die off the tramp will be known no more in New Zealand.

"These are but two of the great many remarkable changes wrought in the country in a few years. All has been wrought by the socialist policy. The country is pretty far advanced in socialism. The experiments have been so entirely satisfactory that when the government went to the country with a much more advanced socialist policy last December it was endorsed by an enormous majority.

The common people of New Zealand are far in advance of the same class in this country for the reason that the eight hour system has been rigorously observed, which has provided time for reading and thought.

"Strikes have been done away with by the substitution of boards of conciliation and arbitration. The law makes it obligatory in all disputes between employers and employees that the subject of dispute shall be submitted to the board of conciliation. This board is composed of five men, two chosen by the employer, two chosen by the employees, while a judge of the supreme court makes the fifth. If either party is dissatisfied with the decision an appeal may be taken to the board of arbitration, which consists of three members, one chosen by the workmen, one chosen by the employer, and the third again a judge of the supreme court. The decision of the board of arbitration is final. It must be observed. Heavy penalties are provided for violators, and the penalties are enforced, too. The defeated party in an appeal must pay the costs. The boards are to all intents and purposes courts of law. They have power to summon witnesses and to punish for contempt. The moral effect of these boards has been most wholesome. Disputes between employers and employees have been reduced to a minimum. The weaker party will yield rather than risk the payment of the costs unless he has a good cause. But the workmen in particular are delighted with the system.

New Zealand is now very prosperous compared to what it was a few years ago. This prosperity is attributed to the land tax and land policy of the government. This is not a single tax but approaches it in principle. The land tax is not a tax on land but a tax on land values. It ranges from a penny to the pound to three pence to the pound with an extra penny added for absentees. The effect of this has been to reduce alien ownership. European landlords soon get tired of paying the heavy tax. They very soon become more than willing to sell out in small parcels and at low figures. This has precisely the effect intended—it gives actual settlers an opportunity to obtain homes at reasonable figures. Large estates are rapidly breaking up. In a few years they will cease to exist. I should say in this connection that actual settlers are permitted to have land to the value of \$2,500 exempt from taxation. Besides this we have the graduated income tax. All incomes under \$1,500 are exempt, from \$1,500 to \$5,000 the tax is 2% per cent, all over \$5,000 pay 5 per cent tax. All corporations and absentees pay the full 5 per cent without exemption. These two taxes take the place of the old property tax which has been abolished.

The government obtains large tracts of land which it leases to actual settlers for 999 years. If the settler is deserving and he cannot lease the land if he is not, the government will lend him the material to the value of \$100 to build a house; then it will allow him a certain sum per acre for clearing the land; it will also provide him not more than three days of eight hours each with work on roads or other public improvements, so that he can support himself and family until he can raise crops. The government is reimbursed for all this by the increase in land values due to increased population, on which it collects a tax, as I have already said.

The government borrows money in Europe in large sums which it lends to the farmers. The government pays it 5 per cent interest and charges the farmer 5 per cent. As a matter of fact the farmer pays 6 per cent per annum, 1 per cent of which goes into a sinking fund to cancel the principal. After paying 6 per cent a year for 75 years the debt is extinguished. The plan has been an entire success so far as it has been tried. Interest rates were formerly very high.

The government owns the telephone, the telegraph and the railroads in New Zealand. One interesting feature of the government ownership of railroads is that in the country districts where the settlers are some distance from the schools, the railroads carry the children to and from school free of charge. It is interesting to note that the railroads are beginning to pay well since they came under government control, although they were unprofitable under private ownership. The government also manages the parcel delivery or express business as it is called in America.

Another very popular feature in New Zealand is the post banks. They have proved immensely popular—so popular that it has been found necessary to fix a limit upon the amount which may be deposited in a post bank, otherwise they would crowd the private banks out of existence. The limit is \$2,500.

"Women vote in New Zealand. We have very advanced laws on the subject of temperance. We have local option with the provision that the question must be submitted to the referendum every three years. The sale of liquor can only be prohibited by a three-fifths vote; on the other hand even a single additional license cannot be granted without a three-fifths vote. But a reduction in the number of saloons can be made by a bare majority, although the number of saloons cannot be reduced more than 25 per cent.

"The government has also established a life insurance, which has been so popular that the government now does more insurance business than all the private companies combined.

"There are also two or three government farms for the unemployed; but as I have already said, the unemployed are getting pretty scarce now. These farms are merely experiments.

The factory laws are far ahead of those of this country, and they are enforced. It is obligatory upon employers to provide dining rooms for their employees. Eight hours and no more constitutes a day's work. No child under 15 years of age is allowed to work in a factory. The laws apply on a farm. In the city, stores must be closed on Sundays and also a half a day during the week. And these half holidays must be paid for. All these laws are rigidly enforced.

Government works on an enormous scale have been undertaken on the cooperative plan. The government deals directly with the men who do the work. And they find it a very easy matter to go along without the contractor.

To sum it all up every one in New Zealand is very much pleased with the new departures.

THE REAL SULLIVAN

A Speech Delivered by the Present Candidate Six Years Ago.

CRITICISES CORPORATIONS.

Men Elected by the Corporations Will Serve Their Benefactors.

The Defeat of Maxwell and Reese.

Six years ago, and long before he dreamed of being a candidate for supreme judge the present candidate of the people's party, delivered a Fourth of July oration at Lindsay, in Platte county, Nebraska. Judge Sullivan is a very careful and methodical man and does not like to be misquoted and as his custom prepared his speech for the occasion in typewritten form. It is not the kind of a speech that will be very generally printed and circulated by the political opponents. The Omaha Bee says that Sullivan is a corporation tool, but the Bee will not print this speech which was delivered six years ago at a Fourth of July celebration, when there was no campaign in progress. Here is what Judge John J. Sullivan said on that occasion:

Ignorance has always been the foundation stone of monarchical governments. Freedom and education go hand in hand. Caesar feared Cassius because he thought and read too much. King James directed Governor Andros to restrain the printing press in the colonies lest the people should learn more than their allegiance and their duty to their king. Universal education, unlettered thought, free speech and a free ballot are the foundations upon which our government rests and upon which, if we are faithful to ourselves, it will rest secure.

But it is still true that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. We have swiftly matured. We have reached pre-eminence while our history has just rounded a century. We have entered upon a luxurious age, the age when servitude, subservience to wealth and power beget antagonistic classes and precedes corruption, degeneracy and decay. It is undeniable that politics has become a matter of sordid business. There is little of truth or dignity, or patriotism in it. There is no individual or party sacrifice for the public weal to sanctify or enable it. It has degenerated into a boisterous brawl and vulgar scramble for place and power and patronage. The elections are decided still upon issues that have been dead for a quarter of a century. At each succeeding campaign with its uniforms and torchlight processions; with its noisy excitement and blaze and glare; with its speeches of buncombe, fopdoodle, spanglegenium and sunbursty, the tocsin of war is sounded and the battles of the rebellion are fought again. Once more the veteran shoulders arms and fights with Hooker above the clouds or marches with Sherman to the sea. He beholds again the hosts in blue marshalled under the flag of freedom. He sees again the hero blood chase in his forehead and quicken in his veins until the interests of the hour, the patriotism of the present, reels and swoons in the presence of the patriotism of the past. But while the masses of the people have been basking in the bright sunshine of a glorious history, the men who are in politics as a matter of business have been coming their patriotism into gold and providing the machinery by which the conditions rise; act well your part, fruits of the people's labor may be legally filched from them.

GOVERNMENT BY INJUNCTION.

An Opinion by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota.

There are judges of high courts that recognize the grave danger in the encroachment by the judiciary upon the other branches of government. Officers of courts like officers in other departments are anxious to increase and extend their authority as much as possible. It is well illustrated by the increased use of the judicial injunction. In a recent interview Hon. Charles M. Start, chief justice of the state of Minnesota, regarding the enlarged scheme of government by injunction as exemplified in the case of the Pennsylvania strikers, said:

"I have never known of a case where the court has given such a broad interpretation to its powers in this particular as in this instance. If the facts are as stated, it seems to me that it has gone too far.

"This government by injunction is a comparatively modern institution in this country, although this power vested in the court is older than the constitution, coming down to us from the old English law. To me it seems to be a dangerous tendency and one which should be guarded most carefully.

"It is taking away from the citizen the right of a trial by jury, and is at any time liable to lead to tyranny; and judicial tyranny is the worst in the world, because there is no appeal from it.

"I cannot now recollect any case where the courts have gone to such length in the use of power of the injunction as this.

"There is no parallel between the circumstances here and those of the Heba rebellion in Chicago. Debs and his followers were simply inciting to riot and actually engaged in trespass and other unlawful acts.

"In this instance the court appears to have intervened to prevent the miners assembling and marching in the public ways. It looks as though the courts had been too anxious to further the interest of the corporations.

"In Pennsylvania the corporations exert a strong influence in the community, and it is not at all unlikely that that influence often extends to the bench and makes it possible for them to obtain from the courts what in other states or communities might be denied.

"This, doubtless, explains why such an unusual order was granted in this instance."

Mayor Graham of Lincoln issued a proclamation requesting the citizens of Lincoln to meet Monday and Tuesday, September 20 and 21 for cleaning lawns, streets and alleys and repairing sidewalks, preparatory to receiving the 25,000 delegates to the national irrigation congress and delegates to other important conventions to be held in Lincoln during the next few weeks.

Just try a 10c box of Cascarets, the fastest liver and bowel regulator ever made.

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The inexcusable and persistent blindness, the supine and utter indifference of an intelligent people to their own interests, as shown by the routine and perfunctory exercise of the elective franchise is to me one of the greatest marvels of the present century. Organization and money are the two factors that control absolutely the direction of public affairs. Men cannot acquire great wealth in a few years by legitimate means; but by illegitimate means such result is possible. To attain their object the business politicians make illegitimate means legitimate. In other words being gentlemen and trying to acquire wealth by robbery, they choose to effect such transformations as will enable them to rob according to the forms of law. Hence they fill the public places with their trucking servants under the magic touch of whose delicate fingers corporate largess becomes legalized and moral wrong is transmuted into legal right.

Two branches of the state government are now, and the third heretofore has been, absolutely under the domination of corporate power which ruled it as completely with a rod of iron as ever Robespierre ruled France. If any official in high place proves true to the people and loyal to his trust, he is quickly marked as a victim for the political guillotine. His official career is ended. The gods love him and he dies young.

The corporations need the courts because, to paraphrase the Scotch adage, in order to know what the law is they must know the judges who administer it. A friendly judiciary, ever ready to nullify verdicts, and by construction, unenacted statutes enacted to control and regulate corporate capacity, is among the most valuable agencies employed by the business politicians for their own enrichment. Four years ago it was known that Justice Maxwell's fidelity to the people of the state had rendered him ob-

noxious to the railroad interests which loudly clamored for his official head. For once, however, the people were aroused from their habitual lethargy and at their county conventions instructed their delegates to resist the railroad demand and vote for Maxwell. As a result of this spasmodic interest in public affairs Justice Maxwell was saved and the corporation purpose temporarily thwarted. M. B. Reese, one of the bravest, purest, and ablest judges that ever sat on any bench, had acted with Maxwell and making a majority of the highest court had stood like a wall of iron between the people and corporate aggression. Under the court so constituted the first measure of relief from the railroads in the way of reduction of freight rates was obtained; the ancient system of discrimination against unfriendly communities was checked; the wholesale removal of railroad causes to the federal court was put under an effectual quietus. For these and other acts of official fidelity, Judge Reese was, by corporate decree, sentenced to political death. The county conventions were held and the delegates to the state convention were chosen in the usual way. The majority of the delegates were good men and true; the minority were super servicable railroad understrappers. The good men yawned languidly and counted the contents of the expense and loss of sleep incident to a trip to the city of Hastings. The understrappers looked forward with pleasure to a free ride and a night of revelry luxuriating in the smiles of corporation lordlings. So when the state convention met, the understrappers were there and the proxies of the good men were voted for the railroad candidate for judge who was duly nominated and easily elected, and Platte county did its full share toward this deplorable consummation both in the convention and at the polls. The value of the political power that proceeds from the people and which is so influential in controlling their destiny, is curiously underestimated by them. It does not create wealth it is true, but it is a wonderful potential factor in its distribution. When wealth is created it declares the dividend and gives to each according to the determination of the persons in possession of the power. Wherever power touches the interests of monopoly it is in the hands of monopoly's servants and wielded for monopoly's good. It is a safe generalization to say that the men who fill the high public places to-day are only nominally the servants of the people. Of course the people nominated and elected them and shouted themselves hoarse in the glorification of the event; but it is not to be doubted that the representatives of special interests inspired the nomination and by appropriate means, open or secret, caused their ratification at the polls.

We misjudge human nature if we expect that the men who owe their official existence and tenure of place to corporate influence will not serve their benefactors well. We should know, too, that political bondmen who would be free must themselves, strike the blow. Political power can be easily placed and kept in impartial hands if people will act upon the idea that politics is a business that vitally touches their private affairs. If it is not contemptuous in me to give advice, I want to say to the individual voter that God in the plenitude of His gifts has not bestowed upon man a nobler attribute than moral courage and that there is nowhere a finer field for its display than where would like to say, be independent, but the battle of politics rages fiercest. Be brave, be self-reliant, do your own thinking, do your own voting, cease the blind and senseless worship of party leaders. They are not often inspired nor not always honest, and 'tis said they sometimes have axes that are dull, and palms that itch, and finger flexures that doth move to free. Go to the conventions as a matter of business, take your own ideas with you and stand by them as long as you believe them to be right. You may not do as well as some others, you may not have the experience and self-confidence that others possess, but you can act up to the full measure of the powers with which heaven and opportunity have endowed you. If you are chosen as a delegate, accept the trust and faithfully execute it, or decline the honor on the spot. In short, when politics is in season, give it your attention as a matter of business and the political power that is now perverted into an engine of oppression and wrong will soon become a goddess of justice, whose unaltering scales will measure with the precision of absolute truth the share of each in the bounty of the earth and in the creations of the brain and hands of men."

Two Recruits.

In a spirit of utmost friendliness we wish to comment upon the fact that two among the greatest living democrats have recently openly espoused the one-time "populist vagary" of government and municipal ownership of public utilities. The democrats have been since last November inarticulate save for an occasional cry for Bryan or free silver. These two remarks are good, any, more, excellent, but there are among the thinking people those who venture to hint that relief for this country will never be obtained by either alone or both, and who even go so far as to suggest that such utterances from frequent repetition has acquired a parrot-like quality that nullifies against its usefulness. No when Altgeld and Overmeyer vary the monotony by crying out with their tongue and pen that other matters must be taken up by the new democracy, it falls on our ears like the morning song of a mocking bird across a road from whence only dreary croakings have all night resounded.

P. H. R.