SHOULD THE STATE CONTROL?

An Interesting Discussion Upon the G.vernmen'al Gwaership of the Telegraph.

IDEAS OF EMINENT ELECTRICIANS.

What the Exponents and Antagonists of the Question said at the Recent Meeting of the New York Electrical Club.

The address delivered by Mr. E. Rosewater on "Postal Telegraphs of Europe," before the New York Electric club, was followed by a discussion of government telegraphs, participated in by several men of great promineuce in the electrical field.

The first publication of this discussion appeared in the New York Electrical Review of December 12 as written from the verbatim notes of the club stenographer. This discussion throws fully as much fight on the postal telegraph question as did the address, and will be found very instructive by all parties who may be interested in the subject. Following is the debate. Mr. Rosewater said:

Before concluding, I want to say that in advocating the transformation of our system of telegraph to the postal system I have no personal interest whatever beyond that of a citizen of the United States. I have no grievance against any telegraph official. I am on the very best of terms with all the Western Union officials so far as I know, and with the Postal telegraph officials, so far as I know. I have always been on good terms with them. The paper, of which I own the greater part is a member of the Associated Press. We have leased wires and we pay the Western Union, probably, from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year for special service; so that I have no grievance whatever, personal or political. I have nothing to redress. But for more than twenty-five years I have been convinced that sooner or later the government, as a matter of military necessity, and as a matter of commercial necessity, and in the interest of the social intercourse of the common people the United States, must own telegraph and operate and this conclusion all disinterested parties must reach when they examine impartially the figures and the records that are presented by the reports of the Western Union Telegraph company and other com panies of this country, and the reports that

bave been made abroad by the different gov. ernmental postal telegraph officials. There is no doubt whatever that our wire system is enormously overloaded. We have more wires than we need and we have them in the wrong place, and we do not serve one-half the people with telegraphic facilities that ought to have them and at a lower price than they now are; and we cannot lower the prices so long as the present system prevails. Competition is always followed by combinations and one company springs up and declares, like all the newspapers that spring up, that they are here to stay, but in a short time they are swallowed by the great American anaconds. I do not blame the anaconda for swallowing them. They are not very desirable morsels, As a matter of fact, they have congested the anaconda very badly. (Laughter.) But it is one of those laws of necessity. Now, how much longer is this to continue? The present telegraphic system of this country is stocked for about \$100,000,000, a little more than that. Upon that the people of the United States, the patrons of these telegraphs. are paving, independent of the excessive cost of maintaining and operating, \$5,000,000 or more as dividends. Now, \$6,000,000 on the British basis, or upon the basis that we can establish, for our credit is just as goed as that of Great Britain, represents a capitalization of \$200,000,000, and we could better afford today to pay \$200,000,000 for the Amer. ican telegraph systems, and wipe them out of existence and place them under the control of the government, than we can to continue this system and keep on, like a snow ball, colling and rolling and enlarging, and making it utterly unpossible in the future to deal with the problem that must sooner or later meet us again-I speak of the problem of handling telegraph dispatches during time of war. It is all well in time of peace. But those who have been where I was during the rebeliion realize, perhaps as fully as anyone can, that a government that does not control the arteries of communication and the system which is equivalent to the nervous system of the body, cannot possibly sustain itself in time of war without serious disaster and without an enormous increase of expense and a prolongation of the war costing millions of dollars and many hundreds and thousands of lives. I have said it and I can repeat it tonight, that I am fully convuced, if the government of the United States had owned the wires at the outbreak of the rebellion in 1861, the war would not have based on the converse of the rebellion.

before, and I would be pleased to hear from those who differ with me on this question. I thank you very much for your kind atten-(Applause) The chairman (Mr. Erestus Wiman)-I am sure the club is very much indebted to Mr. Rosewater for the very admirable address that he has presented, and I am delighted to see tonight so many practical telegraphers and electrical men in the room talk on this subject. It does not become me, as the presiding officer, to criticize in any degree the very excellent address that has been pre-sented, especially as being in the position of a director of the great American anaconda he has spoken of and as president of one of the little annexes away off in the northwestern iand. But I cannot take my seat without ex-pressing a sense of surprise and disappointment that the arguments in favor of a gov ernment telegraph are so few and so imma-ture in the mind of the gentleman who has read the address. It seems that the pneu-matic system of London is the strongest slaim for government telegraphy. I cannot siaim for government telegraphy. I cannot imagine that we cannot have the pneumatic system in Now York, Boston and Philadelphia, and even Omaha, as complete as they have it in London, if we want to, and why it is necessary that we should have a government control for that is beyond my comprehension. For the present moment the single argument in favor of the postal 'lelegraph system of a in favor of the postal 'telegraph system of a governmental character is the pneumatic sys-tem in London. There are many other points in the address, however, that it is not now necessary to go into. But there is just one l would like to mention, and that is the revelation again of the fact that the government were fools enough to refuse for \$100,000 the stupendous means of instantaneous com munication that now throbs through this country. If they were fools enough at that day to refuse that great gift for that small sum, what sense has the government since got that it will not be as foolish again under got that it will not be as foolish again under similar circumstances? [Applause, I am yery much disappointed, I am almost sorry that my friend has given us so much information and so little argument. I confess I do not see one single thing on which a thread of an argument can rest in favor of government telegraphy, accept it be that the business of the news-papers is all sent to the intelligence office in papers is all sent to the intelligence office in London. Now, at the time of an election, when Boss Platt is on one side of the road and Boss Croker on the other, and all the in-formation for the newspapers is sent to the intelligence office, I should be very sorry to be a director in the Western Union under such circumstances, because it would seem to me if we did not have the informa-tion to suit Boss Platt he would dismiss us all the next morning, or if it did not suit Mr. Croker he would dismiss us the next morning. The conditions that prevail on the other side are so entirely dif-ferent. The principles of self-government are so developed here that every man is a

overeign, himself and there is no relation at

would not have lasted more than two years. But I cannot digress in this way now, and I

will leave it to other gentlemen, for I would like to have this matter thoroughly discussed. There are two sides to it, as has been said

what would occur in England or Germany or Austria, and what would occur in New York. I do not see, in all the information our friend has given us about the lowest rates and splendid service they render. what protection they would have if the doc-trine which underlies our government, namely, to the victor belongs the spoils, pre-vails in telegraphy as it does in postoffices and every other part of our government sys-

tt has always been a matter of surprise to me that those who say that the government should go into any business should want to have it go into electricity. It seems to me it would be better to go into oil. If the gov-ernment wants to do the people good and ex-ercise paternalism over them, oil would be very much more adapted to its purpose. The objection against the present system of tele-graphy is that it is a monopoly. It is not nearly the monopoly that oil is. There is a great deal more monopoly today in the great deal more monopoly today in the Standard Oil company than there is in the Western Union company. There is only one oil company and there are forty telegraph companies. A man can go to Wall street and buy a share at about 80 or 83 in the Western Inion company. To save his soul ne can not buy a share in the Standard Oil company. It is a fact that not 3 per cent of the population of the United States use the telegraph; while I believe 97 per cent use oil. In England, it is said, that nearly every post office has a telegraph, and if in America overy post office were to have a telegraph, the deficiency, with our 60,000 post-offices, would be so great that the entire surplus, with which we are so much burdened just now, notwithstanding the great ension system, would be entirely obliterated. I marvel what would have become of this country if the government had acquired the country if the government had acquired the telegraph. Compare it with the navy, until the last three years, until Mr. Whitney, a good democrat, got hold of it, who was succeeded by Mr. Tracy, a good republican. What has been the expenditure on the navy since Mr. More was refused his \$100,000 to Millions and millions; and yet we did not have a craft on which we could place the slightest reliance. Look at the War department, the most complete that we have and the least influenced by political considerathe least influenced by political consideration. Go to Staten Island and to Governor's Island and look at the miserable system of detense that there is. See a great War debarment and a great Navy department spending millions and millions of dollars and yet remaining in a most ineffi-cient condition. I marvel what would have happened to this country if the means of instantaneous com-munication over its broad expanse were in the hands of Mr. Wanamaker, who is a good man for the bargain counter. I am sure, but who might not succeed beyond that. I marvel at the fact that such a thorough going man as my good friend Rosewater should for a moment stand up and argue in favor of a government telegraph. I feel sorry, in a certain sease, that my friend has not given a better argument. Still, at the same time, feel sure that my good friend Mr. Foote, whom I will call upon, will give us something on the other side.

Mr. Allen F. Foote-I think that Mr. Rose

water and Mr. Wiman have both lost sight of the fact that whoever operates the telegraph. whether it is done under the ownership of a corporation or under governmental ownership, must employ people to do the work. Those people, in this country, are bound to be politicians. We have politics on both sides operating the telegraph and there has never been any complaint from either political party that they were badly treated under the present system; but how they would get along under government ownership I do not know. Mr. Rosewater closed nis paper with the statement that it was necessary for the safety of this country that the government should own the telegraph. We have supposed that it was necessary for the safety of this country that the government should own its army. When the civil war broke out in 1861, the mon who were loyal handled the telegraph keys loyally. The men who were disloyal did the other thing. We had in our government men who we educated at West Point, and one of them became president of the southern confederacy. The gov-ernment owned West Point, and owns it yet, If government ownership were a security against disloyalty there should have been no disloyal men in the southern army who were educated at West Point. Will Mr. Rosewater say to this audience or to his association of Old Time Telegraphers or to the Military Telegrapher's association, that the service was not safe in their hands during the war! Was not that service done well and loyally? Mr. Rosewater paid a com-pliment to the operators in America by saying that one operator in America would do about twice the work that an operator in England would do—two to one. My observation of the way clerks work in the city of Washington is, that the clerks in your officesin your private business do twice the work that the cierks in Washington do—two to one. I do not see in that any reason why the government should own the telegraph (Applause.) I understood Mr. Rosewater to say that the countries in Europe where the government owns the telegraph are as quick to take up inventions and utilize them as they are in this country. I understood him to say, also, that in three out of four countries that he visited, messages were received by the recording Morse instrument; that the only exception was England, where they worked by sound. I may have misunderstood, but that is the way I understood him. I am somewhat disappointed that Mr. Rose water told us so much about the detail— the mechanism of the telegraph—and so little of the argument of government own-ership. I am not clear now, from what he has stated, whether he means to advocate gov-ernment ownership or government control. There is quite a broad difference between the Not knowing what Mr. Rosewater was to say this evening, I took a reported interview with him, which appears in the Elec

We are under the impression that a postal telegraph system means an office at each postoffice. That is the impression given out. We find that is not the case in England, according to the pest statistics I can get. In England, in 1869, there were 17,829 postoffices and 7,021 telegraph offices, being one tele-graph office for every two and one-half postoffices. In the United States for 1891, I believe these statistics are from Dostoffices. In the United States for 1891, I believe these statistics are from the World Almanac, there are 66,000 postoffices and 25,591 telegraph offices, being one telegraph office for every 2 1-12 postoffices, so that the percentage of telegraph offices to postoffices in this country is a little greater than it is in England. In England the increase in the number of tele graph offices for two years from 1887 to 1889 was 517. There were 6,514 offices in 1887 and 7,031 in 1889. In the United States the increase for the same time was 3.116, the offices being in 1887, 15,876, and in 1889, 18,992. The increase for England on 6,314 offices is but s per cent, while the increase for the United States on 15,876 offices is about 20 per cent. The increase for the United States, 3,116 offices, on that number of offices in England, is nearly 48 per cent, against the English in-crease of but 8 per cent. Mr. Rosewater did say that we had too many wires here and that the country was doing about one-balf the business it ought to do. We may look to the explanation of that in this little detailed statement of telegrah offices per population. In England, taking the census of ISSI, and adding 10 per cent to bring it up to date, there is one office for every 5,500 pepulation. In the United States, there is one office for every 3,400 population. I wonder why Mr. Rosewater did not stay in England and get the people to extend the benefits of the telegraph, so that the people might be served in equal proportion to the United States. The size of the country has something to do with the problem—telegraph offices to England. In England there is one office to 17.27 square In the United States there is one office to 131 square miles. The population to the square mile has something to do with it. In England there are 320 to one square mile. In the United States there are 17.93 to one

The area and population to telegraph of-ices compares as follows: England, area, 17.27 square miles; popula-United States, area, 131 square miles; pop-

lation, 2,349. A short time ago it became my duty to make a schedule for correcting statistics of telegraph companies for the eleventh census of the United States. In a circular report which I called for from the companies they wanted to enter commercial messages, press messages, etc. I said no; what I want is a report that will show what the farmer and the wage workers of this country are paying for the service you are rendering in comparison with what the same class of people pay for the service rendered them by governments that own and operate the telegraph system in foreign countries. For this reason I would admit to the report full rate night rate and the money transfer messages only, and at the rate now being paid over the country by anyone who may have occasion to use the telegraph. I have made up the figures on 8,355 full rate mes-sages, 614 night rate messages and six money all as to the transmission of information, and aspecially as to the press reports between

transfer messages. I find that these messages contained 195,014 words, counting all words in the address, body and signature of the message, making an average of 21.82 words per message. The reason for counting the words in this way is that the governments owning and operating a telegraph system count and charge for every word transmitted. The English rate would be 21 cents per message. The toils paid for these messages in the United States average 414 cents. So that on the face of the showing thus far made it would appear that the rate in this country is double that of England. I find, however, that the average mileage of those messages was 540 miles, and the average distance from New York to the places to which they were sent is 603 miles. On an account of distance the office in transmitting 8,978 messages repeated over 11,000 message in the same period of time. As the biggest distance in England is not over 600 miles it is reasonable to assume that the average mileage of 8,078 messages sent out from London will not exceed one-half the average milenge of the messages sent out from New York. Therefore, messages from New York averaging 540 miles at 414 cents are as cheap as messages from London averaging one-half the distance at 21 cents each. This, however, is not the whole story. Messages were sent at the rate given in any direction desired from New York. England is not large enough to make a comparison with the United States. We are compelled to take Europe for such a purpose. If the citizen of London wishes to send his messages 500 or 600 miles from London he must go into other countries, as the American citizen goes from state to state. Let this be tried and then make a comparision of European rates with United States rates.

The rates in New York on 8,978 messages averaging 21.82 words and 540 miles was 414 ceats. The rate from London for a sage of 21.82 words to Sweden is \$1.74. United States rate for the same distance 414 cents. To Norway, \$1.52. United States rate for the same distance 41¼ cents. To Germany, \$1.30, against 41¼ cents. To Austria, \$1.52 against 41¼. To Corisca, 87 cents, against 41¼. To Spain, \$1.74,

cents, againse against 414.

I suppose this is plain why so many people come to this country. It must be to enjoy the privilege of telegraphing a long distance at the low price charged by our grinding monopoly. (Applause and laughter.) I do not know whether Mr. Rosewater can be said to be the representative of the postmaster general or not; but I do know that we can judge of the kind of advice that the postmaster general has received on telegraph matters by his official utterances. Here is a government circular dated June 15, 1891, which says, flxing the rate for government messages, ten words, exclusive of place from, date, address and signature, 10 cents to all distances, 400 miles. As the message actually counts twenty words, that is 10 cents for twenty words for 400 miles. Half a cent a word for additional words. Half a cent for each word in the body. I would like to have Mr. Rosewater state, if he would, If he believes that a charge of one-half a cent a word will pay the expense of doing the ousiness over a distance of 400 miles. On June 29, 1889, the postmaster general issued an order fixing the rate at 1 mill a word, irrespectively, for all messages, day and night. If I mill a word for all dis-tances day and night was a fair. honest compensation in 1889, I would like to know what has increased the cost of telegraph service to bring it up to half a cent a

There is one point in this Review article that I want to refer to, and Mr. Rosewater can easily sot himself right if he is wrongly reported. He says here: "I would buy out all the telegraph lines in America and then advertise for proposals, and have them operated by private companies under the controt of the government, fixing the rates and requiring them to report their earnings from time to time to the government. When the receipts exceeded 10 per cent upon the in-vested capital, their investment being rather small, I should lisist upon their reducing the rate." I suppose he meant dividends instead of receipts. To give an idea of what Mr. Rosewater considers a small capital, he is reported here as saying that the govern-ment at the time, that is February 27, 1866. when the government turned over its lines to the private companies—the government at that time owned 41,211 miles of land line and 178 miles of submarine cable. I understand that to mean miles of wire instead of miles of line. He is reported to have said that the property was worth \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000. Was it miles of line or m iles of

Mr. Rosewater-I presume it is miles of

Mr. Foote-Assuming that Mr. Resewater means miles of wire and that he will prob-ably agree that the true valuation would be he average between his extremes, the statement may be construed to mean that the government owned 14,389 miles of wire worth \$2,500,000, or about \$174 per mile. At this rate the present valuation of the combined oileage of the Western Union and Postal Felegraph-Cable companies is \$138,332,834. if the military telegraph lines were worth \$174 a mile, it is fair to presume that the lines that are working now commercially are worth as much. On that computation, however, the capitalization of these com-panies does not begin to reach the values given to it by Mr. Rosewater. That may be where the watered stock is to come in. I am of opinion that if Mr. Rosewater can induce the government so to fix rates that those companies can carn 10 per cent on this valuation, that they will give him an exclusive contract to attend to their stock watering nereafter.

Government ownership is advocated by Mr. Rosewater as a principle. In my opinion the principle is radically wrong. It is op-posed, as I understand the matter, to the inderlying fundamental laws that govern all human actions. When you separate a man from any direct interest in his work or any hope of having a direct interest in his work, you separate that man from the most active element that can induce him to be thrifty, saving, progressive, observing and careful in everything he does. I do not suppose that any of you gentlemen will admit for one mo-ment that there has ever been a work undertaken by government that has been executed at anything like the cost it could be done for by private parties. A gentleman with whom I was conversing in Boston not long ago—a very competent engineer—observing the work of government buildings, of forts and arseinis, etc., told me that he did not believe that, with two or three exceptions in these United States, there had been one single instance where a government building had been put up at anything like the cost it could have been put up for by private parties. He estimated that the excessive cost was at least 100 per cent. In other words, cost the government twice as much to do he work as it would private parties. Assum ng, for the sake of argument, that the capitalization of these telegraph companies could be agreed upon—they have accepted a law passed by congress in 1866 which defines the way in which the government can acquire possession of the telegraph companies. If that were to be carried into operation, the capitalization agreed upon and the interest on the capital figured at the same rate that on the capital figured at the same rate that
the government pays on its bonds, the capitalization question would be out of the way.
Then comes the question of maintenance and operating expenses. I do
not think any one will suppose for
an instance that those expenses, operating
under government control in this country,
would come anywhere within the limits that
they do under private management. I do they do under private management. I do not think that 20 per cent difference would be any too large a margin to allow for that. Therefore, I assume that the telegraphs of this country, operated under private man-agement, doing a business of the same rate that it would cost the government to do the business, could pay at least a 10 per cent dividend, and at the same time be giving the service at what the ordinary politician calls cost, which is what it would cost the govern-

The absence of statistics in all these details is one of the weak points in the argument. When we do not have statistics which both sides can agree upon as being true and accurate, we cannot follow our argument through its legitimate course. I have under my hands the work of ottaining these statistics from the telegraph companies in the United States. That work will be accomplished in the course of time, provided that the government will furnish the funds to do the work. We are now practically at a standstill. Those of you who want to have the statistics made up in that way will have to assist in getting the appropriation. (Ap-

Mr. Insuli: On hearing our friend, Mr. Wiman talk of commercial union, I never have been able to make up my mind whether he talked as a resident of the United States with large interests here or as subject of the queen as I believe he is today. But when he gets up here to talk to us on the question of government control of telegraphs, there is not the slightest doubt from whence he draws his experience. If he is afraid of Mr. Boss Platt at one time having control of our

telegraph system and using it for his own particular interest, and of Tammany politicians having control of it another time, he evidently is drawing upon the experience of his friends and fellow subjects in Canada, where we find his of trouble with the tories in the Decision and with the liberals in the Dominion and with the liberals in

So far as Mr. Foote's remarks are con-

cerned, when he first addressed you, he re-ferred to the treatment of inventors, I think. There is one thing that those of us who go to the other side, must have noticed, that whilst our telegraph companies here and our telephone companies here were arguing as to the impossibility of placing their wires underground, that that same work had been done in London by the postal telegraph department for years past, and it would seem from that that the telegraph companies here con-sider not so much public convenience as their own pockets. The question of government own pockets. The question of government control of anything, I presume, depends upon the particular principle of government that we should have the greatest possible good to the greatest number. Does it seem reasonable that the proneer who goes to the northwest, I will take Mr. Wiman's side of the line, and starts to develop a country, or if he wishes to communicate with his base of supplies, should be taxed to the ex-tent, not of 12 cents for twenty words, but of 13 cents for a single word! Can that lead to the rapid development of any new country! If it is reasonable that the man living in the Rocky mountains snall have to pay \$1 for ten words and be without the advantage of a night rate, why is it not reasonable that the same man, if he requires the protection of our military, shall pay much higher rates of taxes than the people living in a city like New York! The great advantage of the government administration of telegraphs, more especially in England, where I have had some experience, is that if you are in the smallest village where there is transmitted but one message a day, you may exactly the same rate as you would in a larger city, and the business man has the same op-portunity there to develop his business that the man has who lives in a larger center of population. I presume that the expenses of the business are proportionately larger in a small place than they are in a large one. Those of us who run small businesses find that the expenses of business are greater under those circumstances. Does it seem reasonable that the merchant should be taxed to a much far greater extent than the man living in that smaller town! I think you will find the tendency of all governments is to take control of all matters where a business is built up and vested interests acquired, by taking advantage, not of any private rights, but of public rights. The congress of the United States seems to have recognized that state of affairs so far as the rallways are concerned and they have taken control to a greater or less extent, according to the shrewdness of rail-road officials, of rates of transportation and of passenger rates. I cannot see why the same control cannot be taken of the telegraph companies with advantage to the publie at large. Whether that control is exer-cised by direct ownership or by some such control as we have in the case of the interstate commerce law whatever way it is done, I think it would certainly be of advantage to those of us who have to use telegraph facilities for the purpose of running our business. Mr. Foote drew attention to some comparative figures as to telegraph offices; but he did not mention that in a small place of 5,000 or 10,000 inhabitants, owing to the exigencies of competition, you will find not only a Western Union office, but also a Postal office, and, a short time ago, a Balti-more & Ohio office. Now such a thing is not at all a necessity; one office could do the business just as well as three, and, therefore, it is not fair to take those comparative figures. In a country like the United States, where private ownership is the rule in telegraph business, to compare that with a country like Great Britain, where you have gov-ernment ownership, and, consequently, the necessity for competitive offices removed, the comparison is not fair. He also made a comparison between the postoffices and the telegraph offices. But if he were acquainted with the English postal system, and were sware of the fact that altem, and were aware of the fact that almost at every strict corner you will find a postoffice. I do not think that he would have used these figures. It would be absolutely impracticable and absolutely unnecessary, I think to have a telegraph office wherever there is a postoffice. I have lived in New York a good many years, and I have often had a great deal of trouble in fluding postoffices. An absolute stranger never

when you look into the details of the business n the two countries.
On the question of the work done by operators in this country and operators in England, I think such of our members present as are posted on European telegraph service will tell you that the atmospheric conditions have something to do with that. I think it is a question of rapidity of operating; but I am respassing on a subject that I am not at all

Mr. Forte made show some inconsistencies,

but I think some of the comparisons

posted upon. Mr. Rosewater: The presiding officer of this club has seen fit to pour oil upon the troubled waters here and pour it on very promiscuously, for the amusement of the au-dience; but I do not think it necessary for me to discuss the oil question in connection with postal telegraphy. He said here that I had brought forth no argument in favor of the postal telegraph, and had not supported my statement with figures sufficient to show whether or not the British and foreign telegraphs were equal in number to postoffices, whether we wanted a postoffice at every telegraph station, and whether we proposed to increase the civil service by an enormous list. Now, I happen to have with me a few figures that I made up today from the official book that I have here, made up really in the German language by the Austrian gov-ernment, giving a full account of all Euro-pean postal facilities and telegraph facilites, and I find this to be the fact that in Great Britain the number of postollices, by he last report of the postmaster general was 8,359, the number of telegraph stations 7,627. That is for the year 1889. I have a report with estimates for 1892. They have

only 5,912 postal telegraph offices and 1,715 railroad telegraph offices in Great Britain. France is the only country in Europ probably, and perhaps in the world, that has more telegraph offices than postoffices. She has 7,020 postoffices and 9,498 telegraph offices, of which 6,086 are postal and 3,412 are railroad. Austria has 18,017 postoffices and 10,806

elegraph officer, of which 5,311 are postal and 5,495 are rattroad.

Germany has the largest postal telegraph system in Europe, She has 21,212 post-offices and 16,408 telegraph offices, of which 12,431 are postal and 3,977 railroad.

Now, computing the whole thing, what de we see! In all these four great countries the total number of postoffices is 64,614, and the number of telegraph stations 44,339. You notice that there are nearly two-thirds as many telegraph stations as postoffices, and

notwithstanding my friend's statistics | would venture to say that he is entirely mis-taken, unless Br. Green gave wrong figures to the government last winter. Accord ing to Dr. Green there are some 18,600 telegraph stations in America, including all the railroads, and to the best of my knowledge the number of postoffices is about 60,000 or 61,000. Now, we have over 60,000 postoffices and only 18,600 and some odd telegraph offices, and of these you find that the telegraph companies have got less than 5,000 All the telegraph companies have got less than 5,000 telegraph offices and the balance are all railroad affices. Now, just compare those countries and see what an absurdity. This is a striking argument, it seems to me, in favor of postal telgraphy, because it enables the people in the smaller towns and villages to get the facilities of the telegraph, and while my friend here says that there are only a few clod-hoppers out in the west that

are entirely cut off, it seems to me that every citizen of the United States is as good as every other citizen, and it doesn't matter whether he is on a farm or in a work shep. The object of the postal system is to facilitate the inter-communication of intelligence. If that had been established, no matter what disparaging statements have been made here today as regards the mismeascement of different branches of the mismanagement of different branches of the government, I defy any man here to come forward and show where there is a better

ept that challenge with very great pleas-

The Chairman-Mr. Bryan, we will give

The Chairman—Mr. Bryan, we will give you an opportunity as soon as Mr. Rosewater has finished.

Mr. Rosewater: If you can show that the millions and milhons of letters and the vast quantities of newspapers that are translitted all over the United States for istances covering something like 160,000 miles of railway, and traversing these rail roads at every hour of the day all over the United States, handled in every railway mail car and thrown off by fast mail trains, nandled on the steamships as I have seen right bere—there were 100,000 letters handled by the American postal clers, who was on the steamship and who assorted them be-tween Hamburg and New York and placed them in packages going all over the United States, including Omaha if you please, and every other town. I say that the postal system of the United States is admirably managed, whether Mr. Wanamaker meas-ures his letters by the yard or weighs them by the pound. I have not been paid by the postoffice department and have not been authorized to speak for it, but I whi say for Mr. Wanamaker, and I have been acquainted with every postmaster general from the days of Creswell down to today, that he is the most efficient man in the department and has more business in him than any other man that was ever in it.

Mr. Foote has called me to task here about question, and it is a very serious one, is his opinion at least, as to what the value was of the telegraph lines turned over to the various companies by the government after the war. It is true that I charged at Washing-ton last winter, before the congressional committee, that after the war, without any com-pensation whatever, 15,000 miles of wire and mething like 160 or 200 miles of cable and all the instruments and machinery and all the appliances that had been used in the military telegraph service, were turned over to the companies without a dollar, and I have the audacity to say that they were worth about \$2,000,000. Well, I meant \$2,000,000 at the time they were turned over, when gold was worth about 180 cents and everything was worth about 150 cents and everything was proportionately high. But, after all, it is very remarkable that the gentlemen should venture to the defense of this peculiar transaction. It was certainly a transaction that requires explanation. It was a transaction that I never have been able to explain to myself. When I went to investigate it in the quartermaster general's office, I thought that the govern-ment had sold out those things, as I stated then, as old junk, at so much a pound for the wire and so much per cord for the poles. But, as a matter of fact, the government actually turned it all over for nothing at the instance of the gentlemen who were managing the telegraph companies. Now we have been given here a promiscuous line of figures. I do not think it is necessary for me

o repeat the telegraph tariffs abroad. I expect to go before the congressional mmittee, probably this winter some time. these figures might perhaps be more appreciated than they would be right here tonight. But I just want to call attention to a few little items. For instance, in 1880, the Western Union had a capital and a debt of \$46, 000,000, and now it has just \$98,250,000. The consolidations that have taken place in ten years have almost duplicated the entire cap

tal and debt. Mr. S. Bryan of Washington, spoke at length of the defects in our postal system, claiming that it was the worst in the world with the exception of a few of the Latin countries. A letter posted at Twenty-third street, New York, at 7 p. m., would not reach Washington and be delivered until 1 o'clock the next day. Mr. Bryan also favored Sunday delivery. He said the tele-graph service of England and France was not near so prompt as with us.

Mr. E. A. Leslie spoke of his acquaintance with Mr. Rosewater, and stated that under-lying all of Mr. Rosewater's arguments for postoffices. An absolute stranger never finds such trouble in London. I have no decided views on this subject one way or the a postal telegraph was the welfare of the tel-egraph operator. After tendering a vote of thanks to Mr. Rosewater, Chairman Wiman declared the meeting adjourned.

Mr. Foote has been at great pains to point out the exorbitant rates charged for dispatches from London to places in Siberia, Sweden and Noaway, but if he had taken down his telescope and looked a little nearer nome he might have discovered some excessive charges that cannot be pailiated or explained away. For instance, every steamship coming into New York basses by Fire island. A ten-word message announcing the arrival of the steamer is enarged \$1 and for every duplicate of this message delivered in the city of New York only thirty-five miles distant, \$1 is charged. And the steamship companies are forbidden to post announce ments of arrival of their steamers or to sup ply their patrons with the news. Would such an autocratic thing be submitted to in any place in Europe or Asia? The telegrams are the property of the people who pay for them. The telegraph company is simply a public carrier, just as the express companies are of letters and packages.

The opponents of postal telegraph cannot the proper than a package and packag

conceive a more glaring abuse of power than is constantly exercised by the managers of telegraph companies and for me, I should prefer to trust the control of the telegraph in the hands of the men who are held responsible by the people for the trust reposed in them, than to the men who recognize no re sponsibility excepting to the capitalists who operate telegraphs for the profit there is in them. [Applause,]

They had lots of wedding presents, but the nost precious was a box of Haller's Australian salve. She said thoughtfully, it's so nice for the little chaps on my hands. He said, we haven,t got any "little chaps" yet. She

said, Why! John, and John was squelched. Dr. Cullimore, oculist, Bee building.

A Pathetic Appeal. Somebody has been refusing to pay Brother Phaxton of the Jackson (Ga. Argus for a puff, for this is the way he

is nutting it now: "A doctor will sit down and write a prescription; time five minutes; paper and ink, i of a cent; and the patient pays \$1, \$5, \$10, as the case may be. A lawyer writes ten or twelve lines and gets from \$10 to \$50 from his client. An editor writes a half column puff for a man, pays a man 50 cents or \$1 for putting it in type, prints it on \$7 worth of paper, sends it to several thousand people and surprises the puffed man if he

makes any charges. Dr. Birney cures catarrh. Bee bdlg.

Millions in It. The population of China is now estimated at 350,000,000, which is almost equal to the entire population of Europe. The Chinese national debt is one of the smallest, amounting to only \$38,500,000.

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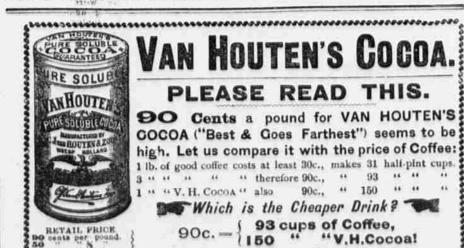
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