

ITS BENEFITS PROVEN

Superior Advantages of Government Control of the Telegraph.

FACTS FROM ENGLAND'S EXPERIENCE

Private Ownership Expensive and Crude in Comparison.

THE TENDENCY OF BRITISH JOURNALISM

Reports of Crimes and Divorce Cases Disliked by the People.

NOVELTIES ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN

Edwin Abbey's Success—Rider Haggard as a Farmer—A Peer in the Milk Business—Notes on Current Events Abroad.

LONDON, Feb. 9.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—The telegraph service of Great Britain is, undoubtedly, quicker, more reliable and cheaper than that of the United States. I make this statement after making proper allowance for the differences in distances. It costs 1 1/2 cents for twelve words and 1 cent for every additional word. This for Great Britain and Ireland—a uniform rate. It works admirably, as nearly all the postoffices are also telegraph offices. As a rule the people are civil and obliging, and the delivery of messages more prompt than with us. These postoffices, which include as a rule news stands and stationers' shops, are scattered all over the city, especially in London, and one is not trouble in getting post-office orders, postal notes, stamps, etc., as is too often the case in New York. Another great advantage of the British system is that there is no such thing as sending messages, "Collect." You can prepay an answer to a telegram, and the boy brings you up a blank with the telegram when an answer has been paid for. Again, if you write to any one and want a telegraphic reply, merely stamp a blank with six penny postage stamps affixed. This saves the trouble of transmitting money or imposing on a friend for reply. As managed by the English government, there can be no doubt of the wisdom of state control of the telegraph business. Indeed, when you consider the bustle before the government took it in charge and now, the old idea of private ownership seems expensive and crude.

SOME STRIKING FACTS.

The reports recently published by the British postoffice department on the commemoration of the first quarter-century of the telegraph service in England, should be studied with the greatest care by American statesmen and economists. I shall not attempt to even give a summary of these valuable data, because undoubtedly they were called over. Nevertheless, it would be well to bear in mind some of the most striking facts. On the 1st of January, 1864, the telegraph service in England was taken over by the government. At that time there were only 2,000 telegraph lines, and the number of messages sent was 79,000,000. In 1894, the number of telegraph lines had increased to 100,000, and the number of messages sent to 2,000,000,000. The number of offices had increased to 10,000, and the miles of wire had increased from 60,000 to 200,000—surely this indicates that the public is well and cheaply served. Financially, the telegraph service is a paying day business, but not the interest on the money invested. It is claimed, however, by such men as Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who ought to know, that the telegraph service is a business, one public service in both effect and honest—far more so than the government of some of the large cities. Why should statesmen hesitate to give the telegraph service to the government, which would do much to bring all parts of our vast domain together in still closer ties? A uniform telegraph service, at 25 cents per message, is no more, in this advanced day of electrical appliances, than a uniform 2-cent letter rate was adopted.

NEWSY ARTICLES.

In this connection I am tempted to say a few words about press rates for telegraphing in England. The rate for press dispatches is uniform, and is 10 cents per 100 words between 6 p. m. and 9 a. m., and an additional charge of 4 cents per 100 words is charged for each additional address to which the message is directed. Wires are working well during these hours to newspapers, as with us. I see no difficulty in the government taking charge of all this business. In all our large cities, the telegraph offices are equally divided from the press room up to the subscriber's and editor's offices. Democrats do good, honest work in making republican newspapers, and republicans do the same in the preparation of democratic newspapers. And so it always will be.

STATESMEN AND THEIR SPEECHES.

Speaking of telegraphic rates, we are brought to mind an interesting statement made here the other day in relation to the importance, perhaps I should say value, of certain public men to the several news agencies and associations. The manager of one of these associations declared that Mr. Gladstone's remuneration for his speeches is not over \$10,000 to that association. No one seems to take the grand old man's place. Press associations here have certain rules and regulations, and they are all on the list, as it were, some for "verbatim," some are "two column," some "one column," and some are "condensed," others a "stick full," and a few others whose utterances are not noticed except in local newspapers. Of the "verbatim" class, it is impossible to get a word of news, most in demand of the Big Four—Salisbury, Rosebery, Harcourt or Balfour. When some of the distinguished British statesmen are "verbatim," they are not asked to speak, they are politely informed by the Press association that they must make shorter speeches or be taken from the verbatim list. I am informed that Mr. Gladstone is a "stick full," and his speeches are not reported beyond a certain length, unless it is an occasion of supreme importance. This amount of talking will occupy about three columns of solid matter in a large daily—dreadful stuff, as a rule, to wade through. The only exception to all rules is Mr. Gladstone's. No pen-up-the-hill orator can do as well as Gladstone. Verbatim if two hours in length, and no papers ever complained—so say the representatives of the News Association.

TENDENCY OF BRITISH JOURNALISM.

Those who, like Mr. Dana, are editing newspapers for "sensible people" will be

glad to learn that in England there is nothing like the demand for reports of sensational murder trials that existed twenty-five years ago. This is in part due to the education of the masses, and in part due to the fact that newspapers nowadays aim at a higher level. The popularity of divorce trials, so these authorities say, varies with the districts. The people of some towns want long reports; others are satisfied with a short statement. Of course some notable exceptions still exist, as in London, where the British taste is improving. I think there has certainly been a decided improvement in the last ten years in the English newspapers.

DEATH AND DEBTS.

Those enterprising town boomers who sell you a lot on the installment plan and agree to give you a year to pay for it, may be a trifle from the London furniture dealers. I have just received a circular offering to install a house on the installment plan, with this important clause, printed in red ink: "If the hirer dies, the furniture becomes the property of the hirer, and he is bound to pay the further payment." It furthermore states that one article or a whole house of furniture can be supplied on the same system. If all tradesmen would supply articles in this way, death would not only be a happy issue from all our afflictions, but in the fullest sense, a liquidation of our last debts.

EDWIN ABBEY'S SUCCESS.

The little colony of Americans to be found here and there in London, with its pride and satisfaction at the enthusiastic reception given Mr. Edwin Abbey's superb paintings for the room of the Boston gallery, on the first day of their exhibition to the public in the Nineteenth Century gallery more than half the members of the Royal Academy and people of note in literature, science and art gathered to view them. The pictures, relating as they do to the Holy Grail, arouse more interest on account of the Arthurian legend given at the Lyceum theater. Of the research and labor entailed in the production of these works only a student of the history of the Boston gallery, through a whole library of literature, German, Pagan and Irish, and the myths connected with King Arthur. After choosing the dramatic incidents which would be the most successful in his purpose, he traveled all over Europe making rough oil studies and chapel in the south of France. Mr. Abbey was one of the few artists who have not been so severely finished by the major of the town as the rest of the artists. It was only through the intervention of the president of the Royal Academy that he was enabled to bring them away in peace. These decorations were given to the artist, who has long been recognized as the head of his profession in black and white—a branch of art, curiously enough, Englishmen do not seem to value. Mr. Abbey's power of winning friendship and his modesty as to his own ability that dispelled anything like jealousy or rancor among his competitors. I do not think Mr. Abbey has the least of the faults of Punch, in the shape of a bad pun, which is the next thing, I suppose, to being received at court. Says Punch, in comment on the artist's modesty, "The artist's faults are few, and when these are pointed out to the Anglo-American artist, he gaily replies, 'What's the odds as long as I'm Abbey.' What is the odds, as none but himself can be his parallel."

RIDER HAGGARD RAISING TURNIPS.

The picturesque author of "Solomon's Mines," "Jesse," and "She," of whom not so many years ago the English newspapers were talking as the latest literary sensation, now appears in the role of a Norfolk turnip grower. Mr. Haggard has taken to protection, bimetalism, and kindred topics. "To the Editor," in the London Times. Of course Mr. Rider Haggard admits these subjects are not his own, but he says that he would like to demolish you, about the only thing left to him to hit back at the editor who writes me to call at his department, which I did, and found much of interest, though the progress of telegraphy under government management in England can best be understood by the results of twenty-five years' practical experience. The increase in messages alone from 8,000,000, when three private companies ran the telegraph service, to 2,000,000,000 in 1894, tells its own story. That the number of offices has increased to 10,000, and the miles of wire have increased from 60,000 to 200,000—surely this indicates that the public is well and cheaply served. Financially, the telegraph service is a paying day business, but not the interest on the money invested. It is claimed, however, by such men as Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who ought to know, that the telegraph service is a business, one public service in both effect and honest—far more so than the government of some of the large cities. Why should statesmen hesitate to give the telegraph service to the government, which would do much to bring all parts of our vast domain together in still closer ties? A uniform telegraph service, at 25 cents per message, is no more, in this advanced day of electrical appliances, than a uniform 2-cent letter rate was adopted.

PLEASANT PICTURES.

In addition to this remedy, Mr. Haggard likewise puts forward the following: I would suggest, as a second remedy, that rates and taxes should be so arranged as to press equally upon real and personal property.

MY THIRD REMEDY.

My third remedy is that a heavier duty than is charged upon pure beer should be levied on the checks which are made of other materials than barley, malt and hops.

FOURTH REMEDY.

My fourth remedy is that butchers or dealers in life, who are paid a penalty from passing off foreign meat as English grown.

FIFTH REMEDY.

My fifth remedy is that, by appeal to their better feelings or other means, railway companies should be persuaded to cease from their present custom of carrying important baggage and parcels at rates that charge to the British farmer.

THOUGH MR. RIDER HAGGARD IS ENGAGED JUST NOW IN THE SOOTHING OCCUPATIONS OF CULTIVATING TURNIPS, HE IS WRITING A BANG DRUM DOMESTIC NOVEL FOR MR. ASTOR'S MAGAZINE, AND THE ROMANTIC IS NOT SOOKED OUT OF HIM. IF IT WERE HE WOULD KNOW THAT RAILWAY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MADE OF OTHER MATERIALS THAN BARLEY, MALT AND HOPS.

PERER IN THE MILK BUSINESS.

It would seem to be a good thing for a modest American citizen to purchase his milk of a real live member of the House of Peers, and in the case of the state of New Jersey, this is the case. It is not large to "his lordship," and to listen with profound attention to his lordship's representatives, dilating with coziness upon the quality of "his lordship's" milk, and the scrupulous care taken to insure the purity of his lordship's milk. Satisfactory as this must be to all householders with young children, it is still more gratifying to learn that this distinguished lord has recently discovered a new element, which, on account of its extraordinary heat nature, Lord Rayleigh has ventured to name argon. This discovery is regarded here as being as important in the domain of physics and chemistry as the discovery of Adams and Leverrier in astronomy. The discovery of a new element in the atmosphere in these days of scientific advancement will naturally be received with surprise and interest, and in a few weeks the scientific world will be commenting on the greatness and importance of the discovery. Meantime, those who live within the London district which Lord Rayleigh supplies with milk will have additional reasons for rejoicing. That one so brilliant in science should engage in such a practical business is a good sign of the times, and an additional safeguard of domestic health and comfort.

ROBERT P. PORTER.

Next May the Roman Catholics of Boston will celebrate the Golden Jubilee, or the fiftieth anniversary of the priesthood of Archbishop Williams.

CANNOT ANNUL THE CONTRACT

Attorney General Churchill's Opinion on the Penitentiary Muddle.

LEGISLATURE PRACTICALLY POWERLESS

Assignment to Dorgan Released Mosher's Bondsmen, Not Left the State Bond on Its Side—Methods to Secure Relief Are Uncertain.

LINCOLN, Feb. 16.—(Special.)—The special committee appointed by direction of the house to inquire into and report on the legal status of the prison contract entered into between the state of Nebraska and C. W. Mosher, and of which W. H. Dorgan now claims to be the owner, held its first session Friday afternoon, but beyond listening to the reading of the opinion of the attorney general the committee did nothing, reserving further action and discussion until the opinion could be printed.

Attorney General Churchill's opinion is lengthy, but necessarily so, as it reviews at length the history of the prison contract and its various phases. The opinion follows: "In answer to the request of your committee in regard to the contract of the state in the leasing of the penitentiary, penitentiary grounds, and convict labor, I beg leave to report: That I find that the Board of Public Lands and Buildings, created by the act of the legislature of 1887, under section 17 of the act establishing a Board of Public Lands and Buildings of the state of Nebraska, and defining their duties, approved February 13, 1877, found in the Session Acts of 1877, page 184, and in the Session Acts of 1878, page 184, the purchase of a tract of land within the Board of Public Lands and Buildings, on the 23rd day of September, 1877, leased the same to William H. B. Stout for the term of six years from the 1st day of October, 1877. This contract I find to be in compliance with the section of the statute above referred to. The legislature of 1879 passed an act extending the term of the contract for a period of six years from the 1st day of October, 1883, upon certain conditions named in the act, for which see section 1879, page 184, of the Session Acts of 1879, approved February 25, 1879. In 1883 the legislature, by an act approved February 27, 1883, passed an act extending the term of the contract to the 1st day of October, 1888, which to complete the 24th year of the contract, approved March 2, 1887, upon which it appears that the contract was executed a bond in the penal sum of \$100,000, which bond is hereto attached and marked exhibit A. The bond appears to have been approved by the Board of Public Lands and Buildings, which board was created by the act of the legislature of 1887, and which board was organized on the 1st day of October, 1887. It appears also from the contract now on file in the secretary of state's office that on the 1st day of February, 1892, the legislature, by an act approved March 2, 1892, extended the term of the contract to the 1st day of October, 1897, upon which it appears that the contract was executed a bond in the penal sum of \$100,000, which bond is hereto attached and marked exhibit B. The bond appears to have been approved by the Board of Public Lands and Buildings, which board was created by the act of the legislature of 1887, and which board was organized on the 1st day of October, 1887. It appears also from the contract now on file in the secretary of state's office that on the 1st day of February, 1892, the legislature, by an act approved March 2, 1892, extended the term of the contract to the 1st day of October, 1897, upon which it appears that the contract was executed a bond in the penal sum of \$100,000, which bond is hereto attached and marked exhibit B. 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