

FOR THE WESTERN UNION

Vice President Clark Makes Defense Before Industrial Commission.

GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP IMPRACTICAL

Conditions Here Very Different From Those in England, with More Equipment Required for Fewer People.

WASHINGTON, March 14.—Thomas F. Clark, vice president of the Western Union Telegraph company, testified before the industrial commission today concerning the relations of the telegraph to the public.

In this country, Mr. Clark said, there are only sixty-seven people to each mile of wire, while there are 23,000 people to the mile in England, 220, and in Belgium, 321. In the United States there are 1,118,686 miles of wire and in all of Europe 1,585,267 miles.

All told, he said, there are 23,000 people in the United States for every mile of telegraph line, while in Great Britain there are only 10,166 places thus reached.

While admitting that lower local messages in Europe were rated than in the United States, Mr. Clark contended that on through messages they are comparatively higher.

Capitalization of the Company.

Mr. Clark said that the capitalization of the Western Union company amounts to \$702 per mile of poles, or \$141 per mile of wire. In Great Britain the capitalization was about twice as great.

Referring to the consolidation of the various original lines into the Western Union system, he said it had been necessary in order to secure unification of rates and to facilitate through business.

He also said that the present maximum rates being in many cases not more than one-tenth of the rates in 1866. Now the rates are as reasonable, he said, as they could be made, consistent with good business management.

He said it could not be expected that the owners of telegraph lines would sell at the mere cost of production. They, like the owners of any profitable property, had a right to expect something for good-will, etc.

He also argued that the cost of construction of a telegraph system is not confined to the lines throughout the rural district, but is due largely to city conditions—the construction of buildings and underground conduits and the securing of other terminal facilities.

He quoted the chancellor of the exchequer of Great Britain as saying that there had been a loss to the government of about \$22,000,000 on the telegraph system of that country. If there had been such a deficit there what, Mr. Clark asked, could be expected in a country like the United States, its population being nearly four times that of Great Britain?

He also said that the Western Union rates were reasonable and the result of very careful study and adjustment. He thought any radical reduction would be followed by disaster to the stockholders and would result in a loss to the public at large. There certainly would be a deficit, and in case of government ownership, the burden would be shifted from the stockholders to the people.

He said that the rates of the Baltimore & Ohio Telegraph system "when it was in operation" was asked.

"Yes," the witness replied, "and stopped dividends."

Mr. Clark said that in carrying the government business between the United States and Cuba, the International company, which is under the control of the Western Union, and which carries government business free of charge, had carried more messages for the United States in the year than the United States Postal office in thirty years. This explanation led to the inquiry whether the Western Union had not been pursuing this course for the purpose of keeping the Postal company out of Cuba.

"No, sir," was the reply. "We are only keeping our contract like honest men."

"But it is a fact that you are fighting the right of the Postal company to get a foothold in Cuba?"

"I beg pardon; they are fighting our rights."

"Is anything being done to bring about a combination with the Postal company?"

"Not to my knowledge. I have seen such a report in the newspapers, but I know nothing about it."

Mr. Clark added, in reply to questions, that there was an understanding as to rates between the two companies.

He closed his statement with another reference to government ownership, saying that unless there could be permanent civil service, public ownership would result in a serious deficit and he believed that no good would be served in the end.

Commercial College Banquet.

A concert for the benefit of the Omaha Commercial College band and orchestra will be given in the large hall of the college, Sixteenth and Douglas streets, Saturday evening.

The Blues

Ever have them? Then you know how dark everything looks. You are completely discouraged, terribly depressed.

A little work looks like a big mountain; a little noise sounds like the roar of a cannon; and a little sleep is all you can secure, night after night.

The truth of the matter is, your nerves have been poisoned and weakened with the impurities in your blood. You want a blood-purifying medicine—that's what you want. You want

Ayer's Sarsaparilla the strongest and best nerve tonic you can buy.

Write the doctor freely all uncertainties in your case. You will receive a prompt reply. Address: Dr. J. C. Ayer, Lowell, Mass.

11.00 a bottle. All druggists.

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BUILDING WITH RAPIDITY

Large Structures Now Rise from the Ground as if by Magic Hand.

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Union Labor Nominations. Last night the labor party held its convention at Koutsky's hall and nominated

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The Best of Both Havana leaf inside, Sumatra wrapper outside, cleanliness and good workmanship all the way through. That's El Merito 5 Cent Cigar. A man who smokes El Merito knows our saying's true: "It Brings Havana Home to You." Tell your dealer it's time to deal El Merito. BOLTZ, CLYMER & CO., Philadelphia. PEREGO & MOORE, DISTRIBUTORS, Omaha.

Such quick work would have been impossible under conditions that surrounded the construction of large buildings. In former days plenty of time was essential to good construction. Foundations had to settle before superstructures could be raised.

Today no such waiting is necessary. This is shown in the government building annex, on which the contractors are now at work. The foundations for that building are of a sort unknown in former years. The steel frame of the structure was planned and made hundreds of miles from the place where it is being put together. Each piece of steel, which in modern buildings takes the place of stone in the older structures, is made to fit exactly in its place and holes are cut for the bolts which are to hold it in position. Steel enters into every part of the building. Steel beams covered with concrete form the foundation. These are so interwoven and bound together that were the ends to rest on solid pillars the ground might be cut from under the center and the building would stand. With no need to sink and pile cement placed upon hydraulic brick, which will absorb but a small amount of water, there is no necessity for the architect to wait, as in former years.

Greater Working Capacity. The amount of work which can be done by a workman has been greatly increased in recent years. Take the hod carrier; he has practically gone out of the world. He is still called a hod carrier, but when he is to be carried about the second story of a building they are taken up on a lift and the hod is a wheelbarrow. If the number of bricks handled by workmen of today is compared with the number of bricks which a tricker of ten years ago it will be found that in spite of the reduction in the hours of labor the workman of the present day is accomplishing more. This is in a measure due to the character of the material, but also due to improved methods of handling.

It was when the carpenter was a "tip-top man around a building, but today he is of secondary consideration. He enters the building with every detail of the exterior is complete and he is to finish the details of the interior. His former work has been divided between iron worker, the sheet metal worker, the roofer and the woodworker in the mill.

Increased in the library, the number of books is still insufficient to meet the demand. The message further urges that a day be set aside, to be known as a Federation day, for the careful consideration of the reports and all other federation business that may interest the individual clubs.

Mr. Sigma club met at the home of Mrs. A. M. Jackson on Wednesday morning and after a brief business session Mrs. Somers gave an interesting report of "Felix Holt."

Mrs. Austin led the art lesson on Venetian and modern art glass, rendering the theme altogether instructive and interesting.

There was an unusual amount of important business discussed and settled at Wednesday's meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance union. After the preliminary reports Miss Magee gave an account of the work at the Tenth Street city mission. Rev. Charles S. Saviger was presented to conduct the regular Friday evening gospel services there will relieve her of much responsibility. The plan for the stereoscopic lecture given the children of that district on Wednesday was also discussed. As chairman of the committee appointed at the last meeting to consider Miss Magee's work at the Tenth Street mission, Mrs. Watson B. Smith reported the following recommendations, which were adopted: First, that the union be organized for co-operative mission work in the city, which shall devise ways and means for its prosecution, said board to be composed of two members from each organization interested in the work; second, that the Woman's Christian Temperance union take the initiative and invite the Woman's club, the department of political and social science of the club and the young people's societies to join with its organization in appointing two members each for said board; the board to have power to add to its members from time to time those who materially aid in its work.