

San Francisco Examiner
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Bierce on the Funding Bill

He Tells How Huntington in Washington is Fighting Fiercely, Like a Cornered Rat, With His old Familiar Weapons, a Paid Press and a Sorry Pack of Sleek and Conscienceless Rogues

It is painful to observe that in his methods of affirming his right to the property of others, Mr. Huntington employs methods not always justified by the end.

For a week past his many contributions to the "Post" of this city have appeared in that honest journal as special telegrams from San Francisco, such duly dated the day before publication. Not for three days or more of this week the dromedary head of Mr. Huntington, with its tandem bumps of cupidity and self-esteem overshadowing like twin peaks the organ that he is good with, in the valley between, has been more or less visible in this town. Indeed, the "Post's" distinguished special correspondent, with one leg in the grave, one arm in the Treasury and one eye on the police, has lighted the air with a dusky glimmer in all the dark corners of the Capital; the dog star of apprehension to all honest men and the sin of hope to Grove Johnson.

We have it on the best of authority that a man cannot be in two places at once unless he is a bird; so we are compelled to accept the painful conclusion from these premises that our friends, the telegraph are none the richer for Mr. Huntington's connection with journalism. Indubitably he composes his San Francisco dispatches in the shadow of the Capitol, already famous as the birthplace of Mr. Strother.

This inference is supported by other evidence that amounts to proof. There is in Washington, as elsewhere on this side of the continent, an acute public apathy regarding Mr. Huntington's methods, his skills, his accomplices, and his cries for credit. The history of the crimes committed by him and his partners is almost unknown. New persons one meets have a very definite knowledge of the Pacific Railroad, the enormous robberies committed with building and operating them or the still greater robberies now in contemplation. To the general public here the various building schemes now in discussion by a packed committee of the House are absolutely devoid of interest.

That a Washington newspaper should think it worthwhile to give columns of the paper to daily considerations of these matters for the entertainment or instruction of its readers is not conceivable without a might effort at making believe. The utmost concession that one can make with regard to an editor's good faith is that he prints the stuff at cut rates in deference to the poverty of a corporation that has yet much to steal.

There is also a significant similarity of literary style in the utterances of the thrifty Californian gentlemen quoted in these amazing works of the half human mind. It is as if some cunning hand had written the railroad's entire "case" on a continuous slip of paper, which had then been cut into lengths and each piece fitted with the name of some prominent citizen with a thoughtful pocket known to entertain kindly sentiments toward theft. This may not be the plan

that was pursued, but certainly there is a charming uniformity of expression among these gentlemen who believe that a corporation which for thirty years has defaulted in the payment of interest and is about to default in the payment of principal because it has chosen to steal both principal and interest can henceforth be trusted to pay both.

These beads of personal opinions are strung upon a thread of editorial commentary satisfactorily strung in time to hold them from spilling. Some of these statements have a hardy audacity that make a Californian gasp, though the majority of the House Committee on Pacific Railroads, to whom they are specially, if not tacitly addressed, read and repeat them with lungs undisturbed. Here are a few of these pearls of thought, selected almost at random.

‘THE OPINION IN FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL CIRCLES IN SAN FRANCISCO IS OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT TAKING THE PACIFIC ROADS AND OPERATING THEM.’

“THE FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL COMMUNITY OF SAN FRANCISCO IS SOMEWHAT ALARMED LEST CONGRESS SHOULD THINK THAT THE JUDGMENT OF THIS CITY IS IN FAVOR OF GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF THE CENTRAL PACIFIC ROAD.”

“THE EFFORT TO REVIVE THE RULE OF THE SANDLOT IS A DISMAL FAILURE.”

“OUTSIDE OF A FEW DISAPPOINTED AGITATORS, THE PEOPLE FAVOR AN EXTENSION OF THE DEBT AT A FAIR RATE OF INTEREST.”

“THERE ARE BUT A FEW PEOPLE IN THE CITY OUTSIDE OF THE SANDLOTTERS WHO ARE IN FAVOR OF GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP AND OPERATION OF THE PACIFIC RAILROADS.”

“THE OPINION OF ALL CLASSES HERE IS LARGELY IN FAVOR OF THE CENTRAL PACIFIC FUNDING BILL.”

All these monstrous statements, be it not forgotten, are made of San Francisco, whenve these so-called telegrams profess to be sent. That they seem credible and true in those who have not special knowledge of the mailer there is no reason to doubt. Their falsehood has been exposed in the committee by Representatives Bowers, Maguire and others, and will be exposed on the floors of both houses ie ever the matter comes to a debate; but in the meantime it has having its natural effect elsewhere despite the amusing fact that the other day as incorruptible linotype machine in the printing office of the “Post” dropped