

GATH.

Pointing a Way for the Poor

To Combine Together and Improve Their Condition.

Senator Stanford's Bill to Form Syndicates of Labor a la Capital.

The Scheme Was Worked to Advantage by the Argonauts of '49.

How Telling Woman May Secure Equal Wages With Man.

The California Statesman's Views on Female Suffrage, Coast Defenses and Railroad Legislation.

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE ENQUIRER.

WASHINGTON, February 15.—Calling upon Governor Stanford, of California, last evening who sat in his library-room working away, I invited his attention to a bill he had just introduced upon co-operation as an alternative of corporation.

Said he: "My bill being a Federal one, applies to the District of Columbia, but perhaps in any State can incorporate in this District just as they enter their patents here. Any State intended to copy this law can do so. The theory of the law is based upon observation a very alert and bright state of society people learn co-operation by themselves, but in older and quieter conditions of mining enterprise, such a bill as I propose pointed out the way to mutual exertion. I do not remember that we turned most of the streams of California; a ditch was dug alongside of the river, and very often a tunnel had to be made through rock to carry this water on, so that the bed of the stream could be left dry and the gold taken out of it. Now, all these ditches were made by co-operation, without there being any law. Generally four or six men would unite to do this work; if there were four, three of them worked at the tunnel and flumes, while the fourth went off to distance and got wages, so that he could supply them with food. In that way the workers were kept alive by one man's wages, and he, in his turn, got his proportion of all gold taken out of the bed of the stream."

"That must have been a high condition of society," I said, "for mere laborers?"

"Oh, yes. I do not think there ever will be any thing like it again. There were several hundred thousand young men finding out for themselves the way to conquer nature and fortune; their systems of doing things, derived from necessity and aided by their intelligence, were the highest manifestations of self-government ever made in so short a time."

PRINCIPAL THEORY OF THE BILL.

"Don't you think, Governor, that we may find some other California, and give the young men another chance?"

"I do not know where it will be. Since the days of California so many changes have taken place and intercourse has become so general that the particular leap that society made is now common property. But co-operation ought to be applied as a remedy for idleness and a stimulation to enterprise, especially where matters have become dull. I think it can be applied in forming communities; but there is no reason why men who raise different kinds of things should not have a corporation, putting in their labor instead of capital. The chief theory of my bill is that industry, instead of capital, can be associated—or some money can be put in as a stand-off—for the labor of others. Our corporations are all based upon money subscriptions, and they are represented by stock. Four persons at present can only combine by partnerships, and when one goes out or dies the association expires. These co-operative partnerships I propose shall continue to exist, and to be transmitted so that the poor can make a business and its good will descend to their heirs. There is no reason why the women of the country should not greatly advance themselves by this act. Take the matter of clothing alone; there are sixty million people in America, and if each expends \$10 a year for clothes, that makes \$600,000,000; it might just as well go to co-operative associations of women as to these large partnerships which pay hardly living wages. At the same time the grade of woman's labor would be advanced; they would become cutters, style-makers, &c. I can see how in California such co-operative associations would do the agriculture, such as exchanging labor from the grain-field to the orchard and vineyard."

EXTENDING THE PRINCIPLE.

Said I: "More dull, brute labor, which knows nothing, can hardly get much benefit from co-operation."

"No; because ignorance has hardly any chance anywhere. You must know something specially and be able to do it to come up to this idea."

"Could it be applied to railroad labor?"

"Yes, it might. A co-operative association of men who know how to build a railroad might be able to take a contract just as well as a corporation. The great power of a corporation is that it economizes the expense of many into a small direction. The laboring poor, with handicrafts under such associations as this, could supply labor to different places at the same time, taking into their concern the wheelwright, the blacksmith, the painter, the glazier, &c."

"It seems to me, Governor, that your suggestion shows that there is some uneasiness about the industrial society?"

"Yes. Nobody likes to see deserving persons in need, and whatever can help them or in whatever way they can help themselves consistent with other people's rights should be attempted. Under corporation life the ineredible work of the latter part of this century has been done. Another step might well be taken by the industrial people for themselves, so that they can get the benefit of corporations without having to put in money. The only way they can do it is to save their wages, or rather not draw them out, and let the co-operation society thus be strengthened by broader undertakings. In cases of sickness there will be a stock of wages continued to the person out of work. Women complain that their physical life makes them irregular laborers. Under co-operation they would draw wages when they could not labor, or the character of the labor could be changed for them. We only know of co-operation hitting through stores which are got up for the benefit of particular classes or trades. The corporation I propose is the combining of individuals who shall have corporate rights."

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

I remarked that the subject of female suffrage seemed to be incidental to this subject. Governor Stanford said:

"I am in favor of carrying out the Declaration of Independence to women as well as men. The longer I live, the more the preamble of that Declaration seems to me to be just. Starting with that proposition, no constitutions nor laws can be made to violate the statement that all men are created equal and are endowed with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In fact, it induces our Government more than the written Constitution itself. The American people have received their particular stamp from the axiom of that declaration. Women having to suffer the burdens of society and government, should have their equal rights. But they do not receive their rights in full proportion."

"But," said I, "they have very much advanced; for a good many years they have been Government clerks, and now they are becoming postmasters and school directors."

"Yes," said the Governor, "they are employed in the public departments at just one-half the pay men receive for doing the same work. What is the reason for that? A very intelligent lady said to me yesterday that she thought women were for politics, and that there were but few things women could do. I remarked that I never saw a woman to come into one of our mining camps in California but her mere presence effected a change in the conduct of all the men there. It would be the same in the suffrage; instead of there being more riot and bad behavior when women appear there will be better conduct and more respect for the law."

Said I: "Do you not think women will go off on sentimental issues if they undertake the business of government and break up the organizations by which men work out large ends?"

"Oh!" said Governor Stanford, "it is not sentiment that we have to fear so much as we suppose. A man's sentiments are generally just and right, while it is second selfish thought which makes him trim and adopt some other view. The best reforms are worked out when sentiment operates, as it does in women, with the indignation of righteousness."

COAST DEFENSES.

I asked Senator Stanford what he thought about the bill to spend \$21,000,000 for coast defenses.

"Why," said he, "I am in favor of it; the loss of the money the people will not feel any more than they felt the loss of money in the great civil war, which seemed to put a new aspect and force on every industry, and really created us. The most defenseless portion of the United States is not the front on the ocean, but the back part on the lakes. By the treaty arrangements the Americans can not keep on these lakes vessels of war, but the British have a navy all the time, and they can come up the St. Lawrence, pass through their canals, and visit every lake in turn. They do not want more than one or two guns to a vessel; that will be enough to affect Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, and all those strong young towns which are now indulging the dream that war can never get back to them. In San Francisco the Government keeps \$100,000,000 on deposit. The army vessels of any Power can come in there and demand that money, and have it carried out aboard, and the prize is great enough to pay the expenses of some wars."

"What kind of defenses do you favor?"

"That subject would belong to the professional military people. As to our naval necessities, we ought to have fast cruisers which can run away from very great armored ships that do not make much speed, but can destroy the commerce of an adversary, as the Alabama destroyed ours. It happens that almost every nation we would be liable to have a conflict with has a commerce. We could injure them by running down their carrying ships and steamers. Then, for our harbors we ought to have floating batteries armed with great guns."

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF THE RAILROADS.

I asked the Governor some questions about the Inter-State Commerce bill.

Said he: "I do not think it is going to hurt the railroads east of Chicago. To them it will have the same effect as their present pooling treaties. They are forbidden to make special contracts, and hence it is no advantage for one shipper to go from one railroad to another. Those Western railroads are often close together, and here is a man who lives two miles from one railroad and eight miles from another. The nearest railroad supposes that it will get his transportation, and refuses to make any concession to him. He finds that he can wagon so many tons a day over to the other railroad. He says to them: 'What concession will you make if I bring you my trade?' They lower his rates, so that he can save \$3 to New York on what he can bring over. This \$3 saved gives him, perhaps, \$2 or \$3 profit, after he takes out the additional hauling. But hereafter, under the Inter-State bill, that will not operate. The water competition is also shut out by this bill, and it will no longer plague the railroads east of Chicago. Hitherto they have met with competition of the lake route by making cheap rates between terminus and terminus. But being now compelled to adopt rates which will suit in equity the intermediate stations, they must all fare alike. Hence, I think the railroads east of Chicago will derive benefit from this bill, but west of Chicago the case will be different. So far as the Pacific Railroads go, they will be injured. Hitherto they would take through business from the Pacific to the Atlantic for a much lower rate than the prevailing rate between Chicago and the East; if they made a little upon it they would still work for that little. The cost of sugar has already gone up from twelve to fourteen cents between points in Iowa and Chicago."

THE NEXT STEP.

"Do you consider that this Inter-State Commerce bill is the last step of the kind?"

"No; I think that the emergencies of politicians amount to a factor in law-making; demagogues will constantly be seeking out some interest to assail, with the object of drawing votes. But after they try every thing, they will discover at last that one form of property can not be assailed without all the rest suffering. Here we are living eighteen years after the opening of the Union and Central Pacific Roads, and still something new is brought out all the time. They seem to think that if the Government made a bad bargain, it is not bound by it; but if we should make a bad one, we are to be bound. In the early stages of the road we had a great deal of small predatory attacking. The Thurman bill, which compelled us to pay 25 per cent. of our net earnings over to the Government, really deprived us of one-quarter of the assistance the Government extended to us. By the contract, the Government lent us its credit, which we were to have until the maturing of our bonds, about the year 1900. Since we have to pay back 25 per cent. of what we make, we are to that extent crippled in strength, and it is now proposed to increase the sum to 40 per cent."

"What is the sum you will owe the Government at the end of eleven years, when the bonds mature?"

"We shall owe it \$23,000,000 credit lent to us and interest, which will be about twice as much. From this will come off \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000 for services rendered the Government by the company. Unfortunately both our mortgage and the Government's loan

BECOME DUE AT THE SAME TIME.

We have taken care of our first mortgage, and have a sinking fund, which by the time of maturity will pay it off. We have asked for some toleration in the repayment of the Government loan and interest; there is no just reason for being exacting with us to the last hair. Although the Government lent us its credit, I myself hardly ever handled a single bond we got from them. We were so much in debt before the Government aid came that other parties owned those bonds in advance. But if they turned in our hands a few moments it was at best a transitory joy. When those bonds were given out many of them were not worth more than forty cents on the dollar. We did our best to finance, and we probably got sixty cents on the dollar for them. If the Government itself would finance as well they would have more in that sinking fund than they possess. Under the Thurman bill they go out into the market and buy the bonds at 110 to 100, and they have appreciated so much that the outlay of the money they took from us to buy them has resulted in there being considerably less in that sinking fund than if we had kept our money and not bought up these bonds."

THE OTHER PACIFICS.

"Have the subsequent Pacific railroads been treated any better than the Central Pacific?"

"When the original Pacific Railroad was built it was supposed that it would be the only line and get all the business. Since that time the Government has created three other Pacific Railroads and given them double the land grant the Central Pacific received, and in every case the lands they passed through are better. Therefore, our business has been given away by the Government, which at the same time continues to press us for every pound of our forfeit. The Government was paying before we opened the road \$7,000,000 a year for mails, transportation, telegraph, &c. They were paying for the letter mail, which carried no papers, \$1,500,000 a year. We give them forty tons of transportation for a very small sum comparatively, and our steamer cars they often run one or two extra days. We had no business when we commenced; there was nothing whatever existing between Sacramento and Salt Lake except a few mining camps. The old letter mail coach after it left the Missouri River stopped at only two or three forts before it got to Salt Lake City. Now we deliver the mails to numerous towns and cities. We completed the Pacific Railroad seven years before we were obliged to do so. Time we considered to be all important, because if we did not get to Salt Lake City speedily we were to have no train at all. The first thing we did was to develop along our line and put in pop-

ulation and make interests. There was some passenger travel from motives of curiosity at the outset. As things now stand we depend altogether upon our local business, the through business having ceased to be of any importance. The business across the continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is no longer our reliance. We have made the country through which we pass and make our money upon what has followed us."

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