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Portland Labor Press

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STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

TRADE UNIONS ARE THE BULWARKS OF MODERN DEMOCRACIES.—W. E. GLADSTONE.

Vol. V

PORTLAND, OREGON, APRIL 21, 1905

No. 38

HEADQUARTERS FOR UNION MADE

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UNION MADE Shoes - \$2.50, \$3.50
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COL. J. F. HARVEY

71 Sixth Street, Bet. Oak and Pine

Portland, Oregon

New Company Indorsed By Prominent Men

The Pacific States Telephone people, aided by three or four of our councilmen, are straining every effort to shut out the new telephone system which has been promised the people of Portland. Every scheming trick known to the law-defying corporations has been tried by the local company during the past month to prevent the granting of a franchise to the new company. A few local business men, who are "interested parties," have been induced to come forward in public print and tell the citizens of Portland what a bad thing competition would be for the city. Even bribery has been hinted at, some of the councilmen having been approached by agents of the Pacific States Company and promised pecuniary compensation for their aid in rejecting the proposition of the Home Telephone and Telegraph Company.

The splendid indorsement which the Home Telephone and Telegraph Company has received from conservative business men, wherever its system has been introduced, should go far toward convincing the people of this city of the merits of the automatic telephone system. The Labor Press has seen a large number of letters from individuals and business firms of Los Angeles and other cities where the new telephone is in use, and every letter praises the service which is being rendered to the people. A few of these we reproduce in this article and their perusal should convince anyone of the excellence which the new concern offers.

On Wednesday, May 3, the question of whether or not the Home Telephone and Telegraph Company is to enter this city shall come before the city council for final action. Several of the councilmen are openly in favor of granting the franchise and others are trying to give excuses for being opposed to a competing telephone system. Councilman Sharkey is working hard to have the measure pass, which will give the suffering public relief from the miserable service which it is now receiving from the local concern. Mr. Sharkey visited Los Angeles and San Diego for the special purpose of inquiring into the workings of the new 'phone and he was so impressed with its superiority over the obsolete system now in vogue here that he is enthusiastic in its praises and is using his best efforts to convert his brother councilmen.

Here are some of the recommendations which have come to Mr. Sharkey during the past month:

Security Savings Bank.

Los Angeles, March 24, 1905.

Hon. John Sharkey,

Member of the Common Council,
Portland, Or.

Dear Sir—Relative to your inquiry as to the dual telephone system in this city, I use both systems and in no way find the dual systems objectionable, but think it is a benefit, as both companies are on the alert to give us the best service they can. There is a marked difference between the telephone systems at the present time and a few years ago, when only one system was in existence in this town.

I find the system installed by the Home Telegraph and Telephone Company here to be more than extra satisfactory, and I also hear the best praise for the automatic telephone system installed by the same company, their patrons claim they do not have to wait for central, but get the connection desired themselves, and have no interference or any misunderstanding.

Regarding the regular system installed by the Home Telephone Company here, I have no complaint at all to find with the promptness and clearness of their service. The systems have been installed in most of the cities and towns of California, all of the systems being connected with each other by long distance system operated in the same way, and the service is of high standing.

I feel no hesitancy in recommending its adoption, as I know full well that the patrons and customers will receive more benefits than anticipated, and further, I believe that it is right and a benefit to have competition in all classes of business.

If you wish any more information I will be pleased to hear from you inquiring about the same.

Was very glad to see you, and hope to meet you often down this way. Yours very truly,

M. S. HELLMAN.

Adams & Phillips.

Los Angeles, March 23, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—It was our opinion two years ago that telephony was a natural monopoly. A fair trial, however, of the dual systems has convinced us that competition is necessary to secure a maximum service at a minimum cost. It is now possible to reach more than double the number of subscribers without greater cost, and the service is infinitely more satisfactory than under one system.

The Home Telephone Company of Los Angeles is, in our opinion, doing eighty per cent of the business of the city, and we sometimes marvel at the correctness and rapidity of the service.

In the light of our experience here, and what we are reliably informed is true of other cities where a second system duly constructed has been installed, we believe that not only every city of importance, but practically the villages of the country will soon be served by two companies.

It is believed here that the local system is most excellent in construction, and the company who built it stands extremely well in this community.

Any specific information you may desire, it will be our pleasure to furnish if possible. Respectfully yours,
(Signed) JOHN A. ADAMS.

Merchants' National Bank.

San Diego, Cal., March 21, 1905.

Mr. Sharkey, Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—We have been using the automatic telephone for several months and it is perfectly satisfactory in every way. We always use the Home when we can, because it is quick and private. It is a time and patience saver. Yours truly,

(Signed) F. R. BURNHAM,
Vice-President.

The Los Angeles National Bank.

(U. S. Depository.)

Los Angeles, March 22, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey, Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—It gives me unusual pleasure to express my satisfaction with the service rendered by the Home Telephone Company of this city. It is so immeasurably better than that which has been supplied and is being supplied by the opposition company, that in the effort to give expression as to the result, language fails.

It has not only been of financial benefit to the city in the way of supplying prompt, clear and in every way desirable service, but it has greatly improved the morals of the city, in that it has eliminated a stupendous source of profanity.

In the outset I was not favorable to the establishment of the new system, but in view of the results which have been shown, I have never had occasion to regret my connection with the company. I feel sure that if the good people of Portland can secure a system equal to that which the "Home" has provided here, those who have been active in promoting the new company will in future be denominated public benefactors. Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. C. PATTERSON,
President.

First National Bank of San Diego.

San Diego, March 21, 1905.

John P. Sharkey, Esq.,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—You asked me how we

like the automatic system in use by the Home Telephone Company here.

Well, sir, I consider it a grand success. There are no delays in getting your connections, nor any "line busy" when such is not a fact, nobody to become provoked and make you wait merely because you call a second or third time, and again, by this system the curiosity of any one disposed to pry into the affairs of others cannot be satisfied, as your connection is not with the public generally. Yours very truly,

(Signed) C. W. FISHBURN,
Cashier.

I endorse the above.—D. F. Garretson, V. P.

Citizens' Savings Bank.

San Diego, Cal., March 21, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—Replying to your inquiry as to the reliability of Messrs. Sumner and Godfrey, of the Empire Electric Company, who built the Home Telephone plant in this city, and the general statement of what we think of the plant and service, would say we have found the gentlemen referred to and their company composed of very prompt business men. We have had considerable business with them and have nothing whatever to complain of.

The Home Telephone building erected under their management is a structure of which the city is proud, a combination of both strength and beauty, and the telephone system is the best and most complete we have ever seen. At the time of this company's application for a franchise, our city was suffering from the hide-bound condition of the one-horse city. We had one telephone line, one electric light and gas plant, one system of street railways; in fact, all of the business of the city in various lines was either owned by one man or one set of men. The entering of the Home Telephone plant proved to be the opening wedge. We now have competition in several lines and the city is making rapid and permanent growth.

The strongest argument used against the initiation of the plant was that it would necessitate business houses carrying both 'phones, and although we find it necessary to do so, yet we have the advantage of good service on either lines as against the pitiful or paucummoa ostia tesing their plant, which was obsolete, and have prosecuted the work until they have also a very good plant at this time. Although we have both 'phones it has become habitual to look through disadvantage of very poor service indeed. As soon as the new company commenced work on their plant, the Home list and call by that 'phone in preference to the other, for the reason that we can obtain much quicker service and the very important reason that our conversation cannot be overheard.

Assuring you that the Home 'phone has the good will of our citizenship, I am, Very truly yours,
(Signed) FRED JEWELL,
Cashier.

Central Bank of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles, March 22, 1905.

John P. Sharkey, Esq., City.

Dear Sir—You asked my opinion about the utility of two telephone plants in the same city. We have found since the Home Telephone plant was built in Los Angeles that the service obtained from each company is much superior to the service of the old Sunset Company before there was competition. We expected to find the dual system a nuisance, but do not find it any inconvenience. And while the service of the "Home" is much better and some of its improvements more up-to-date than the old company's, the service of the old company is vastly superior to what it was when they had a monopoly. Yours very truly,

(Signed) WM. WARD, Pres.

The Can Diego Union.

(The Pioneer Newspaper of Southern California.)

San Diego, Cal., March 25, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—In reply to your inquiry: The Empire Electric Company, of which C. E. Sumner is vice-president and general manager, the builder of the Home Telephone system in this city, has more than made good on every promise made San Diego. Its trench work, pole construction, wiring, etc., have been thoroughly and expeditiously done, with very little hindrance to traffic and the material used has been noticeably superior to that generally used by construction companies.

The automatic service of the "Home Company" is continually growing in favor here. All in all, the "Home" system is one of which San Diegans appear to be proud, and its promoters are certainly enterprising business men, who would make valuable accessions to any city not addicted to "dry rot." Respectfully yours,
(Signed) M. F. PARMALEE.

Blochman Banking Company.

San Diego, Cal., March 24, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,
Chamber of Commerce, Portland.

Dear Sir—Regarding your inquiry about the Home Telephone Company of this city and the service we are getting, I must say that we use both 'phones in our bank, but we always give preference to the Home 'phone, as we get much better service from them than from the Sunset. The banks of this city do all their clearing by telephone, and they always use the Home 'phone, not only on account of the saving of time, but also on account of its privacy. We can recommend this company to your kind attention, as they have done all they promised to do in this city and put in a first-class system, which is satisfactory in every way. I would also state that the Sunset Company put in about \$60,000 in improvements since the Home Company started, and through the competition we get better service from them. Yours very truly,

(Signed) L. A. BLOCHMAN,
Cashier.

Edward M. Burbeck, Stationer.

San Diego, Cal., March 21, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,

Dear Sir—In response to your inquiry of my opinion of the Home Telephone, how I liked it and its workings, will say that I have had the Home installed in my store, also one at my residence, as well as the Sunset in both places, and am very much pleased with the Home; in fact, I would not take it out under any circumstances, as it gives me a more prompt and a better service; I have had the Sunset in my place of business for over fourteen years, and do not see but very little improvement in its service. Give me the "Home" every time. Yours truly,
(Signed) E. M. BURBECK.

Nason & Oesting, Underwriters.

San Diego, Cal., March 25, 1905.

John P. Sharkey, Esq.,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—We have been using the new Home automatic telephone in our office for the past few months, and we cannot say too much in its favor. The service certainly could not be better, and invaluable to any office having business of a private nature. As soon as the Home 'phones were put into our office the Sunset Company immediately gave us a better service which naturally it had to do in order to compete with the Home, and if your people are looking for something up-to-date they certainly cannot afford to turn the Home down. Yours very truly,
(Signed) NASON & OESTING.

The San Diego Union.

(Established 1868.)

Union Building, Cor. D and Third Sts.

San Diego, Cal., March 25, 1905.

Mr. John P. Sharkey,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir—In reply to your recent inquiry we wish to state that the Em-

(Continued on page 5)