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If you can invent some way to get rid of rats the United States Government stands ready to give you a fortune. No other patent will pay you so well. Many have tried it on a small scale, but all have failed. "Rough on Rats" did some good in localities, but the danger was its poisoning other things besides the animals aimed at. The thousand and one ingenious traps invented from time to time have caught thousands of the vermin, but they could hardly be missed from the grand aggregation. The terriers, the cats, the small boy with his dog did something to reduce the supply, but apparently as many rats as ever remain to vex humanity. What is needed is a general exterminator, a wholesale destruction, and thus far it has not been forthcoming. The department of Agriculture is much concerned on the subject and declares that an infallible method of exterminating these rodents would be worth more to the people of this country in a single decade than the department has cost since its establishment. The farmer has no worse enemy than the common brown rat. All the birds and beasts of prey put together do not do the damage inflicted by this pestilential pest the long-tailed, sharp-toothed, bewiskered nuisance of the barn, the granary and the poultry-yard.

Governor Hughes of New York by vetoing the recently-passed two-cent fare law, calls a halt on the mania for forcibly regulating the railroads. He shows that the law was passed hastily, without investigation of facts in the case and without understanding of prevailing conditions. While a two-cent fare law may be all right in a densely settled section, it would manifestly be unjust on a line running for many miles through mountains and deserts. The Governor takes the sensible position that it is the duty of the State Railroad Commission to look up the prevailing conditions on all the roads and report to the Legislature, so that body can act intelligently. What is needed are laws to abolish unjust discrimination between communities and individuals.

In six months more the colonistries to Oregon will be in effect again, continuing for sixty days. In order to get the full benefit of them, every commercial organization should get busy with their correspondence with prospective settlers. During this vacation period the boys and girls have the time to write their friends "back East" and tell them about the Oregon country. As an illustration of what can be accomplished by this means, the school children of a single district in one of our coast counties doubled the population of that district merely through correspondence, necessitating the construction of an additional school building.

They do some things better in Mexico. The manager of a bull-fight in Monterey advertised that a certain number of bulls would be in the ring. For producing one bull less than the announced number the man was fined \$300 by the municipal authorities.

Of the Congressmen who have served since the foundation of this government, more than twelve thousand individuals, only thirty-four have served

twenty years or more. The longest service was that of John H. Ketcham of New York, who served thirty-three years, and was a member when he died. Mr. Cameron, who comes next, has served thirty-two years. Since he is elected to the next Congress, he will, if he lives to the end of his term, take the first place in the list of veterans.

It is such fellows as Harriman who bring discredit upon the railroad business and cause the irritable feeling among the people that leads to hostile legislation. Railroads should be owned and controlled only by men trained in the business and conducted on legitimate lines as common carriers, and not by speculators who are making fortunes by kiting their securities. Bankers and brokers have no business with railroads and should not be allowed to control them.

There is one Orchard which all will admit should be cultivated. This is the one that has been testifying at Boise, Idaho, that for fifteen years he has been a professional murderer, drawing a regular salary for killing people. He confesses to eighteen assassinations, including that of ex-Governor Steunenberg, all of the most brutal character. It would be difficult to parallel this record of horrors in all the annals of history.

Oklahoma will come into the Union with the most drastic prohibition law ever embodied in a constitution for the government of men. It prohibits not only the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, but does not allow them to be brought into the state.

The army officers who have been appointed to dig the Panama Canal will receive \$14,000 a year, in addition to glory and their usual pay. If they get the ditch dug they will earn every dollar they receive.

Good draft horses now bring from \$200 to \$300. It is little wonder, therefore, that well-advised farmers pay fancy prices for imported brood mares when three-year-olds bring such prices.

Word comes from Russia that the government intends to hang 300,000 radicals. We are hardly willing to believe that this is a conservative estimate.

Once it is aroused, there is quite a wholesome sentiment in this country against printing newspapers that have to be hidden from the boys and girls at home.

A traveler in the country can generally tell pretty accurately what kind of farmer owns the land by the appearance of the buildings and fences.

### LETTING DOWN THE BARS.

Mr. Harriman has announced his intention of following the example set by the Government in shipping coal from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast. "The bars are down," said Mr. Harriman, "and I am going to ship coal to the Pacific Coast in foreign vessels." Lawbreaking is never a commendable proceeding, but when the Government takes the initiative and breaks a law, as was quite plainly the case when it chartered British steamers to bring coal to the Pacific Coast, it is hardly clear how it can proceed against Mr. Harriman, who follows suit. The situation is most interesting, and is fraught with possibilities of a solution of the merchant marine problem. The primary cause for charter by the Government of foreign steamers was the prospective increase in the naval fleet on the Pacific Coast. Coal was needed to replenish stocks at Pacific Coast ports, and the scarcity of the fuel on this Coast made it imperative that supplies be sent from other quarters.

But, owing to our venerable navigation laws, which prevent Americans from buying ships where they can be bought the cheapest, there was no American tonnage available for bringing the coal around the Horn. The same ancient laws, while preventing us from owning tonnage on even terms

with the foreigners, also deprive us of the right to engage cheap ships in the protected coastwise carrying trade. There was no question about the existence of an antiquated emergency in this case, but the antiquated navigation laws make no provision for emergencies. The coal shortage on the Pacific Coast has forced Mr. Harriman to purchase many thousand tons of Australian coal, which will be brought to the Pacific Coast in foreign ships. On that coal the foreigner not only gets the freight money, but the cost of the coal. Now that the "bars are down," the money for the coal will remain in this country. An emergency unquestionably exists. If the Government had failed to violate its own laws and ship coal to the Pacific Coast, it would have been obliged on arrival here to seize the scanty stocks of coal now available on the Coast, and thus bring shipping to a standstill.

Even with the relief that is afforded by charter of a few ships for the Government there is still great necessity for importation of all of the coal that can be brought in from the Atlantic seaboard. The letting down of the bars will not only afford relief to every coal consumer on the Pacific Coast, but it will bring in plenty of much-needed cheap tonnage with which to move our record-breaking grain crop, as all of the vessels coming here will be available for outward cargoes. A few more practical illustrations of the manner in which existing navigation laws hamper the development of our merchant marine may have the effect of bringing about long-overdue reform.

There would be no necessity for shipping either Government coal or Harriman coal in foreign ships if we would adopt the simple business methods of other countries and welcome these ships under the American flag. The most severe blow yet dealt the theorists who are seeking a hothouse-grown, subsidized merchant marine is this transaction of the Government, for the demonstration that we can secure ships without a subsidy is perfect. All that remains is to repeal our ancient laws and give these ships American registry.—Oregonian.

### OSLER SAYS SOUP MUST GO.

Dr. William Osler, who has an opinion concerning chloroform and men who are 60 years old, is bitterly opposed to the drinking of soup, according to the statements of a New York merchant.

"My wife was a wreck from nervous dyspepsia," said the merchant. "Several prominent physicians in New York had treated her without success, and finally I was advised to take her to Baltimore to see Dr. Osler. He inquired carefully about her habits, and particularly her diet. We described it without going into details, but this did not satisfy the great physician.

"Tell me what you have for dinner, describing the nature of the courses, their number, and so on," he insisted.

"Well, usually we start with some good, nourishing soup," I began. "Stop right there," interrupted Dr. Osler. "Soup must go. There is a popular fallacy that soup is nourishing. That is a mistake. It is one of the most harmful things one can eat. It is worse than lobster. Of course, there are times when a simple beef or mutton broth is not to be condemned. But as a rule soup is positively dangerous. It dilutes the gastric juices and it ferments too rapidly to permit it to be easily digested. It is the greatest cause of dyspepsia and nervous disorders. Vegetable soup should be thrown into the garbage pail, where it belongs, instead of being poured into a delicate stomach. Half the nervous wrecks among society folk who live well are caused by eating soup."

"Dr. Osler gave some other advice, which was followed by my wife in addition to giving up soup. Soup is never served at our table, and has not been for four years. My wife is well and strong today, and she can eat anything on the menu except soup."

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