

EDITORIALS

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK.—The right to possess private property is from nature, and not from man. The State is, therefore, unjust and cruel if, in the name of taxation, it deprives the private owner of more than is just.—Pope Leo XIII.

Some Charges Due

A serious examination of the local election procedure whereby a candidate who was ineligible for office was still able to get his name on the ballot has been scheduled before the city council this week by City Attorney Stanley Remusmeyer.

Although he admits that the problem is statewide, and probably calls for changes in the California election code, the city attorney suggests that the local situation could be remedied by a charter change or by an ordinance. He recommends a charter change to assure that the change would be unchallenged.

Remusmeyer's recommendations are a Torrance HERALD editorial published last May which suggested that filing fees be required of candidates for municipal offices.

The HERALD's suggestion was prompted by the results of the April municipal election here where one candidate was found to be ineligible just days before the election, and by the fact that at least two other candidates on the ballot made no campaign to win the office for which they filed—in fact they could not be found by reporters. It was apparent that they were not serious candidates.

The HERALD renews its suggestion that the city council look seriously at the situation and seek to find a way to determine the legal eligibility of an office seeker before the ballots are prepared, and to require some filing fee to offset the expenses of putting names of candidates on ballots as the result of a bet or dare, or to clutter the ballot to favor some candidate.

Our election privileges are vital to our very way of life and should not be used to furnish entertainment to barroom cronies.

Smog Lethal?

The past two months have seen more smog in Torrance than in any similar period in this city's history. At that it has been only a slight sample of what many other sections of the country suffer with almost monotonous regularity the year around.

Now the surgeon general of the United States rings a new alarm when he warned recently that air pollution in many metropolitan centers of the nation may be causing or contributing to untimely deaths. He indicated smog may be as much a cause of lung cancer as tobacco. He believes the country should take steps now to avoid potential disaster in the future.

The smog problem is old stuff to millions of L.A. County residents who have been literally crying over the situation for more than a decade. Blame for the condition seems now to be centered on the automobile exhaust since open burning has been outlawed, use of fuel oil restricted, and industry equipped with millions of dollars worth of control equipment.

The area will enter another year with very little hope for marked improvement. There will be more automobiles on the road, none with controlled exhaust systems. The same pattern will prevail with weather conditions prompting the protests or jailing the populace into apathy.

LAW IN ACTION

First Court Gets Most Law Cases

We have the federal courts, which try and decide certain civil cases involving \$3,000 or more. As a rule they hear cases between citizens of two states, or of one state and a foreign land.

Besides these federal courts hear civil and criminal cases involving sea law, bankruptcy, Interstate Commerce Commission, orders and actions under anti-trust laws, patents, copyrights, and trademarks; post law, internal revenue and customs, federal election disputes, etc.

Sometimes state and federal courts have to handle the same cases, such as admitting aliens to citizenship. In rare cases the U. S. Supreme Court will hold that one court system, say the federal, has "pre-empted" the field; and if so, the case may not be heard in the other courts.

But which court takes over when a lawsuit can start in both courts and either could

decide it?

As a rule the state court which first takes over to try and settle the case is among California state courts.

But it is different as between state and federal courts with "overlapping jurisdiction," either may go ahead until one renders a decision. Then that court takes over for all of the questions it settled. The other questions may then be taken up in the other court.

Thus sometimes a person injured in an auto accident in either federal or state court, may choose to sue for damages in the state court. But at the same time under federal admiralty rules the shipowner may sue in a federal court to limit his liability.

With two such systems, you are likely to get into some jurisdictional tangles since the relation between the states and the federal government is a complex one.

My Neighbors



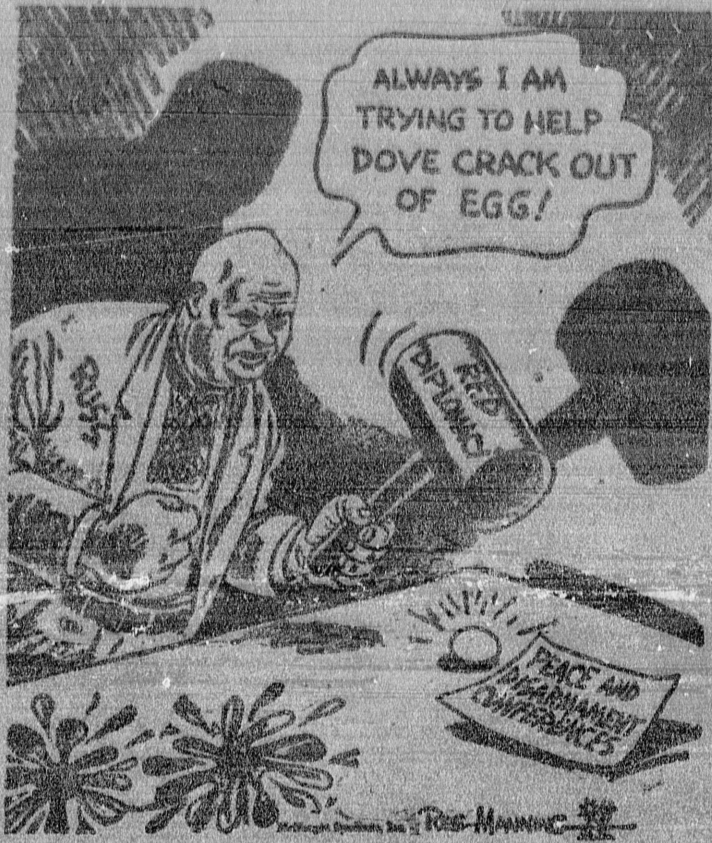
...I had one day about three months ago to come to court and... in fact I had the opportunity...

My Neighbors



...I had one day about three months ago to come to court and... in fact I had the opportunity...

Gets Squabbles, Not Squabs



THE SQUIRREL CASE by Reid Bundy

Tree House Bites the Dust

Week after week, the editors of the service club bulletins distributed to members of the city's burlesque clubs come up with news of the chicken little quip.

This week's sampling is a good indication of the caliber of material reported, prepared and stolen by these bulletin editors.

From the Lions Club's "Toll-Lion" edited by James Crockett:

Hear about the mountaineer who put a silencer on his shotgun because his daughter wanted a quiet wedding?

Or... Observed at recent Ladies' Night party—a man can usually tell what kind of a time he's having at a party by the look on his wife's face.

Or... as one girl said to another: "There's no denying he's a cad... but then, so is his convertible."

And Editor Hank Heinlein of the Rotary Club's "Rotary Rig":

Officer: How do you get along without a speedometer?
Motorist: Well, when I get to drivin' fifteen miles an hour, my fenders start to rattle; at twenty-five the windows rattle; at thirty the motor starts knockin'—and that's as fast as she'll go.

Or... A successful businessman, after eight years of absence, alighted at the station of the old home town. Despite his expectations, there was no one he knew on the platform.

Discouraged, the man sought out the station master, a friend since boyhood. He was about to extend a hearty

greeting when the station master exclaimed: "Hello, George, going away?"

In a different vein, Phyllis Loran, who lives in the Torrance Gardens area, was curious one day about a bunch of city workers piled out of a huge park department truck on Torrance Blvd. near her home and intently studied one of the many Eucalyptus trees planted in the border parkway.

Several of the men walked around the tree, peering intently into its outlying branches, studying, calculating, planning. Obviously, something was in the

wind. After what seemed to Phyllis like a considerable time, the crew left.

The next day the crew returned, supplemented this time by one of the city's huge tree trimmers, complete with hydraulic lift, cutters, ladders, and operators.

After spending the greater part of the morning on the project, the city crew had succeeded in taking down a tree house which the neighborhood boys had erected several years ago and which had since been abandoned.

Must have cost the city \$100 to take the thing down, she said.

—and Not a Package or Card Without These!



DWV Helps State Find 'Lost' Fathers

The driver license files at Sacramento headquarters of the State Department of Motor Vehicles serves a number of purposes other than a ready reference guide to the way a motorist drives.

A dramatic example is the use to which these files are put by state and county pro-

secutors in tracking down fathers who have deserted their wives and children and left them destitute and dependent on public charity.

The first fully organized "deserting dad" hunt was instituted by Attorney General Edmund G. Brown following disclosure that in 1933 the aid to needy children cost California taxpayers \$33,000,000.

"This is an amazing figure," the Attorney General said at the time, adding that he feared California would become a refuge for childless parents to the detriment of those widows and children who are in real need of aid.

To meet this threat the State Department of Justice set up the Central Information Section as a unit of the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation to assist county welfare departments and district attorneys in a crackdown on the "deserting parents."

Tracing Torrance History

Life on the Ranchos in Early 19th Century Told

Cattle and agriculture occupied the residents on the vast San Pedro Rancho during the early years of the 19th Century, and even then, taxes were becoming a problem to the owners—although the land was assessed at 10 cents an acre for tax purposes after the Civil War, according to the eighth in a series of articles being published exclusively in the HERALD.

By R. C. Gillingham

Other than the struggles over title rights and boundary lines, the story of the Rancho San Pedro properly includes some reference to activities on the Rancho itself. The record of this one tract provides an excellent cross-section of the type of rancho life in Los Angeles County during the 19th century, from the early-going cattle-raising era through the disturbing changes in economic conditions which followed the advent of American rule.

Since most of the land was suitable only for grazing purposes, the earlier source of income for the Dominguez family was largely from stock-raising, principally cattle. Before 1857, as has been mentioned previously, the combined herds of the several families varied from 3,000 to more than 19,000 head of stock. These ran together on the common range. Except for corral and small yards, the use of fence was unknown; the cost of posts and wire being greater at that time than the entire value of the stock.

For many years the cattle were slaughtered on the Rancho, the main products being hides and tallow. According to one early record, a full-grown steer of 500 to 600 pounds yielded an average of 250 pounds of tallow, a hide weighing 20 pounds, and about 50 pounds of "carne seca" or dried beef. The tallow was sold at five cents a pound, the hide at \$3.50, and the beef at four cents a pound, bringing a total of \$15.50. Part of the tallow was used to make a good quality of white soap for domestic use.

Being centrally located, the Rancho San Pedro was the scene of many a rodeo, following the annual cattle round-up. In collecting the cattle, the Dominguez vaqueros had a different type of problem than was usually the case in other parts of California. This was due to the extensive growth of mustard, which came after the winter rains.

Stretching across the open country and into the hills west of the Los Angeles River, it made a veritable sea of yellow when in full bloom. Reaching a height of six to nine feet, it afforded a good hiding place for the cattle. Each year before the main roundup, therefore, it became necessary to have a "run through the mustards," tramping down the stalks and driving out the cattle. This operation, carried out jointly by all the neighbors, generally took three or four days.

A lively diversion in connection with the "mustard drive" was the rooting out of hundreds of jackrabbits which infested the entire area.

In later years, as the size of the Rancho was reduced by the advent of settled communities, cattle-raising declined steadily, being partly replaced after 1864 by flocks of sheep. This change is reflected by a report made in 1882, showing that there were on the Rancho "about 250 cattle, over 5,000 sheep, and 20 horses, 12 wild and eight tame." Within the next five years, because of drought conditions, the great majority of all stock was sold, bringing an end to the cattle era.

Sheep-raising operations were carried on from the earliest years. This was confined mostly to about 2,000 acres of bottom land adjacent to the river, which was more fertile. The principal crops were barley, corn, and wheat, along with some produce. Approximately 500 acres of this same area is still devoted to general agriculture.

The river itself was an uncertain source of water supply, but this was partly offset by a number of flowing artesian wells. After 1890, other wells were drilled on the lands to the west, although the great majority of the tract suffered from a lack of good water in many seasons. It was not until the organization of the Dominguez Water Company in 1911 that an adequate supply was assured. In some of the rainy years were handicapped by too much water, due to the winter floods on the Los Angeles River. These floods cut three six inches during the period 1835-1884.

The two principal sources of cash income from the Rancho San Pedro in the closing years of the 19th century were from sales of grain and from land rentals. A report for the year 1887 records the sale of 218 packs of barley at 97 cents per bushel, 4,887 pounds of wheat at \$1 per hundredweight, 3,878 sacks of oats at one cent a pound, and over three tons of condensed milk, or a total of \$4,812.27.

Wheat and land rentals were the only other sources of income. The land being used mostly for grazing purposes and general farming, with the exception of orchards in Wilmington. The policy of leasing lands has continued in some areas down to the present day, along with the more recent oil development.

Land values and the amount of taxes paid provide another insight into conditions on the Rancho San Pedro during the past century. In testimony before the Land Commission, dealing with conditions in 1834 when Manuel Dominguez was engaged in litigation with the Sepatada family, there appears the following:

"The Rancho San Pedro, if it had been vacant, would have been had for the asking; but once in private hands it possessed some value; it could have been bought for \$3000."

Again, referring to the year 1842 a pioneer American owner, Abel Stearns, stated:

"If the Rancho of the Dominguez had at that time been offered for \$5000, I do not think it would have obtained a purchaser."

Throughout the Spanish and Mexican periods, land was never considered to be worth more than a few cents an acre. Taxes paid before 1832 on the Rancho San Pedro amounted to less than \$200 a year. After California became a state, land values showed some increase; the sale of the Wilmington Tract in 1854 bringing slightly over eight dollars an acre. Thirty years later, except for settled areas, this figure had changed very little.

For some years after the Civil War period, Los Angeles County based its tax rate on an assessed value of 16 cents an acre for rancho lands. Even at this low figure, the county rolls show that Manuel Dominguez was on the delinquent tax list in eight different years between 1860 and 1874. In 1882, the taxes on slightly over 22,000 acres then in the Rancho amounted to \$2101.88; five years later the total was \$3230.67. By way of contrast, in 1928, the tax on \$103,294.53 was paid in taxes on less than half of the same acreage, and the combined bill for 1928 was in the millions of dollars.

(The handwritten will of Don Manuel Dominguez goes on to detail the traditions of the Spanish pioneers who were early residents of California. This famous will, still on file in Los Angeles County, will be published here in the next issue of the HERALD.)

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Down and Across words.