

WHY HE VETOED IT.

Reasons Given by Governor Cleveland for Disapproving the Five Cent Fare Bill.

Existing Contracts and Constitutional Requirements Ignored by the General Assembly.

The Measure Intended to Benefit Only People of Some Means and Considerable Leisure.

Workingmen Riding on "L" Roads at Five Cent Fares—The Clamor Raised by Designing Politicians.

New York special.

Since Governor Cleveland was first spoken of so prominently as a candidate for the Presidency, certain of his official acts have been brought up by his enemies to create prejudices against him. Now that he is actually the nominee of his party it will be the more necessary for his opponents to suppress some and falsify other truths in regard to the acts of his administration as Governor of the Empire State. His veto of Assembly bill No. 58, commonly known as the "Elevated Railroad Five Cent Fare Bill," in March, 1883, is the act which has been most prominently urged against him during the campaign to influence the laboring classes. It is safe to predict, however, that none of his opponents will dare to state in detail the reasons which the Governor gave for his veto, or mention all the circumstances under which it was proposed to reduce the fares on the New York elevated roads to five cents. The bill forbade the collection of more than five cents fare between the Battery and Harlem on any elevated railroad. For the past two years, by an act of the Legislature, the railroads have been compelled during six hours of the day, from 5:30 a. m. to 8:30 a. m., and from 5:30 p. m. to 8:30 p. m., to carry passengers for 5 cents, and these hours were specially fixed to accommodate the laboring classes during the hours for their going to and from work. This bill was to make the fare 5 cents all day long, and was confessedly gotten up and urged by Wall street people who were "bearing" the Elevated Railroad stocks, although a popular agitation was cleverly worked up to aid their scheme.

Impressed with its importance, and aware of the public interest which it had excited, the Governor exercised the greatest care and made most diligent inquiry into the measure before rendering his decision, which he gave, finally, in a veto message, setting forth his views with great fullness. "I am convinced," he said, "that in all cases the share which falls upon the Executive regarding the legislation of the State should be in no manner evaded, but fairly met by the expression of his carefully guarded and unbiased judgment. In his conclusions he may err, but if he has fairly and honestly acted, he has performed his duty and has given to the people of the State his best endeavors." Then, in justification of his veto, he gave a history of the elevated roads and the agreements made between them, and the State and city of New York.

In 1875 an act was passed, known as the rapid transit act, creating a Board of Commissioners to be appointed by the Mayor of New York City with power to regulate various matters in connection with the elevated roads. The Board was appointed, and they made a special agreement with the company that it should charge for any distance less than five miles not more than ten cents, and not more than two cents for each additional mile or fraction of a mile. It was further agreed that the company should, between 5:30 and 8:30 in the morning and evening, run what was known as "commission" trains, for the benefit of workingmen going to or coming from their work, on which not more than five cents fare should be charged from the Battery to Fifty-ninth street, and no more than seven cents from the Battery to Harlem. It was still further agreed that when the net increase of the road, after all expenditures, taxes and charges were paid, should amount to a dividend of 10 per cent. on the capital stock of the company, then, or within six months thereafter, the company should run trains at all hours of the day at reduced rates. These agreements were reported by the Board of Commissioners to the Mayor, and, in the fall of 1875, they were approved by the Board of Aldermen. The New York Elevated Railway Company thereupon completed its road to Harlem, a distance of ten miles.

"The bill before me," said the Governor, "provides that, notwithstanding all the statutes that have been passed, and all that has been done thereunder, passengers shall be carried the whole length of this road for 5 cents, a sum much less than is provided for in any of such statutes or stipulated in the proceedings of the Commissioners. I am of the opinion that in the legislative proceedings which I have detailed, and in the fact that pursuant thereto the road of the company was constructed and finished, there exists a contract in favor of this company which is protected by that clause in the Constitution of the United States which prohibits the passage of a law by any State impairing the obligation of contract."

The Governor went on to say that, even if this view of the case were incorrect, section thirty-three of the general railroad act provided that the Legislature may, when any railroad shall be opened for use, from time to time, alter or reduce the rates of freight, fare, or other profits upon said road, but the reduction shall not, without the consent of the company, be so great as to bring the profits on the invested capital to less than 10 per cent. per annum, and this reduction shall not be made except upon an examination by the State Engineer and Surveyor and Comptroller, showing that in the year then past the net income of the company from all sources shall have exceeded an annual income of 10 per cent. on the capital actually expended. "Even if the State has the power," continued the Governor, "to reduce the rates of fare upon these roads, it has agreed not to do so except under certain circumstances, and after a certain examination. I am not satisfied that these circumstances exist, and it is conceded that no such examination has been made. The constitutional objections which I have suggested to the bill under consideration are not, I think, removed by the claim that the proposed legislation is in the nature of an alteration of the charters of these companies, and that this is permitted by the State Constitution and by the provisions of some of the laws to which I have referred his habits. An Albany letter, referring to the fact says:

"The Governor, it must be understood, has such Democratic tastes, or such ordinary inclinations, that he does not keep a carriage. He is the first Governor who has occupied the present magnificent mansion, with its great stable facilities, who keeps neither coach nor horses. Tilden had a splendid stud, and the old gentleman was as accomplished a horseman as Gen. Grant. He had several turnouts, but left them for his household to use, always preferring to saddle B a-kstone. Gov. Robinson had a very modest turnout, although his son Dave occasionally spread himself. Kind regards to Mrs. Fisher. Sincerely yours, J. G. BLAINE.

the situation, passed statute after statute encouraging schemes which promised a solution of the problem. Capitalists were induced to invest their money, and rapid transit had but lately become an accomplished fact, but much of the risk and burden attending the maintenance of the roads was yet unknown and threatening. In conclusion the Governor said: "We have especially in our keeping the honor and faith of a great State, and we should see it that no suspicion attaches, through any act of ours, to the fair fame of the commonwealth. This State should not only be strictly just but scrupulously fair."

WHAT HE'S DONE.

Grover Cleveland's Record an Open Book for the Inquiring Multitude.

Six Important Labor Measures Signed and Two Little Jokers Vetoed by the Governor.

The Contract Labor, Tenement House, Cigar, and Hat Bills Among the Number Approved.

The Car-Drivers' Bill a Delusion and a Scare, and the Lien Law a Pal-pable Fraud.

New York telegram.

In refusing to sign what was known as the "Car-Drivers' bill," limiting the hours of labor of street-car drivers and conductors to twelve hours for a day's work. Gov. Cleveland put his reasons on record. While the bill made twelve hours a day's work for drivers and conductors, it did not in any way prohibit the making of a contract between the corporations and its employees requiring any number of hours' work. The Governor called attention to this point, and further remarked in his brief veto message on the bill that it was plain that if the men worked fewer hours the proposed law did not and could not prevent a reduction in their pay. He concluded his objection by saying, "I can not think that this bill is in the interest of the workingmen."

The fact that the bill did not prevent the making of contracts between the companies and men whereby the latter, by the exercise of pressure, could be induced to waive their rights and agree to work any number of hours, practically made the bill powerless to benefit the drivers and conductors. Even if the companies had not chosen that course to prevent the law from going into operation, supposing Gov. Cleveland had signed the bill, there was nothing in it to prevent the men's wages from being materially reduced. The pay of a driver on a Harlem line is, say, \$2 per day. The round trip from the Bridge to the City Hall and back takes three hours and twenty minutes. Five round trips occupy between sixteen and seventeen hours, constituting the average day's work. These five round trips average 40 cents per trip. If the Governor had signed that bill the company would have divided up the pay into trips, and, without reducing the rate of wages, have paid 40 cents per trip. Three and a half round trips would have consumed the twelve hours to which his day's work last is most convincing proof. The men on the cross-town lines are paid by the trip, being allowed the princely sum of 14 cents per trip. The trips, it seems, have been lessened in distance, whereupon the company promptly cut the men down in pay, the cut being in exact proportion to the time the men would otherwise have gained by the shorter trip. A strike was the result. The only effect the shortening of the number of working hours could have had on the employees of those lines would have been to lessen the number of times they could earn fourteen cents. Would the company have increased the pay per trip in order to make up the deficiency? Gov. Cleveland saw that this bill, alleged to be in the interest of the poorly paid car-drivers and conductors, was of practical benefit only to the car companies; therefore, he vetoed it.

The mechanics' lien bill, as it was introduced in the Legislature, was intended to give mechanics power to secure their wages by the means of liens. Before it obtained final passage it was so amended that its original purpose was either obscured or lost. It was for the reason that it was utterly worthless to accomplish the object intended that the Governor condemned it. In his veto message he said: "This bill, in distinct terms, repeals a number of mechanics' lien laws, including one especially applicable to New York. It gives all parties having claims four months after performance of work or furnishing of material to file a lien. It allows, on proceedings to force the lien, the same costs as in foreclosure cases. This would be quite onerous, and, I think, should not be allowed." The clause of the bill allowing four months for the filing of liens for the performance of work or furnishing of material practically destroyed all chance of the workman's getting his money. It put the workmen's parties having claims on an equal footing, thus destroying the original purpose of the law, which was to make the mechanic's claim for wages a preferred one. The clause allowing the same costs on proceedings to enforce the lien in the foreclosure of mortgages rendered it impossible for a mechanic to collect a small claim. It was palpably a scheme to make increased lawyers' fees and to diminish the protection given the mechanic. The worst feature about the bill, however, was the clause repealing existing mechanics' lien laws, some of which were far more advantageous to the workman than the new law. Mr. Thayer of Troy, President of the New York State Workingmen's Association, said recently that Gov. Cleveland acted wisely and with the interest of the workingmen in view when he defeated the mechanics' lien bill.

Gov. Cleveland's Simple Habits.

Gov. Cleveland has distinguished himself since he has been Chief Magistrate of the Empire State by the simplicity of his habits. An Albany letter, referring to the fact says:

"The Governor, it must be understood, has such Democratic tastes, or such ordinary inclinations, that he does not keep a carriage. He is the first Governor who has occupied the present magnificent mansion, with its great stable facilities, who keeps neither coach nor horses. Tilden had a splendid stud, and the old gentleman was as accomplished a horseman as Gen. Grant. He had several turnouts, but left them for his household to use, always preferring to saddle B a-kstone. Gov. Robinson had a very modest turnout, although his son Dave occasionally spread himself. Kind regards to Mrs. Fisher. Sincerely yours, J. G. BLAINE.

We would respectfully call the attention of anti-monopolists to the fact that the National Cable Company, alias the Standard Oil Comp. N. Y., which is now trying to seize a large number of streets in this city, is the corporation which fought with might and main at Albany last winter to defeat the general surface railroad bill, and that in

with shining liveries, coachman, footman, and tiger, and a Cornell crest on the panels. But our Democratic Governor makes no pretensions either to the coach or the crest."

Here we have the character of a man outlined—Democrat to the core. There is no ambition for vulgar display, but in all things setting an example of economy as against profligracy, of simplicity as against ostentation and parade. Such men are reformers, and everywhere, when in office, exert their influence in favor of Democratic simplicity and against aristocratic display.

BLAINE'S LETTERS.

He Writes to Fisher in Regard to Little Rock and Fort Smith.

"I Do Not Feel that I Shall Prove a Dead-head."

As there is a general interest in Mr. Blaine just now in consequence of his nomination for the Presidency, the following charming effusions from his versatile pen are given in their entirety. They are especially interesting from the fact that Mr. Blaine showed in them that he has an eye to business, and was not above making a nimble penny out of the Speakership, over and above the salary pertaining to the office. The letters were written in regard to stock in the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad and addressed to Warren Fisher, a railroad capitalist and millionaire, of Boston. The following is the first of the series:

AUGUSTA, June 20, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. FISHER: I thank you for the article from Mr. Lewis. It is good in itself and will do good. We write like a man of large intelligence and comprehension.

Your offer to admit me to a participation in the new rail enterprise is in itself a great service as I could expect to derive. I thank you very sincerely for it, and in its connection I wish to make a suggestion of a somewhat selfish character.

You spoke of Mr. Caldwell disposing of a share of his interest in the railroad. I would like to do it. I would make the proposition definite, so that I could know what to depend on. Perhaps if he waits till the full development of the enterprise, he might give reluctantly to part with his share; and I do not by this mean any dishonesty.

I do not feel that I shall prove a dead-head in the enterprise if I once embark in it. I see various chances in which I know I can be useful.

Very hastily and sincerely your friend.

J. G. BLAINE.

Mr. Fisher, India street, Boston.

The second letter expresses Mr. Blaine's appreciation of Mr. Fisher's "liberal mode of dealing" and satisfaction with his offers, in relation to the railroad enterprise. But Mr. Blaine is not so well pleased with the treatment of one of Mr. Fisher's associates, Mr. Joseph Caldwell:

AUGUSTA, July 2, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. FISHER: You ask me if I am satisfied with the offer you made of a share in your new railroad.

Or rather, I am more than satisfied with the terms of the offer. I think it is most liberal.

When I wrote you I had the ardor with which Americans prosecute commerce, the advantage which aids them and the success of their undertakings, I cannot help believing that they will one day become the first maritime power of the globe. They are bound to rule the seas as the Romans did the land, and the British did the air.

The Americans are in every now transport to their own shores nine-tenths of the European produce which they consume, and they also bring three-fourths of the exports of the new world to the northern consumers. The ships of the United States fill the docks of Havre and Liverpool; while the number of English and French vessels which are to be seen in New York is comparatively small.

We turn to the actual results reached since those words were written, with disappointment.

In 1869 America's exports and imports in 1869, 66,55; in 1870, 35,55; in 1871, 45,55; in 1872, 55,55; in 1873, 65,55; in 1874, 65,55; in 1875, 65,55; in 1876, 65,55; in 1877, 65,55; in 1878, 65,55; in 1879, 65,55; in 1880, 65,55; in 1881, 65,55; in 1882, 65,55; in 1883, 65,55; in 1884, 65,55; in 1885, 65,55; in 1886, 65,55; in 1887, 65,55; in 1888, 65,55; in 1889, 65,55; in 1890, 65,55; in 1891, 65,55; in 1892, 65,55; in 1893, 65,55; in 1894, 65,55; in 1895, 65,55; in 1896, 65,55; in 1897, 65,55; in 1898, 65,55; in 1899, 65,55; in 1900, 65,55; in 1901, 65,55; in 1902, 65,55; in 1903, 65,55; in 1904, 65,55; in 1905, 65,55; in 1906, 65,55; in 1907, 65,55; in 1908, 65,55; in 1909, 65,55; in 1910, 65,55; in 1911, 65,55; in 1912, 65,55; in 1913, 65,55; in 1914, 65,55; in 1915, 65,55; in 1916, 65,55; in 1917, 65,55; in 1918, 65,55; in 1919, 65,55; in 1920, 65,55; in 1921, 65,55; in 1922, 65,55; in 1923, 65,55; in 1924, 65,55; in 1925, 65,55; in 1926, 65,55; in 1927, 65,55; in 1928, 65,55; in 1929, 65,55; in 1930, 65,55; in 1931, 65,55; in 1932, 65,55; in 1933, 65,55; in 1934, 65,55; in 1935, 65,55; in 1936, 65,55; in 1937, 65,55; in 1938, 65,55; in 1939, 65,55; in 1940, 65,55; in 1941, 65,55; in 1942, 65,55; in 1943, 65,55; in 1944, 65,55; in 1945, 65,55; in 1946, 65,55; in 1947, 65,55; in 1948, 65,55; in 1949, 65,55; in 1950, 65,55; in 1951, 65,55; in 1952, 65,55; in 1953, 65,55; in 1954, 65,55; in 1955, 65,55; in 1956, 65,55; in 1957, 65,55; in 1958, 65,55; in 1959, 65,55; in 1960, 65,55; in 1961, 65,55; in 1962, 65,55; in 1963, 65,55; in 1964, 65,55; in 1965, 65,55; in 1966, 65,55; in 1967, 65,55; in 1968, 65,55; in 1969, 65,55; in 1970, 65,55; in 1971, 65,55; in 1972, 65,55; in 1973, 65,55; in 1974, 65,55; in 1975, 65,55; in 1976, 65,55; in 1977, 65,55; in 1978, 65,55; in 1979, 65,55; in 1980, 65,55; in 1981, 65,55; in 1982, 65,55; in 1983, 65,55; in 1984, 65,55; in 1985, 65,55; in 1986, 65,55; in 1987, 65,55; in 1988, 65,55; in 1989, 65,55; in 1990, 65,55; in 1991, 65,55; in 1992, 65,55; in 1993, 65,55; in 1994, 65,55; in 1995, 65,55; in 1996, 65,55; in 1997, 65,55; in 1998, 65,55; in 1999, 65,55; in 2000, 65,55; in 2001, 65,55; in 2002, 65,55; in 2003, 65,55; in 2004, 65,55; in 2005, 65,55; in 2006, 65,55; in 2007, 65,55; in 2008, 65,55; in 2009, 65,55; in 2010, 65,55; in 2011, 65,55; in 2012, 65,55; in 2013, 65,55; in 2014, 65,55; in 2015, 65,55; in 2016, 65,55; in 2017, 65,55; in 2018, 65,55; in 2019, 65,55; in 2020, 65,55; in 2021, 65,55; in 2022, 65,55; in 2023, 65,55; in 2024, 65,55; in 2025, 65,55; in 2026, 65,55; in 2027, 65,55; in 2028, 65,55; in 2029, 65,55; in 2030, 65,55; in 2031, 65,55; in 2032, 65,55; in 2033, 65,55; in 2034, 65,55; in 2035, 65,55; in 2036, 65,55; in 2037, 65,55; in 2038, 65,55; in 2039, 65,55; in 2040, 65,55; in 2041, 65,55; in 2042, 65,55; in 2043, 65,55; in 2044, 65,55; in 2045, 65,55; in 2046, 65,55; in 2047, 65,55; in 2048, 65,55; in 2049, 65,55; in 2050, 65,55; in 2051, 65,55; in 2052, 65,55; in 205