

NEW RAILWAY DEPOT

To Be Built at Third and Townsend Streets.

OTHER STATION PROJECTS.

What C. F. Crocker Says of the Union Depot Scheme— Railway Notes.

In railroad circles and elsewhere there is a greater discussion of the Union depot, Carquinez bridge and Goat island terminal schemes of the Southern Pacific Company than ever before. It was reported yesterday that, despairing of securing a suitable bay terminal on the Oakland side, the railroad people had decided to transfer their interests in that line to this side of the bay, and that they would set to work at once to erect a fine passenger depot on Townsend street, which would be made the center of traffic for the whole system. A reporter of the CHRONICLE discovered that this rumor was true only in part. The Southern Pacific Company has purchased a piece of ground on the corner of Third and Townsend streets on which it will construct a handsome station building to take the place of the rather shabby structure which has so long done service as a depot at Fourth and Townsend streets, and in the near future strangers to the city will not say, when our passenger depot is pointed out to them, as a visiting teacher from the East did the other day, "Oh, yes, I see that shed; but where's the depot?" The new building, however, will not be the leading edifice of the kind in this city.

"There is really no room over there," said Vice-President Charles F. Crocker of the Southern Pacific Company, as he sat in his office yesterday and waved his hand in the direction of the Fourth and Townsend-street yards. "We are too much cramped there already, and could not make this part of the city our chief passenger entrance, even if it were advisable to do so."

"Do you think, Colonel," asked the reporter, "that there is any immediate chance of the people of San Francisco being given a suitable union depot or ferry building?"

"I see no reason why such a building should not be erected. The wants of the public demand it, and it is certainly not right that San Francisco should be behind other cities in this respect. Of course the place for such a building is in the immediate line of travel, and it will doubtless be on the site of the present structure. But, as you know, the matter lies with the State, and it is not easy to determine just when the Harbor Commissioners will begin to make provision for this great public want. The State controls the property on a line with and east of East street. For us to proceed to the building of a depot adequate to the recent demands on any property that might be acquired on the west side of that line, however close to the old building it might be, would not be a wise act. We would like to give the public better facilities in the matter of landing from the ferry-boats, providing a similar arrangement to that afforded on the other side of the bay. This could hardly be done except through an arrangement with the Harbor Commissioners, by which the old building would still be utilized; but what is needed is an entirely new building in the place of the old one. The agitation of the question of proper street railway facilities at the ferry building was begun by the Omnibus Street Railroad Company. We would like to see this question settled, as the Market-street system is badly in need of proper terminal facilities. We have plans for a new auxiliary turn-table now ready, by which the blocking up of cars will be greatly obviated. Shortly before starting for the East I was shown the plans of the Harbor Commissioners for the completion of that part of the seawall, including the ferry slips and the building. If this scheme should be carried out it will give the public all that is required in the way of passenger facilities here for the present."

Questioned as to the progress of the movement by which the Southern Pacific Company is to acquire the right to run its trains out upon Goat island, and give the people a five-minute ferry passage, Colonel Crocker said that the matter had sprung up while he was away in the East. He was sure that it had not been revived by any of the officials of the Southern Pacific Company. It was a question whether the company would abandon its present commodious building at Oakland pier to go to the enormous expense of building a great causeway out to the island and leveling the latter off in a manner suitable for the purpose. Still, if the public demanded it and the traffic warranted it, the consideration of the present interests at the pier would hardly stand in the way. Estimates of the cost of leveling off the island and constructing an iron trestle, such as would have to be built, have never been made, but the company is fully aware that it would be very great. It was a question for the people to decide whether they wish to leave the island to the uses to which it has been put since the last discussion of the matter, several years ago, or whether they desire to have it utilized as a great public convenience and benefit.

With reference to the Carquinez straits bridge project, the gentleman said that soundings have been completed from Wheatport to a point on the opposite shore, and at several places near Fort Costa. An opportunity will be given for Eastern bridge-builders to make estimates of the cost of the structure, and Sooy Smith, a representative of a large Eastern firm, has secured data with reference thereto. The bridge will be built, though the date of the beginning of operations is as yet unknown.

The twentieth special expedited fruit train of the season left Sacramento last evening. Thus far this season the trains have averaged eleven cars each.

The new transcontinental freight tariff is announced to go into effect on the 10th prox.

The private car of M. M. Kirkman, controller of the Chicago and Northwestern, was at the Oakland pier yesterday. Mr. Kirkman and a party of eleven friends are visiting the coast, having left Chicago on the 9th inst. for that purpose. They have taken in the Yosemite and Southern California, and left last night for Portland, to return home via the Northern Pacific.

The Yosemite stage coaches are going out full each day. The Watson line took out a party of several Bostonians yesterday. Forty school teachers will go to-day, and a large party is booked for to-morrow.

W. C. Hazledine, solicitor for the Atlantic and Pacific, who has been up from Albuquerque on business, started homeward last night. While here he settled four lawsuits brought by different persons against the Atlantic and Pacific and Santa Fe for damages. Of late years these lines have allowed very few damage suits to go into the courts, preferring to settle them on the outside.