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## THE NORTHWESTERN

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That's nice. Gov. Morehead recommends that a state printery be established at the penitentiary and to be operated by convict labor. That's about the biggest insult the governor could offer the printers and newspaper interests of the state. Outside of that, the governor has claimed opposition to state convict labor in competition with free labor and in the same breath recommends convict labor in competition with the printers of the state. As there are no convict printers we are to suppose they are to be manufactured out of the state criminal classes. Fine, fine. The governor might well take his place at the head of the damphool class. Evidently Morehead is on a par with a certain member of the legislature some years ago who introduced a bill to cut the legal rates for printing in two, and boastfully proclaimed that if he could make it become a law he could be elected to congress in spite of any and all newspaper opposition on earth. He wanted to be returned to legislature later, but wasn't

Billy Sunday has begun the work of taking Philadelphia from its evil ways. His printed talks doesn't sound much like the sweet words of the gentle Nazarene, but perhaps Philamadelphia is too hardened in sin to appreciate other than the ribald utterances of Billy as reported in the local papers as follows:

"I'll make this old town turn over in its sleep. Come on, you forces of evil in Philadelphia that have made the church a doormat to wipe your dirty feet upon. Come on, you triple extract of infamy. Come on, you assassins of character. Come on, you defamers of God and enemies of His church. Come on, you bull-necked, beetle-browed, hog-jowled, weasel-eyed fourflushers, false alarms and excess baggage. In the name of Almighty God I challenge and defy you. I'm here for nine weeks. Come on, and I'll deliver the goods, express prepaid."

In the name of Jesus of Nazareth and Christianity, as we are are taught in the Holy Scriptures, does the world need that sort of billingsgate and braggadocio to evangelize it? Is that the sort of rot necessary to build up Christianity and make men better? Faugh!

In a speech at Indianapolis, the other day, President Wilson hinted that he might run for president again. Now how about the Bryan report that the Beerless might resign from the cabinet to again run for chief executive? Just think of the proud moments Brer. Beush would have in remembering he had fed Billy's face at his festive board as a historical fact, should that perennial get in it again and succeed this time. And, hush, in that case might not Cholly hope to become postmaster general under Billee?

H. D. Leggett of the St. Paul Republican has sold the paper to F. L. Carroll, formerly editor of the Ashland (Neb) Gazette. Bro. Leggett, in the short time he has edited the Republican has proved one of the live editorial wires of the state; and the Northwestern trusts he may re-engage in the newspaper business again in this section of the state. We don't want to lose him. Success to his successor.

All Italians in Switzerland liable for military service, are ordered to report at home for military examination. It is said there are 200,000 of them in the Swiss country, and at least 50,000 of them liable for military duty. Don't that look as if Italy had war on the brain?

Omaha wheat prices soared way up last week, going to \$1.32, the price when Patton in Chicago attempted to corner all the wheat in the United states in July, 1909. Durum wheat went to \$1.46, the top price ever paid in any market west of Chicago.

Persia has sent an ultimatum to Turkey which portends that country getting into the eastern mix-up. Persia complains that its territory is being invaded by the Kurds and Turks.

## FARMER VITALLY CONCERNED IN RAILROADS

### What the European War Means to the American Farmer.

That every city of any size in the country is full of idle men at the present moment is a fact well known to every reader of newspapers—for hardly a day passes that the press is not full of comment about the hungry thousands who stand in the "bread line" and patronize the free "soup houses" in every large center of population. Nor is this state of affairs due to the policy of any one political party, but rather the outgrowth of conditions which have been slowly but surely crystallizing for a number of years. In the first place, the Corn Belt—the great bread basket of the Nation—has had a series of slim crops in most sections, and this naturally has had a depressing effect upon the business conditions. Again we have been passing through a period of industrial readjustment—of changing from the loose methods which prevailed a dozen or so years over to a policy of strict government control of public service corporations and sharp inquiry into conduct of all other large corporations—and, in trying to stamp out the abuses of the past, the pendulum has swung so far in the other direction that so far as the railroads are concerned, at least, it threatens to precipitate the most of them which are not already in the hands of the receivers upon the rocks of financial wreck and ruin.

That the depressed financial conditions of the railroads is largely responsible for the great army of unemployed was vividly demonstrated by a prominent St. Louis newspaper recently when it showed that nine St. Louis manufacturing establishments which deal in railroad supplies employed 14,673 men one year ago, whereas now they employ only 4,503, with a reduction in their pay role amounting to \$588,700 per month, or over seven millions a year. If the effect upon only nine enterprises is so far reaching as this, what would the figures show if they were available for similar industries and the hundreds of other enterprises affected in a greater or less degree throughout the country? Nearly all these concerns have on hand hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of finished equipment which was ordered by railroads a year or so ago, but which they have not been able to pay for; in the meantime not being able to pay for goods already ordered, the railroads are not placing any new contracts, and unless they receive speedy assistance from a Nation-wide standpoint the tendency will be for labor conditions to grow worse rather than better.

In last week's article we referred to the fact that the railroads are the largest employers of labor in the United States and that during the last fiscal year they paid over thirteen hundred million dollars in wages to the army of men and women who conduct their business. We also referred to the fact that they paid out almost a thousand million dollars for steel, coal, lumber and other supplies of which they are the largest consumers in the country, and therefore the chief support of hundreds of thousands employed in these great industries.

In view of these facts, is it not plain to any thinking man that it is of tremendous importance to the whole country that the railroads be permitted to earn a reasonable income if the millions of American laboring men are to be kept profitably employed?

Does not any man know that if the thousands who are at this moment hunting for work in Chicago, St. Louis, New York, Pittsburg, Cleveland and other large cities were profitably employed it would mean a higher price for what the farmer has to sell and that it would be reflected in the receipts of every merchant and the output of every factory in the Nation?

In view of such a serious state of affairs, can the average farmer or business man afford to oppose the small increase in rates which is necessary to put the railroads upon a sound basis? Is not the amount of passenger fare or freight which the average farmer or citizen pays out during the year a mere bagatelle when measured against the lucrative employment and buying power of the millions of American laboring men?

Another Serious Phrase  
Important as is the employment of labor, there is another serious phrase of this problem which calls for profound thought at the hands of all thinking citizens, and especially the farmer. In last week's article we cited the fact that in their desperate effort to make both ends meet, many railroads are "burning the candle at both ends"—that in order to bolster up their securities and keep out of the hands of the receivers the rolling stock and roadbeds of many lines have been deteriorating rapidly for a number of years and hence are in no position to handle a big season's tonnage, should the strain of a heavy crop year suddenly descend upon them. That the great foreign war will produce the highest prices ever known for the food stuffs produced by the farmer is admitted on all hands, and if there ever was a time when he will need adequate and efficient shipping facilities it will be during the next two

or three years—and yet we are actually facing perhaps the most prosperous period the American farmer has ever known with many American railroads in a dilapidated physical condition. No sooner had the great European war burst upon the world than Congress realized that our merchant marine was utterly weak and inefficient. Steps were at once taken to make the best of the situation and to repair as speedily as possible our neglected shipping facilities upon the high seas—and that the handicap has already cost the American people millions of dollars during the last few months is so patent that it requires no extended comment. It is one thing to have markets in all parts of the world which have heretofore been supplied by the great warring nations begging for American goods and foodstuffs—but it is quite another thing to have American ships in which to deliver these cargoes.

We will now add to the neglect of an adequate merchant marine the further folly of permitting our railroads to get into such a weakened physical condition that they will break down under the strain of delivering the products of the farmer and the manufacturer at our ocean ports and thus largely waste the great opportunity for profits which the foreign war will undoubtedly bring to us. This is a phase of the present situation which commands the serious thought of every farmer in Kansas and the Corn Belt generally—for here is where the lion's share of the nation's foodstuffs are produced and here is where the farmers cannot afford to be hampered by inadequate transportation facilities if they are to make the most of favorable market opportunities.

There is not a single manager of a Central or Western railroad who will not admit that the present supply of first-class freight locomotives and box cars could not successfully meet the requirements of several bountiful crop years—and yet they haven't the funds with which to supply this equipment and thus be prepared for emergency when it comes—as it undoubtedly will.

Farmers Will Profit  
In this connection, it is opportune to say that the American farmer is certain to reap a larger profit from the chaotic conditions which exist in Europe than any other class of tradesmen or citizen. So far as our manufacturers are concerned, while new markets are undoubtedly beckoning to the United States, yet on the other hand, for several years to come, the splendid trade which we enjoyed in Germany, England, France, Austria and Russia on our manufactured products is certain to remain demoralized and thus we will be fortunate if we do not lose more than we gain in new fields, with whose needs we are not yet familiar, and to which it is certain to require some years to adjust ourselves.

It is the American farmer, however who has no complications ahead of him, and whose flour, pork, beef, mutton and other foodstuffs must be depended upon to make up the shortage which is already looming big in the distance because the harvest fields of the most fertile sections of Europe have been converted into a shambles

for the contending armies. Exports of breadstuffs from the United States in November were valued at \$40,205,000, or almost four times as much as in November of last year, while meat and cattle exports amounted to nearly \$14,000,000 or a gain of 20 per cent over last year, and this despite our miserable shipping facilities of the high seas.

In view of these facts, was there ever a time when the farmers of Nebraska and other Corn Belt states can view the future with as much assurance, or when they can so well afford to treat fairly every other great industry in the nation as now?

Putting in terms of sound business policy, was there ever a time when they should do their part to the end that American labor may be profitably employed in all great channels of industry, and that it may adequately discharge the heavy shipping burdens which will undoubtedly descend upon it in the not distant future.

More Railroads Needed  
No other single agency in the Nation has had more to do with the advancement of land values than have the railroads, and as evidence of this fact, the proximity of a farm to the market almost invariably fixes its selling value. Nebraska and every other Central or Western state is still in dire need of hundreds of miles of additional railroad mileage, and these new lines will not be built until American railroad securities are re-established as a paying investment—and this, on the basis of present railroad earnings is out of the question. Nearly all our present lines were built years ago, when railroad investments were looked upon with favor at home and abroad, and hence, if there is a class of citizens in the land who should be vitally interested in rescuing the railroads from the pitiable plight in which they find themselves at the present moment it is the farmer. As a matter of fact, were it not so extremely far reaching in its effect, the controversy over a slight increase in railroad rates in any great agricultural state would largely resemble a tempest in a tea pot—a matter which should be settled in the brief space of time required to apply the remedy. When a private industry, great or small, advances the price of its commodities we take it as a matter of course and say nothing about it—and in the past we have opposed a square deal for the railroads largely because the people did not understand their importance to the nation, because they were angered at the occasional abuses which strict governmental regulation has forever eliminated and because for some years designing political opportunists have found abuse of the railroads an easy road to public preferment. The public sentiment, however, is changing rapidly and that we will soon reach a sane understanding between the people and the railroads, which are so vitally essential to the agricultural and commercial progress of every community in the nation, is becoming more and more apparent every day. (Paid adv. To be continued.)

Altogether Out of Place.  
James Payn once told the story of a visiting parson who was starting the prayer for rain when the clerk pulled his coat tails. "You mustn't read that, sir," he said. "But it's a prayer for a good harvest, my man," expostulated the preacher. "That's just it, sir," explained the clerk; "the visitors are our harvest, and we want none of your rain."

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