

## AN IMPORTANT REPORT

The interstate commerce commission has submitted to congress its first report on discriminations and monopolies in compliance with the Tillman-Gillispie resolution of last March. A Washington correspondent for the Associated Press says:

The report deals with bituminous coal carried east of the Ohio river, the roads involved being the Norfolk & Western, Chesapeake & Ohio, Baltimore & Ohio, Pennsylvania, Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburg, Beech Creek division of the New York Central & Hudson River, Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern, Buffalo & Susquehanna, and West Virginia Central & Pittsburg (now the Western Maryland Railroad).

The reports says all of the above companies own, directly or by stock ownership in other companies, large interests in coal lands.

As a result of its findings, the commission makes the following recommendations:

"That every common carrier engaged in interstate transportation of coal be required to make public the system of car distribution in effect upon its railway and the several divisions thereof, showing how the equipment for coal service is divided between the several divisions of its road.

"That where the capacity of the mines is the basis for the distribution of equipment, a fair, just and equitable rating of the mines be required.

"That after reasonable time carriers engaged in interstate commerce be prohibited from using 'individual' or 'private cars' for the handling of coal traffic.

"That carriers engaged in interstate commerce be forbidden after reasonable time to own or have interest, directly or indirectly, in any operated

coal properties, except such as are exclusively for their own fuel supply, and that ownership, either directly or indirectly, by officers or employes of common carriers of any coal properties or any of the stock of coal companies along the line of the road by which they are employed, be forbidden."

Some of the stock in coal concerns acquired by the railroad man is legitimate, says the report, but in any event its holding is unwise under the circumstances. In other instances stock is given to obtain favorable consideration from railroad officers and employes. The most flagrant offender in this respect, concludes the commission, is the Pennsylvania, although on the Baltimore & Ohio the condition prevails to a certain extent.

The report tells of railway and freight associations in the territory involved, the general object of which seemed to be maintenance of certain coal and freight rates on all the roads involved.

The result of this agreement between the roads, declares the report, has been practically to "abolish" substantial competition between the carriers in coal for the territory in question."

This condition is regarded as having brought about "discriminations, injustice and inequalities to independent operators and has prevented persons who wished to engage in mining from doing so."

Most of the conditions about which shippers complain, says the report, grow out of the want of publicity of the dealings between the roads and shippers. If the business is conducted openly, much favoritism would be averted and, "wherever unjust suspicions were aroused, the fact that they

were incorrect would have readily appeared."

It is declared by the commission that many inequalities and unjust methods are used in arriving at each mine's capacity.

The report says the ownership or interest in coal properties or coal traffic by carriers of their officers or coal traffic has, in the opinion of the commission, brought about discriminations, injustice and inequalities in the service to independent operators, and has prevented many persons who desired to engage in mining coal from doing so and that the combinations or contracts of the several carriers, members of the associations mentioned, has had the effect of increasing freight rates and also the price of coal to the consumers.

The report says it appears that one of the most fruitful sources of complaint by shippers against the carriers, as far as car distribution and the furnishing of facilities is concerned, has grown out of the want of publicity on the part of the carriers in their dealings with shippers. If the carriers had conducted their business with shippers openly and had furnished information as to car distribution, to which shippers were entitled much of the favoritism according to the report, would have been averted and wherever unjust suspicions were aroused the fact they were incorrect would have readily appeared. On the Pennsylvania and Baltimore & Ohio railroads it was almost impossible for the shipper to ascertain actually what was the system of car distribution, and whether it was faithfully carried out. The commission announces that the method of rating mines on those roads where the capacity of the mines to produce coal is an element considered in the distribution of cars to the several divisions or districts and each mine therein, has not been carried out with the care or fairness which should characterize such responsible and important duties.

It is declared that many inequalities and unjust methods are used in arriving at the capacity of each mine. It is strenuously claimed on the part of the Pennsylvania Railroad company, the report says, that the acquisition of the stocks of the Baltimore & Ohio, the Chesapeake & Ohio and the Norfolk & Western by the Pennsylvania Railroad company was the real cause for the cessation in rebates, and this claim in part seems to be justified."

## ACCIDENTS IN MINES

The Engineering and Mining Journal shows that in 1905 more than 2,200 lives were lost in our mines, while in ten years 15,000 miners have been killed. The rate to the thousand in 1895 was 2.7. This fell to 2.4 in 1897, but rose to 3.5 in 1902, the 1905 rate was 3.44. The actual number is believed to be greater because the smaller mines were not reported. In England governmental scrutiny has minimized the loss by explosions, but there is a foolhardiness about handling mine machinery that apparently constitutes an irreducible minimum. The Journal goes on to say:

"Insufficient protection from live electric wires and coal-cutting machines seem to be the cause of many deaths. Laws are needed to require proper shielding of the dangerous parts of mining machines. The dangerous parts of mining machines should not be exposed, but should be shielded by some device; some of them are shielded, but in nine cases out of ten those who work with them are permitted to remove the shield and throw them away, because they are a little troublesome to handle. The law ought to require proper shielding of the dangerous parts of mining machines, and it ought also to require a safe and proper system of stringing electric wires in any part of a mine where men are liable to come in contact with them."

—Indianapolis, Ind., News.

## THEY DO NOT RESIGN

Chief justices do not resign. From John Marshall's time till now none has resigned. Taney, Chase and Waite died in office. Mr. Fuller has no intention to do otherwise, and is in good health. Nor under any circumstances would he agree with a republican president to resign, to enable the latter to name a republican to succeed him.

The press can not know the sort of democrat Mr. Fuller is. It can not know the force of the custom which makes the chief justiceship an obligation for life, as well as an inviolable life honor. To be sure, Mr. Chase was suspected of desiring the presidency, but he held the chief justiceship till he died. Mr. Fuller regards his office as of equal rank with that of the president and as a place of higher dignity because of longer service.—Brooklyn Eagle.

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(Atlanta Constitution.)

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