THE RELATION OF RAILROAD RATES TO GENERAL BUSINESS.

To the Business Man: No matter how objectionable an advance in freight rates may be to us personally, we must recognize that an improvement in general business is dependent on a betterment of operating and financial conditions of the railroads. That the operating results are most unsatisfactory is readily seen by the latest INTER-STATE COMMERCE COMMISSION reports, which show that for the nine months ended April 1st, 1910, eleven railroad systems, all West and North of a line drawn from Chicago to St. Louis, compared with the same roads for the same period in the previous year, had their gross earnings increased about $50,000,000.00, while their net earnings showed a decrease of $3,500,000.00, and for the month of March, on the same comparison, they show an increase of $7,000,000.00 in gross and a decrease of $965,000.00 in net earnings.

Attention is called to the fact that the wage increases, (except a small amount,) were not in force during this period, and from now on these will greatly increase the operating cost.

These same railroads had their taxes increased over the previous year $2,500,000.00, or 14% and have to pay higher rates of interest on their loans. These roads covering the most prosperous part of the country may be considered representative of general railroad conditions.

During the past three years of poor business, railroad expenditures for maintainance were necessarily at the lowest point, and in consequence their motive power equipment and tracks now demand a greater proportion of operating expense. No provision has been or is being made for the growing demands of the country, and as transportation is the backbone of business, its weakness or inefficiency cripples every other condition; because all products are valuable in the ratio with which their accessibility to the consuming market.

It is most important to the shipper, that railroads at all times are fully equipped to take care of an increase of his business. The first eight months of 1907 demonstrated that the railroads could not handle the business then offered with any degree of satisfaction. The financial conditions since have not permitted them to even maintain their then position. If the then volume of business were to come back supplemented by the three years growth of the country in the interval, transportation would be paralyzed; and what would that cost the shipper compared with a reasonable advance in freight rates now? Such an advance would provide the means for avoiding this impending disaster. The iron horse needs to be kept in good condition for the same reason as the living horse used for transportation. The teamster knows that if his horse is not well shod, well groomed and well fed, and his harness and wagon kept in good repair, that all he will save on such economy will be many times wasted in the efficiency of his transportation, and also add great expense to the shipper. It is exactly the same with the railroads: the shipper has a right to demand that transportation be ample and efficient; the success of his business and the development of the country are dependent on it.

The Investor: To do this, the railroad must show adequate returns to maintain proper borrowing credit and present a promising source of investment to procure the necessary funds to improve and develop the property as needed. It is neither the railroad president nor the shipper that controls the situation; it is the **investor** alone who holds the key; without his uninvested dollar the railroad cannot extend or improve, no matter how great the needs of the shipper or the country may be.

With all the increasing cost of operation, supplemented by ever increasing and burdensome legislative restrictions concerning their earnings, in face of the fact that the average dividend rate on railroads was less than 3½ per cent for the past six years, and the United States Supreme Court in the case of the Consolidated Gas Company stated that "6 per cent was a fair return on money invested in public utilities," with the average freight rate in 1909 of three-quarters of a cent per ton per mile, the lowest in nine years, the average passenger rate per mile, one and nine-tenths cents, the lowest ever reached, is it any wonder that the investor holds back and the Bankers demand high interest rates from the railroads? The railroads need $2,000,000,000.00 to put their lines in proper condition, and to increase their terminal facilities at all points that are even now a necessity, and $1,000,000,000.00 more for modern new motive power and equipment to move their freight with promptness and economy. Where can they get the money? Only by increased earnings from advanced rates, and by so doing better their credit by attracting the uninvested dollars that are now going to other more attractive but less productive investments.

What will the advance cost the Ultimate Consumer? Poor's Manual says the average haul of all freight in 1908 was 142 miles. The average rate in 1909 was three-fourths of a cent per ton per mile.

The average total rate for the average total haul, assuming it to be the same as 1908, would be $1.06 per ton. An advance of 10% on this rate would increase the cost 10 cents per ton, or 1-200 of a cent per pound. An advance of 10% on the present specific rates would increase the cost of 100 pounds dressed beef in New York, shipped from Chicago, 4½ cents; 100 pounds canned fish in St. Louis, shipped from Maine, 1 8-10 cents; 100 pounds flour in New York, from Minneapolis, 2 cents; a suit of clothes in Chicago, from Boston, ½ cent; the same for a woman's suit. On a man's outfit, coat, trousers, shoes and hat, New England to Mississippi Valley, not to exceed 1 cent. The Ultimate Consumer can multiply these illustrations indefinitely. The manufacturer, jobber and retailer could easily absorb this slight advance, because, if his business increased but one unit, that would more than pay the increased cost on one hundred units.

Railroad net earnings thus increased, the railroads would have a ready market for their securities, and with the money thus obtained again start all the business and industries now comparatively idle that are directly or indirectly dependent on their property. The working men would be fully employed, their families would again purchase freely, and that means good business for everyone.

There are 1,500,000 railroad employees. It takes 2,500,000 men to supply what the railroads need, and a vast number of men are employed in supplying the personal needs of the above 4,000,000 men and their families, representing 16,000,000 people. Every kind of business is dependent in some measure on railroad prosperity.

High cost of living: If it had not been for the encouragement given railroad investors in the past, where would we have been to-day for our food supply? They opened up thousands of miles of undeveloped and unproductive land and yet our food is high, because of lack of supply; our consumption is increasing faster than our food production. If the railroad investor stops as he now has, there will be an advance in food rates soon that will be far greater than increased freight rates. High food means high labor, and high labor means high everything. Therefore the Ultimate Consumer and the State and National Governments should be interested in developing land that will produce bountiful food products. Half of the country west of the Mississippi is not used, and will not be until covered with railroads. Who would want to build roads in unproductive lands when those in cultivated country will barely pay the lowest rate of interest, and the owners and managers are being harassed and maligned as in no other business?

This condition will only improve when the business man realizes that the investor does not provide the source of his own investments. He waits for you to do that in some desirable form. By your individually letting things drift, and doing nothing, your legislator, with no business experience, hearing no advice and receiving no direct information, which he gladly would from you (quite likely you do not even know his name), listens to the only voices heard; the agitator or the aggressive shipper whose views of the business world are obtained by looking out of the small hole of a funnel directed at his own plant, unconscious of other conditions of far more importance to his own business than the freight rates. Such men as these by their vociferous vigor, have stirred up a popular anti-corporation agitation that has cowed all parties, and they are so scared of being charged as owned or bought that all questions of principle, equity or the general good are ignored. The railroad man draws his salary, whether the road pays or not; he does not own it. If he does say anything he is sat upon. The stock-holders as a body are defenseless. You are the sufferer and the only one who would be listened to. Will you not study your own interests, find out your legislator's name, and tell him the real situation? Otherwise we must wait until grim necessity starves out the present anti-railroad fever.

June 6, 1910.

T. A. GRIFFIN.

(Advertisement.)

Incorrect Phraseology.

Speaking of the comet as a "celestial wanderer," when its orbit is fixed and known and its place in the heavens determined at any time, is about as correct as speaking of a "dash to the pole" when the dasher is doing well to make ten miles a day.—New York Tribune.

Leisure Essential.

Trees, fields, sunsets, rivers, breezes and the like, must all be enjoyed at leisure, if at all. There is not the slightest use in a man's paying a hurried visit to the country. He may as well go there blindfolded as go in a hurry. He will never see the country. He will have a perception, no doubt, of hedgerows and grass, of green lanes and silent cottages, perhaps of great hills and rocks, of various items which go toward making the country; but the country itself he will never see.—Country Parson.

Woman Builds Flying Machine.

An Irish woman, Miss Lillian E. Bland, has designed and built for herself a biplane glider 28 feet wide. Several satisfactory glides have been accomplished with the machine, controlled from the ground by ropes. The engine and propellers will be fitted later.

Who's the Boss?

A Boston professional man went out recently and on his return found this note from his stenographer, who had evidently been house cleaning:

"If I'm not in by nine, it's because I am at the dentist', probably, but it may be that I'm at home, sick with all kinds of diseases that one catches from dirt germs. If that's the reason, you have no kick coming at all, because your old desk was a mess. You can be fixing up that pile of letters and we will answer them right off. Them's my orders."

HAPPENINGS IN THE CITIES

"Practical" Queries That Puzzled Dad

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Was education more practical a generation ago, or did John's father study his books more thoroughly than John does? John is a seventh grade student in the public schools. He asked his father one day to help him solve the following problem:

A, asked how much money he has in the bank, replied: "If I had $10 more I would have $1,000 more than half what I now have." How much money had A?

"Such a fool problem," said the father. "Tell that teacher to ask the cashier. You have been pestering me with problems like that for a week. Suppose your teacher asked you how old you are. Would you tell her:

"'If I were ten times as old as I am, diminished by 42, I would be 30 years older than dad, and if dad were one-fourth as old as he now is he would be my age?'"

"What would your teacher do if you answered in such a manner? In my days we had practical problems in our arithmetic."

In order to investigate his father's statement John went to the public library and asked for an old arithmetic.

The librarian gave him "Richard's Natural Arithmetic." He turned to the page marked "Practical Exercises" and read:

A puts his whole flock of sheep into three pastures; half go into one pasture, one-third into another and 32 into a third. How many in the flock?

"That's queer," said John. "Practical exercises, too. Here is a man who wants to find how many sheep he has. He counts them so he will know when he has half of them. This half he puts into a pasture. Then he counts out a third and puts it in another pen. Next he counts what's left and finds he has 32. After a little figuring he finds how many in the whole flock. Very practical. I guess dad didn't study that book."

The next book he examined was "Milne's Inductive Arithmetic," edition of 1879. In miscellaneous examples he found the following:

Two ladders will together just reach the top of a building seventy-five feet high. If the shorter ladder is two-thirds the length of the other, what is the length of each?

"Why didn't he measure each ladder separately?" John asked himself. "That problem is not practical. I guess dad is older than I thought. I want an older book."

The text book written in 1868 was handed to him. The book was evidently influenced by the Civil war, for it was filled with problems dealing with battering down fortifications and the sustenance of soldiers. One problem was:

"If twelve pieces of cannon, eighteen pounders, can batter down a fortress in three hours, how long will it take for nineteen twenty-four pounders to batter down the same fortress?"

"That's fine for a general," John reflected, "but dad says that I am going to be a captain of industry."

Another arithmetic of the same date had the famous fish problem, with which John's teacher had troubled him for six weeks before he himself finally explained it to the class. The fish problem is.

"The head of a fish is ten inches long. Its tail is as long as its head and one-half the body. The body is as long as the head and tail both. How long is the fish?"

Very handy problem for a butcher.

Partners for Years But Never Speak

NEW YORK.—In one of the large wholesale houses in this city there are five partners. Two of them have not spoken to each other except over the telephone for twenty years. Their private offices are not more than twenty feet apart and they see each other a score of times a day, but they meet and pass without the slightest sign of recognition. If it becomes necessary in the course of business for them to communicate with each other they do so either by calling a stenographer and dictating a memorandum or else by being connected on the telephone over their private line. They never speak face to face.

A quarter of a century ago these five partners were young men with small capital. All of them had been employes of the same concern, but they had their own ideas and believed in them. So they put their money together and formed a partnership. The new business was successful from the very start. Each man had his own particular branch to look after and each was a specialist who did his part to perfection. Their separate interests in the firm so interlocked and they worked together so harmoniously that within five years they were on the high road to fortune. It was just at this time that these two partners fell out. It arose from a trifling difference their wives had. Naturally each partner, through loyalty to his spouse, took her side, and the quarrel grew so bitter that it culminated in blows being exchanged. Then they vowed they never would speak to each other again. The other three partners saw that if this course were pursued it would spell ruin. After a lengthy conference, in which the two disputants were called in separately, the proposition was put to them that they should agree to remain with the firm, of which they were essentially important parts, and should hold communication with each other only on business matters and then either in writing or by telephone.

This is the plan that has been followed to this day and is likely to be pursued to the end. When these two enemies talk over the telephone they converse with all the polite amiability of old business associates; they discuss prices, business propositions and the various problems with which they are mutually concerned.

"Old Rags, Old Iron" Set to Music

BOSTON.—An outdoor school for making musical rag men, hawkers and street venders is the latest educational novelty established in this city.

Miss Caroline E. Wenzel, a fair settlement worker and a graduate of Vassar, is the originator of the idea and sole instructor. Miss Wenzel believes that if the voice of the rag man and peddler must be tolerated it should issue forth from the throats in flute-like tones. She confidently believes that once her method becomes a fixture a person, instead of feeling obliged to slam down the window on a hot summer day or fret and fume over the gutteral cries of the merchants of the thoroughfares, will throw open the window and be lulled into peaceful slumber through the melodious strains of "Rags and Bottles," "Ole Iron," "Soap Grease" and "Juicy Lemons."

Miss Wenzel has established her outdoor school at Washington street and Massachusetts avenue and has nearly a score of pupils. The young woman is popular with the vendors.

She got her idea from a trip abroad last year. Her method is simple. She finds out a man's business and instructs him accordingly. She suggests expression to fit his wares and teaches the correct pronunciation of these expressions.

Her musical instruction is similar to what the musical teachers advocate for the production of a good ringing "head tone."

Expected Twin Babies But He Found—

CHICAGO.—"Come home—twins!" A mandatory order to a policeman of the Hyde Park station flashed from his home to the station at midnight. The policeman obeyed, just as he has done each year at the summons to "come home" upon the arrival of new members of the family—ten of them—during the last ten years.

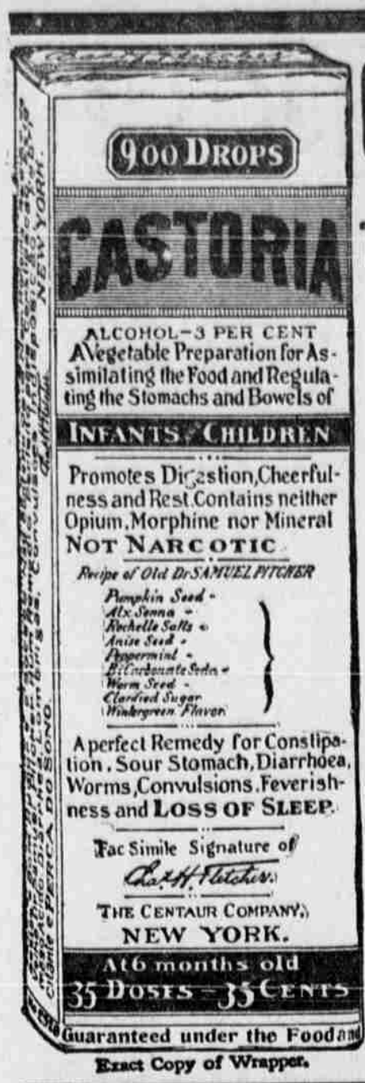
Sergt. Bartholomew Cronin, the father, left his desk duties at the police station and rushed to his house at 7019 Indiana avenue. Within were signs of activity; lights flashed and above the din of excitement could be heard the wail of several of the small Cronins. Even Polly, the red Durham cow, which furnishes milk for the group, seemed affected and mooed in unison with the crying children.

The police sergeant hesitated at the threshold—then doffed his helmet and entered. He sought first the physicians, two of them, who talked disinterestedly with some of the children One of them said:

"Sergeant, this case is one most unusual. It should be brought to the attention of dairymen throughout the country. A full-sized male and female. Mother and offspring doing nicely. You might drop a word to the farm journals."

Then a veterinary surgeon appeared and joined in the congratulations.

Polly, the red Durham cow, had given birth to twin calves.



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Cautionary Note: Be sure you get this stove—see that the name-plate reads "New Perfection."

does away with all drudgery of cooking. Why should you be a slave to a coal range when you can have an Oil Cook-Stove that is cheaper than coal, cleaner than coal, doesn't "smell," doesn't smoke, lights instantly, can be put out instantly, leaves no ashes, and doesn't heat the kitchen. With one of these stoves you can boil, bake or roast the most elaborate dinner. You can change from a slow to a quick fire, or the other way about, by simply turning a wick. Apply a match, and instantly the heat from an intense blue flame shoots upward through the turquoise-blue enamel chimneys to the bottom of pot, kettle or oven—but nowhere else. The stove has every convenience that can be thought of: Cabinet Top with shelf for keeping food and dishes hot, drop shelves to hold coffee or teapots, towel rack; in fact every convenience possible.

The nickel finish, with the bright blue of the chimneys, makes the stove ornamental and attractive.

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