

## AMERICAN RAILWAYS.

There is so much abuse of the railways of America by politicians in this country that it is well to know what foreigners say of them.

Li Hung Chang, the great Viceroy of China, said: "Nowhere else in the world are there such fast and luxurious trains" as in America.

Marquis Yamagata, field marshal of the Japanese empire, said: "The speed, the comfort, the luxury of your railroads, is a marvel to me."

Prince Hilkoﬀ, imperial minister of railroads of Russia, said: "There is nothing in Europe to compare with your railroads."

Sir Henry Truman Wood, special representative of the British government to the World's Fair of 1893, said that nowhere in Europe could there be found such luxury in travel and such excellent service as are given on the railways of the United States.

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The latest reliable comparison of average rates in the United States with other countries shows as follows:

	For passenger, mile.	For freight, per ton per mile.
United States	2.14	0.97
Prussia	2.99	1.32
Austria	3.05	1.56
France	3.36	1.59
Belgium	2.25	1.39
England	2.29	1.95

If the average of American freight rate was as high as it is in Belgium, the people of this country would have paid the railways last year about \$286,000,000 more than they did. If the rates had been as high as they are in England, the people of this country would have paid the railways about \$953,283,602 more than they did.

If the average passenger rate in this country had been one cent a mile more than it was last year (which would be less than the average rate in France), the extra cost to the people and profit to the railways of the United States would have been \$130,490,072.

If American railway rates, therefore, both passenger and freight, were about the average of European rates, the earnings of the railways of the country (and the payments of the people) would have been more than one billion dollars (\$1,000,000,000) greater than they were in last year alone.

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At American rates, European railways could not live, but American ingenuity has learned how to operate railways much more cheaply than they can do it anywhere else in the world, in spite of the fact that the price of labor and of nearly all materials is much higher in this country.

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Last year, however, 70.17 per cent of all railway stock in this country earned no dividend at all; that is to say, that the holders of over three thousand million dollars of the stock of American

railways got no money from their investment last year whatever. In addition, \$860,559,442 of American railway bonds received no interest.

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The number of miles of line in the United States last year was 182,776. The total of all Europe (including Great Britain and Ireland) was only 155,284 miles. The total of all South America, Africa, Asia and Australia combined was only 72,973.

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Showing how good American railway machinery is, American locomotive builders last year sold over three million dollars' worth of engines for use on the railways of China, Japan, Cuba, Mexico, South America, Africa, etc.

#### HOLIDAY ELOCUTION.

The American people are better listeners than readers. That is to say a greater number of the citizens of the United States would prefer to hear a speech—for it is easier and requires less intellectual effort—rather than to read one. Talk, elocution, eloquence, loquacity, even mere verbosity is attractive to the multitude, while real oratory, which, with emotion and inflective management of voice, sets afloat great and original thoughts upon large questions, is always immensely popular.

But after all the thought of the Poet Prior thrusts itself forward:

"And 'tis remarkable, that they  
Talk most who have the least to say.  
Your dainty speakers have the curse,  
To plead their causes down to worse;  
As dames, who native beauty want,  
Still uglier look the more they paint."

And many holiday declaimers of the post-prandial and platform breed of orators in the United States are of the character described by Spencer:

"Therefore the vulgar did about him focke,  
And cluster thick unto his leasings vaine,  
Like foolish flies about an honey crocke,  
In hope by him great benefite to gaine,  
And uncontrolled Freedom to obtaine."

#### AMERICAN WHEAT AND BRITISH BOARD OF TRADE.

Several months ago I heard, says U. S. Consul Halstead of Birmingham, a wheat story which, while not new, has an importance in American and British trade relations. The speaker, an American, says:

"I visited the city mills of a certain town in England about two and a half years ago and the manager showed me three samples of wheat. The first, from India, was of a fair quality, though somewhat hard or flinty; the second, from the Argentine Republic, was of a very inferior grade and was trashy and dirty; the third was from the United States, and was of an unquestionably superior quality. He stated that, landed at his docks, the wheat cost him about the same per bushel, and I naturally asked him why he did not use the wheat

from the United States exclusively. He said: 'We are compelled to use the wheat from India and the Argentine because our ships carry our merchandise to these ports and must come back loaded with wheat and other productions. Our board of trade passes rules and enforces regulations which require, in effect, that the offerings must be carried here in British bottoms, for otherwise the price of good American wheat would soon go skyward.' His idea was that the natural laws of trade and commerce practically compelled them in England to use an inferior wheat, and that he was bound morally, if not technically, to take the product of India and Argentina in exchange for the merchandise sent to those countries in British bottoms, since, if they were compelled to take out cargo and could not bring back cargo, the price of outward-bound goods would be greatly increased in price."—The Roller Mill.

The Roller Mill evidently almost realizes the fact that free trade between England and the United States might raise the price of American wheat in the markets of the United Kingdom of Great Britain. The Roller Mill may also begin to suspect that with our navigation laws which prohibit flying the American flag over keels laid in foreign countries, and our protective tariff, which enhances the price of all ship building materials more than forty per cent, it is very difficult to explain how and when we shall export wheat in American bottoms.

**THE CIVIL DAY.** The civil day is divided into twenty-four hours. Each hour is separated into sixty minutes. Each minute consists of sixty seconds.

The twenty-four hours of the civil day are generally divided into two portions of twelve hours each—twelve o'clock midnight to twelve o'clock noon and twelve o'clock noon to twelve o'clock midnight.

The hours from twelve at noon to midnight are *post meridiem* (after mid-day) and the hours from midnight to noon are *ante meridiem* (before mid-day.)

But legislators and clerks and secretaries of the legislature and even county commissioners in the state of Nebraska have been frequently able to get two days, and pay for two days, out of twenty-four hours. Whether because of a pure atmosphere and a fertile soil hours grow longer in Nebraska than elsewhere is not explained. Possibly the minutes which grow into hours and the seconds which grow into minutes in Nebraska are bigger and more vigorous than elsewhere. It is said that humidity in the air accelerates growth in peas. And it is possible that cupidity in the air about a state capitol or a county courthouse hastens the fruition of fees. Watch Lincoln legislators and see.