RAILROADS AND TWO CENTS

Business Man Believes Fight on Law Will Soon Cease.

REVENUES STEADILY INCREASE

Failure of Corporations' Campaign of Education to Mold Sentiment Caused by Great Gain in Earnings.

"You know, there's something queer about the attitude of the railroads toward the 2-cent fare," observed an Omaha business man over at the Commercial club lunch. "When this law was so generally enacted along with others of similar character we heard Mr. Harriman proclaim that the railroads would have to fight all such measures because they were inimical to the interests of the railroads. We find a reflection of that battle-cry in the more tangible form of a preconcerted opposition by the corporations to these laws. Now, we hear the general cry from the big railroad officials that revenues are being cut down by the 2-cent fare. On the contrary, we hear—some of us who are in their confidence do—from subordinate officials who really know what they are talking about, that business never was as big as it is now under the operations of the 2-cent fare. We not only hear this from these officials, but we hear it from trainmen, from depot agents, from everybody in closest touch with the actual situation and we see it when we have occasion to travel. The fact is we cannot but believe that the 2-cent fare has increased the volume of passenger traffic enormously. The other evening I was putting my family on an eastbound Burlington train and as I came out of the car I remarked to the colored porter, 'Well, boss, you are having some heavy traveling, aren't you?'

"'Heavy?' he replied, 'why man, if dis heah business keeps up like it's been goin' it's gwine a weah my life out.'

Conclusion is a Safe One.

"So I believe it's safe to conclude in the face of all this evidence that passenger traffic is enormously larger today under the 2-cent fare than it ever was under the 3-cent fare and that it is due primarily to the difference in the cost of travel. The point is, if the railroads are reaping advantage in the form of increased traffic and larger revenues under the new regime why are they fighting the new laws? And will they continue to fight them?

"It is my firm conviction that we shall very soon see a complete change of front on the part of the railroads; Mr. Harriman may come out with another declaration and when he has spoken the other officials will talk along in the same channel. I am convinced the 2-cent fares have worked a mutual advantage for the public and railroads and that the railroads will soon admit it and stop fighting it. As a matter of fact you don't notice any tangible warfare now, do you? It's all in the air, isn't it? The thing is this way: the legal departments of the railroads went in to fight the law and they naturally hated to be forced to admission of the unsoundness of their position so early in the game."

Campaign of Education.

This view is being expressed by thoughtful persons who are concerning themselves with the railroad situation. In some cases, however, the railroads have gone to court to show, and claim they will be able to show, that the 2-cent laws cannot be enforced. A systematic campaign of education is being waged sub rosa by the railroads through a certain class of publications and the circular letter scheme to prove their claims and create sentiment. Circulars are coming from big headquarters into this and other western states involved in the controversy. These circulars contain reports which are cleverly made out and said to be based on figures compiled in the "general offices." These same circulars may be found printed in the columns of certain newspapers in some cities of the middle west.

These circulars reflect the unmistakable fact that a close working relation exists between the various "headquarters." Comparison of them shows two fundamental propositions, namely: That the railroads have decided to proclaim that under the 2-cent fare traffic has increased 30 per cent and earnings decreased 40 per cent, leaving room for the plea that the law is unremunerative.

"This proposition is simply not possible," says a traveling man, who has given much thought to the matter. "We may accept as true the railroads' statement that traffic has increased just 30 per cent, but that will remove all ground from under the railroad argument that revenues have decreased, for the simple reason that prior to operation of the 3-cent fare thousands of passengers rode on mileage books which sold at the rate of 2 cents a mile, or other forms of reduced transportation or free passes. Now they cannot ride free or for less than 2 cents a mile.

"I believe the railroads' argument will bring them up at the back door yet. Granting travel has increased 30 per cent—and no one will question it—here is a situation which we might view with some degree of serious thought: A train which last year carried 100 persons this year carries 130. If the train carried the 100 persons 100 miles and every passenger paid 3 cents a mile the train earned $300. The same train this year carrying 130 passengers 100 miles at 2 cents a mile would earn $260, a decrease of 13⅓ per cent, which is a little less than 40 per cent.

Plain, Simple Truth.

"Now we have given our friends, the railroads, the long end of this hypothesis and still have convicted them, but not as badly as we might. The fact is—any any man with a kernel of sense knows it—that no train that ever entered Omaha paid 3 cents a mile for every passenger aboard. Mileage books, half rates, fare and a third and passes cut a very vital part in the number of tickets collected on every train that ever run under the old regime, while today this situation is impossible. Everybody pays the same—2 cents a mile, so that every train earns for every passenger 2 cents for every mile it carries him and a fool could figure out that this represents an increase and not a decrease in earnings. Why, one of the high passenger officials of a Nebraska railroad stated last winter before a legislative committee that the average rate for passengers per mile in Nebraska for the year 1904 was only 1.940 cents and then do they come to us now with this specious plea?

"We are told that improvements cannot be made now because rates have been cut too low, that proper facilities for preventing accidents cannot be employed for the same reason and then we pick up the monthly statements of the railroads and find the revenues steadily increasing over and above the increase per cent of a year ago under the old regime of the 3-cent fare."

ESTIMATE OF THE GRAIN CROP

Nearly Two and a Half Million Acres in Wheat.

The passenger department of the Union Pacific has prepared a small grain estimate for 1907, giving the figures by counties as reported by a large number of correspondents all over the state. The estimate shows an acreage of 247,884 of spring wheat, with an estimated total yield of 3,705,814 bushels. The acreage and yield of winter wheat is much larger, being 2,142,770 acres, with an estimated yield of 48,004,683 bushels. The crop of rye shows 107,426 acres, with a yield of 1,916,987 bushels and the oats acreage is given at 2,286,104, with a total yield of 68,378,456 bushels. It is also estimated that Nebraska has 408,150 acres of alfalfa, which should yield 1,118,639 tons.

The summary of acreage last year as compared with the year before shows:

	1906.	1905.
Spring wheat	247,884½	350,015
Winter wheat	2,142,770½	1,741,856
Rye	107,426	141,149
Oats	2,286,104	2,420,624
Alfalfa	408,150½	315,714

The summary of cereals for the last ten years shows:

	Corn Yield	Wheat Yield	Oats Yield	Rye Yield
1896	125,685,069	14,787,024	39,911,696	.....
1899	298,599,638	19,390,602	34,082,631	.....
1897	241,268,490	27,452,647	51,731,086	.....
1898	158,754,696	34,679,309	56,245,042	.....
1899	224,373,288	20,791,776	51,474,120	907,104
1900	210,430,064	24,801,900	37,778,572	867,287
1901	109,141,840	42,060,885	29,065,222	2,332,125
1902	253,520,173	53,726,451	62,121,601	3,250,832
1903	172,379,532	42,157,560	59,426,658	2,228,491
1904	211,330,203	28,354,698	69,410,512	1,969,883
1905	244,905,449	41,436,135	80,505,919	2,518,978
	2,248,388,492	348,774,987	581,765,858	14,291,640

LETS THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG

Overland Limited Drops Local Business to Make Time.

On and after August 26, 1907, the "Overland Limited" trains, Nos. 1 and 2, and "The Los Angeles Limited" trains, Nos. 7 and 8, will handle interstate business only, and passengers without proper interstate tickets will not be carried on these trains. Mileage tickets will be honored on these trains for interstate trips only.

The above is an official statement given out at Union Pacific headquarters and, taken with the reasons given for the change, has a direct bearing on the matter of traffic in relation to the 2-cent rate. The reason, as announced at headquarters, is:

"Interstate traffic has increased to such an extent that we found it impossible to continue stopping these fast trains at intermediate points and make schedule time, so we have discontinued these stops. When the orders were issued for these trains to pick up local business traffic was not as heavy as it is now. Under the present conditions of increased traffic it simply becomes necessary to run the trains through to make the time."

BETTER CAR SERVICE PROMISED

Improvement Will Be Undertaken by the Western Association.

Members of the Western Car Service association met at the Paxton hotel Friday morning to discuss the car service situation in the west and particularly the situation in Nebraska. Representatives were present from all the railroads operating in Nebraska. The meeting was held behind closed doors and none of the representatives registered his arrival, the purpose being to keep the proceedings exclusive to the association.

Grain and coal men were in conference with members of the association, but they declined to give out any information other than that the prospect for car service is not quite as bad as reported earlier in the season. Efforts will be made to meet an equitable demand for cars during the grain shipping season and to prevent the threatened coal famine as far as possible.

MOTOR CAR BEATS FAST TRAIN

Makes Distance in Less Time Than Overland Limited.

As a test endurance of speed, Thursday Union Pacific motor car No. 12 made the continuous run from Omaha to Denver in sixteen hours thirty-four minutes, running as second section of No. 1 Overland Limited from Omaha to Julesburg. The running time of the regular Denver fast train is seventeen hours fifteen minutes, the distance being 570 miles. This is a most successful continuous long distance speed endurance.

Since the previous cars have been sent to Denver they have been in daily service, making 173 miles, and have been on time constantly. The company still has in various processes of construction eighteen additional cars.

GRAIN AND STOCK TRAFFIC BIG

Enormous Shipments Give Railroads All They Can Attend To.

Grain and live stock movements are keeping the railroads busy these days. The Burlington is loading 250 cars of grain a day in the state of Nebraska and on top of this has one of the heaviest movements of live stock in the history of the Union Stock Yards of South Omaha. Sunday the Burlington had six solid trains of range cattle from the northwest for the South Omaha market. In addition to this movement the Burlington has orders for over 600 cars for the northwest for this week alone for the movement of range cattle.

BILLY THE BEAR AFTER GAME

Friend of Mayor Dahlman Wants to Be Secretary of Eagles' National Body.

J. F. Iaeger (Billy the Bear) is in Omaha on his way to Norfolk where, August 26, he will open headquarters. He goes as the candidate of a large number of friends as secretary of the national organization of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. His only opponent at this time for the place is Conrad H. Mann of Milwaukee. There were four candidates for the place, but two have withdrawn and Mr. Iaeger has drawn considerable strength from the change in the situation.

In his contest before the grand aerie he will have Mayor Dahlman as one of his principal lieutenants. The mayor will leave for Norfolk about August 30 and will then take active charge of the campaign of the Nebraskan for the place.