

pliment of being invited to send a delegate to your meeting. I do not anticipate even the probability of being able to add anything to the knowledge of your Association, in respect to the management of railway passenger business. But I do feel bound to express the high sense in which our Association appreciates the compliment of being represented at your proceedings. We justly consider it an expression of the good-will with which the members of our Association are regarded by the superior officers of the railway passenger service of the U.S.

We come into contact with the railway passenger business of the U.S. a good deal, and handle many thousands of the dollars that annually enrich their treasury. We are always gratified with their prosperity as neighbors, and take pleasure each month in observing an increase in the coupon business of our offices over the corresponding month of the previous year. But we regret having occasion to regard our coupon business only as affecting the welfare of our neighbors, and would really like to have a personal interest in the development of this traffic for ourselves. Abstract theories are not popular with the Canadian Ticket Agents' Association. Financially, we regard them as nature is said to regard a vacuum. Since the American railways abolished the payment of commissions to the members of our Association, we have not been able to feel the keen personal interest in this class of traffic that formerly distinguished our efforts to direct travel in their direction. The managers of the great American railways have not yet substituted any other system of payment for the service we render them, in place of the commission system abolished some time ago. It may be said that all the roads, both in Canada and the U.S., having abolished commission payments to outside agents, the result is equally fair to all parties concerned. I need scarcely point out that this argument covers only the interests of the companies. It does not reach the feelings of the Canadian Ticket Agents' Association with any comforting sense of personal conviction. We do a large amount of work for the great American railways, and get nothing for it. This is not fair. I trust that your Association may be willing to consider our interests in this matter. I feel satisfied that if you look at it from our point of view, you will readily see the justice of our claim. Corporations are said to have no souls, but good business men always proceed on correct principles. And estimating justice by the standard of success, there can be no higher embodiment of moral excellence than American railway management.

It is becoming a tiresome cause of self-admiration to draw attention to the practical achievements of modern science. Its special distinction lies in its application to commercial uses. And of all the discoveries and inventions of human genius, for the promotion of commerce, none have yet surpassed the railway. From its first advent into the life of the world, the railway has always been the leader of commerce. And notwithstanding the immense development of science in other directions, since Watt sat watching the lid of his tea-kettle, the old steam horse still keeps at the head of the procession.

It is impossible to say when railways first came into use, but they are certainly much older than is generally thought. Over 2,000 years ago the Romans had chiselled tracks in the Apian way, and even had them laid out with sidings and switches. And a thousand years before the Roman Censor commenced the Apian way, the Egyptians carried the immense blocks of stone used in building the pyramids over iron-grooved roadways. The world lapsed into barbarism again after the downfall of the Roman Empire, and no further progress in railway development is

reported until the middle ages, when excavated tracks were used in the German mines. In 1676 tracked roads, with timber rails, appeared in the English mines, and it is not unworthy of mention that the gauge of 4 ft. 8½ in., then accidentally adopted, is now the almost universal standard of the commercial world. Iron rails were not in general use for a hundred years afterwards, and it was not until 1801 that the British Parliament granted its first charter for a passenger railroad.

The first passenger railroad was worked by horses, but in 1814 Stephenson constructed a steam locomotive that pulled a little passenger coach six miles an hour. It was one of the wonders of the world at the time, but those of the present company who saw it at Chicago in 1893, scarcely visible in the shadow of the great modern locomotive no. 999, could not fail to be impressed with the vast advance presented by the contrast, and covered by the brief period of less than a century.

It is not alone in the comforts of travel that the railway has improved the condition of the world. By the cheap and rapid diffusion of products, it equalizes conditions of living for all classes of people, and in all parts of the world. It places luxuries in the poor man's house, and on the workman's table, that emperors could not procure without its aid.

In the ordinary intercourse of men with each other, the benefits that all derive from the railway might be expected to create a general feeling of gratitude towards those who place such advantages within their reach. But such does not appear to be the existing condition of feeling towards railway owners. People easily forget benefits, and seldom look back to consider the cause of their present enjoyment. A general belief exists in the public mind, that the great railway magnates get more than their share. And as a means of equalizing conditions arising out of this fact, many States of the American Union, especially the Western States, early conceived the idea of forming commissions for the control of rates. This idea was taken up some years ago by the Federal Government at Washington, which established the Interstate Commerce Commission, a body whose efforts are admitted to be beneficial in some respects, but which on the whole has not given more than a moderate amount of satisfaction, either to the railways or to the public. In Canada, the problem was dealt with for a long time by the Railway Committee of the Privy Council. This body, which was composed entirely of members of the Government, met from time to time to hear complaints, and give judgment. But experience having shown this method to be tedious and expensive, a railway commission on the American model was created in the parliamentary session of 1903. This tribunal has not been long enough in operation to enable a definite opinion to be formed of its effectiveness. It is to be observed also that its power is subject to peculiar limitations. It has no power over the C.P.R., express provision having been made in that company's charter that the Government shall have no power to interfere with its rates, until the net earnings shall reach 10% on their capital, a condition not likely soon to be realized. This state of affairs is regarded as a hardship in our Canadian Northwest, but in reality, from one cause or another, the C.P.R. finds it necessary to keep its rates as low, and in some cases lower, than other lines.

The other limitation on the Canadian Railway Commission is, that it has nothing to do with Government railways. This exempts the Intercolonial, which is owned by the Government, and has an annual deficit of a very large sum. The road is popular with the people of the Maritime Provinces, because its passengers and freight are carried at political, rather than commercial rates. The country at large, which must make up the difference, regards it

with less favor. There is an annual row about it in Parliament, and once upon a time the Government engaged a railway expert from the U.S. to put the road on a business footing. He proceeded to do so by raising the rates. The indignant citizens of the district through which it ran, immediately forced the Government to dispend with his services. The astonished expert shook the dust of Canada from his feet, with the remark that the Intercolonial Ry. was run like a comic opera.

Nevertheless, in spite of our experience with the Intercolonial, the idea of solving the railway problem by means of public ownership appears to be growing in Canada. Ideas of this nature often attract popular favor irrespective of their merits. And in Canada it is looming up just now, largely in connection with the new transcontinental railway. Though the general adoption of public ownership may seem remote at present, we must remember that existing conditions are all the growth of a short time, and that the spirit of the age is always eager to try new experiments. Recent discussion in Parliament brought out the fact that if the rates on the Intercolonial were the same as on the other roads in Canada, the line would pay 3% on all the money invested in its construction, equipment and management.

The rapid development of public utilities of all kinds, is one of the characteristics of modern times. Our ancestors took life easy, but they had not much to do. They had no railways, no steamships, no telegraphs, no electric lights, no telephones, no daily papers, and not much of anything else that is now considered an essential condition of our daily existence. If the present rate of development keeps up for 50 years more, our grandsons won't have time to take three meals a day. It will be remembered by some gentlemen present, that there were no telephones, and no electric lights, at the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876, whilst to-day millions of capital, and thousands of men, are engaged in handling the business electricity has since created.

It is understood to be a prevalent belief in the U.S., that Uncle Sam is just a little ahead of all other nations in national progress. When the country emerged from the terrible struggle of the civil war, in the spring of 1865, a million armed men marched through the streets of Washington, stacked their arms, and returned to the peaceful pursuits of industry. It was the most magnificent display of triumphant democracy that the world had ever seen. The population of the country has doubled since then, and its wealth and power have increased in proportion. Whilst these facts tend to develop a laudable spirit of national pride, it is well to remember that other nations have not in the meantime been standing idle. Across the border, in the Dominion of Canada, we have been quietly making as great proportionate progress as our more powerful neighbors. And in no department of progress can we show better results than in railroading. With a population of six millions, we have nearly 20,000 miles of passenger railway. Twenty years ago, we had but 8,726 miles in operation. I doubt if our American friends can surpass our rate of progress in the interval. In 1883 we carried 9½ millions of passengers; last year we carried 22 millions. Our earnings in 1883 were 33½ millions; last year they were over 96 millions. There are 167 steam railways in Canada, great and small, with a total mileage of nearly 20,000 miles. The various governments and municipalities of the Dominion have aided these roads to the extent of 237½ million dollars in cash, and 57 million acres of land. This is equal to nearly \$12,000 cash, and 2,600 acres of land, for every mile of railway in the country. No country in the world has been more generous in its railway policy than Canada, and I think it may fairly be claimed that no country in the world has a better railway service than that existing in Canada.