

NAVIGATION IN WINTER.

At a general meeting of the Board of Trade held last week, Mr. J. G. Scott delivered an address on winter navigation of the St. Lawrence, in the course of which he said:

As chairman of the committee appointed by the Board to study the very important problem of winter navigation of the St. Lawrence, I have been requested by the president to submit to this meeting some notes as to the present position of that interesting question.

As you will remember, Captain J. E. Bernier, the renowned Arctic explorer, who has been a ship captain for more than thirty years, and knows every mile of the St. Lawrence, gave an address to the Quebec Board of Trade, of which he is a member, a few weeks ago, in which he declared the winter navigation of the St. Lawrence to be practicable.

The early closing of navigation last fall and the excessive and continuous cold weather, held up a number of steamers in the port of Quebec, quite a number of them being upper lake boats and steam barges, on their way to Atlantic ports. Some of these boats had engines of little power, and captains and crews who knew nothing about the lower St. Lawrence. The result was that several of them drifted about in the ice of the gulf for many days, but all but one or two eventually got to sea. This experience would seem to be rather discouraging for winter navigation, were it not that at the same time we had good evidences on the other side. For instance, Captain Bernier sailed from Quebec in the SS. "Percepsian" a vessel very weak in engine power, on the 11th December, when heavy ice had been running in the river for more than two weeks, took shelter at Murray Bay for several days until ice conditions and wind were favorable, and then proceeded safely to Halifax, arriving on the 25th. Capt. Bartlett, another Arctic navigator, was sent here by the owners of the SS. "Favorite," a powerful U. S. vessel from the upper lakes, left here in that ship, on the 11th January, and after some little delay between Quebec and Seven Islands went out to sea with no trouble whatever, passing St. Paul's Island on the 19th January. These cases prove that experienced men, who understand how to take advantage of favorable winds for the movement of ice, can make a success of winter navigation.

Then we have evidence under our eyes every winter of its feasibility. In the port of Quebec, where the river is contracted and the ice flows at its heaviest, the ferry steamers run every thirty minutes in the daytime, and well into the night, all winter long, without interruption. At Murray Bay and Tadousac steamers, not very suitable for the purpose, cross to the south shore. The Government steamer "Montcalm" generally makes several trips during the winter from Quebec to Seven Island, Anticosti, and other points. Steamers run between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; and the Newfoundland Railway maintains a daily service across Cabot Straits from Sydney to Port aux Basques, so that we may say that at a every point, from Quebec to the Atlantic, the winter navigation, for local purposes, is being successfully carried on.

Why not, then, maintain a winter steamship service between Quebec and Great Britain? The only obstacles would seem to be marine insurance and suitable places of shelter in case of snowstorms and adverse ice conditions. These obstacles, it seems to me, could be overcome firstly by arrangement between the Government and the marine underwriters, and secondly by the building of shelter piers, for use in snow storms, which would also protect vessels from running ice, says at Cap Tourment, near the port of the Island of Orleans, and at Murray Bay, Tadousac, at one or two points between Father Point and Gaspé, and perhaps at Seven Islands and Anticosti.

The Government should also build and keep in the lower St. Lawrence a powerful icebreaker, similar to that which they sold to the Russian Government, to keep open the access to Archangel, a winter navigation test said to be much more difficult than the St. Lawrence. This icebreaker would also be very useful for assisting steamers in the gulf in the early spring and in the fall, and would thus prolong the season of navigation for ordinary boats.

It cannot be pretended that winter navigation of the lower St. Lawrence is an easy matter, nor that it would be a pleasant route for passengers. Frequent snowstorms, bitter easterly winds, and low temperatures are disagreeable. So are bad storms on the Atlantic. But if not attractive as a passenger route, it would seem, from the experience we have, and with the safeguards and precautions above outlined, that freight steamers, strongly built, having

RAILWAY NATIONALIZATION

Reasons For and Against Government Ownership.

In a statement prepared for the State Mining Commission of South Africa, Sir William Wilson Hoy, general manager of South African Railways and Harbors, sets forth the advantages and disadvantages of State Ownership and Operation of Railways. It has reached this country from the Government printers in the form of extracts from Sir William's testimony before the Commission.

The main advantages of State control are thus summarized:

- (a) Advantages of administration by impartial authority.
- (b) Tariffs can be designed to harmonize with national policy.
- (c) State better able to finance railways.
- (d) Profits on State lines used for benefit of State.
- (e) State lines can be better located.
- (f) More new country can be opened up.
- (g) Closer co-operation with Government departments.
- (h) Conflicting interests in private and competitive concerns avoided.

(1) Duplication, overlapping and waste avoided.

The main disadvantages of State control are as follows:

(1) Exercise of undue political influences on management with regard to staff conditions, tariffs and general facilities demoralizes the entire railway service, impairs discipline, prevents good relations between staff and management, destroys economical working and in every way is to be deplored.

(2) There is a tendency on State railways for individual employees who feel aggrieved to resort to political influence.

(3) Labor, in Australia, for instance, is piling up unreasonable demands, which the Government grants without consulting the Railway Commissioner. Traders and particular interests employ similar methods to secure unwarranted facilities. Deficits have followed, notwithstanding increased rates.

(4) Political interference producing like results have been felt in Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Canada.

(5) Better results have been attained in Hungary, where there is a permanent head of the railways, and in Germany, where "freedom from political influences undoubtedly accounts in a large degree for the efficiency of the railways."

(6) Under State ownership there is danger of the management being forced to provide facilities to particular sections in such matters as train service, accommodations, etc., and also in alteration of tariffs in favor of particular localities or interests.

(7) On State railways the tendency is to over-centralization and rigid uniformity. Over-centralization destroys initiative and resource, and if carried to excess tends to cripple a large organization. There is nothing inherent in State organization to prevent adequate de-centralization, but the tendency certainly is towards over-centralization.

In conclusion, Sir William says:

"The wide conflict of practical evidence renders it extremely difficult to decide as to the relative advantages and disadvantages of State and private railways. On the whole, it would seem that the problem is one to be determined according to the geographical position and the industrial, economic, political and social conditions of the country concerned, rather than according to the merits claimed for either system in other countries.

"The success or otherwise of State railways is influenced largely by the extent to which the management is freed from political influence. It is thus manifest that the problem is governed by many elements other than the purely economic.

"Experience shows that politics do creep into all State managements, irrespective of the statutory or other safeguards applied, as in the case of Australia and Italy, and that the only managements immune from interference are the autocracies of Germany and Hungary."

powerful engines, and in the hands of captains skilled in ice navigation, could always run to Quebec.

When we think that Quebec is 700 miles closer to Winnipeg than Halifax is, and when we see millions of our money being expended to make use of three months' summer navigation of Hudson's Bay, which even then will be as difficult as the Winter navigation of the lower St. Lawrence, it does seem reasonable that the Government should make some effort to keep open this great artery of the country's commerce, at least for freight purposes.

RY. BROTHERHOODS SEEK INCREASES.

Representatives of the Canadian railroad mechanics and car department trades have waited upon W. N. Neal, sec. of the Canadian Railway War Board with a view to obtaining advances here equivalent to those awarded United States railroad employees, and it is understood that representatives of most of the other Canadian railroad brotherhoods have approached the railroads individually with the same object.

No definite action has been decided upon either by the Canadian Railway War Board or by the railroads individually as to what steps shall be taken to meet the demands of the men. Some United States railroad men are reported to have expressed themselves dissatisfied with the award, and employees of the Rock Island road have gone so far as to threaten a strike if certain amendments are not made. The matter of adjusting Canadian conditions to the new schedule is therefore an impossibility until further details of the American award are decided upon.

INCREASE IN U. S.

Nearly 2,000,000 U. S. employees are affected by the increases which come into effect on Saturday next, being retroactive to January 1 last. The aggregate of the increases probably will be more than \$300,000,000 a year, half of which will be distributed within a few weeks as back pay in lump sums ranging from about \$100 to nearly \$200 each.

To meet the expenses of the wage increase, the biggest ever granted to railroad or any other class of employees at one time, the railroad administration decided to raise freight and passenger rates, and the order of the Director General giving the schedule of new rates was made public on Tuesday. They approximate \$860,000,000 and are not proportionate to the wage increases.

In granting increases, the director general departed from the wage commission's recommendations in the following particulars:

The principle of the basic eight hour day is recognized, but owing to exigencies of the war situation hours of employment are not reduced actually, and overtime is to be paid pro rata. Future adjustments of pay are to be made on the basis of 8 hours.

Women are to receive the same pay as men for the same work. Negroes are to get the same as white men for similar employment.

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