

# The Wayside Philosopher

## ABRACADABRA.

### The Railway Situation.

We note in the columns of the daily press a statement by Sir Henry Thornton that the solution of our Canadian railway problem is a consolidation of the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways.

In this he has finally reached agreement with Lord Shaughnessy's ideas save that he, of course, does not suggest that the consolidation should be by way of giving the Canadian Pacific Railway control of the Canadian National Railway.

We, who are unversed in railway matters, can, perhaps, take it for granted that the opinions of Lord Shaughnessy and Sir Henry Thornton definitely settle the question that the solution of our railway problem is a consolidation of those lines.

This, however, is but an answer to part of the problem. It is now for the country to consider how that consolidation is to be effected and under what control.

Is it not possible that the practical railway men of Canada, who are to be found altogether within the personnel of these companies or their employees, can give to us either a solution, which will commend itself to the wisdom of the public, or alternative plans which can be enquired into and through such enquiry lead to the solution of what is one of the greatest of our problems.

### Our Canadian Government Merchant Marine.

Once again estimates have been tabled at Ottawa and, with those estimates, we find that we have paid a tremendous figure for supporting our Canadian Government Merchant Marine.

We all realize that matters of more importance than finance caused the inception of our Merchant Marine and have continued it in operation.

Without raising any question as to the value received for the money it has cost us to this date, or, in any way, reflecting upon the conduct of the Government of the day in continuing to support it thus far, have we not reached a point where we can justly determine that its days of usefulness are over and that the cost of operating it from now on, coupled with the losses by depreciation from time to time, will be quite disproportionate to any services it can render.

Let us accept our losses as they now stand, cheerfully write them off as having been worthily incurred, forego all criticism as to any mistakes that have been made in the management of the enterprise so far, dispose of the ships we now own and say that we are satisfied with the proposition.

Conditions have continually settled and improved since the war ended. Building costs have decreased and will continue to decrease until the rock-bottom wage and material cost in ship construction have been reached.

When we consider that ships are now being built in the Old Country for \$20 per ton, one can understand the import to Canada of further construction or operation of a Canadian-built Merchant Marine.

Trade conditions have changed and are changing for the better. Ships are more readily available for charter—and it can, surely, now be left to private enterprise to determine how far development of any particular inter-Canadian or other trade is worth while.

We trust public attention will be drawn to the necessity of ridding ourselves of what, from now on, must be an unprofitable expenditure and unnecessary loss.

### Church Union.

The time draws rapidly near for the merger of the Unionist Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Congregationalists, in the United Church of Canada.

Such a merger must have its problems but has also with them its opportunities and it would seem to the onlooker that the local situation offers a splendid opportunity for the re-adjustment of Church life in Vancouver.

In the West End of Vancouver one effect of the Union discussion has been to divide two Presbyterian congregations, St. Andrew's and St. John's—leaving, in each case, the remaining majority of the congregation to face a task which was only possible to the former united congregation and sending two large minorities out without a church home.

Similar conditions prevail in respect to the two leading Presbyterian churches south of False Creek, viz.: Chalmers and Mount Pleasant, although, in one of these cases, church quarters have been secured which are totally inadequate to the congregation's needs and the demands for its future expansion.

It might be expected that the West End situation could be readily settled by the simple expedient of giving St. Andrew's Church to the Unionists and St. John's Church to the Anti-Unionists, or vice versa.

No such expedient seems open South of False Creek.

In addition we have the very rapid development which is taking place within the boundaries of what will be the congregations of the United Church of

## GEO. T. WADDS

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