

Railway Construction In 1894

The Railway age says: "With every financial interest in the country depressed by the sequence of the great panic of 1893, unsettled by radically new legislation, excited by a political revolution, and frightened by labor troubles culminating in the Debs insurrection, the year 1891 has been extraordinarily unfavorable to the progress of new railway enterprises, and it would hardly have seemed surprising if the work of construction had been totally suspended. In face of all the difficulties, therefore, it is encouraging to find that nearly two thousand miles of new track have been laid in the United States during the year now closing, while grading and preliminary work have been done on a considerable additional mileage. In 31 of the 48 states and territories track has gone down on 153 lines to an aggregate, according to our latest returns, of 1,919 miles, and it is possible that a very few miles more may be reported in our detailed statement a little later. Although this total is considerably larger than seemed likely to be reached when the end of the first six months, in the midst of the anarchy of the great strike, showed only 525 miles laid, still it is small in comparison with the previous record of the country. The new mileage of 1891 is less than in any other one of the last twenty years, and it is the least in the last thirty years, with the exceptions of 1875, 1886 and 1895. In the last five years, including the present, the falling off in construction has been steady and marked, the new mileage for those years being as follows: 1891, 5,670 miles; 1891, 4,282 miles; 1892, 4,178 miles; 1893, 2,635 miles; 1894, 1,919 miles. The period of decline which followed the culmination of 1887, when nearly 13,000 miles were built, has been longer than the other periods of reaction in the history of the country, but all signs indicate that the bottom has been reached and that a revival of railway building has commenced.

"The following table shows how the work of adding new mileage was distributed during the last year among the various states and territories:

TRACK LAID IN THE YEAR 1894.		
State	Lines.	Miles.
Alabama	5	14 60
Arizona	4	193 49
Arkansas	5	34 75
California	2	32 20
Colorado	3	65 35
Florida	6	85 93
Georgia	3	30 00
Illinois	8	147 70
Indiana	3	18 20
Kansas	1	3 20
Louisiana	7	91 00
Maine	4	111 70
Massachusetts	1	4 00
Michigan	6	112 60
Minnesota	6	39 12
Mississippi	3	20 00
Missouri	5	59 90
Montana	1	101 17
New Hampshire	1	7 60
New Jersey	3	33 13
New Mexico	1	75 20
New York	6	40 33
North Carolina	2	3 60
Ohio	12	93 91
Oregon	1	1 79
Pennsylvania	23	123 87
South Carolina	3	58 90
Tennessee	2	14 00
Texas	7	87 60
Utah	2	19 00
Virginia	1	6 00
West Virginia	7	49 65
Wisconsin	4	46 43
Wyoming	1	20 80
Total's, 34 states and territories,		153 1,919.13

"In addition we have returns of about 400 miles of track laid in territory adjoining the United States, as follows: In Canada, on 14 lines, 322.65 miles; in Mexico, on 9 lines, 74.9; added to the total for our own country this shows 2,316 miles of track laid on the North American continent during the year.

"It will be seen that 14 of the states and territories are missing from the table, having made no additions to their mileage. These are Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Indian country, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Nevada and Idaho. Oregon barely escapes omission by adding less than two miles, and Massachusetts, New Hampshire, North Carolina and Virginia kept in by building from 3 to 7 miles each. In number of lines as well as mileage the falling off is notable, the number of new roads in 1891 being 153, against 211 in 1893 and 329 in 1892. Short extensions and branches rather than long trunk lines continue to be the characteristic, the average length of all the roads built this year being only 12.6 miles, which, however, is about 2 miles greater than in the previous year. Pennsylvania continues to build a remarkable number of short lines, the number in 1891 being 28, giving an average length of only about 4 miles each. But it is probable that every one of these little roads or extensions is more necessary and will be more profitable than some of the lines of many times their length rushed down during the days of reckless parallel-railway building.

"In respect to total new mileage, it is rather surprising to find that Arizona leads, having added 193 miles on four lines, with work still in progress, an evidence that the many natural resources of this young territory, in climate, minerals, timber and fruit-growing under irrigation, are attracting capital for its development. Illinois comes second, with 148 miles on eight lines, and the other states adding more than 100 miles this year are, in their order, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Maine and New Mexico. These six furnish nearly 40 per cent of the entire new mileage.

Considered by geographical groups we find the mileage distributed as follows:

"In the six New England states 123 miles, built in three states, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts.

"In the five middle Atlantic states 202 miles, contributed by New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

"In the five central northern states 447 miles, all contributing—Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin.

"In the six south Atlantic states 231 miles, all represented—Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

"In the five gulf and Mississippi river states 140 miles, by Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

"In the seven southwestern states 822 miles, by Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico.

"In the northwestern group of seven 191 miles, by Minnesota, Wyoming, Montana.

"In the seven states and territories forming the great Pacific group 246 miles, by California, Oregon, Arizona and Utah.

"The populous heart of the country, composed of the five central northern states, already having a greater mileage than any other group, leads by the addition of nearly 450 miles, thus illustrating the fact, of which Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and other great railway states are also evidence, that there is still room for more railways even in the regions that seem to be best supplied.

"The steam railways of the United States now aggregate in length no less than 179,672 miles. Of this mileage 54,300 miles were added in the last ten years, an average of 5,430 miles each year. If the next five years show an average of a little over 4,000 miles of new road per year—and the promising enterprises already on foot aggregate far more than 20,000 miles—the opening of the year of our Lord 2,000 (sic) will see in this still undeveloped country of magnificent proportions 200,000 miles of railway in operation for the

transportation of passengers and freight, not counting the vast and rapidly increasing mileage of light roads, electrical and others, which will share with the steam railways in short distance passenger travel."

Pay As You Go.

Among the encouraging movements of the times must be included the effort to establish the system of selling groceries for cash, says Pennsylvania Grocer. It is gaining headway, and promises to be generally adopted at no distant time. Scores of our country stores are adopting the system as fast as possible.

The credit system is a relic of early days when the country was sparsely settled and money scarce. Farmers paid once a year when they sold their crops. It is unnecessary to say that they paid well for the privilege of running long-time bills. Dealers made money by the operation.

But times have changed. Farmers have ready markets and can sell their produce for cash whenever they wish. Wage-workers in the cities are paid at short intervals, the majority of them weekly. There is no longer an excuse for running bills. Occasionally it may be necessary to obtain credit, as in case of sickness; but as a rule the necessity is more imaginary than real.

The working man should pay cash as he goes as a matter of economy. It would save many dollars in the course of the year. He avoids many unnecessary expenditures, for he would be apt to think twice before parting with hard cash for something he could do without. Besides, by paying as he went, he could buy where he could do the best.

All things considered, the cash system is more advantageous to the buyer than the seller. He could buy cheaper because the dealer would not be compelled to make good customers pay for the delinquencies of others. Its general introduction will mark a forward step in the conduct of business.

Pork Packing and Provisions.

A decided decrease in packing operations has occurred the past week, the total for western points being 225,000 hogs, compared with 390,000 the preceding week, 225,000 for corresponding time last year, and 240,000 two years ago. From November 1 the total is 3,890,000 hogs, against 2,455,000 a year ago—an increase of 1,435,000. There has been some improvement in prices of hogs, the general average for prominent markets at the close being about 10 cents per 100 pounds higher than a week ago. With regard to the outlook, there is a conflict of views, but the indications seem to justify a tendency to reduction in supplies.

In the provision trade the holiday period has been one of dulness in distribution of product, but matters are evidently shaping better, especially with reference to the domestic trade. The question of values will likely depend on future developments with reference to supplies of hogs. If the manufacture of product should be reduced to any considerable extent, and prices of hogs stimulated, it would be natural to look for improving prices of product. There are some evidences of increasing speculative interest in provisions, although the volume of such transactions has not been greatly increased yet. Prices of leading articles at Chicago have not changed widely during the week, and close at about the same position as a week ago.—Cincinnati Price Current, Jan. 8.

Mrs. Carr's photo. gallery, Winnipeg, had a narrow escape from destruction by fire recently. Damage to the extent of \$100 was done to the goods.