

volved in the Grand Trunk portion of the route from Buffalo to Chicago. But when the companies had time and experience enough to reflect that "in the long run the people pay the rate," they saw it was more profitable to co-operate in maintaining rates. The next step was to apply to traffic on lake, river and canal the same plan as on land. This was accomplished by a tacit encouragement of the gathering of the various lake units of steamships into one control, which could the more easily be done by the larger companies who together had practically a monopoly of the docking and warehousing accommodation in the canal, lake and river ports. This control of terminals and merging of steamship lines has been effected silently during the last three or four years, and now we have in Canada "the greatest inland system of water ways in the world" controlled by a syndicate working in such harmony with the railway corporations that one can only compare it to the happy rhythm of the motion of the heavenly bodies which, in the simple belief of the ancients, produced the music of the spheres.

Water Rates No Competition

In former years railway rates in the summer came down to the water level, but now water not only finds its own level in accordance with natural law, but rises to the level of the rails; with this financial result, that the Canada Steamship Lines Ltd., at its last annual meeting (March, 1916) made a net profit of \$662,151, after allowing for interest charges, depreciation, doubtful debts, etc.

Without suggesting that there was anything more criminal in the affairs of this steamship company than in that of any other corporation similarly endowed, the natural enquiry is: how is this company able to navigate its boats from the upper lakes to the head of ocean navigation at Montreal? Only because there is a system of canals to overcome the Sault Rapids, Niagara Falls and the Rapids of the St. Lawrence. Who gave steamship owners this advantage? The people of Canada at a total cost for the original canals and subsequent enlargements of \$113,971,000. On the basis of the figures of 1915 it costs the people of Canada \$1,644,000 a year to maintain this right-of-way for steamship owners. No tolls have been charged to vessel owners since 1903, and the total revenues amount to less than \$500,000 a year, of which about two thirds comes, not from navigation interests, but from the lease of water powers. No account is here taken of the light-house and life-saving services and the maintenance of the St. Lawrence Ship Channel, costing a total of over five millions annually, of which the lake vessel owners get the benefits; nor have we considered the new Welland Ship Canal, on which the expenditure so far has been over \$5,000,000.

No the people of Canada provide at this huge outlay navigation facilities, and permit private steamship companies the free use of these costly channels, with the privilege of charging the public what freight and passenger rates they list. It is precisely as if the government had built the Grand Trunk, the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian Northern Railway systems, equipped their stations and then given the companies the right to operate their trains over these roads at the public expense, and at rates fixed by themselves.

Contrasted With Other Countries

Contrast this with the policy of Belgium, Holland, Germany and other countries where canal navigation is not carried on to provide profitable franchises to private persons at the public expense, but to co-ordinate water transportation with rail transportation, so that each would help the other, to the end of giving the simplest service at the cheapest rate.

Since the war the British government has brought the whole mercantile marine under state control, portions of it under state operation and other portions under state ownership. Seeing the national advantages of this, there is every probability that after the war, state owned lines of ships will be more in evidence on the ocean, and there would be nothing revolutionary if Canada took over the present railways, enough steamers to make one efficient line on the Atlantic and one on the Pacific. Such a step, with the reduction of the



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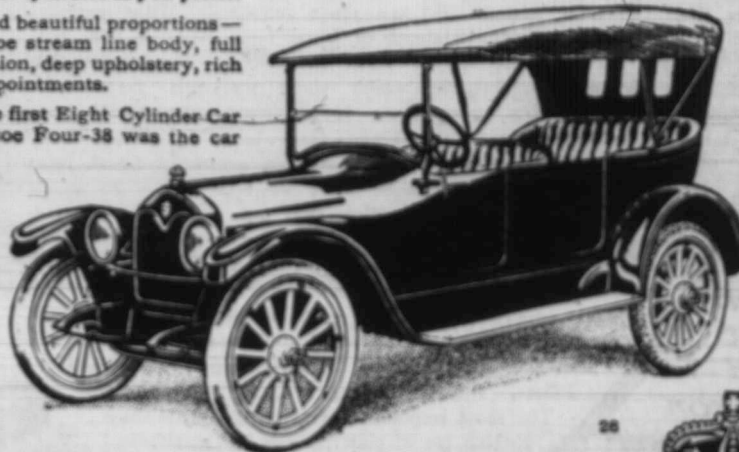
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