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Team Work in Transportation.

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While I realize the scope that this subject affords, it is not my intention to go into statistical details, of which we have abundance in our libraries and offices, but rather to give a short talk on the necessity of team work in transportation, and induce a discussion which may be both interesting and beneficial to all concerned with railroading.

The department generally referred to as the transportation department might lead one to believe that it was somewhat separate from the other departments of a railway, but the deeper we go into it, the more we realize how closely it is identified with all the other departments; in other words, the transportation department, so far as team work is concerned, takes in every other department.

First, we have our maintenance of way, which is really the foundation of the transportation department, and takes a very important part on the team. It is absolutely necessary to have a good foundation in the way of up-to-date track upon which to carry on the work of transportation. Therefore, the roadmaster and his sectionmen are important factors in economic transportation. If the track is not in condition to allow of smooth running, trains have to be slowed down in order to negotiate bad spots. Again, flags carelessly displayed by sectionmen may cause stopping of trains, which in turn may lead to stalling and doubling, thus causing serious delay and helping to increase the fuel bill. In addition to this, is the possible serious delay to the delivery of freight at its destination. It is a well known fact that it costs more to handle tonnage over a poorly put up track than over a smooth running track, not only in the matter of fuel consumption, but in the wear and tear of the equipment, and you all know that a poorly put up track some times results in damage to rolling stock and may cause serious accident and great loss of life and property, all of which help to swell the expense of transportation.

I think, next to the maintenance of way department, we should bring in the motive power department, as part of the transportation team, and this might be styled "The Man in the Box." It is therefore of the utmost importance that the members of the motive power department realize their importance to the success of the team, and keep the locomotive power always in fit condition, since it is this part of the great transportation team that has most to do with running up or cutting down the cost of transportation. I often wonder if the

mechanic doing a job on an engine realizes the jump he may cause in the cost of transportation by being careless in his work and turning out an engine that will fail before reaching its destination, or cause the engine to burn double the coal and take twice the time necessary to get over the road than would be the case if the repairs had been properly attended to. It is far more economical to allow a train to stand in a terminal for a number of hours waiting an engine that may be under repair, to have such repairs properly made, rather than skimp the work to avoid such delay at the terminal, and the general policy of the mo-

cost of carelessness on the part of any member of the team, and the inspectors and others connected with the car department should be broadened out to realize that they are a big factor in the earning power of the road. I say earning power, meaning that every cent that we can save in the cost of transportation is so much earned. A careless car inspector or repairer, by allowing rolling stock to be taken out of a terminal or other station under his jurisdiction in faulty condition, could easily wipe out the receipts of a whole division in what might occur through defective running gear or other parts failing, thereby causing serious accident. The improper packing of an axle box, which would cause it to run hot, means increased cost of transportation. How many of our axle box packers realize what a saving they might make if they were particular about this small matter, and it is generally the small things carelessly done that sooner or later result in serious loss. Therefore, if the men who are entrusted with these smaller jobs and responsibilities were coached in proper methods and disciplined for wilful neglect of the smaller things, the big losses which neglect of small details lead to would be avoided.

Another source of economy in connection with this team work could be developed by the train dispatchers, agents and operators, as no doubt many of them, in their anxiety to further the interests of the service in their special line, overlook the question of cost. Unfortunately a number of cases come up where it would appear the sole object in mind is to get the train in and out of their station, or over their division, or probably leave it for the next trick man to straighten out. I am inclined to believe that the average dispatcher does not consider what it means in the way of piling up the cost of transportation when he makes a bad meet, keeping a train in a side track for an hour or two through an oversight on his part, or want of thought or knowledge as to the work or running of the train he is handling. The engine crew, when they enter a side track, do not, as a rule, expect to be there more than from 10 to 20 minutes, and of course they are burning fuel keeping their fire up, until presently, after they have been there about an hour, throwing steam into the air, they let their fire cool down. Just about this time the other train usually comes along. Then they make a start, and the result is possibly leaky tubes and a struggle from there to the next terminal. Of course, there are times when such delays cannot be avoided, but I think a large proportion are due to that branch of the team not realizing how important a bearing their work is to that of the whole. An operator may have a signal up, causing a heavy freight train to stop



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otive power department should be never to turn out an engine if it is not in fit shape to take the train through to its destination. Nay, I would go still further and say that the engine should not be turned out if it is not in shape to make the round trip from its home station. I am of the opinion that a close supervision and attention to the power on the part of the superintendents and others would result in better and cheaper transportation.

Another important place on this team is that occupied by the car department. too much value cannot be placed on the importance of careful inspection of their rolling stock by those responsible for this duty. Transportation has to stand the