

MERCHANT MARINE SHOULD GET CHANGE

J. J. Hill Says Government Competition in Shipping Would be Disastrous

COMPLICATIONS MIGHT ARISE

Owing to the Uncertain and Conflicting Claims of National Neutrality United States Likely to be Dragged into the European Conflict.

St. Louis, Mo., January 26.—James J. Hill, chairman of the board of directors of the Great Northern Railway, addressed the second annual National Foreign Trade convention. Taking for his topic, "Freedom For Our Foreign Trade," Mr. Hill discussed the question of restoring the American merchant marine. He said:

The one indispensable condition of the restoration, extension and maintenance of our foreign trade is the provision from some source of adequate ocean carriage. All other difficulties are in process of solution. But merchant ships must be had; our need of them is almost as great as that of other nations for munitions of war.

In the month of November the exports from the port of New York were \$12,000,000 more than in the year before. There was an increase of about 200 per cent in exports of food products. The foreign demand must increase in direct ratio with the exhaustion of supplies in the warring nations. How are these goods, which we desire to sell and others are anxious to buy, to be carried to the overseas markets?

Such slight relief as was afforded by the war removal of the prohibition of registry for foreign-built vessels has been given. It is hardly a drop in the bucket. Up to the week ended December 26, 1914, American registry had been granted to 195 vessels heretofore operated under foreign control, aggregating 373,840 gross tons. This is not enough to prevent present congestion and holds out little hope for the supply of future needs.

Many Ships Are Idle. At the beginning of this year all charters at New York had been taken for January, and February engagements were not easy to make. Rates had advanced from 40 per cent, to 200 per cent, above those prevailing before the declaration of war. Many ships are idle because of the risk and high rates of insurance. But, aside from this, it is true that American cost of ship construction is from 50 to 100 per cent higher than that abroad, and, according to a reported statement of Captain Robert Dillaly, who operates ships in both domestic and foreign trade, it costs about \$17,236 more a year to operate a ship of 3,000 tons under the American than under the British flag. These are the disadvantages under which our foreign trade laborers. They must be removed before this country can hope to realize the great opportunities now before it, which are not likely to occur again if now permitted to escape.

The only practical, the only desirable policy for this country is the provision of a sufficient American merchant marine. To buy this by big subsidies is a losing and in the long run an unsuccessful game. We cannot and we do not want to rely hereafter, as we have so long, upon foreign ships to carry American trade and thus control not only its profits but also its direction and its volume. There are but two resources: one a merchant marine owned and operated by the Government, the other a merchant marine provided by and for the people.

A Disastrous Experiment. The former, just now urgently advocated, is an unwise and would certainly be a disastrous experiment. Aside from the complications almost certain to drag us sooner or later into the European conflict, owing to the uncertain and conflicting claims of national neutrality, this policy would be followed by the total destruction of the private shipping interest. Private enterprise cannot possibly compete with a Government which pays no interest on the cost of its ships and throws aside considerations of profit and loss. As Lincoln said the nation could not continue to exist half slave and half free, so our merchant marine, if once this precedent is set, must inevitably become a Government monopoly.

What is the prospect in this case of economical management and of those lower rates which the advocates of the plan hold out as a bait for its adoption? We have an exact measure of the facts in some comparative railroad statistics. The Panama Railroad is entirely owned and operated by the United States. Like most affairs on the Isthmus, it has been handled by honest and competent men in their several lines. We have its official report for the year ended June 30, 1913, to be compared with the statistics of all the railroads of the United States for the same period. The average length of haul was 41-ton miles. There is, therefore, little but through business. But the rate on the Panama line was 3.45 cents per ton per mile, as against 7.68 of a cent for all the railroads of the United States. That is, the Government rate was almost five times the rate made by private enterprise over the entire country. The average expenses per mile of road were \$44,696, as against \$8,938, or five times as great. Aside from the higher cost of coal this line presents, as if, any greater difficulties in operation than other managements have to overcome.

Would Wreck the Country. If the entire rate, charged to American shippers were handed over to the Panama management to cover the cost of handling their freight at terminals, they would still receive almost four times as much as the railroads of the country get. If the Panama rate were established in the United States it would wreck the country. There is not enough money in it to pay such enormous amounts. If the rate charged by the Government on the Panama Railroad were applied to the entire railway ton mileage in the United States, our shippers would have had to pay in 1913 more than eight billion dollars additional freight charges. Yet this is what the country would have to do, either directly in rates or indirectly in taxes, to meet the expenses of Government operation.

What is proved true for railways holds good for Government owned and operated ships. The purchase price is nothing as compared to the cost of operation, increased by the necessary weakness of political management, and loaded down at every session of Congress by new laws for the lowering of rates, the raising of wages and the reduction of hours of labor for employees. Either the people would presently stagger under their new burden or our foreign trade would fall beneath the weight of rates such as those imposed on rail traffic across the Isthmus of Panama.

Ought to Be Dismissed. This method of relief ought to be dismissed by every right-thinking man as a chimera and a menace. There remains, then, only the resource, as old as human experience and as unfailing, of dependence

SHIPPING NOTES

The steamer California, due at New York, February 5, is carrying a cargo of 200,000 bags of coffee, valued at \$2,000,000 from Brazil.

The U. S. Navy Department will soon advertise for bids for the construction of a Zeppelin model airship and for a number of new type aeroplanes.

A prize court of Alexandria, Egypt, has condemned as a lawful prize the North German Lloyd steamer Derfflinger, which put into Port Said at the beginning of the war.

The United States will drop from third to fourth place among the world's sea powers with the completion of all ships under construction up to July 1, 1914, according to the Navy Year Book.

The steamship Koranna, which will be the seventh vessel to take a cargo of cotton to Japan via the Panama Canal, will also take cotton in the same cargo for Vladivostok, Russia.

The Cameronia and the Duca degli Abruzzi have arrived at New York. The Carpathia and the Finland are reported at Gibraltar and the California has reached Havre. The Orinda docked at Liverpool.

A fine of \$14,800 was imposed upon the Johnston Line steamer Vedamore in Baltimore by Collector William F. Stone for having on board 296 cans of smoking opium, which did not appear on its manifest of the cargo.

The Canadian Government cruiser Canada and the Dominion Coal Company's steamer Coban left Halifax yesterday evening to assist in the task of saving the Belgian relief ship Camino, adrift and helpless in the Atlantic.

Bunker coal supplies at Bermuda have been greatly depleted by the requisitions of steamers forced to put into St. George during the past few weeks. As a consequence, chartering of tonnage to carry coal to Bermuda has been quite active, and rates are advancing.

The highest rate reached during the present movement of grain in the steamship charter market was paid to the British steamer Katherine, which was engaged to load grain at Philadelphia for Malta at 11 shillings. The previous high rate was 10s. 6d. for three steamers to carry grain to Genoa.

The crew of the steamer Sacramento, now interned with the ship at Valparaiso, Chile, will be returned to the near future to San Francisco to testify at an investigation to be held by federal officials of the manner in which the cargo of that vessel, destined for a firm in Valparaiso, came to enter the hold of a German warship.

The ice-breaker Canada sent by the Canadian Government to keep open, as long as possible, the port of Archangel is reported disabled. With the disabling of this vessel, the navigable channel of the port has begun to freeze solid, and 16 steamers face the prospect of being frozen in for the winter. Archangel is the only port of European Russia which has been open for over-seas commerce during the war.

A package of important papers, mailed from New York on Friday afternoon, is delaying the departure of the steamer, according to the captain and the agent of the steamer. The papers, it was said, should arrive in Galveston on Tuesday and the steamer will then begin her voyage to Rotterdam, carrying 11,000 bales of cotton. The papers are said to be the record of the ship's transfer from German to American ownership.

The American shipping industry is now experiencing the greatest boom it has ever known. The value of the millions of tons of trans-Atlantic shipping has come up fully 20 per cent during the past four months. Freight rates have gone up in value from 10 to 100 per cent, and the limit apparently has not yet been reached. New tramp steamers are being built as fast as the ship yards can turn them out and booked as far ahead as 1916.

Owing to the fact that the Admiralty have taken over a great number of merchant ships which are engaged in what are regarded as coasting trades, a number of the junior officers have been anxious as to their time whilst at present engaged not counting as qualifying time for present-going certificates of higher grade. The Imperial Merchant Service Guild having submitted the matter to the Board of Trade has been informed that all service afloat during the war in merchant transports, auxiliary supply ships or any other ships in attendance on the fleet will be counted as service performed in foreign-going ships.

EARNINGS OF THE C. P. R. The C. P. R. in the third week of January, had gross earnings of \$2,281,000, a decrease of \$381,000, or 14.5 per cent, from the corresponding week last year. For the first week of January a decrease of \$341,000, or 29 per cent, was reported, and for the second week a decrease of only \$242,000, or 15.5 per cent.

CHICAGO GREAT WESTERN SEEKS TO ISSUE \$3,000,000 50-YEAR BONDS. Chicago, January 26.—Chicago, Great Western will ask the Illinois Public Utilities Commission this week for authority to issue first mortgage 50-year bonds to the amount of about \$3,000,000 and a small amount of preferred stock.

COBALT MINING SLACK. Cobalt, Ont., January 26.—One or two of the mining ventures in the Cobalt camp are to shut down for one week out of every month, the reason being the low water in the Montreal and Mattibichon rivers which supply the power plants.

On private initiative. Give it a chance. It has seemed inadequate only because it has been bound hand and foot by restrictions and regulations unworthy of this enlightened age. The American merchant marine needs just one thing, but that is what it has if it is to revive. Put it on an exact equality with the other shipping systems of the world. Let the American citizen be authorized to procure and to operate vessels on the same terms as the citizen of any other country is under its laws, and his ability and enterprise will do the rest.

A firm declaration for a merchant marine subject to no other restrictions than are imposed by the nations which have done the carrying trade of the world is our only demand worthy of this important body and of our country, which stands once more to-day, as to its foreign trade, at a dividing of the ways.

RAILROAD NOTES

All ferries and tugboats of the Long Island Railroad will be equipped with oil burning furnaces.

The Pasadena Union Terminal project, which is to cost \$3,000,000, is well under way and its success believed certain.

W. H. Cuney has been appointed assistant general passenger agent of the Denver & Rio Grande and Rio Grande Southern.

R. N. Hudson, general manager of Louisville & Atlantic Railroad, has been elected president of Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis Railway.

I. S. Coffin, who originated the law compelling railroads to equip trains with safety devices, died recently near Ft. Dodge, Ia., aged 93 years.

Three men were killed near Lackawaxen, Pa., when an Erie locomotive on which they were riding was derailed and rolled into the Lackawaxen River.

Wireless experiments made by Lackawanna Railroad between a moving train and fixed stations were successful, and will lead to extension of road's wireless system.

The Lehigh Valley's new treasurer, C. J. Kulp, has been with the company 28 years, rising from a clerical position to that of assistant treasurer and now to the head of the department.

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On account of San Francisco Fair, and the necessity for better inter-communication between points in the West generally, the C. P. R. are to continue a series of trains, which have lately been laid off.

The Oklahoma legislature has before it a bill requiring railroad companies to pay promptly employees who voluntarily leave their service, and providing a penalty for failure to do so.

Oklahoma's Jim Crow law having been invalidated by the United States Supreme Court, legislation is likely to be undertaken to give the Public Service Commission the power to determine whether a railroad company should provide separate sleeping cars and dining cars for negroes.

If the Legislature passes a bill authorizing the city of Buffalo to cede certain canal lands to the New York Central, it is thought that the proposed building of a passenger terminal on what is known as the Terrace in the heart of the city's principal business district will be greatly advanced and the undertaking assured.

Unless the recent decision of the appellate court is sustained by the Texas Supreme Court, the International & Great Northern will not return its general offices to Palestine from which they were moved to Houston three years ago. In that case it is said to be the intention to also remove the company's shops from Palestine to Houston.

Within 30 days the Lake Erie & Youngstown must make a beginning on the building of its proposed line to connect Youngstown and Conneaut, projected two years ago. Such is the dictum of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio. Investigation has developed that the Caldwell Construction Co. has been given an excess of \$120,000 in bonds which are to be surrendered. The company's financial plans were disarranged by the war.

The Oil Belt Terminal, a 17-mile Oklahoma road and the latest venture of that kind of former Governor Haskell, will be ready for business March 1 and will be operated closely with the Frisco, of which system it is believed to be destined to become a part. It will place Tulsa, Okla., within two hours of the Cushing oil field. Haskell is negotiating with the Commercial Club of Sapulpa, to build two new lines into that city which is now served by the Frisco alone.

Samuel Rea, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, authorizes the following statement: "The allegations in the circular issued by Dick Brothers & Co. on January 20th, 1915, to the stockholders of the Long Island Railroad Co., charging the directors of that company with mismanagement of its affairs, are absolutely without foundation. It is proper that the stockholders should be advised that the issuance of this circular followed overtures of Mr. William A. Dick to sell to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Dick Brothers & Company's holdings of the Long Island Railroad Company stock at not less than \$50 a share, which were declined."

LESS RESTRICTIONS ON RAILWAYS. Seattle, Wash., January 26.—Resolutions adopted by the Oregon Irrigation Congress, an association of farmers, contain the following reference to railroads: "Whereas, it is of vital importance to many of the irrigated sections of the State that transportation facilities be extended and improved, and that, outside capital will be invested in railroad construction only in proportion as the State of Oregon is found to be an inviting and profitable field of investment.

"Now, therefore, be it resolved, that we recommend the modification of such restrictive legislation as has been applied to railroad enterprises and found to be so burdensome as to destroy profits from railroad operation and discourage the investment of capital in betterment and extension of transportation facilities."

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GRAND TRUNK EARNINGS. The Grand Trunk Railway System's traffic earnings from January 15th to 21st, 1915, were as follows: 1915 ..... \$785,830 1914 ..... 878,948 Decrease ..... \$93,118



SIR WM. MACKENZIE, President Canadian Northern. In 1914, for the first time in its history, the C. N. R. showed a deficit.

KUSKOKWIN IS THE SECOND GREATEST RIVER IN ALASKA

Washington, January 26.—Secretary of Commerce Dillfield announces that a practical navigable channel from the Behring Sea into the mouth of the Kuskokwin River has been discovered by Captain Lakens, of the Coast and Geodetic Service. The Kuskokwin is the second greatest river in Alaska. It is 9 miles wide at its mouth and navigable for over 600 miles inland.

The great submerged flats of the delta of this river extend 100 miles out to sea, and it was through this uncharted delta that the channel which means much to the commerce of that section of Alaska was discovered.

Plans are being made in Seattle for the construction of two light draft vessels for the expected development of commerce on the Kuskokwin River, and another shipping firm has already announced sailings to the Kuskokwin at the opening of navigation in the coming spring.

PENNSYLVANIA'S UNPROFITABLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT LARGELY RESPONSIBLE.

New York, January 26.—At the hearing before the Public Utility Commissioner of New Jersey, counsel for the South Jersey Commuters' Association tried to show that unprofitable financial management of the Pennsylvania was largely responsible for the attempt to increase railroad fares in Southern New Jersey.

Attention of the Commission was directed to alleged loss on the investment of the railroad company in its new station in New York City and it was urged that South Jersey should not be taxed to make up this loss, while North Jersey, which uses the terminal, is not called on to contribute, because there is railroad competition in that section.

Records were introduced showing that 12 per cent of the passenger's revenues of the entire Pennsylvania system, are devoted to the payment of fixed charges and operating expenses of the terminal.

In the examination, E. H. Fell, chief statistician of the railroad, was asked who got \$13,000,000 in discounts from bond sales by the Pennsylvania, but declined to say off hand and was directed to do so later.

The witness in response to further questioning admitted, in connection with statement of directors of the Pennsylvania having voted contracts to the United States Steel Corporation, that H. C. Frick, and Percival Roberts are members of the directorate and stockholders, as well as directors of the United States Steel Corporation.

WESTERN MARYLAND STILL UNDER INFLUENCE OF COAL PURCHASES.

New York, January 26.—While trading was very quiet at the opening, stocks were generally firm. There seemed to be an inclination to await the publication of the Steel figures before doing much on one side or the other.

All transactions in Steel in the first few minutes were at 51, unchanged from Monday's close. Bethlehem Steel opened 1/8 off at 48 1/2, but rallied to 48 1/2 on the second call strong, advancing 1/4 to 20 1/2. Some of the buying was based on reports that interests connection with the company had acquired certain coal properties whose traffic of about 1,000,000 tons a year would be diverted to Western Maryland from B. & O.

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STAMPSHIPS.

CUNARD LINE

CANADIAN SERVICE

Sailings from Halifax to Liverpool:—

TRANSYLVANIA (15,000 tons) Jan. 25th, 1 a.m. After ALAUNIA (13,400 tons) Feb. 5th, after 1 a.m. Orinda (15,500 tons) Feb. 15, after 1 a.m. Transylvania (15,000 tons) Feb. 22, after 1 a.m.

For information apply to THE ROBERT REFORM CO., LIMITED, General Agents, 23 St. Sacramento St. 20 Hospital Street, Steerage Branch, Uptown Agency, 630 St. Catherine Street West.

RAILROADS.

CANADIAN PACIFIC

TORONTO — CHICAGO. Via Belleville, Cobourg and Port Hope. \*8.45 a.m. \*11.00 a.m. TORONTO (YONGE STREET). Via Tweed and Peterborough. \*7.25 a.m. \*10.50 a.m. \*11.00 a.m. \*Daily. \*Daily, ex. Sunday.

TICKET OFFICES: 141-143 St. James Street. Phone Main 8123 Windsor Hotel, Place Viger and Windsor St. Station

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY

DOUBLE TRACK ALL THE WAY Montreal—Toronto—Detroit—Chicago.

THE INTERNATIONAL LIMITED. Canada's Train of Superior Service. Leaves Montreal 9:00 a.m. daily. Observation, Library, Compartment and Standard Sleeping Cars. Montreal to Chicago.

Montreal and Chicago Limited. Leaves Montreal 11:00 p.m. daily. Observation, Sleeping Cars to Toronto, Hamilton, Detroit and Chicago. 4 Express Trains daily to Toronto.

CITY TICKET OFFICES: 122 St. James St., cor. Front St. Phone Main 1111 Windsor Hotel Phone Main 1111 Bonaventure Station Phone Main 1111

The Charter Market

(Exclusive Leased Wire to Journal of Commerce) New York, January 26.—The market for all cargo steamers holds steady, influenced by a general demand for boats in position to give delivery at the leading ports during February and March.

In the sailing vessel market freight rates show a number of the off-shore trades, but with such a limited supply of suitable vessels offering jobs in a strong position.

In all other trades the requirements of shippers are limited, but rates are firm. Charters:—Grain: British steamer Earl of Douglas (previously), 49,000 quarters out from Baltimore to Virginia to Avonmouth or London 60,000 quarters Atlantic; 6s 10 1/2 February.

British steamer Wabana (previously) 3,000 quarters from the Atlantic range to Rotterdam 8 1/2 March. British steamer, 30,000 quarters, same to Liverpool American same rate, March.

British steamer Benwood (previously) 10,000 quarters from the Atlantic range to west coast ports 9s 6d, January-February. British steamer Strathan, 40,000 quarters out, same, 8s 3d, February.

British steamer Rosalie (previously), 30,000 quarters from the Gulf to Marseilles 10s with options, January-February. Petroleum—Barque Annie M. Reid (previously), 80,000 cases from New York to Australia, 10s 10d per port, May-June.

Lumber—Norwegian barque Atacama, 10,000 quarters from the Gulf to West Britain, with timber, 10s March. Schooner Augustus Welt, 1,111 tons, from Philadelphia to New York, 47.

Miscellaneous—British steamer Euterpe, 258 tons from Wilmington, N.C., to Liverpool, with options, 100s February. Greek steamer Elin, 2,780 tons, from Savannah to Liverpool, with cotton at or about 110s, February.

British steamer Huttonwood, 2,533 tons, from Gulf to Liverpool with cotton, 122s 6d, February-March. British steamer Sellicia, 2,265 tons, from Philadelphia to New York or Philadelphia with ore 15s, monthly.

WINNIPEG ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

Gross earnings of the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company for November, 1914, were \$330,908, as compared with \$380,982 in 1913, a decrease of \$50,074, or 13.2 per cent. Aggregate gross earnings from January 1 to November 30, amount to \$3,732,901, as against \$3,638,831 for the corresponding period in 1913. Net for the eleven months amounts to \$1,547,112, which is a decrease of \$110,781 from that shown for the same period in 1913.

EARNINGS OF CANADIAN NORTHERN.

The gross earnings of the Canadian Northern Railway for the third week of January were \$122,000, against \$132,200 in the same week last year, a decrease of \$10,200, or 7.7 per cent. The decrease in the second week of January was 43.6 per cent, and in the first week 33.9 per cent.