

\$1,313,610,118. Operating expenses for the last fiscal year aggregated \$956,814,142, or \$5,025 per mile of line. The net earnings of the roads embraced in this advance report were \$523,858,912 for 1900, or \$73,110,747 more than they were for 1899. Income from investments & other sources amounting to \$60,675,700 was received, so that the total income was \$584,534,612.

The total deductions from income were \$395,811,056. This item includes interest on bonds, rents for leased lines, taxes (\$44,396,165), & other charges to income. The amount of dividends declared was \$109,400,147, which is \$27,555,388 greater than the amount declared by corresponding roads for 1899. The resulting surplus from the operation of the roads covered by this preliminary report was \$79,323,409. The surplus shown in the final report for the preceding year was \$53,064,877.

It should be understood that the amount of dividends stated does not include the dividends paid to stockholders by railway companies, the mileage of which is operated under lease or some other form of control.

SAFETY APPLIANCES.—The safety appliance act became fully effective on Aug. 1 last, the Commission having extended the time of carriers to comply with the law in respect to couplers & train brakes to that date. Railway equipment in regard to hand holds & grab irons & standard height of drawbars shows approximately perfect compliance with the statute. The Government has not undertaken to decide the coupler that shall be used, the number or location of hand holds or grab irons, the height of drawbars, or the number of cars in a train to be provided with the air-brake. These matters are all left to the carriers.

Since the law went into effect no complete or accurate information regarding accidents has been obtained. As the roads are merely required to make annual returns of the casualties to their employes, the value of the law can only be matter of conjecture for a year at least. The Commission points out that a large number of the accidents to employes can only be attributed to carelessness. Impressed with the necessity of particularly directing the attention of the employes to this subject, the Secretary of the Commission addressed a letter to the subordinate branches of various railway organizations calling attention, among other things, to the need of greater care & caution on the part of railway employes in the discharge of their duties. It was also suggested that reports of accidents shall be made by the organizations to the Commission, with a view of minimizing, as much as possible, the need of resorting to the courts for enforcement of the law, & so avoiding the friction & consequent hostility which frequent litigations of this character must inevitably engender. No prosecutions under the act have yet been found necessary. In cases where it was found necessary to call attention to defects in appliances or in their operation, the railway managers have thus far readily complied with not only the letter, but the spirit of the law, & have not been inclined to cavil about the application of the statute in doubtful cases.

June 30, 1899, there were 928,924 persons employed on U. S. railways. During the year ending that date 2,210 of such employes were killed & 34,923 were injured in railway accidents. The number of killed & injured in coupling & uncoupling cars was somewhat less in that year than in the year preceding. Tables given in the report comparing accident statistics in 1893, 1897, 1898, 1899, & partial statistics for 1900, show on the whole some decrease in the number of accidents in 1899 & 1900. In 1893, in coupling & uncoupling cars, the ratio of killed & injured to the number employed was: killed, 1 in 349; injured, 1 in 13. In 1899 these ratios were: killed, 1 in 563, and injured, 1 in 22.

To the end that every precaution may be taken, & that no careless, indifferent, ignorant or selfish individual may be permitted to endanger his fellows, a system of public supervision should be maintained & a close inspection made of the rolling stock in service, so that no wear or breakage may go unnoticed & unremedied. It is not proposed that such public inspection shall in any respect interfere with the duties of the operating companies respecting repairs. Such inspection will require some expenditure of money—small, however, in comparison with the interests affected. Any appropriation of the public funds must be justified by the object to be attained, & here follows a comparison of expenditures made in the Life-Saving Service, Light-House Establishment, & Steamboat-Inspection Service, which are favorable to the proposed inspection on railways.

The sum of \$15,000, appropriated by Congress at its last session to enable the Commission to keep informed regarding compliance with this act & to render its requirements effective, was expended mainly in the employment of competent inspectors. Their reports are not confined to failures to comply with the law. They include all such matters as tend, in their opinion, to increase the risk to employes in this hazardous service. When received, these reports are immediately transmitted to the presidents of the railroad companies concerned, & their attention called to any neglect of their subordinates in not conforming with the requirements of law or the rules established by themselves. This course has proved highly salutary, for in every case these communications have received favorable responses, while subsequent examination of the equipment has shown that the defects have been repaired, & more stringent orders have been issued by the railroad officials. The defects reported by the inspectors are summarized at some length in the report, & the failure to keep automatic couplers in proper repair is noted as a most fruitful source of accident to the men. It is observed, however, that much improvement in this respect has resulted from the system of inspection established by the Commission.

The Commission also says that any estimate of reduction in the number of accidents due to the adoption of these safety appliances must take into account the changes in conditions since 1893, when the law was enacted. At that time the average train load was about 184 tons, while in 1899 it had risen to an average of 243½ tons. The small cars & lighter locomotives then in general use have given place to much heavier equipment. Steel cars have been introduced, capable of carrying 50 tons each. The use of heavy cars & engines in the same trains with old wooden & lighter cars subjects the draft rigging & couplers of these lighter cars to unusual strain, & results in many accidents which formerly would not have occurred. Of course, the risk to the men employed in handling trains of cars of mixed capacity & greatly varying strength is much increased. This was a risk the employe was not called upon to take in 1893, when the law was enacted. The law can only reach its highest value & efficiency when all interested—the railroads, the employes & the Commission—are working to the common end of securing from its operation the greatest practical results.

Passenger-Catching Devices.

The selection of novelties for reminders is a part of the work of some passenger agents. The Plant System & the Seaboard Air Line have always been partial to these. A fair example of this class of devices advertising the Seaboard Air Line was a miniature baggage truck in nickel. This sold for a profit, so perhaps it may be considered a good idea.

Tom Anderson, of the Seaboard, now of the Southern Pacific, must be credited with a large share of the novelties issued by railroads for attracting attention, while he was closely seconded by Jos. Strang. Anderson was the designer of the gold-tipped rabbit's foot, which was projected as an advertisement, though it met with such favor that the manufacturing jewelers took it up & put a foot on the market without any advertisement attached, & sold many thousands for 25c. each. Strang was the designer of hundreds of the almanacs, calendars & fierce lithos used in the South during the boom period when passenger agents who didn't show up business got a walking-ticket. B. W. Wrenn, of the Plant System; C. S. Lee, of the Lehigh Valley, & C. S. Fee, of the Northern Pacific, are other passenger agents who have invented other catchy devices.

C. S. Lee, of the Lehigh Valley, of late years has accepted the principle that there is nothing like heart-to-heart talks to win passengers, & he works it successfully. Not long ago he sent to all his ticket agents a circular which stated in substance:

"Watch the columns of your local papers. When you see items like these:

"Mr. & Mrs. G. G. Green, of Woodbury, are going to Pasadena, Cal., for the winter."

"Z. Z. Smith, of Crescent Terrace, who has been very ill with influenza, is convalescent."

"The marriage of Wm. Gayblood & Miss Primrose on Christmas Day promises to be one of the events of the season."

Mr. Lee continues his instructions to the station agents by saying:

"I want you to clip these articles or take note of them, & at the first opportunity call upon Mr. Green & explain to him the merits of this line; these people in nearly every instance will be glad of the information, & appreciate your enterprise, with the result that business will be secured."

"Before calling on Mr. Smith you can ascertain, probably without much trouble, just what place or climate would be most suitable for his convalescence, as it would be folly to suggest a long-distance trip when perhaps he cannot afford to go beyond a hundred miles. By studying customers the business of the Lehigh Valley is increased."

"In the case of the bride & groom—this is the one period in life when cost is not counted, so that you may feel secure in suggesting all the luxuries as well as the comforts obtainable."

"These points may seem small in themselves, but if the advice is followed it will result in increased business."

Tom Anderson, when he became division passenger agent of the Southern Pacific, at Waco, Texas, a few months ago, adopted a new plan for announcing his appointment. He telegraphed, probably without cost, as passenger agents' business is franked, to all the editors of his acquaintance: "If you can't boost the Southern Pacific, don't knock. I may get hurt," & in the next mail came the official notice of his appointment. According to a clipping bureau, the Southern Pacific, in connection with the telegram & notice, has received over forty thousand lines of good readers to date.

C. M. Hays on the Y.P.C.A.

In answer to a request made a short time since, for his opinion on the Railway Department of the Young Men's Christian Association, Mr. Hays, then General Manager of the G.T.R., now President of the Southern Pacific, wrote:—"I think the reputation of railway employes in the operating department of the railways of the country, especially in the West, 25 years ago, was far below that which they at present have for steadiness, sobriety