

land in Argentina alone, put to wheat and raising 10 bushels per acre, could in one season fill elevators of 3,000,000,000 bushels capacity—500,000,000 more than the entire world is now producing. The new wheat districts of Siberia more than equal in extent all the grain fields of the American continent, and in depth and productiveness of soil are matched nowhere on this footstool. The Russian state railways tap them in one direction, and the enormous rivers of that country, deep enough to accommodate ocean ships, drain them to the sea in the other direction.

What was to be done to meet these new conditions? It could not be admitted that the plane of wages, domestic economy, public instruction, style of living and general tone of civilization should be brought down to that of our foreign competitors. There remained, then, but a single solution, namely, cheaper transportation.

TRIBUTE TO WATERWAYS—What should that cheaper transport be? Water. But that was not an attractive or popular proposition. Canals were considered too slow; rivers ran dry; the lakes were inflexible—incapable of extensions, side-tracks, spurs or branches—in short, could not like railroads be bonused into each new town or bonded into every fresh platting of government land.

Water, like air, is so common that its possibilities were unappreciated. They had to be explained and popularized. "An editor can direct and animate a healthy public sentiment but not create a soul beneath the ribs of death." It was necessary to show over and over that water was the original method of transportation; the free gift of nature—unaffected by leases, pools or strikes; unlimited in value, capacity, cheapness and duration; without capital stock to be watered, right of way to be condemned, culverts to wash out, bridges to break, trestles to burn, lobby at Washington or Ottawa; that its endless tracks could never wear out and never fall into the hands of the receiver or E. V. Debbs and that it was the author of all the substantial additions to the map and the father of all the greater epochs in history.

Had there been as little water as there is land and as much land as there is water, the nations of the earth would have been to day comparatively barbaric. Yet how derelict governments have been, especially that of the United States, in developing the capabilities of this most cheap, ample and enduring of all mediums of transportation.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF WATERWAYS—It was also necessary to dwell at length upon the achievements of artificial waterways, pointing out that in China, India and Egypt canals are more ancient than written history; that China, having the greatest population, the smallest debt, and the oldest written records of the world has more canals twice over than all other countries