

STATE RAILWAYS PAY

All the state railways in Australia report for the last complete year for which statistics are available, 1910-11, results of a more satisfactory nature than have ever previously been achieved. This was due to a most favorable season, with its accompaniment of bountiful harvest and heavy traffic. The total capital involved in the State and Commonwealth railways amounts, it seems, to £149,376,950, of which amount £50,971,894 is accounted for by the New South Wales system, £44,180,774 by Victoria, £12,676,240 by South Australia, £12,019,927 by Western Australia, £27,288,104 by Queensland, and £2,240,911 by the Commonwealth ownership of the two portions so far constructed of the North and South Transcontinental line. This capital represents about 15,588 miles of railways of various gauges in operation. The gross revenues of the systems, excluding the Commonwealth lines, together amounted to £17,528,446. The purely operating expenditure, made up of expenses in the permanent way, traffic and locomotive departments, amounted to £10,493,383. There is thus left an amount of £7,035,063 to be distributed, part of which is absorbed in paying interest on the capital loans, and in other ways.

In the state of New South Wales the balance, after paying working expenses, amounted to £2,351,144. Of this £1,797,146 went in payment of interest on capital, leaving a net balance of £553,998. The Commissioners for the Victorian Railways likewise reported an unprecedented year. Their net revenue was £1,904,536 from the railways. After payment of £1,516,764 out of the net revenue from all sources in interest and £107,830 in pensions and gratuities, a surplus of £282,975 remained, compared with £155,097 in the year before. This surplus remained after £100,000 had been devoted to the rolling stock replacement fund and £91,386 paid to the accident and insurance fund.

After paying £477,632 in interest on capital, South Australia had a surplus of £315,111. The profit and loss account of this system shows that the adverse balance has been reduced now to £400,011, no less than £1,278,449 having been wiped off as a result of the railway's working since 1906. This reduction must be viewed as satisfactory, and one or two more good seasons should clear it all off. The surplus after paying £403,501 in interest on capital, was £224,441 in Western Australia. This, again, is a figure never before reached. It is, in fact, more than £70,000 above the surplus for the previous year. The year was one of very heavy traffic, and this, in the opinion of the commissioners, was likely to continue. Queensland had a revenue, after payment of working expenses, of £1,167,311. The final net revenue for the system of this state, worked out at a rate of 5.07 per cent. on the capital expended on opened lines.

WESTERN FARMERS MUST ACT FOR THEMSELVES

Some weeks ago the Toronto Globe published an article under the heading "Saskatchewan's Problem," pointing out how the first thaw had sent a chill throughout the West because of the effect it would probably have upon the 45,000,000 bushels of unmarketed wheat still lying for the most part in the open fields or in open bins exposed to the weather. It was pointed out that aside from this great loss that farmers would suffer through rot and fermentation of the wheat, to the man who needed the money that his share of this tremendous volume of grain represented and who was forced to pay 8, 10 or 12 per cent. perhaps on overdue bills all through the winter, the condition was mighty serious.

That the condition in 1912, 1913, 1914, or 1915 crops will be very much better is unlikely and everything seems to point that the best move for the Western farmer is to find a means of protecting himself. In a circular issued by the Ideal Concrete Machinery Company, Limited, of London, Ontario, they show how a Western Grain Grower can put up a water, fire and frost proof concrete block storehouse himself at a very moderate cost. They are sending this circular generally to all Western farmers who ask for it. If you have not already got a copy send a post card and get it.—Advertisement.

WESTERN FREIGHT RATES

Ottawa, May 25.—The next session of the railway board to be held on June 18 will be a big day for the West. On that day the general inquiry into freight rates west of Port Arthur will be proceeded with, as will the rehearing of the Regina rates case. In both instances prima facie cases have been established against the railways, and it will be "up to them" to indicate what line they are going to take by way of defence.

Both cases involve the serious charge of discrimination. In the general freight tariff inquiry the allegation is that there is discrimination against Western Canada and in favor of the East. In the Regina case the allegation is that the railways still discriminate against Regina jobbers in favor of Winnipeg jobbers in the matter of rates on 10 classes of goods carried.

The postponement of the general inquiry by the railway board when it met today was due to the illness of E. Beatty, chief counsel of the C.P.R., and to the fact that other counsel for the railways stated that they had not yet had an opportunity to fully acquaint themselves with the intricate question of rates involved.

The Regina case was proceeded with at some length by M. K. Cowan, K.C., counsel for the Regina board of trade, who submitted figures to show that the order of the board issued several months ago had not been fully complied with by the railways and that serious discrimination still exists. He examined one witness, Mr. Smith, of the Regina board of trade, who maintained that Winnipeg still had the big end of the rate situation because the order of the board had not been complied with by the railways. The net result of the proceedings in connection with the Regina complaint was that the railways did not commit themselves as to whether they claim to have removed the discrimination or not.

Acting Chairman D'Arcy Scott, in referring to the death of the chairman, Judge Mabey, spoke of the serious loss it would mean not only to the Railway Commission, but to the whole country. In answer to a question from the solicitors present, Mr. Scott announced that the board would travel West, in accordance with the desire of various Western boards of trade that there should be hearings in their provinces.

COMPETITIONS IN GOOD FARMING

During the past few years several agricultural societies in Manitoba have been conducting Good Farming competitions with very marked beneficial results. In connection with the good farming competitions a smaller number of these societies have held competitions in standing crops. Both forms of competitions have done much toward the improvement of both agricultural methods in the field and general home surroundings. The Minister of Agriculture has authorized the Extension section of the Agricultural Colleges to hold these competitions this year under the auspices of all agricultural societies wishing to undertake such work. The provincial Department of Agriculture will pay as a grant two-thirds of the amount paid out by the societies in prizes. The maximum of this grant will be \$50. Full particulars regarding the holding of such competitions, together with the rules and regulations, will be forwarded to each secretary of an agricultural society within the province. It is hoped that many societies will this year undertake the holding of these competitions.

Andrew Carnegie tells of a unique proposal of marriage which was an actual happening in a Scotch town where he was stopping one summer.

A Scotch beadle was very much in love, and was also extremely bashful. He couldn't make up his mind to ask the lady for her heart and hand in the ordinary manner. He made several attempts, but his courage always failed him at the auspicious moment.

One day he asked her to go for a walk and led the way to the churchyard; there, finding the lot where his ancestors lay, he pointed to the headstones, and said: "All my folks are buried here, Joan. Wadn't you like to be laid away here wi' 'em some day?"



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