

should it at any time appear to this executive board that the farmers were not getting a reasonable price for their wheat, cattle, and hogs, and in order to secure or force the payment of reasonable prices it should become necessary for the board to issue an order discontinuing all shipments and sales of these products for a period of ten days or until reasonable prices could be obtained. Will any one doubt that the order would be obeyed by every respectable member of the association? This, then might be called a farmers' strike, but it would hurt nobody, yet it would be the most effective one the world ever knew.

"Chicago to this country is what Liverpool is to Europe in regulating the markets for food supply. The price of grain, beef and pork in Chicago, is the price at all other marketable points in the west less the cost of taking these products to Chicago. Now if we can by this proposed organization stop the shipment of commodities on the markets of Chicago, even for the period of five days, no one will doubt our power to control the Chicago market, and thus will the question of fair prices for farmers be solved."

The fact that a scheme to make a monopoly of food is seriously contemplated by some of the food producers of the country, and by the very men who were howling loudest about "monopolies" and "trusts" in all other industries, illustrates the fact that in almost every man's estimation a "monopoly" is a terribly bad thing when exercised by other people, but an excellent and admirable thing when he himself is the monopolist. *Railway Age.*

Where the Fifteen Millions Will Go.

THE statements made in the New York *Evening Post* are usually to be relied upon. This is what its Montreal correspondent says concerning the \$15,000,000 guarantee. The Canadian Pacific Railway has called its seventh annual meeting for the 9th of next month, somewhat earlier than usual, in order to authorize the Directors to ratify the agreement with the Government for the renunciation of the monopoly clause in exchange for some \$15,000,000 of 3½ per cent. bonds, the particulars of which were published in the *Evening Post* of Saturday last. The railroad people have negotiated this deal with the most consummate ability, and it is only known to a few chosen friends of the company how very opportune this monopoly agitation has really been to the company, and how little value they put in that clause of their contract.

The fact is that the motive power and rolling stock of the road have been for the past two years quite incapable of moving the immense amount of freight offering, while the net earnings have only been sufficient to meet the interest on the fixed charges. The immense expenditure on the new depot here, on terminal facilities at Vancouver, and on other important works, had taken up any surplus left of the last loan, so that there remained no available funds with which to build additional cars and locomotives. The proceeds of the new bond issue will, therefore, be applied in this direction, as well as on new elevators, and on the line north of Lake Superior, in filling in trestle-work, in reducing the gradients, and in straightening out the curves. The work done in the mountains in British

Columbia last summer, in protecting the track from snow, has proved most effectual, for the line was only interrupted throughout the winter for about sixty hours. Mr. VanHorne, Vice-President of the road, during the summer experimented on building what he terms "crib work glances," which were erected along the mountain sides in the path of the snow slides, and have succeeded admirably in diverting the snow from the track into the valleys beneath.

The enormous crop of last year, which is now known to exceed 13,000,000 bushels of export alone, has overtaxed the rolling stock and motive power of the company, and a very large increase in its equipment is rendered necessary. As soon as the arrangement with the Government is carried out the construction of 4,000 box cars and 200 engines will begin, while the elevator capacity along the line will be increased to a capacity of from 12,000,000 to 15,000,000 bushels. At present every available storehouse and private dwelling on the line is full of wheat which will be moved as soon as navigation opens, the largest portion being at Port Arthur, the head of navigation. The company's passenger equipment has also been greatly overtaxed in transporting emigrants from the older provinces, as well as from Europe, to the North-west, the arrivals at Winnipeg to date being 440 colonist cars, against 150 during the whole season last year. Last year seems to have been the turning point in the development of the North-west, and with another good crop this year the future of the country is assured.

The receipts of the Canadian Pacific show a steady increase, last week's \$345,000 being the largest in the history of the road. The Japan and China steamers of the company have more freight both ways than they can handle, and the company is only awaiting the decision of the Imperial authorities before giving orders for the construction of three large steamers to replace those now in the service. The Atlantic mail service apparently will not be awarded to the Andersons of London, who are backed by the railway company, and who offered to give twenty-knot steamers for an annual subsidy of \$700,000, but is to be divided between the Allan and the Dominion lines, with a subsidy of \$300,000. Four new steamers are to be built for the mail service, but it is said they are only to be guaranteed to steam eighteen knots, and it is feared they will not be able to compete with New York. The feeling here is that the Government has made a mistake in not closing with the Andersons.

How Long?

It is doubtful if there has been, in recent years at least, a severer winter for freight brakemen than the one just passed. Terrible terrific storms east and west have made travel, even in the most comfortable coaches that could be devised, tedious and uncomfortable often, and dangerous occasionally.

But what kind of a comparison can be made between the danger incurred by a passenger on a railway train and the brakeman who has to ride night or day, in fair weather and in

foul, out on top of a swaying, slippery freight car, while the piercing winds and pelting storms beat about him like the spirits of demons. None.

The custom which either requires or permits men to take such fearful risks is a lingering relic of the first half of the century and the primitive days of railroading, and has no more propriety in these days of improved appliances and enlightened ideas than the pony rocket would have beside the 220-ton machines that haul the Pennsylvania limited trains.

But shall we content ourselves by saying that if the brakemen do not like to take the risks which the position involves they need not assume them? No. That will not do. It is true that there are enough applicants for the positions. But it only proves that for the hope of promotion, or to avert starvation a man will do almost anything. That is all.

No one will pretend that any man of sound mind would enter the dangers which the position of freight brakemen carries with it, except that necessity forced him to it. A man of morbid tendencies of mind, who values his life lightly and seeks dangers, as another might use noxious drugs or poisons, could possibly find satisfaction in the perilous duties of a freight brakeman. But the average man could not.

Breaking on a freight train, with ordinary hand brakes, is dangerous and unnecessarily so. Then how long will this barbarous method be continued? How long will these engines of butchery continue to crush and kill the stalwart young men of our land? How long will the railways cling to the antiquated methods of other days? How long will the railway tracks of our land be crimsoned with human blood? How long? how long? *Railway Register.*

New York Labor.

LABOR Commissioner Charles F. Peck, of New York, has submitted to the Legislature his fifth annual report. Following is from the report, which is entirely devoted to the subjects of strikes:

The persistent strikes, the labor organizations, and the repeated interruptions to money-making and quiet capitalistic investment have compelled attention to the laborers' wants and claims. Strikes have helped to raise wages, to shorten hours, to improve the condition not only of the particular workmen who have risen up in protest, but also of the masses. A strike in a particular shop for reasonable cause often ends in general improvement. Bakers have reduced their hours from eighteen to about twelve. The nine-hour day is due to the strike system. Wages in whole trades have gone up from 20 per cent. to 30 per cent., because the men in particular shops have asserted themselves and made good their claim to consideration. A notable result attained by strikes and organization is a tendency to establish fixed rates from one season to another. One of the points not yet settled is whether the uniform wages is to the profit of the trained and thoroughly competent and reliable workmen.