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#### What is the Proper Basis for Railway Rates?

When railway companies are asked either to reduce their rates or assume their fair share of the burden of public taxation, they at once raise the cry that they cannot meet either the one demand or the other without facing danger of bankruptcy. They say that even under present conditions they are not earning the dividends to which they are entitled.

Let us examine this contention for

It is true official reports indicate that rail way companies are not paying very high lividends. These reports show that the net ncome of all railways in the Dominion in 1902, over and above operating expenses, amounted to something more than \$26,000,-000. In other words, after paying wage bills, the upkeep of lines, and meeting all the bills for damages resulting from collisions, etc., the railway companies of Canada had in that year \$26,000,000, to the good. This is a considerable sum, but after all it is sufficient to pay only about 3 per cent. on the capitalization of these carrying companies. But in this matter of capitalization lies the weakness of the companies' position. The capitalization is largely fictitious. The capital of the Grand Trunk, for example, is placed at something like \$100,000 per mile, while the report presented by the commission which is building the Temiskaming Railway for the Ontario government shows that existing railways could be duplicated for about one-third this sum. What right have these carriers to ask that rates shall be based on a valuation of \$100,000 per mile when \$35,000 would replace the equipment provided? Why should the people of Canada be expected to Lay for all time to come dividends on a capital which represents, not the actual cost of construction, but all the waste and mismanagement that character z-d the early years in the history of the Grand Trunk? Why, again, should they be expected to pay dividends on Canadian Pacific stock (which is today rated at a good deal more than its face value) when the actual amount of money put into the road on account of much of the stock issued was not more than 25 cents on the dollar?

But, aside from this aspect of the case altogether there is the other phase of the question: Would the reduction of passenger and freight rates cause injury to the great lines of railways? We believe the evidence warrants a negative answer. Postage in letters has within recent years been reduced by one third. When that reduction was made the revenue of the postal service came far short of meeting the expenditure. Today the revenue exceeds the expenditure. Why? Because lowering the rate has increas ed the business. With a reduction of passen

this nature would be so largely increased that the railways should be benefited rather than injured.

The same statement applies to freight rates. At present the fruit men of the Niagara district pay to the carrying companies more than one dollar for every three dollars worth of fruit carried to Montreal, and the cost of shipping apples from Ontario to the North West is about double the first cost of these apples. The reduction in rates here, again, would cause such an increase of business that the railways would gain more by the increas ed traffic than they would lose by a reduction in the rate per ton.

Look at it from what standpoint you will, the demand for a reduction in freight and passenger rates is based on justice to the people and granting it would not involve injustice to the carrying companies .- Toronto Sun.

#### Hardy Plums.

There is a very large territory extending over part of the province of New Brunswick, a large part of the province of Quebec, the Eastern and Northern parts of Ontario, and the prairie provinces, where the European plums cannot be grown successfully. Al though the cities, town, and villages in some parts of this territory are well supplied with ripe fruit from the more favoured parts of the province of Untario, there is an immense tract of country in which the people get few plums to eat in the fresh condition. During the past 15 years the native plums in some sections of country have been a total failure owing to a disease closely related to the Apple Spot Fungus which causes the fruit to wither and fall before the plums are full grown. This can be pevented by thorough spraying with Bordeaux mixture, as recommended in a Bulletin published at the Experimental Farm Ottawa. There is a class of plums, however, which will bear fruit every year and are but little, if any, affected with this disease, namely, the native plum of the United States, Prunus Americana. This plum has during the past few years been greatly improved, and a large number of named varieties have been disseminated. At the Experimetal Farm there are no less than 100 named kinds growing. Some of these are very fine and, although not considered by most people quite equal to the European plums, are delicious when eaten out of hand, and if properly cooked make good preserves also. The season of these plums if from the last week of August to October. Of the best of those which can be bought in Canada may be mentioned Hawkeye Stoddard, and De-Soto. The Cheney is another excellent sort and earlier than the others. It is an improved plum of the Canadian species. Other varieties which are not yet sold to any extent by Canadian nurserymen, but which are among the very best varieties, are, Bixby, Mankato, U. S., Terry, Smith, Atkins, Bender, Queen, Kieth, Etta. Further information regarding these plums will be found in a Bulletin on Plum Culture by the Horticulturist of the Central Experimental Farm, Octawa, W. T. Macoun, which may be had on application.

Canada and the Grain Trade. The course of the grain trade still is engaging the attention of some of the more serious New York journals. The alarm of the summer seems to be passing into resignation. They are coming to the opinion that the United States henceforth will export a diminishing quantity of wheat. Large Western areas, which formerly relied on wheat as their staple, are developing a complexity of interests, their industries are increasing in deversity, and they are devoting less energy to the production of foodstuffs. Simultaneously, the Eastern States are increasing their manufacturing interests, and thus afford a larger home market for Western food products. The American production of wheat tends to decrease, as the American demand tends to increase. Consequently, there will be less to export. This process has a further effect The wheat areas are being pushed back, to the Northwest into Manitoba and our Territories, and to the southwest into the region west of the lower Mississippi. Not only is the distance from the European market increasing, but routes are being developed shorter than those which lead through New York. The tendency is irresistible, The New York Journal of Commerce confesses, for the grain of the Canadian West to take the route through the St. Lawrence Valley, whether by water or by rail. Moreover, it recognizes that the grain available for export from the Continent to an increasing extent will be Canadian-grown. According to the testimony of New York, the moment is highly propitious for a national effort to turn this coming Canadian trade into Canadian channels .- Toronto

## Dead Out of Doors.

(Richard Burton in the March Atlan tic) High from the ground, and blown upon by

Sun sanct fied; caught from corruption's Gird ed by streams amidst the foot hills fair, With wind-chants making a usic sweet and

This red man rests: unto the elements He doth return; his soul soars glad and free, And e'en his body seems, in going hence, THE DISPATCH. | ger rates from 3 to 2 cents per mile traffic of | To say: "Oh, Grave, where is thy victory?"

#### The Worm That Turns. (Richmond Missourian.)

Thinking that the city papers might have some personals and locals of similiar focal import, the Missourian has picked out a few characteristic items without calling the names of the great metropolitan organs.

Here are the items: Mister Myllere has purchased a silver-plated monkey-wrench for his automobile.

The Ladies' Razzle-Dazzle Seven-up Club met last night, but didn't hold any session, because the president had a slight headache, Miss May Smythe has a perfectly lovely and awfully grand new piano.

The Daughters of the Higher Standard failed to meet last night as the moon shone so bright that the ladies were afraid to go out in low neck dress lest their backs might freckle. DAS SMO

Madame Leader was indisposed last night and could not attend the Tiddledywinks ball, don't you know, because she had bought the wrong brand of drug store complexion.

#### Self-Possession.

On account of the dissipated habits of the assistant bookkeeper, the head of the firm had decided to fire him, but in the kindness of his heart he proceeded to break the news to him gently.

"Mr. Debbit," he said, "I am sorry to learn that you have made up your mind to resign from our employ, your resignation taking place four weeks from today."

But the assistant bookkeeper did not lose his presence of mind.

"Yes," he replied, "I find the close confinement of the office has begun to affect my health. But, I want to thank you, Mr. Spotcash, for your kindness in making me a pre. sent of \$250 in view of my long service with the firm, and in offering me the privilege of resigning now, if I prefer, with a further present of two weeks salary."

Mr. Spotcash was somewhat taken aback, but he made out a check for the amount and handed it over .- [[Chicago Tribune.

To Cure a Cold in a Day

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. E. W. Grove's signature is on each box. 25c.

#### Russian Soldier Choirs.

A French writer describing the Russian soldiers says that it is a pleasure to see a de tachment of improvised musicians marching at the head of cavalry singing with the full strength of their lungs to the accompaniment of fiageolets and clarinets.

Music plays an important part in the life of the Russian soldier, from the regiments of the guard and the famous Preobraschenski Regiment, with their bands over 100 strong, to the regiments on service in remotest Asia and the dreary Pamirs with their improvised

In addition to these improvised bands each regiment has at least one "funny man," who with his caperings and jests beguiles the tedium of the march.

It is said the Russian infantryman prefers to do without his instrumental music rather than his singing men. That is not surprising, considering that with the exception of the guards and a few favored regiments, the music of the drum is the sole instrumental music he is privileged to hear.

## Mixed Metaphor.

Somebody has been writing some wisdom to American newspapers from Toronto, about the effect on Canadian sentiment of the Alaskan decision. In the course of the article occurs the following brilliant mixture of metaphors, to which a correspondent of The New York Evening Post has drawn attention: 'The people of Western Canada are bitter because of this, and the general trend of opinion seems to be that the action of the British commissioners has started a wave of popular opinion which may be the opening wedge of the weaning of Canada from the patriotic reliance upon the Mother Country which has marked the Dominion in the past.

## Lining Out the Hymn.

A colored "expounder" got mixed while attempting to "line out" a hymn from menory. The correct reading of the first verse is as follows:

"Could we but stand where Moses stood And view the landscape o'er. Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood

Could fright us from the shore.' But this is the way the embarrassed brother rendered it:

'Could we but climb where Moses stood En view de landscape o'er, Not Johnson's dream, ner deep col' mud Could keep us off de shore!'

Atlanta Constitution.

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The undersigned offers for sale his valuable farm containing 250 acres more or less, 175 acres eleared, well watered, the balance well wooded, five barns, two houses, wood-shed, carriage-house and other out-buildings, also a good orchard; situated five miles from Woodstock, seventy rods from school house and Post office. Sold with or without stock and farming implements, and at a bargain. HENRY BLACKMORE, Plymouth, Feb'y. 10-3mos.

#### FARM FOR SALE.

Situated in Parish of Woodstock nearly five miles from town, one quarter mile from school house and post office. Contains 150 acres more or less, 90 acres cleared, well watered, fine growth of hard wood. Large orchard, good dwelling house, three barns, carriage house, sheds etc., all in good repair, and land under excellent state of cultivation. Sold with or without stock, farming impliments etc. ROBERT PERRY,

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9.05 A MIXED —Week days—for Aroostook Jct. and intermediate points. 11.28 A EXPRESS—Week days—for Presque M Isle, Edmundston, and all pionts North. River du Loup and Quebec.

12.30 P MIXED-Week Days-for Frederic-2.20 P MIXED-Week days-for Perth Jct. Plaster Rock and intermediate points.

5.59 P EXPRESS — Week days—for Houlton, Saint Stephen, Saint Andryws, Fred ericton, Saint John and East; Vancesoro, Sher brooke, Montreal, and all points West, Northwest and on Pacific Coast: Bangor, Portland, Boston, etc. Palace Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Montreal. Pullman Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Boston. ARRIVALS.

11.12 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, Fredericton, etc., via Gibson Branch.
11.28 A. M.—EXPRESS—Week days, from Saint John and East; Fredericton, St. Stephen, Houlton Boston, Montreal, etc.
1.15 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Plaster Rock and intermediate points.
5.59 P. M.—EXPRESS—Week days, from Presque Isle, Caribon, Edmundston, etc. Isle, Caribou, Edmundstou, etc 7.20 P.M.-MIXED-Week days, from Aroostook Jet.
11.10 P. M.-MIXED-Week days, from Houlton,
Fredericton, St. John and East; St. Stephen, St.
Andrews, Bangor Portland, Boston, etc.