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FEAR CAR SHORTAGE

Inability of Railroads to Move Traffic Offered.

SHOULD IMPROVE WATERWAYS

Solution of Traffic Question Becoming a Serious One and is to be Found Only in the Development of the Rivers of the Country.

WASHINGTON, Dec.19-Is the country face to face once more with a car famine? Are conditions that tied up the northwest last winter to rule again? This is a subject that is worrying the administration. Franklin K. Lane, a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission, recently made a trip through the West and Middle West to ook over the ground. He returned with his apprehension somewhat allayed, but recent reports have served to renew his

The report on the internal commerce of the country during October just issued by the Department of Commerce and Labor, throws a significant sidelight on the problem. The report says:

"The number of cars handled during the month by 38 reporting car associa larger than the number handled in Oct. 1906, although even the larger car supply did not prevent accumulation and delay of traffic at important centers. The inability of the railroads to move all traffic offered is best illustrated by the decision of certain trunk lines to discontime temporarily the making of contracts with western shippers for the transportation of grain "om the lakes to the Atlantic seaboard."

During the month the congestion was least felt along the Great Lakes, where the traffic. 11,826,000 net tons, was greater than any month during the season, except August, and exceeded by 28 per cent the total of freight carried in October of last year. With their fleets of steamers developing rapidly, the Lakes are being resorted to as a means for relieving the pressure on the railroads. They are proving the salvation of the Northwest.

The solution of the traffic question, which is becoming a most serious one, is to be found in a scientific development of the rivers of the country. This is the opinion of practically every public man. President Roosevelt's belief in it is well known. He is supported by students of economic conditions in every walk of life.

In order to push forward this work of improvement, the government cannot spend less than \$50,000,000 a year. To spend less will mean that the Panama Canal will be finished before the rivers. and harbors of the country are in conditions to share in the increase of commerce that the opening of the big ditch will bring about. There is now a vast amount of work, approved by the government engineers and awaiting only the funds necessary for its undertaking. This work contemplates the expenditure of upwards of \$500,000,000. At a yearly expenditure of \$50,000,000 spread over ten years this can be cared for.

The National Rivers & Harbors Congress has been a consistent advocate of such an expenditure. It has maintained that the time was approaching, and approaching rapidly, when the railroads will be physically unable to care for a title of the traffic offered. At the organization's great convention here this month, James J. Hill, of the Great Northern, and W. W. Finley, president of the Southern Railway, frankly confessed that the fears of the advocates of waterway development were well

Captain J. F. Ellison secretary and treasurer of the National Rivers & Harbors Congress, has returned to his headquarters in Cincinnati, and is planning for a vigorous crusade for new members. The membership of the organization extends to every state and territory in the Union, but it is planned to continue the campaign until every believer in added means of transportation for the country is enrolled.

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Euphemisms For "Mad." In order to avoid the blunt word "mad" many euphemisms are resorted to in the English language. While "lunacy" refers to the supposed influ-ence of the moon, "insane" simply means unhealthy; "imbecile" signifies only weak, and "crazy," meaning decrepit, almost corresponds to the sing "cracked." "A tile off," "not all there," "a bee in his bonnet," are only a few of the efforts slang has made to carry off the sad fact with an uneasy joke. "Lunatic asylum," for the old "madhouse," represents not only a great improvement in the institution, but also in the term used to designate it.

A Tiny Well Digger. The mole is one of the thirstiest of animals. It never burrows at any great distance from water, and at times of drought when the supply of the needful element is diminished or cut off the "little gentleman in the velvet coat" counteracts the scarcity by digging wells until it comes to a depth at which water may be obtained.

Reassured.

"Say, pa, won't you buy me a drum?" "No! I'm afraid you'd disturb me with the noise."

"No, I won't, pa. I'll only drum when you're asleep."—Life.

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