

# WATERWAY BIGGER THAN ANY PROJECT

### Rivers and Harbors Men Indorse Nothing in Particular but Demand a General Act to Include All Possible Waterways.

By FREDERIC J. HASKIN.  
(Copyright, 1908, by Frederic J. Haskin.)  
Washington, Dec. 11.—Advocating a policy, not a project, the National Rivers and Harbors convention, in session today in Washington, is reviewing with satisfaction the great progress it has made in the past five years and is looking forward with confidence to the accomplishment of its purpose within the next five years. The National Rivers and Harbors congress meets at the capital each year at the beginning of the annual session of congress, and is made up of delegates appointed from all over the country by the states, the cities, commercial organizations and other societies interested in the development of the waterways of the national government. This body does not indorse or advocate the claim of any river, or canal, or project, "fourteen feet through the valley," for instance, has the general approval of the rivers and harbors congress, but that body will not take any steps toward a specific indorsement of that or any other improvement.

It stands for a broad, liberal and comprehensive policy for the improvement of the waterways of the United States, and favorably reported upon by the United States army engineers and those who are recommended to congress as worthy of improvement for the benefit of the commerce of the country.

**Both Parties Indorse Broadly.**  
It hopes in time to cause the government to adopt a plan by which an annual appropriation for rivers and harbors work will be provided for, and the work will be pushed with systematic dispatch, and so that it will not depend upon the whims, compromises and wire-pullings of various successive congresses.

For the first time in the history of the country both great political parties are committed by their platform utterances to a general program of waterway improvement. The Republican platform declares that it "is imperative to enter upon a systematic improvement upon a large and comprehensive plan, just to all portions of the country of the waterways, harbors and Great Lakes." The Democratic platform declares for the "immediate adoption of a liberal and comprehensive plan for improving every water course in the union which is justified by the needs of commerce."

**Taft Committed to Bond Issue.**  
President-elect Taft, generally favorable to the entire program looking to the conservation of natural resources, is especially interested in the development of the waterways of the country. In his speech at the Lakes-to-the-Gulf Waterways convention at Chicago, Mr. Taft declared himself to be in hearty sympathy with the exact program which is to be urged by the Rivers and Harbors congress.

"Transportation is the question of the hour, and no nation is so favored as this one with a great natural system of water transportation. With a proper development of the rivers and construction of canals in conjunction with the Great Lakes, we can see no reason why the means of transportation should not keep pace with the production."

Then Mr. Taft declared that the waterway projects should be financed by the means of bond issues, saying:

"To leave in my mind the matter to the fitful and partisan consideration of the appropriation committees in congress, influenced by a desire to reduce the appearance of the national expenditures each year, as much as possible, is to impair the necessary financial support of every one of our great enterprises and to drag them along from year to year, and greatly to delay their ultimate completion."

**Reasons Under the Policy.**  
The reasons advanced by the Rivers and Harbors congress for its advocacy of a general scheme for improving all the waterways, even at the expense of many hundreds of millions, have been stated in a concise form by the president of the congress, Representative Joseph E. Ransdell of Louisiana. They are:

First—Because water transportation is much cheaper than by rail, and in many cases much cheaper for the shipping of low class commodities. On well improved lakes and rivers the cost of transportation is about one-sixth of the average cost by rail.

Second—Because the railroads under normal conditions are congested and unable to handle the commerce of the country. Experts assert that during the past 10 years production has increased 125 per cent and railroads facilities for handling that production show an increase of only 22 per cent. Improved waterways would relieve the congestion very materially, if not entirely, and would also furnish healthy competition with resultant cheapening of railroad rates.

Third—Because our commercial competitors, Germany and France, have so thoroughly improved and improved their waterways and cheapened freight charges that we will be unable to compete with them in the world's markets unless we do likewise.

Fourth—Because Canada now has a 14 foot canal connecting the Great Lakes with the ocean and is planning a 21 foot canal through Georgian bay and the Ottawa river, we must make good connections with the sea, or the commercial supremacy of our great ports is liable to pass to a Canadian city.

## QUARREL OVER PAUPER'S BODY

### Medical College Will Give Up to Late Appearer Relative for \$15.

(United Press Special Wire.)  
Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 11.—After refusing to pay the Pacific College of Osteopathy \$15 for the remains of John Ahlin, his cousin Oscar Anderson, a Southern Pacific fireman, who lives at 1723 Ninth street, West Oakland, is trying to induce the authorities to force the institution to surrender the corpse. Anderson has prepared to give his cousin's body decent burial.

When Ahlin, who was also known as August Allen, died at the county hospital September 23 the county authorities waited the prescribed three days and then, no relatives having appeared to claim it, the body was given to the college of osteopathy.

Anderson came to Los Angeles and asked that he be allowed to take the remains. Dr. C. A. Whiting, head of the college, informed the fireman that he could have the body, but must pay \$15 to cover the expense of embalming it.

Appealing to the district attorney's office, Anderson was advised to sign an affidavit showing his relationship to Ahlin. This document, however, failed to alter Dr. Whiting's view of the case. Anderson says he has already expended \$65 in arranging for the funeral and that he will not pay the college a cent.

**HOT SPRINGS HOTEL TOTALLY DESTROYED**  
Seattle, Dec. 11.—Fire that started shortly after 1 o'clock Wednesday night totally destroyed the magnificent scenic Hot Springs hotel on the Great Northern line in the Cascade mountains. How the blaze started is a mystery but the flames spread with such rapidity that little was saved. W. Whittier, an Amadorian, jumped from a second story window and his shoulder was dislocated. Manager Prosser was slightly burned while trying to save some of his valuables.

The hotel was built four years ago at a cost of \$50,000 and its furnishings were valued at \$25,000.

**CATHLAMET GIRL DIES, DR. PEACOCK ACCUSED**  
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)  
Astoria, Or., Dec. 11.—Madeline Longtine, the Cathlamet girl who has been under treatment at a local hospital for an alleged unlawful operation, died late tonight. Dr. Peacock of Cathlamet is accused of being responsible for the girl's trouble.

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