

The Heppner Gazette

Issued Every Thursday Morning

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Regulation of Railroad Rates.

One of the first subjects brought to the attention of the President since election has been that of the regulation of railroad rates. This problem was presented to him by a large delegation including Governors of two states and representatives of many commercial organizations. It is a subject of fundamental importance. It now comes up in the shape of a demand for an enlargement of the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission, so as to make it practically a court of last resort as regards railroad rates.

Whether railroad rates be regarded as a transportation tax or as the price paid for transportation service, there is nevertheless need of the establishment of some system which shall insure the making of stable, equitable rates, thus preventing discrimination either between localities or individuals. The question has been raised as to whether the advance in railroad rates in the past three years has been equitable, in view of the fact that by consolidations and interchanges of stocks the railroads have been able to get rid of excessive competition, and have reduced almost to an exact science the business of transportation. But whether this advance is unwarranted and due to an arbitrary excess of a monopolistic power, or whether it is only in line with the general increases in prices of commodities, which have added to the cost of living, the fact remains that some solution of the railroad problem is demanded. Speaking generally, there are three ways of dealing with the railroad problem.

First, by letting the railroads alone to do as they please, depending upon economic laws to protect the public.

Second, by selling them to the government for their operation as public property, the same as the post-office department.

Third, by leaving them under the ownership and operation of corporations to be carried on as independent business enterprises, but subjecting them to supervision and regulation by the government.

The third is the system under which we are now working. But it is held that the powers of the officials of the government having supervision over the railroads should be increased so as to prevent those inequalities in rates as serve to favor one section at the expense of another; to enrich one individual at the expense of many; and to confer powers scarcely less than those of the government itself upon individuals who, however capable and conscientious they may be, have no direct responsibility to the people. We believe there is justice in this demand. We recognize that the making of rates is a very delicate thing, involving many intricate problems, and that it is a function which should be performed by qualified experts. We recognize that a government commission having power to regulate railroad rates might work much mischief and that to confer such powers upon a commission involves the possibility of political evils. But however great these evils may be, they are less than those which would attend either government ownership or an entire absence of government supervision.

The view of "a leading railroad lawyer" given in our columns a day or two ago that "the scope of the Interstate Commerce Commission should be limited to public investigation and public hearing in cases where differences cannot be privately adjusted," would reduce that body to the status of a referee who hears a suit, but is unable to decide it, being compelled to submit the evidence to the court which appointed him.

The making of railroad rates is so important that it should be the joint work of railroad officials who are responsible only to stockholders and of government officials who are responsible to the people. The former should make the rates, but the latter should have the power to regulate them. Something more than mere investigation is needed.—Wall Street Journal.

COST OF RAID BIG.

Stocks Have Been Sent Down \$200,000,000.

New York, Dec. 9.—The total shrinkages in the stocks by the Lawson-Gates bear raid against Amalgamated Copper now amount to at least \$200,000,000, but when the stock market closed this afternoon prices had advanced 3 to 5 points throughout the list, and the recovery from the severe slump of yesterday seemed to be complete. When the gong sounded at 3 o'clock, the signal to stop trading, the members cheered loudly and were jubilant over the way prices had moved up and the fact that no failure had occurred as a result of the sudden break of yesterday. The opinion was expressed that the liquidation had paved the way for a new bull movement, and left the market in better shape than it was before.

To Build Cathedral.

Baker City, Or., Dec. 8.—Net profits from the cathedral fair held by the Catholic ladies in the Armory, last week, will be something over \$1500. This money will be used by Bishop O'Reilly toward erection of a cathedral in this city in the near future. There is considerable money in the diocese treasury for cathedral purposes. Several bequests have been made by deceased members of the Catholic Church at various times, and this, together with money that has been raised in the past, makes a neat sum available for the purpose.

The church real estate in this city is quite valuable, and in all probability the ground now occupied by the church building and the bishop's residence will be sold and another location selected for the cathedral and the new residence for the bishop. The plans for the cathedral call for a building that will cost about \$100,000 when completed.

When the cathedral is built the Catholic Church will own in the aggregate more valuable property in Baker City than in any other place in Oregon, outside of Portland. A new academy building is now nearing completion, that is the finest structure of the kind in the state. A handsome, well-equipped hospital was erected several years ago. With the completion of the cathedral, the estimated value of the church property in this city will be about \$250,000.

The railroad lines east of Chicago have raised wheat rates one cent per hundred since lake traffic shut down for the winter.

Discovery of Anthracite Coal.

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SUMMONS.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Morrow County.

C. F. McCarter, Plaintiff,

vs.

Cora B. McCarter, Defendant.

In the name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit on or before the 12th day of January, A. D. 1905. And if you fail so to answer, for want thereof, the plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in his complaint, to wit: for a decree dissolving the bonds of matrimony existing between the plaintiff and the defendant; and for such other and further relief as may in equity be just.

This summons is served on you by publication pursuant to an order on the Honorable W. R. Ellis, Judge of the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Morrow County, duly made and entered in the above entitled cause on the 1st day of December, 1904. The date of the first publication hereof being the 1st day of December, 1904, and the last publication will be on the 12th day of January, 1905.

REDFIELD & VAN VATOR,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

The editorial page of the Weekly Oregonian gives a broad treatment to a wide range of subjects.

Weekly Oregonian—Heppner Gazette

CHEAPER MEATS

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