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GREAT RAILROAD MAN IS SEVENTY YEARS OLD

J. J. HILL.

St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 16.—When James J. Hill, the great American railroad king awakened this morning he had reached the scriptural age of "three score and ten." But time has dealt gently with him any physically as well as mentally Hill is today as strong and fresh as few men twenty years younger. Some time in the year 1906 it was stated that Mr. Hill had announced his intention of retiring from active business on July 1, 1907, but that time came and passed and found him still in harness, working as hard, if not harder than ever to consolidate and strengthen his enormous financial and railroad interests, the largest in the control of a single man in the world. It is believed that the unsettled condition of the money market and the exigencies of his railroad enterprises resulting from recent legislation by congress caused Mr. Hill to postpone the date of his retirement. However that may be, no man has earned rest from life long activity more than Hill. During his lifetime he has acquired an enormous fortune estimated at more than one hundred million dollars and has brought under his control greater trnsportation interests than are or ever have been in the hands of any single individual. He controls the Great Northern system, which he created, and also the Burlington and the Northern Pacific. As head of the Great Northern he has more than seven thousand miles of track under his control, the Burlington gives him eight thousand miles more and the Northern Pacific about five thousand miles. The tracks of his railroads, if placed together would come within five thousand miles of reaching around the earth. In addition to that he controls the largest steamer line between Unied States and China and the fine steamship line between Buffalo and Duluth. He is also supposed to have a controlling interest in the Erie railroad and important intersts in many of the Atlntic lines.

Mr. Hill is a Scoch-Irish-Canadian-American and was born on a small farm near Guelph, Ontario, on September 16, 1838. His father was a North of Ireland Orangeman and his mother was a Scotch lassie of the Dunbar clan, with a pedigree traceable back to the house of Stewart. As a boy Hill showed a dislike for farm work, but such interest in books, that his father decided to make a Presbyterian clergyman out of him. He entered school at the age of seven, but when he had reached his seventeenth year young Hill decided that he would not become a minister, but a businessman. He became clerk in a local grocery store, but after one year he went to the United States. He drifted to St. Paul, then a busling town of about five thousand inhabitants. He found work at the docks, shoveling grain into steamers. He soon became a clerk, however, and remained in a clerical position for eight years.

When the war came, young Hill, with Captain Shelley organized a troop of Minnesota rough-riders and offered his services to the state of Minnesota. There was some delay and Captain Shelley took the men to Iowa and entered the service from that state. Hill remained at home and did a great deal in sending men and food to the fighting line. At that time he began his railroad career by becoming the agent of the St. Paul & Pacific railway. He recognized the possibilities of the road although, at that time, it was in a wretched financial and physical condition. He interested some Canadian bankers in his plan and gradually acquired the securities of the road, which was renamed the St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba railroad. Hill started on an aggressive policy and invaded the rich wheat territory, with the Pacific coast as the ultimate terminal. In 1893 came the formal opening of the Great Northern line, from Duluth to the Pacific.

Since that time Hill has expanded his railroad interests wisely and with daring conservatism. It is characteristic that Hill does not tolerate the splitting up of profits on his roads. He controls the diuing and sleeping car privileges on his roads as well as every other privilege connected with transportation and including grain elevators along the wheat roads. His methods were entirely different from those in vogue on the other railroads and won for him the reputation of being a close and stingy man. It is true, he practices the strictest economy in conducting his railroads, but in other respects he has always been quite liberal. Of his 4,000 acre estate near this city he has for many years conducted one of the finest stock farms in the country at great expense. He has probably the finest collection of paintings owned by a private individual in this country and has a collection of diamonds and other gems valued at more than two million dollars. His two sons, who are also in the railroad business, give promise of developing into worthy successors of their father.

LOUIS W. HILL.

Son of James J. Hill, who is the active president of the Great Northern road.

EXCURSION TO THE SOUTH POLE REGIONS.

Sydney, N. S. W., Sept. 16.—Arrangements have been completed here to run a novel summer excursion to the ice-pack around the South Pole. About one hundred passengers will start towards the end of December on a month's cruise, about a week of which will be spent in the ice-pack.

Albany will soon have continuous vaudeville. One of the four electric theatres here is planning a change to vaudeville, giving this city an innovation in the theatre line.

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The attention of all who are half choked and generally bedevilled by an excess of fat, which, by the way, always seems more excessively excessive during the sultry season than any other, is called to the Marmola Prescription Tablets.

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