

BRITISH EXPERT LAUDS RAILROADS OF UNITED STATES

Tells Congress Committee That
They Lead World.

NO GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

It Would Mean Political Control and
Loss of Efficiency—Declares That
Crisis Confronts Country on Account
of Transportation Situation—Lowest
Freight Rates to Be Found in United
States.

Washington, D. C.—That the United States is face to face with a serious crisis in its commercial affairs, due to the conditions by which its transportation system is confronted, was the opinion expressed by W. M. Acworth, England's leading authority on railways, before the Newlands joint committee on interstate commerce at a special session held here to enable the committee to hear his views before his departure for London. Two steps are necessary, according to Mr. Acworth, to avert this crisis and to solve the threatening railroad problem confronting the country.

The first is to allow the railroads to charge freight rates sufficient to meet the great advance in operating expenses which is taking place and to enable them to command the credit necessary to provide the extensions and improvements needed to meet the growing demands of business. The second is to do away with the multiple and conflicting systems of regulation that now hamper railway operation and to provide one centralized regulatory agency with such local subdivisions as may be necessary.

Higher Rates a Public Necessity.

Mr. Acworth's views on the transportation situation in the United States were expressed in answer to questions by members of the committee, who asked him to apply his knowledge of railway conditions throughout the world and of the experience of other countries with government ownership to the present problem before the United States.

"The fundamental factor in the situation is very simple," said Mr. Acworth. "It lies in the fact that you cannot get three-quarters of a cent's worth of work done for less than three-quarters of a cent, no matter whether the agency performing it is a government or private enterprise. Freight rates must advance when the cost of performing the service advances as it is doing at present, just as the price of bread or meat or any other commodity increases with increased cost of production."

In answer to a question Mr. Acworth said that he thought American freight rates had been at much too low a level for several years past, that they had reached this low point during the period of cutthroat competition among the roads and had since been held there by regulating bodies. Unless relief were afforded to the carriers very promptly, he said, the result would be a tremendous loss to the people of the whole country through insufficiency of transportation facilities.

Weakness of Government Ownership.

On the subject of government ownership of railways Mr. Acworth said:

"It is impossible to obtain satisfactory results on government railways in a democratic state unless the management is cut loose from direct political control. Neither Australia nor any other country with a democratic constitution—perhaps an exception ought to be made of Switzerland—has

LOCAL AND PERSONAL

Dr. S. A. Mulkey returned from Portland Sunday night "on the 10:30 train that got in at 12:30," as he put it. He went to the metropolis to attend the convention of the State Dental Society and incidentally to attend to some business. While on a business errand Saturday morning the doctor met with a very singular experience. He was on his way to see a fellow dentist, Dr. J. Howard Miller, whose office was in the Morgan building, about a business matter that might have saved a man's life. Upon arriving at the Morgan building, on Washington St., he found a large crowd gathered in front of the big office building. Dr. Mulkey inquired of an officer what the excitement was about. To his utter amazement he learned that it was the suicide of the very man he wanted to see on this important business errand. Dr. Miller was a well known dentist high up in the profession, who had been somewhat unfortunate in his business the last year or two. In a fit of despondency that morning he had hurled himself from his office window on the fourth floor of the building to the pavement below in full view of the pedestrians on Washington St. "His body was horribly mangled," Dr. Mulkey said, "and blood had run over a large space on the sidewalk. The unfortunate man died by the time they could rush him to a hospital, ten minutes after the fatal plunge. If I had known that Dr. Miller was in the state of mind he was and could only have arrived at his office ten minutes sooner, that would not have happened." The two dentists were acquainted. The Herald editor knew Dr. Miller quite well and was shocked to read of his untimely end. Dr. Miller had a beautiful home on the East Side and owned some valuable city property, which makes it seem very strange that a man of his age—only 47—would commit such a violent deed.

succeeded in maintaining a permanent revenue. In France, in Belgium, in Italy, parliamentary interference never has been abandoned for a moment. The facts show that government interference has meant ruining the railways not for the benefit of the people at large, but to satisfy local and sectional and even personal interests."

Prussia, Mr. Acworth said, was the best example of an efficient government railway system, and he pointed out that military considerations were treated as of paramount importance in the Prussian railway system. While American freight rates had been reduced nearly 40 per cent in thirty years, rates in Prussia were nearly as high as at the beginning of the period. While the charge for moving a ton of freight one mile in the United States was a trifle over three-quarters of a cent, the rate in Prussia was 1.41 cents.

As illustrating the difference in rates between government and private roads Mr. Acworth compared the railways of New South Wales, Australia, with those of Texas. While the amount of traffic to each mile of line was about the same in both cases, he pointed out, the Texas railways performed for the public four times as much service as the government owned roads of New South Wales. The charge in Texas for hauling a ton of freight one mile was less than 1 cent, while in the Australian state it was well over 2 cents.

"American railways lead the world," said Mr. Acworth. "Nowadays when men in any other part of the world want to know how to run a railway they come to the United States and study your railways here. The American railways are entirely the result of private enterprise, and I think they go a long way toward proving the case against government ownership."

Spring time is kodak time, and if you have not a kodak see Paxson Drug Co. Some nice ones from a dollar to twelve dollars.

Mrs. W. H. Ferguson and her mother, Mrs. A. R. Bradney, left for Vernal, Utah, last Saturday evening. They did not get away as soon as they had expected they would. In the first place they expected to go to either Florida or Texas, but changed their plans.

Have you saved any old papers or magazines for the local Red Cross? If not, do so at once.

Two lady demonstrators were at the Cranfill & Robnett store last Saturday with a new washing compound called "No-Rub." It is evidently all that is claimed for it and will doubtless become a common necessity in the home as well as the laundry. The main feature of this new washing compound is the fact that it will do the work without rubbing, thereby saving much labor for the housewife.

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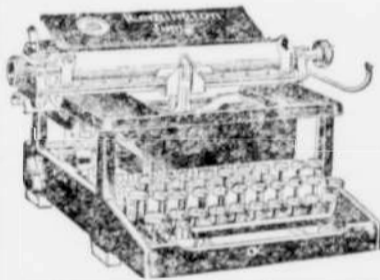
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