

CAR SHORTAGE CHOKES ALL ARTERIES OF TRADE—UNEMPLOYMENT MAY FOLLOW

(By R. C. Burritt in Chicago News.)
The railroad lines forming the country's transportation system may be likened to the arteries of the human body. Just as the body must depend for sustenance on the healthy flow of blood through the arteries, so the prosperity of the nation is dependent upon the circulation the railroads give to the goods which are the nation's wealth. For many months now the railroads of the middle west, the north-west and the east have given at best a sluggish circulation. In places there has been on numerous occasions no circulation at all; there are constant interruptions; acute congestion obtains where the flow should be functioning perfectly.

The average citizen may say of rail congestion, the lack of cars and the perilous coal shortage: "What business is that of mine?" Yet the average citizen must pay as high a price for the congestion that ties up and reduces his country's wealth as he would pay for congestion in his own body. All citizens must awake now to the gravity of the situation or pay next winter in idle factories, scarcity of food and unemployment.

Who is to blame for this? In the order of culpability, the interstate commerce commission, the railroad operators, the railway labor board and, lastly, labor itself. The interstate commerce commission in opinion of business men interviewed in many states, appears to lack initiative and moral courage. It has permitted the carriers to wipe their feet on order after order which the commission has issued to relieve the strain on industry and commerce by relieving the shortage of cars, thus renewing the production of coal and the distribution of merchandise. The commission has power to enforce its orders; it has not chosen to do so.

The commission knows of the shortage of railroad equipment in actual property. It knows the carriers must be placed on a paying basis, and to accomplish this rates must be increased. Yet the commission is said to have where to be adding along with the rate question, waiting, it would appear, for the time when the six months' guaranty offered the carriers on their return to private ownership shall elapse. The millions of dollars the carriers are receiving under this guaranty come out of the taxpayers' pockets. Actually, the taxpayers are paying the shippers' bills, and neither gets value received.

Next, the carriers themselves. By the words of their own officials they have not co-operated with one another. Nor does industry believe they are putting up a real fight for better transportation. The railroad brotherhood seems to have many of them on the hip. The principal lines serving the middle west and the east are congested primarily because of lack of man power. What has been done to strengthen this degenerated condition in which the carriers are now hobbling along projects an illuminating picture of many a railroad executive's attitude.

The strike of outlaw switchmen left the roads in Illinois with but a small percentage of employees. These belonged to the brotherhood which had united with the carriers in fighting the outlaw union. The carriers were confronted with the difficult problem of replacing the switchmen they had lost where to be adding along with the rate question, waiting, it would appear, for the time when the six months' guaranty offered the carriers on their return to private ownership shall elapse. The millions of dollars the carriers are receiving under this guaranty come out of the taxpayers' pockets. Actually, the taxpayers are paying the shippers' bills, and neither gets value received.

Still Wait for Brotherhood.
Ever since then the carriers have been waiting for the brotherhood to make good. The brotherhood has not done so. It never will, observers say, so long as the carriers procrastinate and do little but privately "point with alarm" when action is required. Meanwhile with small crews in the yards the railroads have been trying after a fashion of their own to keep the nation's wealth in circulation. They will ask you "How can we get switchmen at the pay we can give them?" They're all going into other lines. To a large extent that is true, and that is where the culpability of the federal administration and the railway labor board comes in, the president for his failure to appoint the board until virtually forced to do so, the board for delay when a fair award was needed at once to keep the switchmen where they belonged—on the railroads.

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federation of labor to be held at Evansville, August 25.

SAIL FOR JAPAN SOON
MARIETTA, O., July 23.—B. F. Strecker and wife, their daughter, Miss Marjorie Strecker, and Miss Carol Strecker, will sail Aug. 31, for Japan, where they will attend the World Sunday School convention.

RUNAWAY GIRL JOINING SHOW
MIDDLETOWN, O., July 23.—John Shafer asked police Wednesday to locate his daughter, Dorothy, 17, who, he says, ran away Sunday night to join a show at Lexington, Ky.



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