

THE RAILWAYS AT WAR

HOSTILITIES IN THE NORTH-WEST BEGUN IN EARNEST.

THE CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE AND ST. PAUL
CUT AT ROCK ISLAND—THE LATTER RE-
TALIATES—A GREAT WAR IN PROSPECT.

CHICAGO, Nov. 24.—It is becoming more evident day by day that the rate war between the great North-western trunk lines will be a serious business, and that some line is going to be hurt before it is finished. Up to yesterday the fight was purely local in its character, being confined simply to a cut on eastern passenger rates from St. Paul and Minneapolis, and between Omaha, Sioux City, and St. Paul and Minneapolis. Yesterday afternoon a cut was made by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul on Moline, Rock Island and Davenport, and from those points to Chicago. This was a direct blow at the local passenger travel of the Rock Island Road, which was as promptly met by the latter company. Inquiry at the Rock Island offices this morning developed the fact that that company had received information from their agents in Davenport and Rock Island that this cut was being commenced by the Milwaukee people, and orders were, therefore, issued by the Rock Island management to duplicate any rate which the Milwaukee and St. Paul might see fit to make. This cut has been followed up by another on the part the Milwaukee and St. Paul on Albert Lea and intervening points of \$1, and in return the Rock Island has flooded the city with dodgers advertising a fifty-cent rate to Cedar Rapids, and a one-dollar rate to Albert Lea.

In fact, both companies are cutting to all junction points, and a trip to St. Paul, via Albert Lea, costs \$4 90, and by way of Chaska, which is 22 miles south of Minneapolis, only \$2. Chaska is one of the points included in the one-dollar cut from Chicago, and is the nearest point to Minneapolis. Thus it will be seen that the cut is getting as close as possible to terminal points without actually reaching them. Under the provisions of the North-western pool a forfeit of \$500 is due for any offense against the regulations of the association, and so these companies are adhering to the letter of the pool, but evading the spirit of it. It is clear that the present strain cannot last much longer and that a general war will ensue, including all business, unless a compromise is speedily reached. The North-western management deny that they will begin to cut, but it is thought that they will soon be forced to take action, for they are between two fires, their St. Paul business being affected by the Albert Lea operations, and their Iowa and Omaha business raked by the cut on Davenport and Cedar Rapids. A passage to Council Bluffs now costs only \$10 by the Rock Island Road.

Mr. Percival Lowell, the General Passenger Agent of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, when asked this morning what action would be taken by that company in view of the cut on Davenport and Rock Island, said:

"We shall do nothing immediately. We want to keep out of the fight as long as possible. This last cut directly affects through business to Omaha, and, of course, if it continues, we shall be compelled to take action. We will postpone it as long as we possibly can."

This morning a general cut on east-bound freight was begun in St. Paul, and the rate will be 15 cents per 100 pounds, regardless of classification. It will be readily seen that both sides are determined to carry the war into Africa, and the result cannot be foretold. The Rock Island management is determined to have its share of the grain shipments, and the Milwaukee and St. Paul Directors regard their demands as extortionate, and are equally determined not to concede them.

Manager R. R. Cable, of the Rock Island Railroad, in conversation with a reporter this evening, said that in his opinion the war would be a protracted one. He declined to say anything in reply to the card of Alexander Mitchell, President of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Road, published this morning, but intimated that he might have something to say on that head within a day or two.

OMAHA, Nov. 24.—The St. Paul and Omaha and Illinois Central freight line makes a rate of 25 cents on all freight from Omaha to Chicago, regardless of classification, thus taking a direct hand in the current war on rates in the North-west. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy is expected to join the strife next.