

NEWS OF THE RAILROADS

Proposed St. Paul Traffic Agreement Discussed.

Freight Representatives Not Disposed to Share Chairman Jeffery's Optimistic Views.

The optimistic views of the result of Tuesday's conference of Western Presidents, as expressed by Chairman Jeffery on Tuesday, were not generally shared by freight representatives and other railroad men in this city yesterday. That the absence from the conference of representatives of the Northern Pacific was more or less of an intentional slight and that it foreboded ill for the future of the St. Paul committee was shown by a statement from President Mellen of the Northern Pacific.

"Will the Northern Pacific," he was asked, "join in the organization of the proposed St. Paul Traffic Committee?"

"The Northern Pacific," answered President Mellen, "will under no circumstances join in any pool, traffic committee, or other such agreement, and Mr. Jeffery has received no assurances from us to the effect that we are favorably disposed to such a plan." This statement was made very emphatically, and as it is hardly probable that the other roads will organize a committee without the Northern Pacific, the territorial committee plan may have to be abandoned.

But aside from this it was pointed out by railroad officials yesterday that in spite of all statements it was evident that the conference had again failed to accomplish anything.

"The appointment of committees which are to report at the next conference is nothing more nor less than procrastination," said a freight official yesterday. "The committees may consider as much as they please; when it comes to reporting their deliberations at the next conference it will be found that no conclusion has been reached."

Another official whose knowledge of the freight situation throughout the country is very accurate, said:

"The great question which the Presidents have not answered and cannot solve is, 'What shall be done with the low-rate contracts entered into between the Western roads and their Central Traffic Association connections on business originating in trunk line territory, which low-rate contracts do not expire until next year?' The answer to this question is the explanation of why nothing definite has been done and why the committees have been ordered to report at the December conference. Nothing can be done until these contracts have expired, which will be soon after the December conference. One of the principal items of freight covered by these contracts is the tremendous apple crop of New York State, a large part of which will be moved west at low rates."

It is understood that one of the matters under discussion at Tuesday's conference, and which raised quite a disturbance, was the demand that the Chicago Great Western return to the other roads the sum of \$50,000, which, it was claimed, it had received in excess of its share in the freight pool. Report has it that the representative of that road made most strenuous objection to this demand and that the matter is not yet settled.

GRAIN POOL RE-ESTABLISHED.

Believed It Will Secure More Export Traffic for New York.

By the appointment of Frank Harriott as Commissioner of the New York Grain Committee, the five New York and Buffalo lines have re-established the grain pool which was abandoned nearly two years ago. The members of this committee are the traffic managers of the New York Central, the West Shore, the Lackawanna, the Erie, and the Lehigh Valley. The committee was re-established primarily for the purpose of securing to the Port of New York its share of the export grain traffic, and to secure for the interested railroads an equitable division of the ex-lake grain business—grain carried to Buffalo by water and thence to seaboard by rail.

It is intended to prevent diversion of this traffic, and yet to secure the best rates possible from the initial Western lines. The percentages of this traffic which went to each line under the former agreement have been revised on a more equitable basis, but the traffic managers declare that although this has been done, the agreement is not a money pool. Mr. Harriott will have complete charge of the handling of the grain, and he will have authority to route it over these lines as he sees fit.

NORTHERN PACIFIC AFFAIRS.

Increased Business in the Far West—New Cars Ordered.

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Northern Pacific was held yesterday. The annual report was approved and will probably be given out to-morrow. The traffic agreement between the Northern Pacific and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul for use by the latter of the St. Paul and Duluth was approved, and it now only lacks the approval of the Milwaukee's Board of Directors.

President Mellen, after the meeting, in speaking of the business conditions in the West, said that Washington, Idaho, and Oregon were exceedingly prosperous, and that it was entirely due to the earnings of the western part of the road that the general showing was so good, as the western division's surplus overbalanced the deficiency in the eastern part.

On the eastern division the traffic was 250 cars per day less than last year, due to the failure of the crops. The addition of the St. Paul and Duluth's earnings should make an increase of about \$5,000 per day. If earnings for the next few months showed an average increase of less than this amount, it would have to be assigned to the failure of the eastern division of the Northern Pacific to keep up its earnings.

Mr. Mellen confirmed the statement that the Northern Pacific was receiving from the Pressed Steel Company of Pittsburg 1,000 freight cars of a new pattern. The cars are 36 feet long, with a capacity of 80,000 pounds, and an average weight of 38,100 pounds.

NEW YORK CENTRAL MEETING.

Boston and Albany Lease Approved by Directors.

W. K. Vanderbilt attended a meeting of the Board of Directors of the New York Central yesterday at which the lease of the Boston and Albany Railroad was approved. The final ratification of this action will be made by the New York Central stockholders at a special meeting to be held in Albany, Nov. 8, and by the Boston and Albany stockholders at a similar meeting to be held Sept. 26.

No action was taken in regard to the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburg or the Long Island Railroad, and nothing will be done until the return of H. McK. Twombly, who has, it is understood, made a special study of these properties. The meeting was presided over by Chauncey M. Depew. Among others present were President Callaway, J. P. Morgan, and D. O. Mills.

Brief Railroad Items.

President E. D. Codman of the Fitchburg Railroad has resigned.

The Southern agency of the Central Vermont has been removed to 385 Broadway.

Edward M. Rine has been appointed Acting Superintendent of the Scranton Division of the Lackawanna Railroad.

Only routine business was transacted at the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Denver and Rio Grande.

It is expected that the Plant System will shortly be reorganized. The line now has six divisions, and this number will probably be reduced to four.

Arthur W. Ecclestone, former Eastern Agent of the Toledo, St. Louis and Kansas City, known as the Clover Leaf, has been appointed to a similar position on the New York, Chicago and St. Louis, known as the Nickel Plate, with offices at 385 Broadway.