

Union Recognition Waived

Publicity by Business Men Helps to Mold Public Opinion Against Union Recognition

The labor troubles in Kansas City, Mo., which started with the strike of employees of the Kansas City Railways and have extended to packing houses, freight depots, soap factories and manufacturing establishments, still hamper plans of business men. A turning point, however, seems to have been reached, for on Sept. 23 the striking freight handlers agreed to return to work without recognition of their union. It will be remembered that the street railway strike was settled without formal recognition of the union. The packers, however, recognized the union in their settlement. Union leaders then declared that the basis of the packing house settlement would be that of other strikes. Several weeks ago a Business Men's Association was organized and it used large newspaper space to inform the public of the incitement of unrest among workmen. The publicity campaign was credited with effecting such a change of public sentiment that the freight handlers decided it would be most unwise to insist upon union recognition. The railroads had been able to keep their freight depots more or less in operation, and the agreement provides that the men employed during the strike need not be discharged to make places for the strikers who now return to work. Patrick F. Gill, government mediator, arranged the settlement of the freight handlers' strike. Teamsters and chauffeurs who refused to handle goods for or from freight houses have returned to work.

Electrification Efficient, Economical and Satisfactory

Charles A. Goodnow, vice-president of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, who has been in charge of the electrical construction during the last few years, is quoted as follows:

"It was unjustly and ignorantly stated in the financial column of a New York newspaper that St. Paul was going on with its electrification, not because that method of operating had proved satisfactory or economical, but because we had gone so far that we could not stop.

"This may be flatly denied, like some other recent stories in the campaign against St. Paul's credit. Electrification has not only proved to be highly efficient, but economical and satisfactory in every way. It has solved the problem of reliable and cheap mountain operation, especially in the winter, and has demonstrated that the cost of repairs is only about one-half that of steam operation, while the capacity of the electric engines as regards both speed and tonnage, is practically double that of steam locomotives. Electric engines put in service in December, 1915, are still doing 100 per cent work and have never had a general overhauling."

Abandonment of Road Sought

The Inter Urban Railway, Des Moines, Iowa, has filed a petition with the State Railroad Commission of Iowa requesting permission to abandon its branch to Woodward, on a spur of the line to Perry and 5 miles from the junction point at Moran. The company contends that the road is not a paying proposition; that it cannot afford to pay for an overhead crossing which the Railroad Commission has ordered, and that the rails are needed by the company for double tracking its line to Camp Dodge. Citizens of Woodward have declared through Senator A. M. McColl that they will oppose the closing of the road.

The Inter Urban Railway has announced that if it can secure a 15-cent rate for soldiers it will double-track its entire line to Camp Dodge. At the present time the soldiers are paying 10 cents to Des Moines, while citizens pay 15 cents. Emil G. Schmidt, president of the road, states that it will cost \$300,000 to double-track the line to Camp Dodge, but that with the increased fare he has made arrangements to finance the work. Camp Dodge is 12 miles from Des Moines, so at the present time the company is receiving less than 1 cent a mile for carrying the soldiers.

Strike in Twin Cities

Minnesota Public Safety Commission Brings About Settlement—Discharges to Be Investigated

A strike of trainmen of the Twin City Rapid Transit Company begun on Oct. 6, as a result of the activity of union organizers, was ended on Oct. 9 at the direction of the Minnesota Public Safety Commission. The commission found that the only real difference between the company and the men on strike was the question of the reinstatement of men previously discharged and that the policy of the company was not to discharge employees solely on the score of their membership in any organization. It advised that the men return to work immediately, the status of the fifty-seven men to be investigated on their individual merits. The present status seems to be just about the same as it was before the strike. The company has not recognized the union.

DEVELOPMENTS JUST BEFORE THE STRIKE

Previous to the strike the company was conferring with a co-operative trainmen's committee selected from the car-houses and had agreed to practically all the requests of the men. Later an advance of 10 per cent in wages was granted. At this time the union intervened. Horace Lowry, president of the company, refused to confer with the union under the circumstances. Vice-President T. F. Line and Representative Edward McMorrow of the Amalgamated then took over the direction of the affairs of the men who had organized and the strike began. A general sympathetic strike was threatened, but the commissioners' order ended the affair. Following the settlement President Lowry said: "I have nothing to say except the Public Safety Commission has taken the matter out of my hands and the company's control. We must and will obey cheerfully and patriotically the order of the commission."

PUBLIC INCONVENIENCED LITTLE

Rowdism in St. Paul resulted in damage to equipment of the company and in slight injuries to passengers and policemen. Except for these outbreaks and the discontinuance of owl service three nights the public was inconvenienced very little. An average of 88.8 per cent normal service was reported by the company the last day. This was 6.8 per cent over the previous day. When the strike was called the company announced that 319 trainmen out of 2716, or 16 per cent, failed to report for duty. Three per cent is the normal absence report, leaving the percentage of men on strike at only 13 per cent of the total. The company was prompt to offer to receive applications from men who had quit work but had done no unlawful act while out.

A Question of Veracity

Policemen Accused of Insubordination Plead Lack of Definite Instructions

After deliberating seventeen and one-half hours without reaching an agreement, the jury considering the case against former Patrolman E. W. Benjamin of Seattle, Wash., charged with failure to do his duty as a public officer during the recent strike of the railway employees of the Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company in Seattle, was discharged by Superior Judge Boyd J. Tallman. Benjamin is one of thirteen officers charged in one information with the same offense, but granted separate trials. It is stated that his case will be tried again before the State proceeds against the other defendants. The State's case rested mainly upon testimony of Police Sergeant F. A. Ribbach, who said he ordered the policemen to board the cars for a trip downtown for the purpose of protecting property and the car crew, and that Benjamin and his co-defendants refused to obey him. All of the "striking" policemen testified that Ribbach did not issue any orders, and that when they attempted to learn from him what they should do, once upon the cars, he walked away. They all asserted they were ready to obey any commands as soon as detailed instructions were received by them. G. A. Richardson, general superintendent of railways of the Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company at Seattle, testified that his company had asked the police for protection.