

## Interstate Commerce Commission Orders Cut in Express Rates

An Associated Press dispatch from Washington, under date of August 4, says:

Reductions in express rates, which will cost the companies fully \$26,000,000 a year, approximately 16 per cent of their gross revenue, were ordered by the interstate commerce commission to become effective on or before October 15, 1913.

Notable reforms in practices also were ordered.

The most important change prescribed by the order is by way of modification of the present graduated scale of parcel rates.

One hundred pound rates for short distances either have been left unchanged or slightly reduced; for longer distances they have been lowered.

For fifty pounds or less, all rates have been reduced.

For packages more than four pounds going more than 200 miles and less than 2,000, the new express rates are generally lower than the parcel post rates; for more than 3,000 miles the rates are practically the same.

The report and order of the commission, prepared by Commissioner John R. Marble, are virtually an affirmation of the findings of Commissioner Franklin K. Lane, now secretary of the interior.

It prescribes a so-called system, dividing the United States into 950 blocks, averaging 2,500 square miles as originally proposed by Mr. Lane, 900,000,000 different rates now published by the express companies will be reduced to less than 650,000, and the interstate commerce commission

believes the system points the way to a solution of the existing maze of freight rates.

The general impression in official quarters is that the express companies will attempt to test by legal means the constitutionality of the commissioner's order.

The requirements of the order of June 3, 1912, that a label shall be attached to each parcel, is modified to the extent that in case of shipments of perishable property, consisting of two or more packages, the label need be attached to only one package.

The express companies had filed statements indicating the loss of revenue under the proposed rates would be intolerable and argued strenuously that the establishment of the parcel post had deprived them of quite 30 per cent of the revenue they formerly received from parcels of eleven pounds or less. They contended that the express business could not survive the losses from business sources.

"This is equivalent to saying," comments Commissioner Marble in his report, "that inasmuch as shippers have been given the convenience and economy of the parcel post, the express carriers must on that account be allowed to charge higher rates than otherwise would be reasonable. That is to say, the commission is called on to take from the shippers of the country all the benefit they receive from the parcel post, and give it to the express companies in the form of higher rates on the remaining business." The report says:

"The order is for two years only. That period will give abundant opportunity for a test of these rates

under various conditions amounting to a normal average. In no other way can the absolutely proper rate basis for respondents be finally determined. Respondents are also at liberty at any time to bring forward new facts as a basis for a petition for modification of this or any other order."

The decision of the commission, deferred as it has for more than a year, followed an investigation that occupied nearly six years of hearing, special examination of reports and accounts covering in detail the various phases of the express business. Nearly a carload of books and papers have been filed and are a part of the proceedings in this case.

### MR. BRYAN'S CRITICS

For his chautauqua lectures, Mr. Bryan is criticised. It would be strange for Mr. Bryan to be without critics. When he is carted off to the cemetery, they will probably criticise him for the time and method of his burial.

If Mr. Bryan were an apostle of privilege, there would be no criticisms from the present critics. There was no criticism from them of Secretary of State Knox when he journeyed about the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific, campaigning for Mr. Taft. There were no criticisms from them of Secretary of State Root when he ambled about the country making most excellent campaign addresses.

There was no criticism of Mr. Taft, when as secretary of war, he made a tour around the world occupying several months during which he hobnobbed with crowned heads and left the duties of his great office to the care of underlings.

There was no criticism from them of Mr. Taft when he repeatedly put

the White House on wheels and rolled it all over the country, putting up his political fences. In four years, the amiable and delightful Mr. Taft twice toured the country as far as the Pacific coast, carrying the presidential office in his suit case, and covering a distance by railroad never equalled by any other chief executive. And behold, not a criticism, not a challenge, not a hint fell from the lips of those now attacking Mr. Bryan.

Criticism from those who are condemning Mr. Bryan in the present instance is a better sign than would be their commendation. That his endeavors have made enemies of them is decidedly to Mr. Bryan's credit. He could win their plaudits quickly by coming out as an exponent of plutocracy and privilege. It is because he has not sought their approbation that he is widely beloved by millions of his countrymen.

It makes no difference whether Mr. Bryan does or does not make chautauqua addresses during his vacation period. He will be criticised for something else if he doesn't. None need care less than he since the criticisms of his critics have given Mr. Bryan one of the greatest followings of any leader who ever lived in the United States.—Portland (Ore.) Journal.

### LOOKING FOR HELP

Merchant (to detective)—"Some fellow has been representing himself as a collector of ours. He's been taking in more money than any two of the men we have and I want him collared as quickly as possible."

Detective—"All right. I'll have him in jail in less than a week."

Merchant—"Great Scott, man! I don't want to put him in jail; I want to engage him."—Boston Transcript.

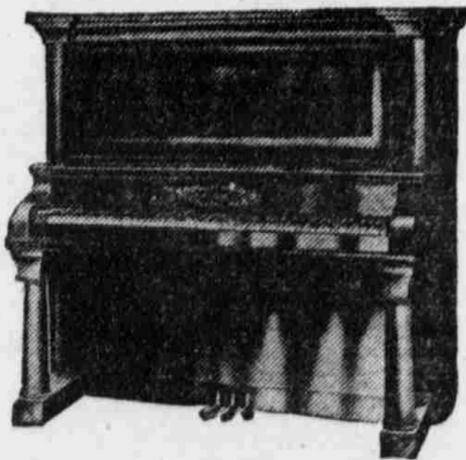
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