

A New Enterprise.

The following resolutions will be presented at the next meeting of the Trades Assembly:

We, the undersigned committee appointed by the chamber of commerce, board of trade, Commercial club, Trades and Labor assembly and jobbers' union, met as requested in joint conference with the directors of the Duluth & Southwestern Railway company, who explained and outlined their project in all its details and as to their future course, provided St. Louis county gave them sufficient encouragement in the matter of aid to still further prosecute the consummation of it. We have carefully considered the question in all its phases, as to whether the time is opportune for the county to take up a question of this kind, and whether the project is a meritorious one from a commercial and railroad standpoint, and whether its construction and completion would increase the wealth and population of our city and county and give sufficient additional employment to labor, together with other benefits to warrant the county in granting the aid requested, under the existing circumstances. We believe that it can afford to do so, for reasons, several of which are set forth below:

MUST HAVE TERRITORY.

The affairs of this city and county are conducted at a fixed charge and expense that need not be materially increased in a population several times larger than it is, and in our judgment we have nearly reached the limit of population that can be supported in this city merely as a port of transfer, and in order to increase it we must have greater facilities for distribution so as to induce the location of manufactories here. If we expect to become a manufacturing center of iron and steel and their products, we must have a larger territory tributary to us for their sale and use, as the country west of us is now our only market, and if it were sufficiently large, it has uncertainties that will not be met in that part of the southern portions of our state and northern Iowa that would be reached by the proposed Duluth & Southwestern railway, where crops are more certain, owing to a more diversified farming, and it is very important to all of St. Louis county that our food supplies from that section should be cheapened by coming direct before we can compete with other places as manufacturers, lumbermen and miners. We particularly need independent lines of railroad leading to the northwest and southwest that can be controlled and operated in the interest and for the benefit of Duluth, entirely independent of the cities of Chicago, St. Paul and Minneapolis, which are now our competitors for manufacturing and jobbing trade, and which have been built up and fostered by their railroads.

The Duluth & Southwestern railroad is projected to run from Duluth in a line almost south through Red Wing to at least the southern boundary line of this state, tapping, we are informed, an excel-

lent belt of hardwood timber many thousand acres in extent, and containing many millions of feet, principally white oak. This tract of timber is at present inaccessible, but being within seventy miles of Duluth, would, with a line of railroad from here, be of great value to this city for use in manufactures of various kinds, while the refuse could be used in the making of charcoal, which will be required in large quantities in the iron and steel business. This fuel cannot be gotten at present owing to the small quantity of hardwood near the city. At Red Wing the road would reach the eastern side of the most fertile, thrifty and well populated district in this state, one hundred and sixty-five miles from Duluth, being a route twenty-seven miles shorter than by way of St. Paul, and correspondingly shorter to Duluth by it, and making direct connections with independent lines of railroads to all the important cities of the southwest. Existing lines of railroad that connect Duluth with that district are so incumbered by their connections with lines of road controlled by Twin City or Chicago influences that Duluth and St. Louis county are practically barred out of that territory, which from our geographical position we should naturally supply with all their requirements in the way of Eastern manufactured goods, coal, lime, salt, lumber, etc.

BETTER FOOD SUPPLIES.

On the other hand, it is estimated that at least 50 per cent of the food supplies of St. Louis county are obtained from that section of the state, and only a very small part of this is shipped direct to our city, but is handled by Twin City commission men, and we have not only to pay additional charges on their account, and two local rates of freight, but we must necessarily receive our supplies in poorer condition than would be the case if they could be shipped direct.

Such a road would make our city a corn market, and would bring in soft wheat to blend with the hard, which our millers are very much in need of.

We are satisfied that the selection of the proposed route of the Duluth & Southwestern railway, and the scheme for its promotion are good ones, free from the entanglements of other cities and railroad systems, and that it will be made a Duluth road. The application for aid as suggested for our approval would fully protect the interests of the county. The amount asked for will be \$250,000 in bonds payable in thirty years, or at the option of the county, in a lesser time after the year 1911, in lawful money of the United States. The bonds would bear interest at 5 per cent, and are not to be delivered to the railroad company, nor is any interest to accrue on said bonds, until the road is completed from the southern boundary of this state to Duluth, and the locomotives and cars running thereon into this city via the city of Red Wing. An exchange of stock for bonds is provided for, and the limit of the time for completion of the road is the 1st of December, 1900.

It is also provided in said application that the principal erecting and repair shops and the general offices of said road shall be located in the city of Duluth.

The promoters express a desire to abide by the decision of the bodies represented at this conference as to the advisability of submitting the proposition to a vote of the people, feeling that if it cannot be endorsed that it would entail an unnecessary expense to the county and themselves to press the project further.

It is our opinion that this proposition should meet with the unqualified approval of the citizens of St. Louis county, and we know of no railroad project that could be suggested and that could be completed by the construction of a like number of miles that would add so much to the future prosperity of our county.

Respectfully submitted,
 H. R. ARMSTRONG,
 Commercial Club.
 G. A. LELAND,
 Chamber of Commerce.
 WARD AMES,
 Board of Trade.
 E. R. COBB,
 Trades and Labor Assembly.
 C. A. DUNCAN,
 Jobbers' Union.

Government operation of public franchises is a principle that has been tried and not found wanting. It may not be feasible to make haste too fast in matters of this nature, but it is a good principle to work on, and no new franchises should be granted to private interests, and no opportunities let slip for regaining those that have been given away.

The next issue of the Labor World will be a very interesting Christmas number. Don't miss it.

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