

# Two Men Who Have Made Notable Successes in New York Life

## Frank T. Hedley Known to Millions for His Remarkable Career as Active Head of the Interborough Traction Lines

SOME time when this sphere of ours was in the travail of genesis, taking a more or less permanency of form of continents and oceans, rivers and lakes, mountains and islands, quite a while before I was a King of Babylon and you were a Christian slave, a heaving of solids and a rushing of fluids decreed that Manhattanites should go down town to work and up town to sleep. It is also why a personally inoffensive gentleman known as Frank Hedley has achieved the distinction of being one of the most frequently damned men in the world.

It is simply a matter of mathematics. Multiply a million and a half of us going down town and a million and a half of us going up town by 300 days; add a few hundred thousand coming back and forth daily from Long Island and New Jersey; add the population of several good sized cities going about their business and pleasure in between; don't forget the Sundays and holidays; subtract a percentage of ignorance on the one equation and intelligence on the other, and there you are. Move up forward in the car!

### Hedley "Steps Lively."

Frank Hedley is, and has been for a large part of the life of this generation of urban travellers, the directing intelligence of metropolitan transportation. The daily tidal movement of New York's great masses has been subject to his "Step lively!"

He has stepped lively himself—from the immigrant landing stage at Castle Garden to the presidency of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, with the direction of the most complicated system of passenger traffic in the world, the conduct of great capital and much labor, and the personal responsibility for the safety of most of the inhabitants of the "Wonder City."

It is this last, this element of safety, of which Hedley is most proud, and the boast, a legitimate, justifiable boast, that he always falls back upon when hard pressed by the clamor of the multitudes. When the subway traveller says "I stood from the Battery to the Bronx," or "From Brooklyn to Van Cortlandt," "I was late for my work or my dinner or my urgent appointment," "I was crushed, squeezed, maltreated, insulted," Hedley says "But you didn't get killed in a wreck." And that is, of course, something, but beyond the purposes of this sketch.

Whatever the merits of the operation of the system, whether or not the city could do it better with its own employees, with John F. Hylan director instead of Frank Hedley, whether or not we add a few pennies to a nickel for our fare, whether or not the system goes bankrupt is beside the mark on this occasion—it remains that Hedley is *en fait accompli*, both the titular and active head of the great transportation lines of Manhattan, as he has been the active head for many years.

What manner of man is this Hedley? He is a mechanic fundamentally, a student of the forces that operate inanimate things, developing into a student of the forces that operate the animate, such as Interborough employees. We can imagine him as a Teddy taking his uncle's watch apart because he "wanted to see the wheels go 'round." With this added, that he became able to make the wheels go around himself, and tuck on a few touches to their whirring.

### Father of the Locomotive.

The uncle-wheel allusion is not so far fetched either. If there is one thing that Frank Hedley is sensitive about (he is not a sensitive plant) it is his insistence that his great-uncle William Hedley should be called "The Father of the Locomotive" rather than George Stephenson. He will talk about this more freely than about an 8 cent fare. So we will have to go back to William Hedley to explain his great-nephew Frank. Yellowed with age and treasured with care the president of the Interborough keeps safely but convenient of reference this letter written by his uncle to an engineering and scientific authority in 1836:

Sir: I beg to call your attention to the following circumstances connected with the establishment of the locomotive engine in this district. In October, 1812, I had the direction of Wylam colliery. At that period I was requested by the proprietor to undertake the construction of a locomotive engine. The celebrated Trevithick had previously been applied to for one and had declined the business. Among the many obstacles to locomotion at that period was the idea entertained by practical men that an engine would only draw after it, on a level road, a weight equal to its own.

To obviate this Trevithick and Vivian proposed to make the wheels rough and uneven. I was, however, forcibly impressed with the idea that the weight of an engine might be sufficient to draw a train of loaded wagons. I had a carriage constructed (the model of which was placed upon rails and loaded with parcels of iron. An engine, being constructed with a malleable iron boiler, was placed upon four wheels and went well—regularly drawing eight loaded



FRANK T. HEDLEY, ACTIVE HEAD OF THE INTERBOROUGH.

four to five miles an hour. Another and better engine was subsequently constructed and gave the most satisfactory results.

I should not have troubled you with this exposition of facts, but you recently stated publicly that Stephenson was the father of the locomotive engine. I do not wish to detract one iota from the celebrity to which Mr. Stephenson is entitled—he has done much for the locomotive engine—but by referring to Wood's book on railroads, which may be considered an excellent authority, it appears that a locomotive engine was not constructed by him before July, 1814.

Long before this period the use of horses on the Wylam railroad was superseded by locomotive engines, a large annual sum being saved to the colliery by the reduced charge in conveying coal. My patent bears the date of March 13, 1813.

In conclusion, I beg to state that I am the individual who established the principle of locomotion by the friction or adhesion of the wheels upon the rails and, further, that it was the engine on the Wylam railroad that established the character of the locomotive engine in this district as an efficient and economical prime mover. After this statement, which can be verified by many professional men in the district, I trust you will see the propriety in your future lectures of not designating George Stephenson as the Father of the Locomotive Engine.

### Supported by Encyclopedia.

We can hardly go into the merits of the relative claims to fame of William Hedley and George Stephenson, but it may be said in support of Frank Hedley's treasured ancestral document that Chambers's Encyclopedia in the course of its history of railways says (p. 654): "The first railway locomotive was tried, it is said, on the Merthyr tramroad in 1804, but the experiment was not successful, and to the venerable 'Puffing Billy' patented in 1813 by William Hedley and now to be seen in the museum of the Patent Office, must be ascribed the honor of being the progenitor of the enormous stud of iron horses now existing in all quarters of the world. In previous experimental lines rack rails and toothed wheels had been provided under the mistaken notion that the adhesion of a smooth wheel to a smooth rail would not be sufficient. 'Puffing Billy' after many trials and alterations commenced regular working at the Wylam colliery, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1813, and was kept in constant use until 1872, when it was purchased by the Government."

A drawing of "Puffing Billy" is reproduced beside Stephenson's "Rocket."

### Hedley's Boyhood.

So Frank Hedley comes legitimately by his interest in moving wheels. From Wylam, whence coals are really carried to Newcastle, Hedley's immediate family removed to Kent, where his father became master mechanic of the Southeastern Railway with headquarters at Maidstone. Young Hedley got his education in the public schools and the railway machine shops. When he was not yet of age (he was born in 1861) he packed up his kit bag and set sail for the Land of Opportunity. He came on his own, with precious little money after his passage had been paid without friends and



MR. HEDLEY SHAKING HANDS WITH JAMES CUSACK, LAST HORSE CAR DRIVER.

Army of Friendly Invasion of America, conveyed only by his own stout determination to win out.

When in the years that he had climbed pretty well up the ladder he was asked: "Did you come to America intending to pursue an engineering or a mechanical career?" he replied: "Career? I did not have any such high and mighty notions as such a dignified term would imply. No, I came to America looking for a job. As the first place that offered itself was in the Erie shops over in Jersey City, I took it, and was glad to earn enough to live on."

That was Hedley. Get a job and work at it so that you may get a better one. That has been his creed, and the creed he has preached. Work has been his cult. He always refers to himself as a workman, and he has always wielded great personal influence with his army of employees, even when they were bedeviling him for more pay. He doesn't spare himself, and it is said that he doesn't spare others. Shirkers he has no use for, but there are many who will testify that he has generous sympathy with honest effort. He is not as young as he was, but he is at it hammer and tongs every day. He married young, when he was still in overalls, and has an interesting family. Once, when the original subway was still young, he was asked what were his favorite recreations. "Recreations?" he replied. "As a matter of fact I have not had a real vacation since the subway started. But when the work permits there's nothing in the way of recreation to compare with a quiet restful evening at home counting the children."

and Hedley became a real American right after passing through Castle Garden, he is an ardent baseball fan, and was frequently a noted figure at the big league games. Often he and his predecessor in the Interborough presidency, Theodore P. Slants, cheered on the Giants or Yankee. One of his many ways of keeping his employees interested was encouraging a baseball team formed from their ranks and providing a grounds, "Hedley Field," where they might play and indulge in other outdoor sports.

It is one of Hedley's aims, whether actuated by business or philanthropic purposes does not matter, to have his employees maintain some semblance of an esprit de corps. The Interborough brass band is one of the city's institutions. A weekly publication, devoted chiefly to personal news, is enjoyed by many. One department of this, strange as it may appear to the buffeted and irritated daily passenger, consists of letters from patrons commending the politeness or kindness of such and such a numbered employee.

Hedley never wearies of meeting his employees personally. When he was general manager in the early days of the subway, he said in answer to a remark about keeping in close personal touch with the operatives: "It would be impossible for me to do otherwise and be myself. On the principle that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, it is my duty to my superiors in the service and to the public in general to know pretty thoroughly the personnel of the men who run the trains, operate the signalling system, guard the gates and

tion and construction. That is the reason why it is more important for me to be out on the lines most of the time rather than sitting here in my office. So nine-tenths of my time is spent among my men, directing them, encouraging them, sometimes discharging them, but always trying to be just to them." Having been a mechanic myself, and knowing just what every man in the service is expected and paid to do, I am able to keep in close and constant touch with every wire and pulse in the machine, so to say. Yes, I make it a point to know my men personally—nothing short of that will do."

### Illustration of His Methods

In times of trouble and threatened disaffection Hedley goes into the men's meetings and talks to them. The Sun's report of his talk to about 2,000 of them when a strike was threatened in August, 1916, will illustrate his methods. He had gone to the hall with President Shonts. Following Shonts's formal address, Hedley said:

Well, boys, I've got it on the boss this time. He's the orator and I'm the plainspoken workman among you. I remember the time when I worked with many of the men whose faces I see here and when I did not have enough money to get my overalls washed every week. I think I know how you men feel. I wouldn't be human if I didn't. But

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## Ralph M. Easley, While Seldom in Lime-light, Ranks Among Highest in Americanism and Service to the Nation

WHILE Americanism, wholly sincere, is the dominating impression left upon any one who meets Ralph M. Easley, founder and executive of the National Civic Federation, the nationwide organization for betterment of humanity just rounding out twenty years of its existence. Countless thousands know of the federation and its work and have benefited from it. Few know the man who thought out the scheme and who has given the best years of his life to its fruition.

Ralph M. Easley's personality pervades the federation—and it should—yet so modest is the man, so retiring, that only the few who have helped him make the organization the power it is realize his force and the strength of his character.

No Croix de Guerre is his, nor has he a Distinguished Service Medal. Yet in the unwritten history of the great war his part was not a small one. His sterling patriotism leaped forth at a critical moment and through the machinery he had built up in the federation were accomplished results of incalculable value to the nation and of inestimable help to the Allies.

### Two Service Stars.

Two blue stars adorn the tiny service flag that flutters above his desk in a sunny office on the thirty-third floor of the Metropolitan Tower. They stand for his son Ronald, who answered the call, and for his daughter, Miss Donna Easley, whose songs lightened many a painful and weary hour for the men in the camp hospitals. Two others stars rightfully could have been placed there—one for Mr. Easley himself, the other for his devoted wife and assistant, who did so much work in furthering the war risk insurance plans and in devising the details of the national housing operations.

Though to many it would seem that this war work was the apotheosis of the federation and its founder, an interview with Mr. Easley quickly disillusioned one. Problems of reconstruction engross him and constitute the federation's activities at present, and leading all these is the solution of the problems of industrial unrest and a campaign against the propaganda of Bolshevism. Much of the active campaign against the Reds in this country can be traced directly to the National Civic Federation, and many an organization that was threatened with domination by its radical elements has been held safely American when the facts were fairly presented to its leaders through the same source. "America, first, last and all the time," is the spirit that animates the federation and all affiliated with it.

Adherence to one idea is the force that

has brought the National Civic Federation's founder to the place he holds in the sociological and industrial world. He always believed that most matters affecting labor and capital could be adjusted if only each side would admit that there was another side to the question. Working on that principle, he has assembled a body that has Alton B. Parker for its president and Samuel Gompers for its vice-president, and which includes in its executive council Charles S. Barrett, president of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union of America; V. Everit Macy, Nicholas F. Brady, George W. Perkins, Vincent Astor; an organization that fosters a debate at a luncheon between Hugh Frayne, labor organizer, and August Belmont, banker; that brings together Warren S. Stone, head of the railway workers, Dr. Alvah H. Doty, physician, and Mrs. Coffin Van Rensselaer, prominent in society, to solve problems in civic health matters.

Being able to accomplish these things in peace times, it is no wonder that when the world crisis came the National Civic Federation was able to outline a policy that met many emergencies.

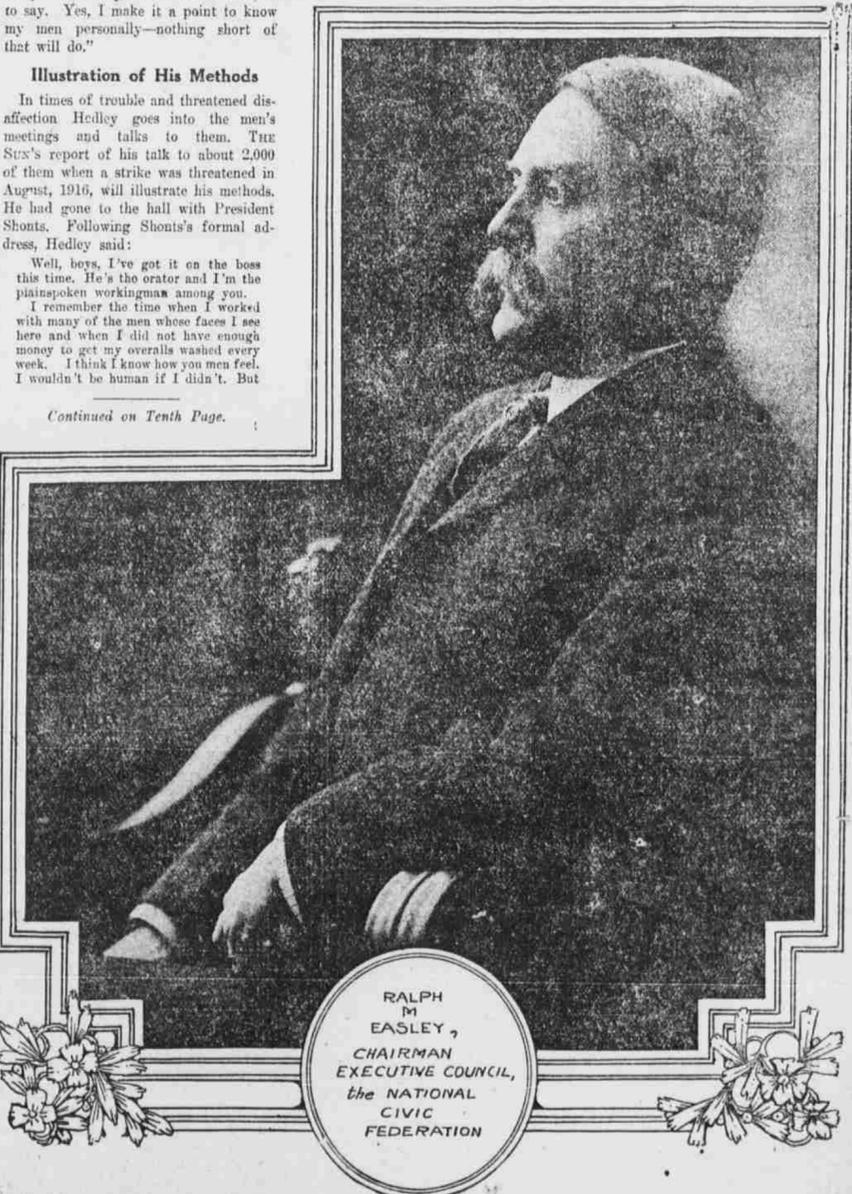
Mr. Easley was assistant to Mr. Gompers in the committee on labor of the Council of National Defence, and Mrs. Easley was secretary of the committee. Practically the entire machinery of the federation was turned over to that committee, and Mr. Gompers has publicly testified to its great value. Wherever the machinery of the federation could be used to advantage it was placed at the service of departments of the Government. Mr. Easley's services were often utilized by the Department of Justice and the Military Intelligence Bureau in the investigation of enemy activities.

### Exposed I. W. W. Activities.

When the 110 I. W. W. leaders were on trial in Chicago and a nationwide campaign in their defence was being waged by the National Civil Liberties Bureau Mr. Easley put out a brochure exposing the lawless activities of the I. W. W. and showing how that organization had acted as an auxiliary to the enemy espionage system in this country. Mr. Easley organized the League for National Unity, which carried on a vast publicity campaign to keep the people of the nation united back of the Government in its conduct of the war to a victorious conclusion, which vigorously attacked propaganda for a premature compromise peace, and which was found helpful on many occasions in special work by the Committee on Public Information.

Out of its work and investigations during the war the federation gained im-

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RALPH M. EASLEY, CHAIRMAN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, THE NATIONAL CIVIC FEDERATION