

# THE RAILROADS ARE DOING FOR THE CITY

By John Hamilton Gilmour

THE relations existing between San Francisco and the state are so close that what benefits the people outside of the city is beneficial to the city itself, therefore whatever the railroads, the Southern Pacific, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, the Western Pacific, the Northwestern Pacific and the Ocean Shore do for the state they are doing for San Francisco.

Residents of San Francisco, even the comparatively well off, have landed interests all throughout the state, and if the railroad companies improve their service in the most distant section they are conferring in an indirect way a multitude of benefits upon many living in San Francisco.

For instance, one of our most influential and certainly one of our richest bankers is interested in orange groves in the southern part of the state, while there are hundreds of men of small means who have land in various parts of the state, holding it for speculative purposes or with the intention of embarking for themselves in the venture of raising oranges or deciduous fruits.

Hundreds of people have stock in small companies who are engaged in exploiting land in the interior, and whatever the railroads do to improve conditions in these portions is felt by the residents of San Francisco.

### A Gigantic Task

No two railroads in the entire world were ever confronted with so formidable a task as the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe in April-May, 1906. On these two transportation companies fell the burden of rehabilitating a destroyed city. Was there ever such a problem faced by the general managers of any railroads? The Santa Fe has a line from Chicago into Oakland. The Southern Pacific has its friendly connection at Ogden and Omaha, and from Ogden, practically from Chicago, both companies have a single track on which to operate their trains.

In ordinary years the capacity of these two lines is taxed to the utmost in handling California products, for the nature of our climate is such that the citrus fruit movement overlaps the deciduous fruit movement, and in addition to this demand in the east for our vegetables is so insistent that the use of freight cars for vegetables is an important factor in our eastward movement.

Not only had all the west bound traffic to be cared for in the months directly after the fire, but the east bound movement had also to be cared for. This business could not be rushed back for more west bound freight, but had to be utilized so as to keep all this enormous tonnage going and coming, all on a single track.

What was the nature of most of the orders from the west? Everything. The dry goods merchants ordered stuff by the train load, the hardware man, the crockery man, the automobile man, the piano man and the grocery man all wanted their trainloads sent ahead of everything else, and, therefore, when we come to think over the matter, can there be any surprise that there was a congestion of freight between here and New York? For despite the statements of the agents of the freight lines in this city, there was a congestion of freight between Chicago and San Francisco, only there was no one here to tell us of the troubles that the eastern roads were having in filling their orders.

Not only were thousands carted away from the burning city, but by the ton was being poured into the city to relieve the distressed. Harriman and his lieutenants on this coast deserve the commendation of the residents in California for their conduct of the railroad on this supreme occasion. They were tried and not found wanting.

San Francisco can never have a dangerous rival on the Pacific slope. Her advantage consists in her admirable situation. She may practically be said to be in the center of the coast line extending from British territory in the north to the possession of Mexico in the south. She is surrounded by the most fertile country on the face of the globe, and close to valleys which exceed that of the Nile and the Ganges for richness. She is in a zone of perpetual summer. With a few hours' ride from the city, shortly to be tapped by another overland road, are groves of oranges which vie in beauty and in the excellence of their fruit with the famous groves of Redlands and Riverside. A little farther away are the groves of Lindsay and surrounding territory which will be developed by capital from San Francisco. The Sacramento valley is one of the wonders of the world, and there is no land which is capable of raising such diversified crops.

In the San Joaquin valley we have vineyards which would astonish the growers of Italy, and the Santa Clara valley is equally rich in prunes, while the valleys of Napa, producing grapes from which the choicest wines are manufactured. All these varied agricultural industries are in one way or another, closely identified with San Francisco. Their success means money to San Francisco, for, as the distributing point, San Francisco sells to them, and their making money means our making money.

perly depends our prosperity, it will be well to learn how the Southern Pacific had fortified itself to take care of this business by having the necessary equipment.

Paul Shoup of the Southern Pacific, in discussing this matter, said in this connection that the greatest problem that railroads people had to solve was that of putting our fruit in the east as fresh as if it had just been plucked from the vine and tree.

In order to do this cars had to be built and so arranged that the fruit could be transported long distances with the bloom still upon it.

The old cars were found to be out of date, and a new car, that of the Pacific Fruit Express, was built especially to handle our fruit, and the sum of \$11,500,000 was expended on 8,000 cars, which have been received up to date.

To still further assist the spread of sales of Californian fruit in the east immense icing plants are being constructed at Roseville, Colton and Las Vegas, Nevada. Some idea of our shipments east of fruit can be gathered from these figures, according to the statement of Paul Shoup, who prepared these estimates:

"During the season ending October 31, 1905, 8,810 cars of deciduous green fruit were shipped east; this season to November 1, 7,045 cars. This has been the banner year in the green fruit business. California has received more money net than during any previous season. Many cars of fruit brought over \$2,000 each, while cherries in a number of cases ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per car. The total northern California shipments of vegetables, green deciduous and citrus fruits during the season just closing have been 10,913 cars, nearly a thousand more than last year. From southern California the shipments via all lines were 27,632 cars of citrus fruit and 2,477 of vegetables.

"The Pacific system of the Southern Pacific had in 1905 1,198 locomotives and 26,148 freight cars out of the total already mentioned. Since then 184 locomotives and 5,488 freight cars have been received or ordered—an increase in motive power of 14 per cent and freight cars 20 per cent. Our latest reports indicate an increase in tonnage up to June 30, 1907, of 11.15 per cent and in car mile movements 11.10 per cent and in train miles 11.10 per cent. But the new freight cars are much larger than the old; the engines more powerful.

"Therefore to meet your needs during the coming year we will have an increased efficiency in freight cars of probably 25 per cent and in locomotives of 20 per cent, whereas no such increase in business is now demonstrated. The prospects for better service are therefore much brighter. Of course, the Southern Pacific is, however, affected somewhat by the car and engine conditions on every other road in the United States, with all of which we exchange business. If they are unable to meet traffic demands cars which should be returned promptly to the owner, move slowly and in some instances cannot escape homeward from local shippers. The problem is not local to California; not to western railroads. But all indications point to better service. There is a further favorable factor. The value of cars lies not in their numbers alone, but in the rapidity with which they are moved. All summer the Southern Pacific has had thousands of men employed in supplying additional track facilities.

lengthened 700 feet, enabling our operating department to make up trains of 40 cars with three huge engines, instead of 30 cars with two engines. This work now finished, practically increased the track facilities of the line over the mountain 50 per cent and thereby the capacity of the Ogden route for handling your freight 50 per cent.

"The increase in other equipment received or ordered since 1905 is in proportion to the demands of commerce. The last two years have been a trying time for shippers and railroads alike. All over the United States commerce has outgrown the railroads and even where money has been available to develop the railroads it has been difficult as in other lines of manufacture, to secure within the ordinary time, or double or even treble the ordinary time, cars, rails, engines, structural material and the thousand and one mechanical parts absolutely necessary to a railroad machine, whether an engine slide valve, an air brake or a patent coupler."

### The Railroad's Side

Continuing the same authority says: "In setting forth the railroad side of the question there is no disposition to overlook or minimize your difficulties, your necessities, I am trying to show they are appreciated, and that strong efforts are being made to meet the conditions presented. Railway service is as much a factor in your prosperity as cultivation of orchards, the fighting of disease, rainfall and irrigation, and other home problems.

"If you want to ask your consideration for some of the railroad troubles, as a matter of justice to the railroads and since they affect the efficiency of the railroads, because they are a factor in your business."

The fact is not disputed that railway building has not kept pace with other business in the last few years. One reason is that, compared with this other business, it has neither the same elasticity nor the same promise of returns, during the last few years. Your attention is directed to an article in the North American Review for November showing the relative returns based on actual values, as near as they can be ascertained from agricultural, manufacturing and railroad investments. The figures used are from the interstate commerce commission reports for 1905 and 1906, the special census for manufactures for 1905, the general census report for 1906, and the year book of the department of agriculture for 1905. It is sufficient to say here that for each \$1,000 invested the net returns to capital for manufactures were \$151, agriculture 128 and railroads 84.

It will not be hurting the sensibilities of our friends in the interior if it should be said that San Francisco is perhaps the main concern of the railroads. Why should this not be so? San Francisco is an outpost and a growing city. If her interests are properly conserved by the national government she is destined to be the most important city on the continent of North America. Let us look at her position from a strategic point of view. She is, as we have already observed, in the center of our coast line. This is not only true, but must be forever the port for the trade of Alaska, and we have to thank such energetic men as H. E. Anselmi of the Santa Fe for his good and great work in securing this Alaskan trade. Through diligence somewhere — let no fault be found now — this valuable business, amounting to several millions of dollars a year, slipped away from us and was eagerly snatched up by our enterprising friends in Tacoma and Seattle. This neglect on our part has to a certain extent been remedied,

and ships are now loading at China basin direct for Alaskan ports.

Then there is the trade of the far south. The republics of Guatemala, Costa Rica and other states, including the west coast of Mexico, are all tributary to us, and it was the railroad company—the Southern Pacific—which made this possible, for the Southern Pacific built and operated the steamer plying along this coast. Here are brought the products of the coffee ranches and of other industries of Central America, and Mexico and Guatemala, and the towns of us. The Hawaiian islands send in their stuff. Japan and China hold us as their best customers and by the railroad company keeping agents in the larger cities of the orient passenger traffic is attracted to this city. For years the Harriman lines have maintained an expensive establishment in Hongkong, and T. D. McKay, who represents the Harriman lines in the east, has to travel once a year through the entire orient. He makes his headquarters in Hongkong, goes to Shanghai, Tokyo, Manila, then to the Straits settlements through Burma, the entire length and breadth of India to drum up passengers for the Southern Pacific and the Union Pacific, who will have to pass through San Francisco on their way to Europe.

The railroad companies are just as keen for immigrant business as they are for first class business. Note the fact of the colonist rates that are put into effect in the spring and autumn months of each year. Last fall during the time the colonist rate was in effect over 40,000 people were brought into the state, and the railroad people say that the majority of these immigrants settled in and about the city. Forty thousand in 30 days; this is the record of travel, and the two great transportation companies are to be credited for this increase in the population of the coast.

Within the last few weeks the Southern Pacific has opened the Bay Shore cutoff, which cost \$7,000,000. This nine miles of road saves time and eliminates grades and is a majestic entrance into the city. In time the road from Sacramento along the south bank of the river will be completed, which will be an all-rail line, as it is being constructed from Sacramento to Antioch, crossing the straits on a bridge; from Antioch it will run down the San Ramon valley and connect with the line at Livermore, then go on through Miles to Newark across the Dumbarton bridge, then to Redwood City and up to San Francisco by the cutoff. This will do away with having to cross the ferries and thus a great saving of time will be effected by all overland trains.

The Dumbarton bridge will also be used by the Western Pacific. Nor is this all. The Bay Shore cutoff has brought in its train extended improvements. This service means that the Southern Pacific looks far ahead and realizes that the expansion of San Francisco in the near future will demand greater terminal facilities.

To secure this enormous freight yards will be built at Visitation bay, where there will be 40 miles of track for the making up of freight trains. This will bring into existence a new town and add to the assessed valuation of the city. Visitation bay will be the place where trains are made up, but the expansion of San Francisco will demand still more space for the handling of freight, and in the event of this the Southern Pacific has expended approximately \$10,000,000 for recent yard purchases in San Francisco in the vicinity of Channel street, where immense freight yards will be created in the line of the Bay Shore cutoff, where deep sea vessels will have ready access to the yard and in this way

expedite the transfer of freight shipments.

In addition to the shortening of the time between San Francisco and San Jose and intermediate points the Southern Pacific has secured all the rights of way and has all its plans prepared for installing an electric car service between this city and the towns of the peninsula. This means that the expansion of San Francisco down the peninsula is assured and that it will be only a matter of a few years before the Garden City is a suburb of San Francisco. The Southern Pacific will also install electric service in Alameda, Oakland and Berkeley at a cost of about \$2,000,000. This it is expected will greatly improve the facilities for handling the large transbay business. At the present time the Southern Pacific ferry system is said to handle 22,000,000 passengers a year and is the largest ferry system in the world.

Every new railroad into a city means its growing importance. We have the Northwestern Pacific, which will connect San Francisco with Bureka and eventually become another overland route to Portland and beyond, for Harriman is building north from Portland tracks under Fort Mason to handle United States freight, for the government intends to establish its own docks at this point.

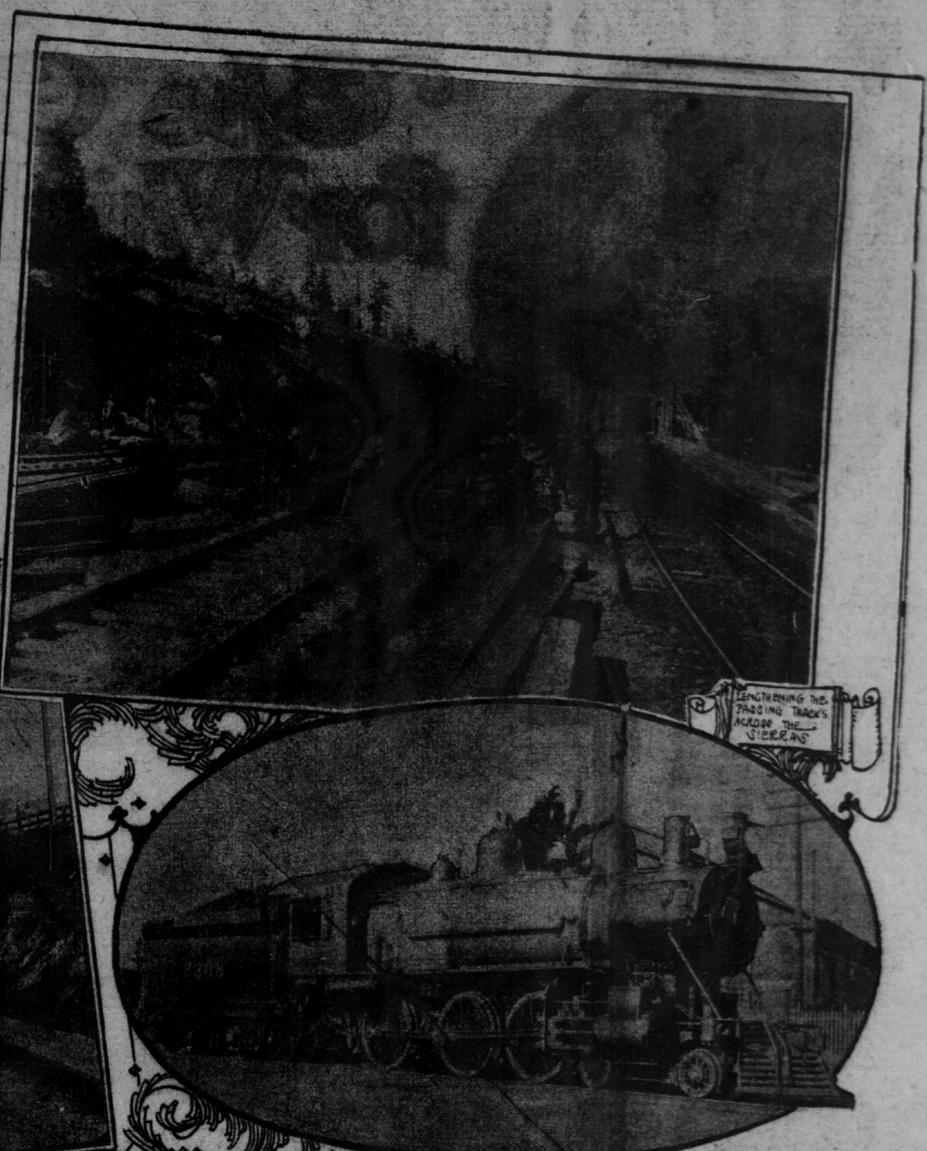
The Ocean Shore line has attracted considerable attention lately, for it will not only be a scenic road, but will be used by the people of San Francisco to reach the beaches, and especially Santa Cruz, during the vacation season. Up to date over 14,000,000 have been expended in covering purchase of right of way, grading, etc. and it is expected that when the road is completed over \$10,000,000 will have been spent. The road will be about 60 miles long, and it is estimated that there are 1,000,000,000 feet of timber along the line and 25,000 acres of agricultural land which will be opened up. The road has the terminal facilities in the city and should do a good passenger business to Santa Cruz.

Considerable mystery was attached to the road. The original promoters would not satisfy curiosity and for some time the Western Pacific was regarded as a myth, the invention of the agile minded railroad reporter. When the Western Pacific was fathered by Gould enthusiasm knew no bounds, and now that it has many miles completed and that work has actually commenced in the city by tunneling under the hills so as to give the road an entrance into the city, the third overland road is no myth.

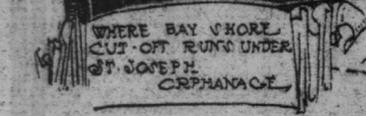
The length from Salt Lake City, where it will connect with Gould property, will be 827 miles and it will cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000,000 when ready for operation. The new road will materially increase San Francisco, as it will give it an extra road for the receipt and the dispatch of freight which under its present rate of expansion promises to outstrip the facilities of the other lines, despite what they may do to meet the situation.

It is estimated that the Western Pacific will be running by this time next year, though at one time the hope was expressed that it would be ready for operation by the first of next September.

Some mention in this connection should be made of the foreign lines doing business in this city. It is estimated that \$30,000 a month is expended in the eastern lines in the maintenance of agencies, and the bulk of \$350,000 a year is spent in San Francisco in the payment of rents and of salaries. San Francisco is the western terminus of the great Santa Fe railroad system, owning more than 16,000 miles of track, traversing a dozen states and territories, with a great ramification of branches touching every character of agricultural, mining and manufacturing resource known to the country. Appreciating the unusual demand that would be made on all transportation lines to transport the materials and supplies necessary for the reconstruction of San Francisco, and knowing that the ordinary traffic would tax the current facilities, the Santa Fe system planned extensive improvements to take care of the unusual volume of San Francisco business that naturally had reason to believe it would be called upon to transport. Prompt efforts were made to complete the facilities in the city and in the United States with resulting economical handling, not only to the railroad but to the shippers.



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