

The Yakima Raid And The Coal Famine

LUTE PEASE in the Pacific Monthly Gives Graphic Account of this Interesting Event in North Yakima's History.

"If the railways are trying to give the people an 'object lesson,'" remarked the prominent citizen, "why I guess Yakima can establish a little kindergarten for the railways."

And next day North Yakima, Washington, sallied forth, held up and confiscated a long trainload of Northern Pacific coal—and paid for about one-third of it.

The railway's monetary loss is regarded lightly by some of the citizens. "It's a small fine for the company's neglect and general cussedness," but the city's honorable business men regret the moral effect of this feature of the historic raid, and its results to the reputation of the town.

It is not the purpose of this article to throw more bricks at the railways, though it may shy a peanut shell or two at both sides. But the story of the picturesque episode and its causes is interesting and rather instructive.

North Yakima is one of the finest types of northwestern towns. It was built by irrigation. Seventeen years ago most of its site and the wide sweep of surrounding valley was sag-brush and bunchgrass. Then came the Sunnyside ditch (a Northern Pacific enterprise), which spread a portion of the waters of the Yakima over many thousands of acres of "volcanic ash" soil—richest and deepest in the country. Settlers were invited to come in and take up tracts of ten acres, and upwards, on long time and easy payments. They came, and soon the desert vanished. In its place bloomed apple, peach and prune orchards, wonderful fields of alfalfa and record-breaking crops of the finest potatoes in the world.

The town, at first a "wide-open" frontier hamlet, rapidly developed into the present-day beautiful city of 10,000 inhabitants, splendid schools, high license, Carnegie library, numerous prosperous banks, good hotels, substantial mercantile houses and fine church structures. Its wide streets, excellent light and water systems, well-edited daily newspapers and other advantages, are also the pride of its people and of the agricultural population of some 15,000 tributary to it.

There is no suggestion of the untamed, wide-sombreroed, jingling-spurred west about this peaceful community that almost wrecked a train and freebooted a thousand tons of coal.

Some time ago the federal government took over the original ditch that began the development of the Yakima valley, extending and including it with a larger irrigation system. This, together with certain private projects now under way, or in contemplation, means further great increase and prosperity to Yakima with the extension of its tributary agricultural and horticultural region.

Naturally the Northern Pacific looks with jealous eye upon the threatened encroachment of the mysterious North Coast railway into this hitherto exclusively Northern Pacific territory. It has fought, and is fighting, with every device and weapon in the brains and hands of its able counsel, the right-of-way progress of the North Coast.

But the ungrateful inhabitants view with anything but alarm the approach of a competitive line. "We shall have plenty of cars, then," they say, "to bring us coal and carry our products to market."

At the time this article is being written many scores of thousands of tons of alfalfa are heaped in stacks, and sixty per cent of the great potato crop is stored in pits, shrinking daily in weight, while prices are highest, because the farmers cannot get cars. Hence the popular party cry at the last election was "Hooray for the North Coast road!" It boosted O. A. Fechter, banker, into

office as mayor for the eighth time. Now many Yakima people believe the Northern Pacific feels vindictive on this score, and tried to get even on the town by cutting down its fuel supply. The officials scoff at this as an absurdity, and point to the very general shortage of coal elsewhere.

But Yakima always has had to depend almost entirely upon the

perate straits two or three other small points had already startled the railway companies by seizing coal, in one case an entire car, but it was done in an organized and orderly fashion, the coal being properly weighed and duly paid for.

At Yakima the pinch began to be felt as far back as the heavy floods, which absolutely stopped all train service during the latter half of November. Thereafter coal arrived intermittently in small lots, a car or two at a time. Through all the years in which the company has been selling coal to this large town it has constructed no bunkers or storage bins here; the consumers are obliged to back their wagons up to the siding and shovel directly from the cars. This is a measure of economy, for coal loses weight from the time it is out of the mine; and the plan has been followed to keep only enough coal on hand in cars to supply immediate needs. Consequently any loss of service or shortage of cars is promptly felt.

Through December, Yakima people and the farmers far and near had to form in line with wagons day after day, moving up, one by one, to the car, only to receive at times a maximum allotment of 500 pounds. This line-up began as early as 3 o'clock a. m., and often stretched out

people became more skeptical and indignant. The weather waxed colder and they took to their kitchens to economize with cookstove heat only. Boxes, old boards and backyard fences—every scrap that could serve for fuel—went to drive away the shivers.

The pinch became more bitter—actual suffering was experienced by at least 1500 families. At last, January 6, with the east wind whistling through the icy streets, a committee of citizens visited the mayor at his office in the bank. As a result the following telegram, signed by Mayor Fechter, Sheriff Grant and Chief of Police Cayou, was sent to Vice-President Levy at the Northern Pacific office at Tacoma:

"Prompted by desperate conditions, an organization of more than a hundred people was formed here today for the purpose of seizing and appropriating the first shipment of coal, large or small, the company attempts to haul through North Yakima. Suffering actually exists. Not a pound of coal is for sale. At least ten cars are needed to relieve the present conditions, and as much daily while the cold weather continues. May we expect relief?"

Vice President Levy's reply to the mayor's telegram stated that a dozen cars were in transit for North Yakima, but the dispatch was not

they mentioned I. B. Turnell. "He set the example—he's a bad one—he raided coal cars on his own account here two or three times before this last raid; he's the man that started the crowd to dumping those coal cars."

So I made inquiry about Mr. Turnell among Yakima people. "He's all right," they said. "An old railway man; now he's proprietor of one of our hotels. You can depend upon anything he tells you."

Almost everybody is ready to abuse the railways privately, but when it comes to utterance for possible publication, many business men are curiously shy. "I don't want you to say I said that," one hears; "you see I have had favors and may want another sometime—I can't afford to have the company down on me."

(Continued next week.)

The Lay of the Optimist.

What's the use o' worrying, though skies are dark and drear? Tune your heart to harmony, and light your life with cheer.

Don't groan and croak Because your broke, Or grumble at your luck; The price of canvasbacks is down to seven bucks a duck.

Supposing you are down and out, brace up and be a man. If you cannot enjoy yourself, some other fellow can.

What's the use o' grumbling, though the summer's fiery glare Wilts your features out of true and sings off your hair? Don't wall: "Great Scott! But ain't it hot?"

And fume and fuss and frown; Remember that in summer time the price of coal is down. And if your hard, rebellious heart with joyfulness won't thrill, Be comforted by thinking that some other fellow's will.

What's the use o' growling when the blizzard whistles through Your home these winter days and makes an icicle of you? Don't worry so About the snow, Or wish that you were warm; As long as ice don't cost so much, why kick about the storm?

You may not have an overcoat to keep the cold away, But then, again, you might reflect, some other fellow may.

What's the use o' sighing, though a thug, with stealthy tread, Slips up behind and lams you with a brickbat on the head? Just stroll along And troll a song, And be an optimist.

Don't worry if you're shot, or hung, or wallowed on the wrist. If you can sing through all these griefs a gleeful, cheery chant, It's worth the while to bear in mind that other fellows can't.

—James J. Montague.



Beginning of the Raid. Agent Meeks in Foreground.

Northern Pacific for its fuel. The Roslyn mines, some sixty-seven miles away, are owned by the Northwest Improvement company, a Northern Pacific allied corporation, that in the past has always supplied an abundance of good coal at reasonable prices to the Yakima valley towns, as well as elsewhere through the Pacific Northwest.

Last summer the company announced that it had decided to get out of the commercial coal business; that the entire output of its mines would be required for its own use in the train service.

Some railway officials have volunteered statements to the effect that so much agitation against the railways has had a damaging effect upon the business, and hinted that had the government and various state legislatures let them alone, there would have been less trouble. Many people have pounced upon this as an indication that something like a vast conspiracy exists for the purpose of giving the country an "object lesson" of its dependence upon the good will of the railways. If this be true in the matter of fuel, the roads have been hoist by their own petard in many cases, for their reports reveal serious losses because of shortages of company coal on almost every division.

On all sides one hears statements to the effect that in the effort to control the coal supply and gather the profits of the trade unto themselves, the railways have frozen out private coal enterprises, refused to build spurs to private mines, or to provide sidings and cars and otherwise encourage the development of independent mines; that had the companies stuck exclusively to their proper business of providing transportation, and had consequently reached out to encourage new sources of freight, coal would be cheaper and doubly abundant, for there are vast bodies of untouched coal in many parts of the northwest. But the roads retort that they have had to get control of mines to provide for their own needs.

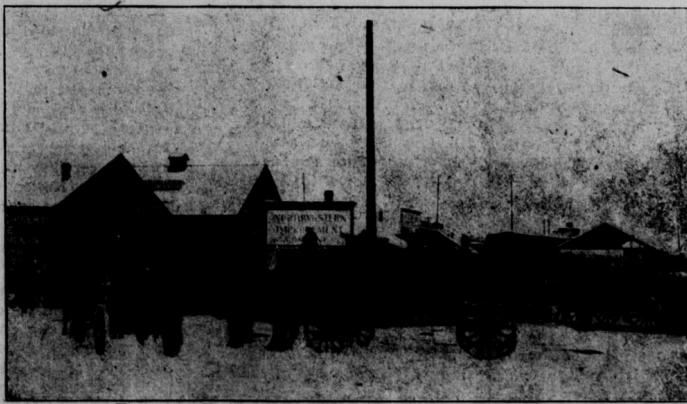
Whatever be the causes, the northwest has encountered an appalling fuel shortage accompanied by a season of almost unprecedented cold weather. Yakima was not the first town to confiscate coal from cars destined elsewhere. Driven to de-

many blocks in length. As teamsters charged from fifty cents to one dollar an hour for this waiting time the cost of coal was frequently doubled to the shivering householder.

Complaints and questions assailed the company, and the reply was usually "car shortage." But reports came to Yakima of empty coal cars idling at sidings in many places near; and once, eighteen "empties" stood

received until late next day. Meanwhile the town had carried out its threat, seizing twenty-one cars of coal January 7.

Newspaper reports indicated that the affair was sudden, spontaneous, leaderless. Now, even though driven by dire stress, a modern American town of churches, banks, culture and commerce, does not suddenly rise up and take that which belongs



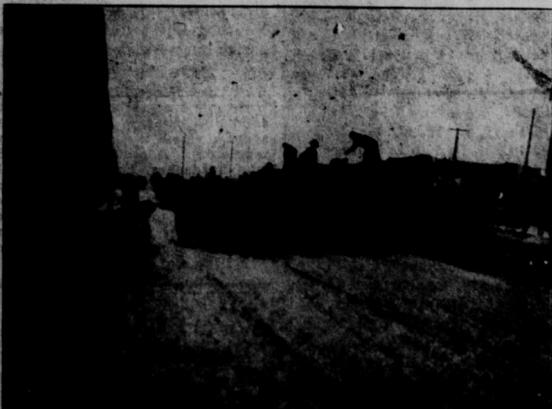
Teamsters Weighing Wagons at Coal Company's Scales.

on a Yakima sidetrack for several days—quite long enough, said the citizens, to have run up to the mines, loaded and returned.

So, as conditions grew worse, the

to another, without the counsel, example or leadership of at least one man.

I talked with the railway company's employes at the yards, and



Taking Engine Coal.

A Little Nut to Crack.

H. M. Willis, the aluminum king, found time one day to sweat over the following, says an eastern exchange. A man had 60 ducks for sale, and divided them into two lots of 30 each. One lot was to be disposed at three for \$1, and the other at two for \$1. In his absence the clerk sold the 60 ducks at five for \$2, realizing the sum of \$24. If sold according to instructions, one purchaser would have got 30 ducks for \$15, and the other 30 for \$10, making \$25 for the lot. What became of the missing dollar? Send The Herald your answers.

May Remove Capital.

SACRAMENTO, Feb. 28.—The Senate tonight, by a vote of 40 to 3, expressed itself in favor of the removal of the capital from Sacramento to Berkeley, and passed a bill submitting the question to the people.

Get your plumbing and steam fitting done by the Moxee Hardware Co. 72-2t

A NAME TO BE COVETED

When you buy trees of the Washington Nursery company, of Toppenish, you have the assurance of getting what you bought, and of getting the finest class of stock that experience and skill can produce, under ideal conditions of soil, climate and moisture.

This fact is so well known among the buying public that an occasional unscrupulous nursery salesman, who finds he cannot make a sale any other way, will promise the buyer that his stock shall come from the Washington Nursery company.

We want to say right here that every salesman who represents us, carries a certificate of agency, signed and sealed by our office, and that his catalogue, plate books, and other literature bear the imprint of the Washington Nursery, of Toppenish, Washington, and that no other parties are authorized to solicit orders, or sell stock for us, and that all orders taken by our salesmen are duly acknowledged by our office, so that no purchaser need be in doubt as to who is responsible for the proper filling of his order.

We make this statement on account of reports which reached us last week of three unauthorized salesmen trying to deceive the unwary by falsely claiming that they would procure stock from us to fill their orders.

The good name of Washington Nursery company was not won in a day—nor a week, nor a year. Neither was it purchased by money nor inherited. It was earned by painstaking care, knowledge of how to grow stock, hard work and attention to business, all combined with a location for the growing of clean stock that is probably unequalled today. Any good reliable man with satisfactory references can always procure a place with us as salesman, as we are constantly extending our business over a wider range of territory. Spring sales are rapidly coming in and we would advise those who have been delaying their orders to make an early decision, as there is a strong likelihood of short stock in some of the standard varieties.

Washington Nursery Company

Toppenish, Wash.

- A. W. McDonald, Pres.
- C. J. Atwood, Sec.
- F. A. Wiggins, Treas. and Sales Mgr.
- B. A. Mitchell, Vice-Pres. and Mgr. Eastern Office, Detroit, Mich.
- N. F. Damon, Local Representative, Room 14 Wilson Bldg., North Yakima.

BY DYKES.

Sewer Outlet Will Be Protected—Built at Once.

To protect the sewer dump a dyke probably about sixty feet in length, will be erected along the Yakima river, it being hoped that by this method the dump will be protected from further difficulty with the water. Considerable trouble has been experienced with the outlet of the sewer, water having washed out the grade in some places and in others water is said to be over the pipe. It is an opinion of the city attorney it is up to the contractors to complete the sewer and during the time taken in completion of the work, the city attorney states, the contractor should stand all losses.

NEW PLAT.

Rainier Addition, Twenty Acres, Accepted by City.

The latest addition to the city is Rainier plat, which is on the southerly line of the original town and contains twenty acres. This will be opened up for residences and the plat has been accepted by the city council.