

Whatever the conclusion at which the Interstate Commerce Commission arrives in the immediate question of next season's railway rates, it will not do to drop the matter of scientific management. There was great force in this remark by Mr. Henry R. Towne, in his testimony last month at the rate inquiry:

I am not here, to oppose the proposed increase of freight rates. I do not know whether the railroads should have it or not. If they are entitled to it, they ought to have it. But I see this fact, as a manufacturer; that, whereas, in other industries, when we are confronted by too close an approximation of our income to our expenditure, competitive conditions rarely, if ever, permit us to open the interval to the point which will cover a fair profit by putting our prices up. Our competitors will not permit of our doing that. We have to meet the competition, and, therefore, we are compelled to look within for the remedy—not to pass the burden on to others, but to face it ourselves, and find some way of relief. We have done it again and again, successfully, on a great scale in hundreds of thousands of cases; and it is one of the many illustrations of what is commonly understood as a blessing in disguise.

MAKING LAWS FOR AIRSHIPS.

The International Conference on Aerial Navigation has again been in session in Paris after an adjournment on June 28, taken at the request of the British Government, which desired plenty of time to examine the draft of an international convention upon which the Conference had nearly agreed. A summary of that convention, which has just appeared in the *London Times*, bears on its face such evidence of its great importance as to make it plain that other nations besides England will need ample time to consider before giving their adhesion to its provisions. As an instance of international law-making in a new sphere of human activity, it is particularly interesting and will doubtless afford fresh inspiration to those enthusiastic members of the new World-Federation League, whose objective is a Supreme Court of International Justice. It may well be asked if the nations can so readily be got together to discuss questions of aerial navigation, why they cannot be induced to legislate in regard to the excessive armament that is steadily bringing on the financial ruin of Europe.

As bearing on this point, it is of interest that all the participating nations agreed that the aerial transport of explosives, firearms, ammunition, and car-

rier-birds must be forbidden. An airship of one nation arriving in another's territory will be exempt from duty, passengers' luggage to have the same treatment as if it had arrived by sea or land. If there are, however, any photographic films or negatives on board that have evidently been used on the flight, the visited state has the right to insist on their being developed—this, we presume, with a view to preventing the photographing of fortifications. "Merchandise," says the convention, "can only be carried under special conventions, or in virtue of internal legislation," and wireless is to be used for no other purpose than to secure the airship's safety. Unfortunately, the Belgian Government's proposal that there should be everywhere free trade in airships in order to advance aerial navigation was not accepted.

As to liberty to navigate the air, the following rule was accepted:

Each of the contracting states shall permit the navigation of the airships of the other contracting states within and above its territory, under reserve of the restrictions necessary to guarantee its own safety and that of the persons and property of its inhabitants.

The restrictions referred to relate chiefly to the question of certain zones, over which, if they are properly indicated in advance, no airship may fly unless compelled by necessity. If an aeroplane is carried by accident or by adverse air conditions over an interdicted zone, it must descend at once and indicate its disability. It must also descend if signalled to from the earth; but just how the airship, which may be 6,000 feet high, can be signalled from earth, and how it can always be made to descend if disabled, are technical points that are not touched upon. Will an airship flying 3,000 feet high be able to make a distress signal as required, which can be seen from the earth? Practice alone can tell; but this question shows clearly that, while it is easy to theorize, the effectiveness of the new rules will after all have to be tested in actual practice a few years hence when the dirigible and the passenger-carrying aeroplanes have reached a greater development than at present. Meanwhile, all captains of airships must be provided with certificates of their government, or of some recognized aeronautical association. Moreover, "a very detailed log must be kept, giving not only the names, nationality, and domicile of all persons on

board, but the course, altitude, and all events which may occur during the voyage. Log-books must be preserved for at least two years from the date of the last entry, and must be produced on demand of the authorities."

The question of the nationality of an airship brought up some interesting points. It was decided that it should be determined by the nationality of the owner or by his domicile. It was also voted that:

A state may require its subject to be at the same time domiciled on its territory, or it may admit domiciled foreigners as well as its subjects. Airships belonging to companies must take the nationality of the state in which their head office is situated. In the case of an airship belonging to several owners, at least two-thirds must be owned by subjects of, or foreigners domiciled in, the state conferring nationality.

The Swiss delegates protested that this article would permit the establishment of many foreign airships in one nation without the supervision of their own, and then drew attention to a suggestion already made by them that no nationality be attributed to airships, but that each airship be compelled to acknowledge a "certain port of register or domicile." This system, the Swiss believe, "offers from the point of view of the safety of states, very superior guarantees to those secured by the system of owner's nationality." But the Swiss proposal was rejected.

Each state is required to furnish in the month of January to every other signatory to the convention a list of all the aircraft to which it has granted nationality in the preceding year. These airships must have distinguishing marks and otherwise conform to the *Règlement de la Circulation Aérienne* which is to be annexed to the convention as finally passed, and will, doubtless, help to elucidate many doubtful points. A distinction is made in the convention between public airships—those employed for civil reasons by states—and military airships. The latter are naturally exempt from certain of the regulations, if manned by men in uniform; but the departure or landing of military airships of one nation in the territory of another is strictly prohibited without the authorization of the visited state. Each state may forbid the passage of any or all military airships over its lands. Finally, the convention in no wise interferes with the liberty of action of belligerents or with the rights and duties

of neutrals. Non-signatory states may adhere to it by notifying their intention in writing to the French Government. A contracting state may denounce it in the same manner.

FASHIONS IN HOLIDAY BOOKS.

This is the bookmaker's hour. Now, if ever, he expects the public to give him heed. After months of preparation his shop is thrown open. And in many ways, no doubt, well it may be. Outdoing Mohammed, he has made the mountain, and the whole world besides, come to him. Through him East and West, North Pole and Southern Seas, are any reader's for the asking. So are the painters, authors, prophets, martyrs. The completeness of the output is, indeed, a little appalling. There is scarcely a branch of knowledge which is not presented comprehensively, in attractive form and manner. What though at Christmas the oracles are dumb, the publishers are not.

We may mention at the outset some of the features which are more particularly associated with the season. Especially agreeable is the thought which has been given to children's books. The best of the fairy-tales, tales of heroes like Odysseus, Roland, and Samson, and a quantity of other historical matter told pleasantly but without gush, besides photographs of the masterpieces of painting and sculpture, place the elements of culture where a child will not avoid them, and make a valuable foundation for later thought and reading. Under such tutelage, who shall say that the child, become man, will not win back the pleasurable art of allusion, or that he will not cultivate the habit, of historical perspective in forming judgments of present needs? A word likewise for the illustrations, both for juveniles and adults—at least, for those illustrations which stand out from the many that are garish and tawdry. Artistic skill in this line has been progressing steadily; so have the processes of mechanical reproduction, and between the two some beautiful creations have resulted. Books of travel, in particular, have come off well, with their lovely bits of the old world; and, in a few instances, we have observed simple photographures of city scenes almost as artistic as etchings. As to the so-called "handsome editions" with which Christmas is loaded, opinions will differ wide-

ly. To us they are, for the most part, overdone, and contrast unfavorably with those true rulings and simple pages of other days. Here, much more than in the less elaborate editions, the designs and color-schemes are of the impressionistic, unstable sort.

In general, the publishers have shown rare ingenuity in trying to meet a great variety of tastes. Part of their zeal, however, seems to us questionable, if not pernicious. "Reading," under ideal conditions, "maketh a full man," but to-day it becomes a weariness to the flesh, even for him who reads but the titles. Publisher vies with publisher. Not only are the old favorites re-issued, but new favorites are created on the spur of the moment. The publishers, no doubt, will tell you that they are carried along by a force stronger than themselves. Like the etiquette which prevents disarmament, for which each nation shouts in turn, suspicion of the other fellow keeps the publisher from his avowed wish to limit himself to a few books each year. Meanwhile, to stand the bombardment, the reading public may well pray for *aes triplex*. True, he who runs may read, and still the running reader is no match to-day for the active publisher.

The latter, in point of fact, recognizes this, and agrees to do your reading for you by furnishing a predigested variety. There never was a time when books of reference were so plentiful. There are even summaries of fiction, the best hundred pages of Plato, of Herbert Spencer. Keeping pace, too, with the specialist, publishers now get out hosts of "series" in which knowledge, cut perpendicularly, athwart, or to order, is easily accessible. If it is true that "he is wise who knows the way to the book-shelves," then wisdom will soon be omniscience. And in this respect—putting conveniently upon record the doings of man, his every thought and feeling, however trivial—the publishers of the present time have wrought heroically. Yet there comes the distressing feeling that this policy is partly mistaken. Does the reader read more the more his reading is done for him? That may be an Irish question, but it fairly presents the situation. The chances are, we believe, that the modern way is weakening to the public's mental fabric. When men had to go distances to borrow books and had to make their

own summaries, they remembered what they read, if only in self-defence. The tendency nowadays is to get knowledge literally at hand, and to get it permanently any farther is thought unnecessary. In the hour of need, we append the words of Francis Bacon on these very matters:

Read not, to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.

RECENT GERMAN POETRY.

Compiling and editing poetical anthologies is a task to which German men of letters devote themselves with enthusiastic industry. Even the younger generation has given us a number of lyrical collections of merit, and has roused interest in the poetry of other countries. Karl Henckell, one of the leaders of those militant secessionists who made their debut in the "Moderne Dichter-Charaktere" twenty-five years ago, gave us a loose-leaf collection of the world's lyrics some years later, and now his name appears on the cover of a book called "Weltlyrik" (München: Die Lese), which contains some of the choicest specimens of lyric verse written outside of Germany and which, with the exception of one of Shakespeare's sonnets, is limited to the last century. The beautiful little volume bears the subtitle "Ein Lebenskreis in Nachdichtungen," defining the scope and character of the work. There are selections from Shakespeare, Rossetti, Swinburne, Poe, Whitman, Holger Drachmann, Pushkin, Mjerszkowski, Maria Konopnicka, Ada Negri, and others, among them fifteen Frenchmen, beginning with de Musset and ending with the singer of Bruges, the mysterious George Rodenbach. The keynote of the work is struck in the editor's prologue, a hymn to life, and for epilogue he has appropriately chosen the hymn to the sun from "Chantecler."

The translations are really "Nachdichtungen," namely, poetical reproductions, and as such have great merit. Among the best are the lines on love from Whitman's "Mystic Trumpeter," Poe's "Eldorado," Emilio Praga's "Night Prayer," Asnyk's "Futile Plaint," and Maupassant's poem on the wild geese. Almost all of Henckell's versions of Verlaine are distinguished by a rare spontaneity, but in rendering Sully Prudhomme's "Broken Vase," he has been less successful. As a whole, the book is a remarkable achievement. It reflects sometimes the more sordid phases of human existence, but the only selection which might have been omitted is that from Aristide Bruant, though as a translation, it is a veritable *tour de force*.

When Ernst Freiherr von Wolzogen, who is now lecturing in America on the