

Purinton Explains

Trolley Situation

(Continued from Page 1)

ities over our lines. By prudent economy and conservative management, we have been able to keep our head above water, but there is no denying of the fact that insofar that we are operating in a resort which is largely—almost entirely—dependent upon its itinerant population, we must stand prepared at certain times of the year to carry vast crowds, and at other periods of the year, we are completely dependent upon the local population.

This fact alone precludes the possibility of any transportation company earning extraordinary or substantial dividends in this territory, for the simple reason that the overhead continues twelve months in the year, and the good business is unfortunately confined, at the best, to four months in the year. If we could sustain the business the year through that we do in July and August, our books would show an entirely different story, but unfortunately, this is not the case.

In the month of May this year, our receipts were behind those of last year, and June, which is usually a good month, showed no improvement. This, of course, was due to a great extent to the inclement weather which was so prevalent during this period that it kept thousands of excursionists away from our resort who would undoubtedly have been here if the skies had been clear and the weather propitious.

Under these circumstances, even if there should be an improvement in July and August, we can at no time hope to do any better than we did last year, and we will be indeed grateful if our receipts are as good as they were last year.

A year ago we arranged with our employees a schedule of operation which was satisfactory to both sides, and which we believed was broad and liberal, and many of our employees seemed thoroughly content up to the very hour of their going "out." During the last year, and since this schedule was arranged, the general cost of living has declined. Merchandise of all kinds is lower in price than it was a year ago. In fact,

everything and anything that is purchasable for the daily life of a human being costs less than a year ago. Rentals have softened in price, but largely on account of this being a resort, have not decreased in the same proportion that merchandise has declined, but in no instance are they any higher than last year; and in many cases, comfortable quarters can be obtained at at least some concessions below last year's figures.

As we are already paying as high a wage scale as any transportation company in New Jersey, we were completely at a loss to understand why under the existing circumstances our employees should make a demand equivalent to a raise of 17 per cent, which, if granted, would simply mean that it would be only a matter of a short time when the Atlantic City and Shore Railroad might be compelled again to apply for a receivership, for there is absolutely nothing to indicate that the earning power can possibly be any greater than it was a year ago.

I am of the personal opinion that a majority of our former employees have reasoned this matter out carefully for themselves and would have been most content to remain at the old scale—especially subsequent to our granting almost a dozen of the minor requests that they made, and which we were glad to concede as we found it possible to do so, but influenced by agitators with a man on the ground representing a national organization which knew absolutely nothing of the details and intricacies of the local condition, these employees were either coerced, influenced, or persuaded by a false sense of loyalty to a union controlled and operated by paid agitators who make their livelihood by operations of this kind, and thus went forth on a strike.

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time upon the return of any of our old employees, with the exception of those who through their behavior since their departure in our opinion have forfeited the right of re-employment.

Rapidly the vacuum created is being filled by able men willing to work on the terms and schedules that we offered our old employees. Of course, these will be retained and a number of our old employees—when they get ready to come back—will, of necessity, be crowded out. Such employees that remained loyal and stuck to their posts—of which there are quite a few—will be given their just reward by seniority preference.

The whole thing summed up would evidence the fact that the Atlantic City and Shore Railroad has for years tried to preserve humanitarian rules and extend considerate kindness to its men. In previous years, when advances were demanded and general conditions warranted these demands, the men received them without controversy and without difficulty, but a quart cannot be put in a pint pitcher.

Our books will show that the earnings of our road have not permitted any return to our stockholders in any way equivalent to any other kind of safe investment that they could have made, and therefore anything that would tend to practically wipe out the already meagre earnings of the

corporation could not be considered by a management which must exercise prudence and care in the guarding of the interests of all concerned.

We are now operating Atlantic Avenue cars and Ocean City branches on full schedule time. The men that were brought here originally as emergency operators have gradually been eliminated, and our cars are to a great extent in the hands of experienced employees who we contemplate retaining in our employ. At all events, nothing has been left undone to guard the interests of the public, for this corporation realizes that we have a serious and holy duty to perform as a public utility and must extend to the citizens of these communities and to the vast visiting public every facility for safe and expeditious transportation."

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