

"Say!" interrupted the Old Man. "How long can you keep this up?"

"Don't mind me. I believe you're clearing my head up. Now, again, you take ten trips to Clear Lake, 1,800 miles, for \$55, and I take ten trips to Forest Lake, 2,660 miles, for \$55. If your ten trips are worth the money, then the Northwestern has hauled me 860 miles for nothing—which is less than two cents a mile. When a road can carry one man 300 miles for 15 cents, and then carry another man 860 miles for nothing, I'm wondering if the directors have fixed the date for the downfall of the Republic."

"We can't adjust all those details," he said.

"No; they're unimportant. Here's a Milwaukee folder with some bargain-counter rates. Last April it offered these marked-down specialties:

\$33.00—Chicago to	Mile Rate.
San Francisco	1.45
Los Angeles	1.43
Portland	1.52
Seattle	1.04
\$30.50—Chicago to	
Spokane	1.32
Pendleton	1.48
\$30.00—Chicago to	
Laramie	2.81
Ogden	2.01
Helena	1.57

"Nine different mile rates over the same roads from Chicago to Laramie, 1,086 miles; five at less than a cent and a half a mile, and all less than three cents. Nine men leave Chicago on the same train, each with a ticket for one of those places, and no two pay the same rate per mile. Ogden rides 427 miles farther than Laramie, but pays no more. Helena rides 831 beyond Laramie, and pays no more. Now, how much more would the roads lose if they had ten passengers for Helena and one for Laramie than if they had ten for Laramie and one for Helena?"

"Humph! There's not a railroad man on earth can tell you that," replied the Old Man.

"That's queer. In each case the eleven tickets would cost \$330. In the first case the total mileage would be 20,256, and in the second case 12,801—both for the same money, but with a difference of 7,455 miles traveled."

"What's the difference to the roads, as long as they are running the trains, anyway?" asked the Old Man.

"None, I suppose—which proves that a two-cent rate means ruin. Now, I want you to take notice: San Francisco is 1,213 miles farther than Laramie, but the additional fare for that distance is only \$3. That's \$2.47 a thousand miles! One hundred miles for less than two bits! Ten miles for less than two cents and a half!

"Now, hold on to something while I remind you that the passenger for Spokane pays only 50 cents more for his 2,315-mile ride than the Laramie man paid for his 1,086 miles—or 50 cents for the extra 1,229 miles, and \$2.50 less than the San Francisco passenger paid for his extra 1,213 miles. Talk about ruin! At 50 cents for 1,229 miles, what's the rate per mile?"

"I won't take advantage of you. It's .000-406834743620 of a cent a mile, and yet you——"

I heard a gurgling sound, and thought he had fainted; but he was sleeping sweetly.

* * *

ARE WE ALL COWARDS ?

George Wallace in the South Side Observer, Rockville Center, N. Y., February 19.

A nation of free men should not be a nation of cowards. My own belief is that this widespread, demoralizing cowardice arises from the fact that our institutions give special privileges to the few and do not give equal opportunity to the many. If the ordinary business men or workmen had equal opportunity in life with all others, they would not be afraid to utter their sentiments on any question.

There are people who talk loudly and bravely on some topics, although arrant cowards on others, because on the latter topics there is some club swinging over their heads.

I have known men who shouldered a musket, offered their lives for their country, and were noted for bravery in war, but who lacked the courage to express their private convictions in many of the affairs of life after the war was over. These men are not naturally cowards; they have records for bravery on many a bloody field; it is the conditions of our life that make cowards of them in these particulars. They fear future penury and want; they know that the pittance allowed them in the form of a pension would be scarcely enough to keep soul and body together in old age; they have no desire to be sent away from their old homes even to a soldiers' home; they are compelled to sink their independence in the anxiety to save themselves and their families from want.

All such conditions must be wrong. It is not only my duty, but the duty of every citizen, to fight against conditions which produce demoralizing cowardice among the people. It is a sad condition for any nation when the spirit of independence is crushed among the people. As the poet has written:

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

This lack of independence comes to every nation hand in hand with the accumulation of unearned fortunes. It is high time to put a stop to it in the free United States of America.

* * *

No man made the land; it is the original inheritance of the whole species.—John Stuart Mill.