

rates, and therefore may be taken into account in classification. But still others have been found potent. Every section of the country has its peculiar products which it desires to market as widely as possible, and is not unwilling that classification should be made use of by the railroads, which serve it as a means of favouring and thus extending the trade in local productions—favouring them by giving them low classification and thus low rates, and discriminating against those of other sections through a classification which rated them more highly.

It has been in the power of every railroad to have a classification of its own, but the necessities of an interchange of business have brought about agreements, and the railroad associations have been given the authority to make classifications for all their members. Their labours in this direction have been extremely important and useful; they have been steadily reducing the number of different classifications in the country, and steadily approaching a condition of things in which there will be one only. But in these associations, when in session for the making of rates, each railroad official has, to some extent, had the district which was served by his road behind him; he has felt the pressure of the interests there, and contended for them as against the interests in classification represented by others, not only because it was desirable that the road should favour the policy its patrons favoured, but also because the same policy was likely to be beneficial to both. The result necessarily is that a classification made by a railroad association represents a series of compromises, to which not only the railroads are parties, but, in a certain sense, business interests and sections of country also; these in many cases being admitted by their representatives to the consultations upon a subject so vitally concerning their interests, and allowed to present their views. This contention of interests still continues to go on in the meetings and conferences, but with a steady tendency in the direction of one uniform classification, and there is reason to hope that, without much further delay, all classifications will be brought into harmony. If any other tribunal were to be given the authority to make classification it must, if it would exercise its power wisely, proceed in much the same way; it must act deliberately, give all interests an opportunity to be heard, take into account all the considerations which ought to bear upon it, cost of service, interest of sections, equity as between industries and between classes of persons, and so on indefinitely. Whether, therefore, the steady tendency in the direction of one uniform classification would be hastened by conferring the power to make one on a national commission is not entirely certain. The work, if taken up anew, would be one requiring much time for its proper performance; it would involve a careful consideration of the interests peculiar to different sections of the country, and a close study of the conditions of railroad service as they bear upon such interests. But these conditions change from month to month; the classification cannot be permanently the same, but must be subject to modification on the same grounds on which it was originally made. The appeals for modification would be as numerous as they would be perplexing, because of the diversity of reasons on which they would be grounded. Under the law as it now is the Commission has appellate powers to correct any unjust classification, and it will keep in view the desirability of general uniformity, and do what it properly can to bring about that result.

The classification of passengers has to some extent been a subject of complaint to the Commission. Some carriers, as a rule, have but one rate of passenger transportation, and but one class of passengers, except as they may be carriers of emigrants in considerable bodies, and they then have emigrant rates, which are lower than those given to other persons, and the emigrants are either given less desirable cars attached to the regular trains, or are sent on trains by themselves. Other carriers make first- and second-class rates by the same train, the difference in charge having some regard to difference in the carriages which are allotted to the classes respectively. In some sections coloured persons are required to take separate cars, though charged the same rates as others. The carriers making this requirement assume to give to coloured persons accommodations equal to those given to white people, and are required by law in some States to do so; but complaint is made that this is not always done. Then, on all roads of any considerable length parlour- and sleeping-cars are run, which, in most cases, are owned by outside corporations, and a special charge made by the owners for seats or berths in them. The palace- and sleeping-car corporations, like the express companies, as has already been said, do not understand that they come within the contemplation of the Act so as to be subject to its provisions, but the persons accommodated by them must also have tickets for passage from the railroad companies, and as to those it is not doubted that the same rules of uniformity and impartiality apply as in other cases.

Previous to the passage of the Act it was customary on many of the roads of the country to give reduced rates to the class of persons known as "commercial travellers;" but this was made illegal by the provisions in the Act against unjust discrimination (1, *Inter-State Commerce Reports*, p. 8). It was also common in some quarters to give special rates to land-lookers, explorers, or settlers, who were supposed to be looking for or establishing new homes in a section where their purchase, settlement, or improvement would benefit the carrier giving them; but this also is held to be now forbidden (1, *Inter-State Commerce Reports*, p. 208). The opinion of the Commission, as declared in these cases, is that, under the law, it is no longer competent for the carrier to discriminate among passengers enjoying the same accommodations by means of any special classification dependent upon occupation or other condition or circumstance of a personal nature, except as the law itself, by the 22nd section, has in terms authorised it.

X.—VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD MANAGERS.

Nearly every railroad in its origin has been independent of all others, and in the early history of such roads they were commonly provided for as local conveniences, with no provision of the great highways of trade and communication which they have since become. It was in many cases thought to be important that a road should be kept as distinct in its business from all others as possible, and at their termini in some instances they were not allowed to have the same freight or passenger stations with other roads, lest the local draymen and hackmen should be deprived of a profitable employment.