

ledge, and you cannot strike a subject on which he is not posted. He is a man of wide scientific reading and he is one of the best judges of pictures and fine arts in the United States. He can go into a gallery and can tell you the names of the artists of any famous pictures that may be upon the walls, and his house here is just filled with paintings by the great masters. He has a large art gallery connected with his house, which is lighted from the roof and which contains more fine modern paintings than you will see in the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington. He has four paintings by Millet, the famous French painter; a number by Troyon, and others by Diaz, Munkacsy, Delacroix and others. Some of his paintings cost \$50,000 apiece and among others he has a beautiful portrait of one of his children by Bourgeois. I doubt whether there is another private house in the country which has so many fine pictures. I visited it today and I will write of it in my next letter.

HILL'S KNOWLEDGE OF HIS ROAD.

Hill's knowledge of his road is, I am told, wonderful. He knows personally nearly every man employed upon it and he is liable to be found at any point along the line at any moment. He has a thorough civil service organization as to his employes, and promotion goes entirely by merit, and the man who disobeys orders is discharged instantly. An instance of this was told me the other day by his son-in-law, Mr. Samuel Hill, the president of the Montana Central. "We were sitting one day," said he, "in Mr. Hill's house in St. Paul, when he asked me if I didn't want to go west for a little trip. I replied that I didn't object and asked when he wanted to go. He said, 'right away,' and I thereupon telephoned to have my bag sent over from Minneapolis, and in the course of an hour we were on his special train and going out to the far west. We stopped at a point in the mountains in Montana, and here got off the road and rode forty miles by stage with relays of horses. We then slept and rode forty miles further and stopped at a tavern. Mr. Hill tramped around all that day over the country and came back in the evening and had supper. After supper he said, 'I think we could reach the car if we took the horses tonight,' and we had them harnessed up and cut across to the track. It was a long ride and a dark night, and we came to the road at a station above the one which we had expected to strike. Just as we got there a freight train from Butte City was pulled in with flames bursting out of its side. As it pulled up at the station Mr. Hill saw it and his voice rang out in the darkness:

"Where's the conductor of this train?"

"Here," was the reply in a gruff voice.

"What rate are you running?"

"About eighteen miles an hour," said the man, rather resenting the question.

"You are not telling the truth," replied Mr. Hill. "You have been running over thirty miles an hour, and your orders are not to run more than twelve. You are discharged this instant, and I will have another conductor to take your place." When that conductor left Butte City Mr. Hill was sitting in his office in St. Paul, and it must have scared the man almost to death to find him away out here in the heart of Montana."

DISCHARGED BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON.

Another instance of Mr. Hill's prompt discharge of an inefficient employe was at a famous trestle bridge on the line. A man was kept to patrol this bridge after every passing train. He was expected to have a bucket of water in his hand, and he was there to put out any sparkes that might fall from the engine. One night a freight train had just gone over, and as it left the bridge Mr. Hill's special car shot out through the darkness and came over it. During his rides over his road he spends a good deal of time outside the car and he was standing on the platform as he came to the bridge. The moon at this point shone through a cloud and he saw the man who was expected to take care of the sparks throw his bucket over his shoulder and as he did so his eye noted the fact that there was a hole in it. He stopped his car and discharged the man from work. He insists always upon discipline and no man can work for him who will not obey orders.

A DYNAMO IN CLOTHES.

As for himself, he is the hardest worker on the road. He is a dynamo in clothes. His head works all the time. He is a man of wonderful activity and of great power of endurance. He has gone over the greater part of his road on foot, and all the new lines he has traversed on foot or on horseback before they were put down. When out camping he often sleeps in the open air. And he can sleep anywhere at any time. He often reads himself to sleep and he has thorough control over his mind, and can, I am told, dismiss his work when he wants to. He has a wonderful memory and instances of this are often seen at the Great Northern offices here. His accounts, you know, run up into millions and he seems to remember each one of the thousand items from year to year. The other day a statement was brought into him. It represented thousands of dollars. He looked over it and at one place he saw a charge of \$600 for the completion of a water tank. He looked up at once and said: "How about this item? This was not in last year and we have never had it here before." He was told that it had not been quite finished and the charge was not made. He did not like it at all and gave the man a severe reproof for not keeping the accounts in detail.

HE WANTED THE LETTER.

One of Jim Hill's hobbies in the development of his railroad system is in the improvement of the stock and the farming along his lines of road. He has for years been distributing fine stock, sheep, cattle and hogs to the different sections for breeding purposes, stipulating that the animals shall be for the use of the communities. He has usually sold them at a moderate figure to one of the leading farmers in each place with this provision, and has rarely charged more than the cost of the freight from St. Paul. Among other things that he distributed in this way were some very fine hogs, the offspring of some that he imported from the old country himself, and which cost him several hundred dollars apiece. He sold them for about five dollars apiece to these farmers and sent them out all along the line. One day not long ago he came down to his office in St. Paul to find an old farmer

waiting for him. He asked him what he could do for him and the farmer said: "Mr. Hill, I have come down to do business with you. You sent me a boar some months ago and I took it from you at five dollars. Well, I like it so well that I have come in to tell you that I want to buy the whole litter if you will let me have them at the same price." Mr. Hill then sat down and explained to the man the philosophy of breeding. He told him what the hogs had actually cost him, and when the old fellow went out of the office his eyes were, I am told, as big as your fist.

Mr. Hill is acting on this same way as to all matters connected with the lands along the Northern Pacific. His principle is that the prosperity of his road must depend on the prosperity of the small farmers living along it, and he says he hopes to make it so that their products can be shipped to the east and can compete with any in the United States.

HILL'S STEAMSHIP LINE.

Already the Great Northern is reaching out to the east as to freight rates. Its vice president tells me that it has six big steamers on the great lakes which carry its freight from Duluth to Buffalo and Cleveland in less than four days. These boats will each carry between two and three thousand tons and two passenger steamers are being built which will be faster than the steamers which cross the Atlantic, and by which you may go from Buffalo to Duluth in fifty-two hours. This is almost incredible, but the ships will, I am told, be faster than our new iron cruisers and they will probably be ready for the summer travel. In these as in every other part of the road no expense is spared to get the very best, and as an instance of the way the road has been built, that part of it which runs through the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis has cost more than \$2,000,000. In no place does it cross a street or grade and it always runs above it or under it. Leaving Minneapolis the road crosses the river on a bridge which is the wonder of the civil engineers the world over. It is the only bridge of stone arches which has ever been built upon a curve and the engineers said it was an impossibility to construct it. Mr. Hill laid out the plans and it works as well as any straight bridge in the country.

JIM HILL'S MODESTY.

One of the most prominent traits of Mr. Hill is his modesty and his retiring disposition. He does not like to be talked about in the newspapers and he has never given out a picture of himself for publication. He has not been in St. Paul during the week I have spent here, and I have not met him. From the oil portrait of him which I saw in his house he looks, I judge, very much like the late President Garfield, and he is a rather stoutly built, broad shouldered man of about fifty-five years of age. He is said to be a pleasant man with his friends, a splendid companion, a good story teller, not a bad singer and thoroughly posted on almost every subject under the sun. During my stay here I have gone through his mansion, which George W. Childs says is the finest private house in the United States, and of this and of the new and unknown country opened up by his road across the continent I may write hereafter.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.