

THE WISCONSIN CENTRAL FIGHT. A LIVELY WAR BEGUN BETWEEN TWO WESTERN ROADS.

MILWAUKEE, Jan. 26.—Highly sensational developments are likely to come out of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul and Wisconsin Central imbroglio, which has been brewing ever since the latter road announced its intention of doing business between Milwaukee and St. Paul. The running of trains over the Wisconsin Central's new line to St. Paul began to-day, according to the advertised programme. The war between the two roads began at 12:30 P. M. When the first of the Wisconsin Central's trains started from the Union Station prominent officials of both roads were on the spot. The Wisconsin Central had sold sleeping car tickets over the new line, and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul management had determined that the Wisconsin Central's sleeper should not be permitted to run. They accordingly blockaded the sleeper with freight cars, so that it could not be pulled out of the station. But the laugh was turned upon them after all, for the persons who had sleeping car tickets over the Wisconsin Central were accommodated in the sleeper belonging to that company, which came up from Chicago at that hour and went on to Stevens Point and St. Paul.

The affair has been the absorbing topic of conversation in railroad circles to-day, and it is generally regarded as the first skirmish in a railroad war which will make things very lively before it comes to an end. The Wisconsin Central officials propose to take the matter into the courts, and an interesting litigation is in prospect. This afternoon the Central people all expressed themselves ready for fight to maintain what they believe to be their legal rights. One of them remarked: "The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul folks are attempting to do things with a high hand. They have seized our sleepers on the ground that we are doing business over their line not provided for in our joint contract. We know very well what our contract is, and are preparing to take legal measures which will prevent them from interfering with us. We shall get an injunction which will restrain them from retaining our sleepers, and we shall also bring suit for damages. The damages will be very heavy, as we are doing a large business, and it inconveniences us and puts us to unnecessary expense for them to act as they have been doing. However, we are quite willing to let our sleepers to the St. Paul Road upon the terms which they will undoubtedly be obliged to pay."

"Will you do business to St. Paul as you advertised," asked the reporter.

"We are certainly not going to crawlsh," was the reply. Reverting to the original topic, the speaker remarked: "We partly expected this. Our new line hurts the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul folks daeadfully. They are afraid of our competition, and would like to stop us. They can't do it legally, so they are trying to do it illegally."

Acting General Manager Miller, of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, this afternoon remarked: "As you have repeatedly said the whole dispute is as to what our contract with the Wisconsin Central covers. They claim it covers St. Paul business and we claim it doesn't. That's the whole thing in a nutshell. That's all there is to it. Oh, you'd like to know what we're going to do, would you? Well, wait and see. I don't think it would be a proper thing for me to tell what we are going to do."

The St. Paul officials held six of the Central's sleepers this afternoon, and the 3 o'clock train pulled out without a sleeper. The sleepers are side-tracked and held by scores of freight cars. It is believed a rate war will be started to-morrow. President Colby, of the Central, has gone to Boston, and will see about getting funds to secure an outlet to Chicago. A railroad man from Chicago, who was in the city to-day, stated that he knew it to be a fact that the Wisconsin Central Company had already made arrangements for terminal facilities in Chicago with a company which has ample facilities there. The name of the Chicago company he would not give, stating that in a few weeks the public would learn the details of the arrangements.