

any decision is arrived at in regard to the public ownership of this utility. That public ownership is the proper solution of this question we are satisfied, but we contend that the municipalities are in the best position to satisfy the requirements of local telephone users, while the long distance service can only be properly administered by the Dominion Government.



—We are glad to be able to say that the new Ontario Government, in reorganizing the Temiskaming Railway Commission, has made the appointments from the ranks of practical railway men, as this journal contended should be done, and not from the ranks of politicians. In Cecil B. Smith, the chief of the new commission, they have a first-class engineer of wide knowledge and high character, and the others, we understand, are men of practical experience in work of this kind. The *Globe* is among the opposition journals who are fair enough to approve of this application of common-sense business methods to affairs of state.



—The mathematicians, Atcherley and Pearson, of University College, London, have developed a new point in dam construction, and acting on this discovery, Sir William Garstin has abandoned the attempt to raise the great dam at Assuan, Egypt, another 20 feet as intended. This discovery is that in vertical sections of dams under water the pressure is more severely strained than in horizontal ones. Therefore, while a dam designed under rules which have hitherto applied may be safe from cracking horizontally, it may be liable to crack vertically. Sir Benjamin Baker, consulting engineer of the Nile reservoir, accepts this theory and advises against raising the dam further. He says, however, that the vibrations on the masonry due to rush of water through the sluices are negligible, and adds that the dam as it stands, will last for centuries.



—It is a most fortunate thing in the interests of the people in general, and particularly the business community, that the special committee appointed by the Dominion Parliament to investigate the telephone question has a man of the character of Sir William Mulock as its chairman. The people of both sides of politics will acknowledge that Sir William has proved to be the ablest Postmaster-General Canada has ever had, not only in the number of domestic abuses he has reformed in the administration of the post-office, but in the effect of his advanced statesmanship upon the postal policy of the whole British Empire. It has required no common courage to carry out these reforms, and it will require no common courage to save the people of Canada from the dangers that threaten them in the present telephone crisis. We believe Sir William, if he is spared, will be able with the help of the few earnest reformers who are in the house, to deliver the country from the false position in which it finds itself by reason of the unwise telephone legislation of the past, and if he does, his name will be held in grateful remembrance by future generations, even if the results are not fully seen or appreciated by his immediate contemporaries.



—The city council of Hamilton, after a heated debate, has awarded a contract for cement to the amount

of \$23,325 to the Cayuga Lake Cement Co., a New York State concern, whose tender was \$1.55½ per barrel, as against \$1.58 per barrel quoted by the Grey & Bruce Cement Co., of Owen Sound, Ont. The latter was the lowest tender from a Canadian firm, and the difference was so small that it was thought the contract would be awarded to the Canadian firm, the tenderers having been notified that the lowest bid would not necessarily be accepted. The city engineer reported that the Canadian cement had shown on the tests a slight superiority over that of the United States tenderer, and he would have preferred carrying the tests still further in order to make a fuller proof of the relative qualities. No delay was permitted, however, and the tender of the Cayuga Lake Co. was accepted by a vote of 16 to 5. The cement thus to be purchased is made in a state which forbids any contract from being executed within its borders by a foreign firm, or even the employment of foreign workmen brought into the state to work on a contract. It is moreover pointed out by the *Hamilton Times* that the tender made by the New York firm is so far below its normal prices on home sales as to be subject to the charge of dumping, as the freight of 3¾ cents per barrel, and duty of 43½ cents per barrel, besides the cost of teaming in the city, and cost of returning the bags to the works would all have to be deducted from the contract price. These deductions would bring the net price down to about 75 cents per barrel, whereas the prices of standard brands of United States cement quoted on the New York market range from \$1.10 to \$1.40. If the anti-dumping act were put into effect in this case, the city would have to pay the extra duty if this contingency is not specifically provided against in the contract, and in such case, the patronage of the foreign article would be rather a costly experiment. It may be well to call the attention of other Canadian municipalities to the fact that within the past few months two western towns have paid pretty dear for like experiments. In one case a town "saved" \$200 on a contract for iron pipe imported from Scotland, but found that when a case of dumping was made out the importation cost \$1,000 extra. As the canny Scotch firm had quoted its price on board car or steamer on the other side, the net loss of \$800 fell on the Canadian town. There is no use in a law which is not fairly carried out, and under the anti-dumping law bargain-counter prices for foreign supplies may often turn out to be dear investments.



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