

**QUERIES' COLUMN.**

In order to furnish our readers with information we propose to devote this column to replies to correspondents. Letters should be addressed to "THE CHRONICLE, Enquiry Department, Montreal."

Answers will only be given to such communications as bear the writer's name, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and only to questions referring to matters of general interest in regard to which the Editor of Queries' Column will exercise his own discretion.

1508.—B. L. C., Toronto, O.—A married woman residing in the Province of Quebec cannot accept or transfer stock without the written consent of her husband, unless she is separate as to property and then the transfer office will require evidence of this fact.

1509.—W. W. F., Montreal.—St. John Railway Company, St. John, N.B., stock is listed on the Montreal Stock Exchange. It sold as high as 1.5 in 1899, and touched 105 in 1904. The present quotation is 113 asked 110 bid. The stock pays 6 p.c. per annum in half-yearly payments of 3 p.c. in December and June. The authorized capital is \$800,000, paid up \$779,700. Bonds outstanding \$675,000.

**PROMINENT TOPICS.**

THE MONTREAL MAYORALTY.—There are several candidates in the field for the office of Mayor of this city. According to usage it is the turn of an English speaking citizen. Some of the candidates are fairly well qualified for this position of dignity and responsibility, but lack practical experience in civic affairs. Those who have had any experience in civic matters can readily realize the desirability of selecting for the Mayoralty some citizen who to other qualifications of a general nature has the special and most important one of experience as a member of the City Council. One who is a stranger in the Council Chamber may have all the business and personal qualifications essential to a Mayor, but if he has not shared in the work of the Council he will find it a long and wearisome task to adopt himself to the work of presiding over, and, to some extent, guiding the proceedings of the Council. It takes a length of time to become familiar with the routine work and the laws regulating the business over which the Mayor presides. There are pitfalls on every hand that must be avoided, as a Mayor's prestige and influence are lowered if he falls into the traps set for the unwary and those created by the complexity of precedents on points of order.

AMONGST THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A MAYOR are, a good knowledge of civic affairs, an equable temper, well balanced mind, freedom from racial, or creed, or political prejudices, a judicial faculty,

a capacity to take the lead in any civic movement for promoting the city's interests and a temperament that encourages such enterprises. As an encouragement to prominent citizens to assume the duties of civic life it is most desirable that the Mayor should be selected from the City Council, provided he has shown his fitness for the position by his record as an alderman and is otherwise qualified.

In this connection we believe one member of the City Council who has presented himself as a candidate is deserving of the support of the citizens.

HIGH PRICES FOR NORTHWEST LANDS.—Quite recently land has been sold near Dauphin, 178 miles northwest of Winnipeg, for \$50 per acre. This is higher than good farming land can be had for in Ontario and this province. Some of the land in the same district is owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and a large area of land now held for \$50 per acre was sold only few years ago for \$3 per acre.

There is no more productive soil for wheat growing in the world. The yield on some of the farms was from 35 to 55 bushels per acre. The local market price is about 60 cents per bushel.

A visitor settled in that region, who is now in the city, reports that, the heavy crops this year are causing a wholesale clearing off of debts that have stood for a length of time. Implements are being purchased, new settlements founded, buildings being erected and the whole country west and north of Winnipeg is alive with prospectors and settlers from the United States. As an illustration of rapidity of growth, so characteristic of the Northwest, he describes one village as having been simply without a location last summer, while to-day it is a prosperous village of 600 inhabitants.

ONE NEED OF THE NORTHWEST is stated to be expert artisans. Places of several thousand inhabitants are without a plumber, or bricklayer, or carpenter, or tinsmith, whose several crafts are exercised by amateurs of the crudest type, who are paid enormous wages for most inferior work. "Jack of all trades and master of none" is the style of mechanic in the Northwest.

THE NEW CABINET OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.—The Cabinet elected by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman having received the King's approval is now fully constituted, and the Rt. Honorable Mr. Balfour and his colleagues, are out of office. The situation is a very singular one, indeed, in some respects unprecedented. The Balfour Government had a large, though somewhat uncertain majority in the House of Commons, but majorities in that House are becoming more and more erratic and unreliable now the old hard and fast lines of cleavage between political parties are disappearing and new ones are