

Lake Erie & Detroit River Ry.

It has been known for some months that this Co. was negotiating for the purchase of the Erie & Huron Ry., & it was also said that the Michigan Central had similar views. However, the L. E. & D. R. was successful & has made a straight purchase of the property, the transfer having been made on Aug. 19. The parties to the transfer have not made the price public, but it is rumored at Chatham, the E. & H. headquarters, that it was in the neighborhood of \$750,000.

The E. & H. line runs from Rondeau, Ont., to Sarnia, 76 miles, connecting with the L. E. & D. R. at Blenheim, 8 miles from Rondeau; at Fargo & Courtright with the Michigan Central & at Chatham with the C. P. R. & G. T. R. The following statistics of the E. & H. are up to June 30, 1897: Ordinary share capital, authorized, \$150,000; paid up, \$109,000. Bonded debt, \$740,000 at 5%. Dominion Government aid, \$96,000; Ontario Government aid, \$83,000; municipal aid, \$257,500; capital from other sources, \$61,028.75; total capital subscribed and paid up, \$1,346,528.75; floating debt, \$61,028.75; total theoretical cost of railway & rolling stock, \$1,346,528.75. The gross earnings for the year ended June 30, '97, were \$107,891.19, & the net earnings, \$25,408.44. The line is laid with 54 & 56 lb. steel rails, & the radius of the sharpest curve is 661 ft., & the heaviest grade is 52 ft. to the mile. It has 5 locomotives, 8 first-class coaches, 5 baggage, mail & express cars, 25 cattle & box cars & 17 flat cars.

The directors of the E. & H., of which E. H. Bickford, Toronto, was President, & J. G. Ross, Chatham, Managing Director, resigned, & a new board was elected with the following officers: E. C. Walker, President & Managing Director; Dr. S. A. King, Vice-President; J. H. Walker, Treasurer; J. H. Coburn, Solicitor; W. Woollatt, General Superintendent & Traffic Manager. These gentlemen all hold precisely similar positions on the L. E. & D. R. The Secretary of the E. & H., J. E. Foreman, Toronto, was re-elected. The officials of the L. E. & D. R. have been placed in charge of the E. & H. & are operating it. In addition to Messrs. Bickford & Ross, above mentioned, who retire, the other officials of the E. & H. under the old management were: E. H. Edwards, Freight & Passenger Agent; C. H. Crofts, Storekeeper; F. Stamelen, Master Mechanic, & J. G. Entwistle, Roadmaster.

A new time-table will probably be put in effect about the middle of September, when some changes will be made in operating, & trains will run between Walkerville & Chatham & between Ridgeway & Sarnia. The L. E. & D. R. now connects with the E. & H. at Blenheim Jct., & that will be the junction used to & from Chatham.

In addition to the E. & H. just acquired, the L. E. & D. R. consists of its main line from Walkerville, Ont., to Ridgeway, 84 miles, the line following the Lake Erie shore line a few miles back from it. The Co. also operates the London & Port Stanley line between those towns, under lease.

A rumor has been current that the L. E. & D. R. has purchased the London & Port Stanley Ry. We are authorized to say that this is absolutely foundationless. The lease has yet 15 years to run & nothing further has been considered.

There is nothing definite as to the proposed extension of the L. E. & D. R. from Ridgeway to St. Thomas. The management hopes to secure a subsidy next session, in which event construction will go on without delay.

The new slip docks at Port Stanley, the contracts for which were awarded by the L. E. & D. R. Co. late in May, will be completed & ready for use early in September. The contracts called for their completion on Aug. 1, but unavoidable delays prevented their being finished in that time. The docks are

being constructed immediately to the west of the lighthouse piers, & with the tracks & grading of the approaches will cost in the neighborhood of \$55,000, the estimated cost of the docks alone being \$45,000 & of the approaches \$10,000.

The main objects of the Co. in having the slip docks built are to get a good connecting link between the coal & iron regions of Ohio & Pittsburg respectively, & the west, by means of a car ferry service & the Port Stanley line to London. During the past 2 years the Co. has handled a large quantity of coal & iron for London by the lake route, but the greatest drawback, especially in the coal trade, was experienced in the trouble of having to remove it from the schooners & on to the cars. This meant a heavy expense for labor & also a loss of time, & to remove these obstacles the L. E. & D. R. decided to build the docks & operate the car ferry Shenango no. 1, which for 3 years has run between Conneaut, Ohio, & Port Dover, Ont. The Shenango is a very large vessel, costing \$150,000, & has a capacity of 26 cars, having 4 tracks, the 2 centre tracks holding 7 cars each, & the 2 outside ones 6 cars each. In addition to this she can carry on her upper deck 1,200 excursionists & she is fitted for regular passenger business with staterooms. The Shenango made her first run from Conneaut to Port Stanley Aug. 18.

The distance from Conneaut to Port Stanley is 58 miles, Port Stanley to St. Thomas 9 miles, & Port Stanley to London 24 miles. It will thus be seen by this new route Western Ontario is practically placed in direct connection with Pittsburg & the central States, from which a large amount of business comes into Canada. The L. E. & D. R.'s direct connection at Conneaut is the Pittsburg, Bessemer & Lake Erie Ry. (largely owned by the Carnegie Co.), which works direct with the Baltimore & Ohio, the Pennsylvania & other railways running out of Pittsburg. The L. E. & D. R. has already completed traffic arrangements with the C.P.R., & similar arrangements are pending with the G.T.R., M.C.R., & Wabash. (Official.)

The principal owners of the L. E. & D. R. are Hiram Walker & Sons, the millionaire distillers of Walkerville, so that the Co. will not want for capital to work its property to the fullest advantage.

The Quebec Conference.

Several questions of special importance to the interests represented by THE RAILWAY & SHIPPING WORLD will come before the representatives of Great Britain, Canada & the U.S. sitting at Quebec. These are referred to by the Toronto Globe as follows:

"While it is a large question, there should be no great obstacle in the way of coming to an understanding in regard to the bonding privilege, the continuance of which is recognized as an advantage both to the U. S. & Canada, & it would seem that all that is called for in this matter would be the careful drafting by experts of a series of clauses covering all possible conditions of transportation for incorporation in the treaty.

"The proposed revision of the treaty stipulation in regard to the maintenance of war vessels upon the great lakes seems to present no time-consuming difficulty. If it is the wish of the U.S. merely to be allowed to construct war vessels on the upper lakes for ocean service, & not to maintain a fleet in the inland waters, it is probable that no serious objection will be offered.

"The alien labor question, which has been the cause of so much irritation, will, doubtless, find an easy solution.

"The anomalies of the wrecking laws of both countries have long been felt by the shipping trade & recognized by public men, & there

being a manifest disposition to wipe out small causes of difference, this one will be removed with the rest. In short, if the three questions of prime importance relating to reciprocity in trade, the Bering Sea seal fishery & the Atlantic fisheries are disposed of, there can be little doubt that the solution of the other differences will follow."

A few days later the Globe said in reference to the question of war vessels on the lakes: "The crucial question will be one of transit, rather than construction. The vessels contemplated are, we suppose, destroyers, and other small but deadly craft, capable of passing through the Canadian canals. The Globe said when this subject was first broached (July 25) that it was opposed to the maintenance of armed fleets on these waters & to giving the Americans any territorial rights in our canals, for that or any other purpose, & it adheres to that view."

A correspondent of the Globe, writing from Quebec, Aug. 22, says: "A city which is early in the field is Ogdensburg, represented here by State Senator Malby, of the New York Legislature. Ogdensburg wants to see the Welland canal thrown open free to all vessels, a tonnage fee of 2½ cents a ton being at present collected on all vessels, Canadian or U.S., passing through. With this tax removed he thinks Ogdensburg would get a lot of the grain that now goes over the Erie Canal to eastern points by way of Buffalo. He admits that Buffalo & New York will object to free canal navigation into Lake Ontario but thinks the grain-shippers of the west & the grain-users of New England will support his position. Canada, he thinks, would gain heavily also by the diversion of grain bound for Europe from the Erie route to the St. Lawrence. The benefit to Montreal, however, is not what Senator Malby is here to put to the front. Buffalo & the Erie are what Ogdensburg is out after."

Toronto Street Railway Taxation.

The application of the Toronto Ry. Co. for leave to appeal from the decision of the Court of Appeal of Ontario, holding that the rails, poles & wires of street railway companies were land, & assessable as realty, came on to be heard before the Privy Council in London, Eng., Aug. 2. Hon. E. Blake, Q.C., appeared for the T. Ry. Co., & C. Robinson, Q.C., for the City of Toronto. The position taken by the city was that leave to appeal should not be granted, because the legislature of this country & its courts should have the right to settle their own domestic questions of taxation, & that no broad general question of general law was therefore involved. The Privy Council gave effect to this contention, & refused the leave to appeal. The refusal of the leave does not settle the question as to whether rails, poles & wires are assessable as land. The Toronto Ry. Co. intends to further contest the question by paying its taxes under protest, & then suing the city to recover back the same. It will then be entitled to the decision of the Privy Council upon the assessability, as a matter of right, without special leave.

Smoke, Noise, Vibration & Bustle.

In Toronto, Aug. 22, Judge Rose gave judgment in the appeal of the T.H. & B. Ry. against the award of \$5,000 made by Arbitrators Judge C. J. Snyder & W. Bell, of Hamilton, in favor of the trustees of the McNab Street Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, for damages to land & for "the smoke, noise, vibration & bustle" consequent upon the running of the railway past the church. The judgment confirmed the \$500 land damages, but referred back to the arbitrators the balance of the award, \$4,500, to eliminate "any amount allowed for smoke, noise or bustle."