

distance of 500 miles, using a pressure of 20,000 to 30,000 volts, and that under certain circumstances electric power could be thus transmitted at a profit. He claims that the power of the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi river might in this manner be economically employed in the mines of Rhodesia, and that the city of Cairo could be lighted more cheaply by means of current generated at and transmitted from the First Cataract, 400 miles distant, than by steam engines on the ground.

#### Street Railway Organization.

OUR attention has recently been called to the necessity of an organization representing the street railway interests of Canada, and we are pleased to learn that in some quarters there is a strong feeling in favor of such a movement. It seems that the smaller roads are the most anxious that the formation of an association should be effected. It is pointed out that there are many questions in common affecting the operation of street railways which might with great advantage be dealt with by an association. If taken up independently, the expense and trouble of adjustment is certain to be much greater and the results less satisfactory. The difficulty, in this country, of working successfully an association composed of street railway officials is quite apparent. The limited number of railways necessarily prohibits a large membership, while the great distance from the east to west of the Dominion makes it extremely doubtful that members could be secured in British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. This would confine the membership, in reality, to Ontario and Quebec. The suggestion has been made that there be formed a street railway section of the Canadian Electrical Association. This would be, perhaps, the wiser course to pursue. In the past, we fear the association named has been regarded as non-representative of the street railway branch of the electrical industry, but this has been due to the fact that it received its chief support from the electric lighting, telephone and telegraph interests. Just how to effect an organization that will best serve the interests of the street railway companies cannot be easily defined, but we have referred to the matter in the hope that a discussion may be provoked, and some course of action outlined by those interested.

#### The Niagara Falls Power Franchise.

THE time granted by the Ontario government to the Canadian Niagara Power Company for the development of a fixed quantity of power on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls expired on November 1st, 1898. The company not having fulfilled its agreement in this respect, the question was submitted to the courts to decide whether or not the franchise should be declared void. The questions which the High Court of Justice was asked to decide were as follows: 1st. Is the agreement void by reason of the failure of the Canadian Niagara Power Company to have 10,000 horse power developed and ready for use by November 1st last? 2nd. May the government declare the agreement forfeited? 3rd. If the agreement cannot be declared wholly at an end, is the government relieved from the agreement not to grant to any other person the right to use the waters of the Niagara river? To each of these questions a negative decision was given, thus permitting the Canadian Niagara Power Company to continue to hold its franchise. That all our readers may understand the situation, we will review, briefly, the

circumstances of the case. In April, 1892, the Canadian Niagara Power Company entered into an agreement with the commissioners of Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park, which agreement was ratified by the Ontario government, whereby the company secured exclusive control of the right to develop power on the Canadian side of the Niagara river, in return for an annual payment of \$25,000 for the first ten years, the amount to be increased \$1,000 for each year of the second decade until the annual rental shall have reached \$35,000, at which figure it might be continued for 80 years. A provision of the agreement was that by November 1st, 1898, the company should have completed water connections for the development of 25,000 horse power, and have actually ready for use and transmission 10,000 horse power. Some time previous to November 1st, the company applied to the park commissioners for an extension of time, but the Ontario government, although hesitatingly, refused to grant the request. Recourse was then taken to the courts to ascertain if the Niagara Power Company still had any legal right to the franchise, with the result given above. The ruling of the court certainly seems ambiguous, inasmuch as it places the owners of the franchise in an almost helpless position. If a violation of the terms of the agreement is not sufficient to annul the contract, the entire agreement is of little value. There are some peculiar features of the case. The company contend that they have supplied the local demand, and that up to the present the problem of long distance transmission has not been satisfactorily solved. Their method of supplying the local demand was by placing two 500 horse power generators in the power house of the Niagara Falls Park and River Railway, situated within the park limits. These are belt driven by the two turbines of the railway company. This 1,000 horse power is almost entirely consumed by the Carborundum Company, the Niagara Falls Electric Light Company, and the Carmelite Monastery. It might be asked what the intention of the government was in granting to a syndicate the right to utilize the Niagara power. Was it not that the development of the power would create a growth of industrial establishments in the vicinity, the supplying of the then existing demand being of minor importance? It is noteworthy that while practically nothing has been done towards utilizing the immense water power of Niagara Falls, the owners of the franchise have permitted the Cataract Power Company of Hamilton to cut off one of their most promising fields for exploitation, namely, the city of Hamilton, while we would not be surprised if, in the near future, the same company would be supplying current to the city of Toronto. This fact, and the apparent indifference and inactivity of the Niagara Company, gives color to the suspicion expressed in some quarters that in securing control of the franchise the Canadian Niagara Power Company had some other motive than that of developing the power. What course will now be taken is a matter of interest. Should the courts not be asked to decide what time shall be given the company for the execution of the work agreed upon?

The National Carbon Company, of Cleveland, Ohio, have sent us a neat calendar, on which is shown a view of their extensive works. It also includes the moonlight schedule for the current year.

The 60 k.w. S.K.C. generator of the Dundas Electric Co. has been placed in position. They expect to have their water-power in operation in a few days, and will begin the lighting of the city by the 15th of January.