

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

The annual report of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway has recently been presented to the Ontario Legislature, and shows a gratifying increase in the total net earnings for the year. The net earnings have increased from \$436,130.31 for 1910 to \$593,152.69 for 1911, or an increase of about five per cent. The operating expenses have decreased in percentage from 73.2 to 66.4. An appendix to the report is a report from Engineer Ellis, who states that the mouth of the Moose River, on the James Bay, provides the only possible site for a harbor. He adds the opinion that the cost of making the roadstead available for vessels of reasonable draught might not be prohibitive.

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An inkling of the country's railroad needs is gathered from the statement of Vice-President Bury, of the Canadian Pacific Railway, that the company may spend, shortly, \$60,000,000 on an entirely new line of railway from the prairies to the Pacific coast. It was Mr. Bury who recently emphasized the importance of mixed farming in Western Canada as a part solution of the crop movement problem. The growing of wheat, however, will for many years keep ahead of the cult of mixed farming. We cannot tell the Western grower to stop wheat production until railroad mileage, waterways and terminal facilities overtake him. Material and labor, rather than money, appear to be the railroads' trouble. This makes important the work of immigration. In turn, we must remember that railroad labor to-day may not have the same employment to-morrow. While there is need for caution in new transportation plans, the double tracking of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Winnipeg to the Pacific coast appears to be a necessity. According to Mr. Bury's various calculations, based on the development of all the railways in Western Canada and a proportionate growth of the country, only 40 per cent. of the crop will be moved by the close of navigation this year. This is a problem upon which our governments and transportation authorities may well concentrate effort.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Water Powers of Canada.

Sir,—In your issue of March 7th I note an appreciative editorial respecting the report on Water Powers by L. Denis and A. V. White, recently issued by the Commission of Conservation.

You say: "There is one feature of the conservation question, however, which is lost sight of, and that is the absolute necessity of securing the highest possible economy of water in all water power developments," etc.

Our report not only shows the wasteful use of head, as illustrated by conditions at Niagara Falls, but, in addition, points out the necessity for providing for the possible use of all the power that may be made available at any particular water power site.

This is brought out on page 12 as follows:—

"The regulations respecting waters which are to be set aside for the development of power should be so framed as to require that the preliminary installation of dams and other main works necessary for the control of the waters be made with reference to the possible future development of the full water-power that may be available. For example, suppose a certain waterfall is capable of yielding 10,000 horse-power. If development rights are let to A. for 2,000 horse-power, to B. for 1,000 horse-

power, and to C. for, say, 1,000 horse-power., and A., B. and C. are allowed to design and construct their respective works irrespective of each other, or of the possible development of the remaining 6,000 horse-power, then it will probably become quite impracticable to get anything like the remaining 6,000 horse-power because of the damage that would be caused to the plants of A., B. and C. On the other hand, if preliminary works were constructed with a view to utilizing any amount of power up to the full 10,000 horse-power, as occasion demanded, no such contingency as has been supposed could well arise."

James White,
Secretary Commission of Conservation.

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Lethbridge Sewage Disposal Works.

The Editor:

Sir,—We have read the very interesting account of the new works in course of completion at the above, designed by Mr. Aird Murray, and described in your issue of February 1st, and as makers of the sprinklers and other fittings for the filters and tanks, we would like to add a few lines regarding these sprinklers, which we think would be of interest to your readers.

The three percolating filters are to be worked by our Patent Airlock "Cresset" Revolving Distributor with Canadian Patent Roof Support. The stationary centre column is extended to form what might be described as the tent pole, which extends to the apex of the roof, where the girders converge and are bolted to the lugs on the centre cap. The body of the sprinkler is so built that, by removing adjustable wedges, the double flanged piece in the column can be taken out; this action releases the weight on the ball bearings, so that they may be got at, cleaned and replaced without dismantling the whole of the sprinkler and consequently the roof.

Another valuable advantage which the "Cresset" has over all other makes is its lack of friction when in work owing to the airlock seal. This seal enables the apparatus to revolve with so small a head as 9-inch, and deliver almost any variation in volume required.

We are issuing a new pamphlet, wherein the mechanism of this apparatus is specified, and shall be pleased to send same to any of your readers on application. Yours obediently,

Adams-Hydraulics, Limited.

An interesting bill has been introduced by the Attorney-General of Saskatchewan. The measure provides for the appointment of a Fire Commissioner, whose foremost duty shall be to investigate the origin and circumstances in general connected with every fire which is believed to have been caused by incendiarism or negligence. He may issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses at such investigations. Deputies will be appointed throughout the province to furnish the Fire Commissioner with reports on every fire occurring in the various municipalities, where the damage is in excess of \$100. They shall also advise him of any suspicious circumstances, and he will then be in a position to institute an investigation. This is most desirable legislation. Manitoba already has a fire commissioner, and Saskatchewan will likely be the next province. Ontario has discussed the matter for many years, but seems little nearer an actual appointment. With an annual fire waste in Canada of more than \$20,000,000, every province can well afford to employ a fire marshal or commissioner.