

Commission of Enquiry into Railways and Transportation.

The Chairman of the commission, A. H. Smith, President of the New York Central Lines, and Sir Henry Drayton arrived in Ottawa Oct. 8, on their return from an inspection trip over Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk Pacific and National Transcontinental lines as far as the Pacific Coast.

William Mitchell Acworth has been appointed a member of the Commission, in succession to Sir George Paish, who was compelled to relinquish the appointment on account of ill health. He was born near Bath, Somersetshire, Eng., Nov. 22, 1850. He is a barrister, M.A. (Oxon), and was a member of the London County Council from 1889 to 1892, and was a candidate for Parliament for the Keighley Division of Yorkshire in 1906, 1910 and 1911. Following are a list of committees connected with transportation of which he has been a member:—1895, Board of Trade Committee on Light Railways; 1899, Royal Commission on Accidents to Railway Servants; 1906, Vice Regal Commission on Irish Railways, and Committee on Railway Accounts and Statistics. He is a member of the council of the Royal Economic and Royal Statistical Societies, and of the executive committee of the Tariff Reform League, and Chairman of the London United Tramways Co. He is the author of several works on railways, including Railways of England, 1889; Railways of Scotland, 1890; Railways and the Trader, 1891, and Railway Economics, 1905. He was, from 1895 to 1904, lecturer on Railway Economics at the London School of Economics.

The Commission's Staff.

As stated in a previous issue, no information is obtainable from the commissioners as to the staff employed. As already announced, Prof. G. F. Swain and W. H. Chadburn have been brought in from the United States. Prof. Swain is apparently not spending much time in Canada, but is directing the work from Boston, Mass., W. H. Chadburn being his principal assistant at Ottawa, while A. Buchanan, formerly of the New York Central Lines, is looking into rolling stock questions. W. P. Kellett, who was Chief Engineer of the Lake Erie & Northern Ry. during most of its construction, and who is now President of the Dominion Steel Products Co. at Brantford, Ont., has been engaged in connection with the engineering work and is going to inspect the lines to the Pacific coast. A. H. N. Bruce, M. Can. Soc. C.E., formerly Chief Engineer, Quebec & Saguenay Ry., is said to have also been appointed on the engineering staff.

Geo. F. Swain's record is as follows:—Born, Mar. 2, 1857, in San Francisco, Cal. Graduated in 1877 from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Civil Engineering. Studied in Polytechnic School at Berlin, 1877, 1880. 1880-1884, hydraulic expert, 10th United States Census. 1887-1907, Professor of Civil Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in charge of the department. 1909 to date, Gordon McKay Professor of Civil Engineering, Harvard University. 1887-1914, Consulting Engineer, Massachusetts Railroad Commission. 1894 to date, member Boston Transit Commission; since June, 1913, Chairman of the commission. 1904, member of commission to revise building laws of City of Boston. 1908, member, National Con-

servation Commission. 1911, member joint commission to consider and report on transportation improvements in Metropolitan District, including steam and electric railways, and port developments. 1910, expert employed by State Board to validate assets and liabilities of New York, New Haven & Hartford Rd. 1911, 1912, expert on valuation of Chicago Elevated Railways; also made valuation of two small railways. During the last 20 years he has been consulting engineer for a large number of engineering projects, having designed and superintended construction of quite a number of bridges of various types. Has been expert in quite a number of cases involving bridges, railway matters, docks, and other engineering problems. Has also been a member of a large number of special commissions, including 15 or 20 commissions appointed to decide manner and apportion the cost of abolishing grade crossings of highways and railways, including a considerable number of large projects, such as those at Worcester, Waltham, Taunton, Newton, Somerville, and many other cities and towns in the United States. 1913-1914, Consulting Engineer for City Cincinnati on project for subways. Has also been employed by various States and municipalities on engineering projects of various kinds. 1916, member of board of arbitration on plan for reconstruction of Galveston causeway. 1913, President, American Society of Civil Engineers. Is a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, American Institute of Consulting Engineers, Canadian Society of Civil Engineers, Institution of Civil Engineers of Great Britain, Society of Engineers and Architects, Hanover, Germany, Boston Society of Civil Engineers (Ex-President), American Railway Engineering Association, American Society for Testing Materials, and many other professional societies.

The following memorandum has been issued from the Prime Minister's Office in Ottawa:—"The government are in receipt of many communications which have reached them in consequence of a circular issued by the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers on Sept. 7, copy of which is hereto appended. [Editor's Note.—This circular was published in Canadian Railway and Marine World for October.]

"It is the policy of the government to employ Canadians for all public purposes; but having regard to the magnitude and seriousness of the questions which confront the government with regard to the railways, they have not been disposed to dictate to the commissioners in the selection of the best available assistance on this continent or elsewhere. Indeed the government could not expect the commissioners to undertake the very arduous and important task which has been set before them, unless they were given a free hand in such matters. The Prime Minister has called upon Sir Henry Drayton for a full report in respect of the matters set forth in the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers' circular, and that report has just been received. A copy is hereto appended."

Sir Henry L. Drayton's report.

The following letter from Sir Henry L. Drayton, K.C., Chief Railway Commissioner for Canada, and one of the Commissioners of inquiry into railway and transportation, was dated: "On Private

Car Acadia, Port Arthur, en route west, Sept. 19," and addressed to Sir Robert Borden.

"A copy of the circular of protest issued by the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers on the question of the appointment of Prof. Swain, of Harvard University, who is an American engineer, has been forwarded to me. In case you have not already got one, I enclose copy herewith. I understand, rightly or wrongly, that some 3,000 of these circulars have been issued; and, as the object of the circular is to have all those circularized write the members of parliament and to take up the question with those whom they believe to have influence in Ottawa, I have no doubt that the question is one which will be called to your attention with more or less regularity and insistence. I, therefore, think that while the appointment by the commission of investigation of their assistants is of necessity a matter for that commission, and that no apologies are required for the appointment of Prof. Swain, it is but fair that I should write you my position in the matter. The question was first brought to my attention by R. A. Ross, an electrical engineer of much eminence, with whom I have been personally associated in the past in connection with hydro electrical matters. At the outset, I desire to say that I have a very high opinion of Mr. Ross' engineering skill and knowledge and honesty of purpose. He writes:—

"As you are the only Canadian on that board and I am an engineer without knowledge of railway matters and therefore free to speak without my motives being misunderstood, I may say that it has been common practice in Canada whenever investigations were carried on which were really worth while taking up, to call in foreign engineers and that I sincerely hope that your board is not going to continue this practice which will result in a horde of probably several hundred American engineers being landed in this country to do work for which our Canadian engineers are better fitted both by training and actual experience. Canadian engineers can and do go to the States and obtain a preference there because they are Canadians and are well trained and reliable and there is abundant material still in this country to cover the present requirements. At the present there are many engineers out of work in Canada and who have had to go to the States for the same reason or who have enlisted, all of whom are our own citizens who will have to bear the burden not only of war costs but of the railways at present under consideration. Of course I realize that this dispatch may not be correct, but previous actions of the governmental bodies have indicated the possibility of its truth, hence this protest to the only Canadian member of the board. May I also add that from what I hear the personnel of the board itself appears to be thoroughly acceptable to every one and personally I wish you every success in this very important undertaking."

"I am entirely free to admit my personal preference in favor of the local men, many of whom I know and have come in contact with in business. It occurs to me, however, that in a position of the present magnitude, and, indeed, as a matter of common duty, the only proper thing to do is to ignore all personal predilections, acquaintances, and the like, and get the best men available, whoever they may be. The question is certainly large enough and the urgency sufficiently real. Every consideration was given Mr. Ross' letter before Prof. Swain's appointment was made. I note that the circular refers to his appointment as a particularly flagrant case. I, therefore, should say something about him. Strangely enough, he happens to be a member of the protesting society. He became a member in Jan., 1913, being himself at the time President of the American Society. I should also say that he is a member of many years' standing of the