

Quebec Southern Ry.—The section of the line from Sorel to Noyan Jct., closed since Jan. 20, had not been re-opened Mar. 20, but H. A. Hodge, President, said he hoped to be able to arrange for its re-opening very shortly. F. D. White, of Burlington, Vt., Secretary of the South Shore Ry., has brought an action against the Q.S. Ry. to recover \$49,000 in connection with the purchase of the former line. Press reports state that a syndicate of New Yorkers is being organized to take over the Q.S. Ry. as well as the South Shore Ry., in the interests of the Rutland Rd.

The Minister of Public Works for Quebec has received a formal petition asking the Quebec courts to appoint a sequestator for the United Counties, the Quebec Southern, and Richelieu Valley railways, amalgamated under the title of the Quebec Southern Ry. The petition was set down for argument April 2. (Mar., pg. 107.)

The St. Mary's River Ry. Co. will apply at the current session of the Dominion Parliament for authority to move its head office to Montreal.

Temiscouata Ry.—Net earnings for Dec., 1902, \$912.

White Pass and Yukon Ry.—Gross earnings from July 1, 1902, to Feb. 14, 1903, \$1,167,978.

Winnipeg Electric Street Ry.—Gross earnings for Jan. \$44,515, against \$32,060 for Jan., 1902.

The Shipping Federation of Canada.

This is the title under which representatives of the various shipping firms of Montreal are seeking incorporation at the current session of the Dominion Parliament. The names appended to the application for incorporation are: H. A. Allan, representing H. and A. Allan; J. R. Dinning, representing Furness, Withy & Co. (Ltd.); J. Thom, representing the Hamburg-American Packet Co.; Wm. I. Gear, representing the Robert Reford Co. (Ltd.); F. A. Routh, representing F. A. Routh & Co.; D. W. Campbell, representing Elder, Dempster & Co.; J. G. Brock, representing J. G. Brock & Co.; C. McLean, representing McLean, Kennedy & Co., and J. Torrance, representing the Dominion and the Leyland lines. The firms mentioned include practically the whole of the firms engaged in the trans-Atlantic steamship business in Canada. As set out in the notice of application, the objects of the federation are to amalgamate and federate shipowners, steamship and ship managers and agents, whether individuals or corporations, and such other persons or corporations as may be interested in the shipping trade of Canada; to act jointly and in co-operation with any other association to consider all questions affecting the shipping trade of Canada, or other trades allied therewith, and to take such steps as may be deemed advisable to protect all such interests.

For many years past those interested in the shipping trade have acted together in an informal manner, and without organization, as regards pilotage, channel, lighting, harbor accommodation, harbor dues, cargo, and a multitude of other questions of interest to the trade as a whole. This method of procedure has been found to have its inconveniences, in view of the fact that there was no individual who could officially speak for the whole, and that it was difficult sometimes to get the trade to act as a unit. The purpose of the incorporation is to overcome these inconveniences and to create a body similar in purposes and formation to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. We are informed there is nothing in the nature of a combine in the proposed federation, and that the or-

ganization will in no way attempt to affect or influence rates nor interfere in any way with the autonomy of the several firms and companies.

Talks to Ticket Agents.

By F. B. Sankey, Pittsburg, Pa.

LETTER WRITING.—In writing letters to your general office on any subject, be brief. Write all you have to say, but put it in as few words as possible, so that the person with whom you are corresponding can see at a glance the facts in the case. Remember the general passenger agent of a large line receives hundreds of letters daily, not only from employees, but from the public in general. It is no easy matter to reply to all such letters; hence the importance of brevity and conciseness. State facts and use the official company letter head. Be charitably disposed toward your general passenger agent. By this I mean, do not feel chagrined because the answer to your communication is not always as lengthy as you may anticipate. Your general passenger agent, as explained, has too many letters to write each day, and has not the time to expatiate, as it were, when a few words to the point will answer the questions you have raised. Guard against repetition in your letters. So many of us repeat the same facts throughout a letter, which is entirely unnecessary. In writing letters we should have regard for precision—that is to say exactly what we mean; to state our thoughts plainly; to avoid ambiguity. We should have regard for propriety, or the use of words in their proper sense. The rules for unity should govern us in our composition. The letter-writer whose diction is good is bound to stand out pre-eminent among his fellows in the eyes of his superior officers, and quite frequently is the man sought for to fill more lucrative positions. Never let a letter go unanswered. If a person thinks enough of your opinion on any particular subject, to write you a letter asking your advice, it is as little as you can do to reply promptly and courteously.

ASK FOR ASSISTANCE WHEN NECESSARY.—An agent should always ask for assistance when in need of it. He should first use every means within his power to handle the business himself. He should not ask for help from any source whatever until he has exhausted his own stock of knowledge. After doing this, if he feels he is not capable of handling the transaction, or if he is in doubt as to the information he has given the passenger, or the correctness of his decision in the matter, then, by all means, he should ask for assistance or advice on the subject in question. Quite frequently it occurs, an agent fails to ask for advice pertaining to passenger business, fearing he will show his ignorance on the subject, or that he will be criticised by his superior officers for not knowing better. Rather than write a letter requesting advice, he goes ahead blindly, makes a mistake or loses the business by default. Always ask for assistance when in doubt. Mistakes frequently cost the railroad company money, and oftentimes could be avoided by asking questions. Sometimes an agent feels if he asks for assistance, the travelling passenger agent will be sent out, and if the business is secured, the travelling passenger agent will get all the credit and the local agent none. The above surmises are all wrong. Every agent will be credited for the business done at his station by his superior officers, regardless of who assisted him. The travelling passenger agent gets credit for the business done in his territory as a whole. The general office is too busy with more important questions to keep tabs on each and every movement of its travelling representatives, and scarcely ever knows the individual cases

handled by the travelling men. It judges the travelling man's work by the showing made in his territory. Therefore, as the travelling man is on the road to assist the agents, no agent should hesitate to call upon him for help on account of any of the reasons mentioned, when his services are necessary.

Ontario and the Great Lakes.

The strs. *Urania* and *Imperial*, which were operated in 1902 between Cleveland, Ohio, and Port Stanley, Ont., and Cleveland and Rondeau, by the Lake Erie Navigation Co., may be so'd this spring.

The Montreal Transportation Co. has closed a contract for the construction at Collingwood, Ont., of a steel screw, lake and river tug, having the following dimensions: length, 117 ft. over all, 107 ft. keel; beam, 23 ft.; moulded depth, 13 ft. 9 in. She will be fitted with triple expansion engines, with cylinders, 15, 25½ and 43 in. diameter, by 36 in. stroke, supplied with steam at 185 lbs. pressure from two Scotch marine boilers, 11 ft. diameter by 11 ft. 6 in. long.

Waldie & Wright are having built by the Bertram Engine Works Co., Toronto, a full Welland canal size, steel, bulk cargo steamer, a duplicate of the *Iroquois*, built for the St. Lawrence and Chicago Steam Navigation Co. Her dimensions are: length, over all, 262 ft. 2 in.; breadth, 43 ft.; moulded depth, 25 ft. 6 in.; and she is to be fitted with a vertical triple expansion engine 17, 28 and 46 in. cylinder, by 36 in. stroke, and two Scotch boilers, each 11 ft. 6 in. by 12 ft., built for a working pressure of 176 lbs. of steam.

The C.P.R. and the Northern Navigation Co. have entered into an arrangement by which there will be a daily steamship service on the upper lakes to Port Arthur and Fort William this season. Hitherto the C.P.R. service has been three times a week from Owen Sound, and the Northern Navigation Co.'s service has been operated without special reference to railway connections. Under the new arrangement the Northern Navigation Co. will operate on its North West Transportation line four steamers from Sarnia and other Lake Huron ports to the head of Lake Superior, the sailing being alternately with the C.P.R. sailings from Owen Sound and Fort William, thus maintaining a daily service, Sundays excepted. The four steamers of the Northern Navigation Co. which will be on the service will be the *Huronic*, *Majestic*, *United Empire* and *Monarch*.

The steel hull for the first of the two side-wheel steamers for the Upper Ottawa Improvement Co., has been put together at Timiskaming, and the hull for the second steamer has been shipped from Toronto for erection on the lake. The hulls were built in sections and set up in the yard of the builders—the Bertram Engine Works Co., Toronto—all parts properly marked, then taken down and shipped on cars for Timiskaming. They have the following dimensions: (1) length over all, 146 ft. 6 in.; breadth, 26 ft.; depth 8 ft. 5 in.; fitted with inclined compound engines 24 and 48 in. cylinders, by 60 in. stroke and two locomotive type boilers, 5 ft. 4 in. by 23 ft. 4½ in.; (2) length over all, 140 ft. 6 in.; keel, 133 ft.; breadth, 24 ft.; depth, 8 ft. 3 in.; fitted with inclined compound engines 20 and 38 in. cylinders, by 54 inch stroke, and two locomotive type boilers, 4 ft. 10 in. by 21 ft. These tugs have been built for the Co.'s logging trade on Lake Timiskaming. Hitherto the Co. has had a contract with the Lumsden Co. to do the towing on the lake, but this having expired, the Co. will now do its own towing. The tugs are to be on the lake for the opening of navigation, and are being put together on the lake. The Up-