

The International convention on wireless telegraphy held recently in Berlin, Germany, declared that "coast stations are obliged to receive and transmit telegrams going or returning from ships without distinction as to the system of wireless telegraphy employed by the ships."

The act providing for the establishment of a special news cable service between Canada and Great Britain has been passed by the Dominion Parliament. A suggestion is made that a special cable will in time be laid so that there will be Canadian controlled cable connection with Great Britain.

It is reported that the terminal charges both in Canada and Australia in connection with the all-British trans-Pacific cable are too high, and should be reduced. Lord Strathcona interviewed Sir Wm. Mulock, the Postmaster-General, in connection with the matter, with a view of having Canada make representations to the Pacific Cable Board.

The U.S. Government proposes to lay 1,050 miles of cable between Seattle, Wash., and Juneau, Alaska; 206 miles of cable from Sitka to Juneau, and 150 miles of cable to connect the Sitka line with the Seattle-Juneau cable. The work is to be completed this fall. This will bring up the mileage of telegraph lines and cables in Alaska to over 3,000 miles.

In the British House of Commons, recently, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had ascertained that the Pacific Cable Boards' accounts showed a total net expenditure, charged to the Exchequer grant up to March 31, 1902, of £91,437 4s. 11d., which covered interest and also the working expenses of the cable so far as they exceeded the traffic receipts. The charge covered nothing for sinking fund, as the first instalment of the annuity for repayment of the money borrowed for construction did not become payable till December. The share due from the contributing colonies in respect of the expenditure up to March 31 was £65,374 5s. 4d., payment of which would be claimed from the Colonies as soon as the Board's accounts were received.

As early as 1840 an eminent electrician had published his opinion that a submarine cable from England to France was a feasible undertaking. The first such cable was laid in 1842 from Governor's Island to the Battery in New York. In 1850 one was laid across the English Channel, and in 1851 it was replaced by a greatly improved service. In 1853, many miles of sub-marine cable were laid, and the feasibility of transatlantic telegraphy became a matter of capital and enterprise. For these the world is indebted to the indomitable efforts of the late Cyrus W. Field, the first message having been transmitted in 1858. As in other phases of the march of scientific improvement, the "fairy tales" of ocean telegraphy have long since become the "commonest commonplace."—Globe.

Referring to the recent press reports that the Western Union Telegraph Co. was negotiating with a view to absorbing the Great North-Western Telegraph Co., H. P. Dwight, President, has made the following official statement: "I beg to say that no such action has been contemplated by either of these companies. The recent visit of Western Union officials to Canada was solely for the purpose of consultation with reference to improvements in the service in the mutual interests of the companies, between which there is an exclusive connection. The Great North-Western Telegraph Company, while intimately connected with the Western Union Telegraph Company in its business relations, will remain, as heretofore, a distinctly Canadian institution."

Signor Marconi stated, on his arrival in Montreal, Sept. 11, that there were no insuperable difficulties in the way of making his system a commercial success. There had

been a great deal of criticism and some opponents had tried to belittle his invention, claiming priority, but the only thing that remained was to make arrangements with the several countries which have made contracts in order to get it working on a profitable basis. He expressed the hope that his stations across Canada would be soon under way. He also confirmed the report that his company had signed a contract with the British Admiralty, whereby the Marconi system will be installed on all the ships of His Majesty's navy. Signor Marconi afterwards went to Glace Bay, N.S.

General Telephone Matters.

The Bell Telephone Co. has installed long distance lines to St. Bruno, St. Hubert, Ste. Julie and St. Anicet, Que.

The Bell Telephone Co. has made arrangements with the River du Lievre, Que., Telephone Co., for an interchange of communications.

The Bell Telephone Co. has agreed to interchange communications with the local telephone system serving East Templeton, Wallingford, Blackburn, and Perkins Mills, Que.

The Bell Telephone Co. has extended its long distance lines in Manitoba, so that they now include Manitou, Pilot Mound, Darlingford, and La Riviere on the Pembina branch of the C.P.R.

The Bell Telephone Co. has completed a line from Buckingham, Que., through the townships of Buckingham, Portland and Bowman to High Falls, thus placing that district in communication with Ottawa.

Some citizens of Hamilton, Ont., are not satisfied with the new contract entered into between the city council and the Bell Telephone Co., and propose to take action to have the by-law approving the agreement declared invalid.

Seabright, on St. Margaret's Bay, N.S., has been placed in telephonic communication with Halifax and the rest of the province. The six mile line has been constructed by public subscription, and has been carried through Tantallon and French village.

A number of residents in the vicinity of Gracefield and the Desert, Que., have formed a co-operative telephone exchange. Each subscriber buys his own instrument, and aids in putting up the poles and wires, and pays \$3.50 a year to a man to look after the making of repairs.

An effort is being made in St. John, N.B., to obtain 1,000 subscribers to a proposed new telephone exchange. The promoters of the concern propose to charge an average rate of \$22 a year. The present rates charged by the New Brunswick Telephone Co. in the city are \$40 for business houses and \$23 for residences.

The Chatham, Ont., city council proposes to give the Bell Telephone Co. an exclusive franchise for five years at \$500 a year, the company to furnish the city with free 'phones, give half rates to hospitals, charge no more rental to subscribers than is paid in cities of equal size and importance in Canada, and give subscribers the right to use any other subscriber's 'phone without charge.

The Bell Telephone Co. has not less than twenty-seven miles of conduit in Montreal containing 648,266 ft. of duct, besides another 100,000 ft. of duct in the branches leading into lanes and other points of distribution. The cost of laying a conduit is five times as much as the cost of poles and wires, but the cost of maintenance is 15% that of overhead lines, owing to the immunity from storms and other sources of danger existing above ground.

The Bell Telephone Co. has submitted a further offer to the Ottawa city council for an

exclusive franchise. The rate for business houses is to be \$45, and for residences \$23, and the company will accommodate the wires of the fire alarm telegraph on its poles and supply 50 telephones to the city free of charge. This reduction of \$5 in rates of house telephones and the free service supplied the city buildings, the company proposes to offer in lieu of an annual cash payment to the city treasury, which heretofore has been \$1,500 a year. The proposed term of the contract is five years. The city council has not come to any decision regarding the proposal.

The Bell Telephone Co. purposes making a large expenditure in Montreal in improvements. The new building in course of erection on Hospital st. will, says the Montreal Witness, receive the complete new apparatus and equipment and common battery type known as the main exchange district. The ultimate capacity of the switchboard will be 9,600 lines. In addition to providing for local subscribers, the apparatus will provide a new switchboard for long distance service. In the portion of the city known as the East exchange a new building will be provided, and this is now in course of construction on St. Andre st., near St. Catherine st. The switchboard in this exchange will also have an ultimate capacity of 9,600 lines. It is estimated that it will require at least eighteen months to construct these boards. The company will have to change every subscriber's telephone set to conform with the new apparatus. This work will be followed by similar changes and improvements in the other city exchange districts. There are at present connected with the telephone system in Montreal nearly 14,000 lines, and provisions are being made in the new system for an expansion to 50,000. Switchboard provision will also be made for 100 long distance operators. At the present time about 20 operators are engaged in this special line of work. The work is being done under the supervision of T. J. Baylis, electrical engineer of the company, and the apparatus is being manufactured by the Northern Electrical Manufacturing Co., of Montreal, and the aerial and underground cables by the Wire and Cable Co. of Montreal.

The Bell Telephone Co. in Toronto.

The Ontario Court of Appeal has given judgment in the case of the city of Toronto against the Bell Telephone Co. The original action was tried in 1902 before Justice Street, who decided that the Company "have no rights to carry any poles or any wires (whether such wires be above or under ground) along any street in the city of Toronto without first obtaining the consent of the municipal council." The Company appealed, and the present decision is a reversal of that judgment. Chief Justice Moss and Justices Osler, MacLennan and Garrow held unanimously that Justice Street was in error in regard to the powers of the Dominion Parliament; that a work or undertaking such as that of the defendants fell under clause 29 of sec. 91 of the British North America Act and that Parliament had jurisdiction to give the powers which it purported to give by 43 Vict., ch. 67, and properly exercised those powers. The court also held (Justice MacLennan dissenting) that the Provincial statute had no qualifying effect—that the powers given by the Dominion could not be affected by Provincial legislation. Justice MacLennan said that the Dominion Parliament might have contented itself by merely incorporating the Company and leaving them to apply to the different Provinces for the right to erect their lines. Parliament went further and gave the Company absolute power to interfere with property and civil rights. The Company, however, apparently not certain of their position, applied to the Legislature, and by this