

construction, rather than of railway operation. A dark night, a heavy rain and uncompleted "fill-in" of a gap in the road bed, caused the trouble. Whether under the circumstances somebody was justified in running the construction train over this section of the road is matter for investigation; but if Canadian precedent is anything to go by, there is not likely to be much in the way of serious investigation. The delaying of twenty members of Parliament for a few hours on a train is a matter worthy of the attention of Parliament itself, even to the extent of delaying all the other members for an hour or two; but the killing of twenty Japanese labourers somehow does not seem to come into the same category.

**Fairly Extensive.** The Montreal Central Terminal Company is applying to Parliament for power to amalgamate with the Canadian Northern Ontario Railway, the Ottawa Valley Railway Company, the Carleton & Grenville Railway Company, the Boston & Maine, Chateaugay & Northern, Montreal Terminal Railway, Montreal Suburban Railway, and the Intercolonial. A clause of the proposed bill would give the company the right to acquire franchises, rights and property of, or to amalgamate with the Montreal Light, Heat & Power Company, and other power companies, with the authorization of the shareholders. The company desires also to enter into agreements to connect its telegraph or telephone lines with those of other companies and also to enter into agreements with the city of Montreal, and any other corporation or individual to use the companies' lines. The bill sets forth that the company shall expend \$500,000 on its construction work within two years and shall complete it within seven years.

#### **British Insurance Mergers.**

According to a London despatch the Phoenix Assurance Company is absorbing the Law Life Assurance Society. The Phoenix issues one million pounds in 4 per cent. debentures and 8,334 fully paid shares to be allotted Law shareholders in proportion of £120 in debentures and one Phoenix share for each six Law shares, which is equivalent to £26 for each Law shares. Based upon 1908 figures the combined companies' assets would be nearly thirteen million pounds and the total premium income over two million pounds.

Another British insurance change is announced from London, the Law Guarantee Trust and Accident Society having sold the good will and connections of its fidelity, personal accident and direct fire business to the Guardian Assurance Company. The payment of all claims under such policies of the Law Guarantee arising after this date is guaranteed by the Guardian.

#### **Interesting Mound Discovery.**

An important archaeological discovery is announced from a point a hundred yards below Whitefish Rapids on the Lake of the Woods. Stanley McLeod of Keewatin discovered a mound sixty feet long, thirty feet wide, and three feet high, containing a great number of interesting relics of ages passed away. These included flint knives, hatchet and spear heads and other flint utensils and good specimens of ancient pottery, some showing high-class workmanship. There were also bones which appeared to belong to a race of giants. That the Indian Mound-Builders were physical giants is not impossible, but not we imagine probable and there is not an atom of evidence to suggest that they were intellectual giants. Many relics show that they were expert in handicraft to a degree which modern intellectual development may have rendered unnecessary among the most civilised races. For instance the weaving of water-proof baskets has been superseded by the manufacture of water-proof vessels requiring a little more intelligence to devise, but infinitely less ingenuity and labour to construct. The Government might very properly adopt some plan for the encouragement of Indian "finds" and the protection of these records of our country's past. If most of the known mounds are South of the Great Lakes, it does not follow that there are not about as many, North of that frontier; and of these the Dominion Government is the legitimate and responsible guardian.

#### **Ontario's Mineral Production.**

In recent years, the mineral statistics of Ontario have been of great interest. The annual report of the Bureau of Mines for 1908 shows that the production has grown from \$11,572,000 in 1904 to \$25,637,000 in 1908. Of this latter amount \$16,754,986 is represented by metallic products, including \$9,136,830 of silver; and \$8,882,631 by non-metallic products, including \$2,123,248 for brick, \$2,417,769 for cement, \$988,616 for natural gas, \$703,773 for petroleum and \$488,330 for salt. Cobalt, of course, provides the most interesting figures. Cobalt profits are estimated at \$10,000,000; in which profits, however, a very small per centage of the companies incorporated to do business in Cobalt have participated.

#### **For Civic Improvement.**

The Civic Improvement League of Montreal has this week been in convention, discussing ways and means for promoting the general welfare of the city, improving its social conditions and beautifying its external aspect.

The League has made clear that its attitude towards already existing organizations is one of collaboration rather than of competition. The convention's discussions covered a broad and varied field.