

months ago but for the accident in Aug. last when one of the piers collapsed, resulting in the death of several workmen & seriously impeding the progress of the work. Operations had to be entirely gone over & to do the work thoroughly a great deal of time & expense has been necessitated. The bridge over the north channel is completed & work is being proceeded with day & night on the remaining portion, the men working in 3 gangs, 8 hours each. It is expected that the through service will be established in Oct. or Nov. (July, pg. 210.)

St. John Valley Railway.—J. H. Miller, of New York City, states that construction will begin this fall & that it is expected to have the road finished by July 1900. The route will be from Fredericton to Lower Woodstock, thence to Houlton, Me., to connect with the Bangor & Aroostook R.R. The line will be operated as a local institution. (May, pg. 137.)

White Pass & Yukon.—We are officially informed that a large force is still at work on the line between Skagway & Lake Bennett, 42 miles, ballasting & perfecting the grade & alignment. Work has not been commenced upon construction beyond Bennett towards Fort Selkirk, but the management anticipates that a force will be located on that line before winter opens. A large amount of freight is going in over the line & there is considerable tourist travel in addition to that of miners & prospectors. The line has been built by the Pacific Construction Co., & is expected to be turned over to the railway company about Aug. 20. The 42 miles between Skagway & Lake Bennett are said to have cost about \$2,000,000 exclusive of equipment. (July, pg. 210.)

The management has no information respecting the proposed line to be built by Capt. W. Langley from Taku City to Atlin. (June, pg. 176.)

Railway Operating Flatters.

More than 2,000,000 trees have been planted along the line of the Northern Pacific in Dakota, to serve as protection from snow-drifts.

The Central Ontario Ry. has placed an order with the Acton Burrows Co., Toronto, to equip its stations & station platforms with enameled iron "No Smoking" signs.

On Aug. 2 some 250 men in the G.T.R. shops at Port Huron, Mich., struck, owing to the employment of a non-union man. They returned to work the following day without having obtained any concession.

We unhesitatingly endorse the following from the Sarnia Observer: "Now that the Port Huron, Mich., authorities are enforcing the alien labor law with respect to Canadians employed in the G.T.R. shops in that city, it behooves the authorities here to pay the same kind of attention to the men who work in Sarnia but reside in Port Huron."

The last two clauses of the Minister of Railways bill to amend the general Railways Act, which proposed to empower the Railway Committee of the Privy Council to order the location of stations to suit the public convenience & to frame running rules for use by all railways, were abandoned. The last mentioned provision should never have been introduced.

It was stated in Winnipeg on July 31, that the C.P.R. locomotive drivers & firemen had come to an amicable arrangement with general Superintendent Osborne as to the changes desired in their schedule, & the delegates were returning to their respective divisions. The trainmen were likely to settle matters that day. One of the principal points they urged, that express messengers should not be required to handle baggage, in place of the regular baggage men, was expected to be agreed to.

The locomotive drivers & firemen of the G.T.R. have been notified by their committee, which has been in almost daily consultation with F. W. Morse, Superintendent of Motive Power, for the last couple of months, that an increase of wages has been agreed to by the management. Concessions, it is said, have been made on both sides, & the good feeling existing between the employees of this branch of the railway service & Mr. Morse remains unimpaired. The members of the Grievance Committee have returned home.

The difficulty between the G.T.R. & its trackmen appears to be at an end. After the announcement of the increase of 10c. a day to the men on the main lines of heavy travel as detailed in our last issue, pg. 207, the Executive Committee of the Trackmen's Association reassembled in Montreal. Those of them who were employees of the Co. had an interview with Mr. Hays in which he stated that no further concession could be made. The Committee then issued circulars to the trackmen, but the number & tenor of responses was such that it was evident another strike was not desired & on Aug. 12 the members of the committee returned to their homes.

Quebec and Lake St. John Railway.

A meeting of the holders of the 5% 1st mortgage bonds of this Co. was held in London, Eng., Aug. 2, for the purpose of appointing a committee of holders of the bonds "to consider the position of such bondholders, to confer with the trustees, & to take such steps as the committee may think best to protect the rights & interests of such bondholders, & to organize for unity of action." C. C. Macrae, a director of the Railway Share Trust & Agency Co., (the trustees), who presided, stated that the bonds were issued in London, over the complete main line of the railway, about 10 years ago, with a guarantee of interest for 10 years, by the Province of Quebec. That period had run out, & the bondholders were now in the position of having to look for any return on their capital to the earnings of the road. The working of the railway had shown that only on something like half of the line were the prospects for earnings at all good. In addition to the 190 miles from Quebec to Lake St. John, which formed the main line, & upon which the bonds were secured, various extensions had been made, which served as feeders. The bondholders had a valuable asset in the terminal property situated in the city of Quebec. Analyzing the accounts of the railway for the past 10 years it would be seen that the line had only about paid its way, & in common with so many lines operating without working capital, the directors had been compelled to take the cost of betterments out of the revenue of each year. From all the information he could obtain he was strongly of opinion that, in this instance, there had been no bad faith on the part of any one connected with the management in Canada, everything having been done on the other side to make the line successful. The Canadian Government had not seen its way to grant any further assistance, & in view of the termination of the guarantee & the inevitable default, the trustees, through their solicitors, had done all that was needful to protect the rights of the bondholders. The effect of the action of the trustees would be to keep the railway intact. The present meeting, however, was quite informal, as no legal gathering could be held until six months after the default had taken place. The bondholders could not expect to obtain their full interest for some time, but when the Co. had turned the corner they might, he considered, obtain a return on their capital during the next year or two. Some of the gentlemen in Canada, more sanguine than he was, thought that in the near future the

actual earnings of the road would be sufficient to pay something like the full interest on the bonds. He then moved a resolution appointing a committee of bondholders.

In reply to the comments of bondholders the Chairman said that the capital stock of the Co. was given at \$4,074,000, but he had never attached any value to it, as he had always considered that much of it represented "water," as was usual with so many transatlantic railways. He did not know who were the present holders of that stock.

Mr. Hanson pointed out that the line had not been exclusively built out of the money of the bondholders, but that an appreciable portion of solid cash was put into the undertaking. He moved that F. Ross, A. S. Jecks, S. Gardiner, J. W. Ballance, & E. F. Coates be appointed as the committee for the object stated, words instructing the committee to report to the bondholders being added to the original motion. The resolution was adopted. —Railway Times.

Proposed Topographical Survey.

M. J. Butler, C.E., of Deseronto, Ont., says that a strong effort will be made to have a topographical survey made of the Dominion. The Government has been memorialized on several occasions by the Land Surveyors' Association, & the matter has been agitated in journals of scientific societies; but for the most part the public is quite ignorant of the matter.

"Canada alone among all the civilized nations I can think of," says Mr. Butler, "is without an accurate topographical map of its territory. No water-power development can be undertaken, for instance, on any intelligent basis under the present conditions. Its future must be estimated by guesswork pure & simple. The same is true of many other departments of enterprise. What is needed is a topographical & geodetic survey, which will ascertain all the physical features of each section of the country; its geology, the character of its soil, the extent & age of its forests, the areas of cleared land, the public improvements, roads, & so forth; in fact, all the features, natural & artificial. Most important of all would be exact information as to the watersheds & the catchment area in relation to statistics of the rainfall. As I have said such maps are to be found in every country except Canada; even the lesser countries of Europe & the petty Republics of South America have them. What Canada needs is an enterprise similar to the U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey, which is conducted at the expense of the Federal Government at Washington. In the past, when Canadians did not realize the value of their natural possessions & there was little competition for their waterways, the lack of such information was not felt. From this time on the evils arising from the absence of such information will be more & more recognized. Every stream in Ontario is being studied with a view to its possibilities as a source of power, & information as to the watershed is essential. We know hardly anything about the rainfall & run-off of our waterways. The water supply of them can only be estimated on the basis of accurate information as to the catchment areas. Take the Trent Valley canal, for instance, which is to be a series of artificial waterways connecting the natural waterways already existing. So far as I can see, there is no way of knowing whether the water supply is to be permanent throughout its length as the settlement of the country increases. The matter is one of great importance in lake navigation also. Our knowledge of the coast-line of Lake Ontario is far from accurate, based as it is on old charts. Until two years ago, when Col. Anderson had a topographical survey made of the Bay of Quinte, it was impossible for a