

difficulties can easily be removed by the Dominion Board, or the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board, or both working jointly.

Did you ever stop and consider the subject of adopting automatic car couplers to a wide range of passenger and freight cars made by several different car shops and used by a greater number of railways? At present anybody's car, if it has an automatic coupler, can be hooked on to a train to be hauled by any company on any road in the country, without regard to who made the coupler, or whose car carries it. This condition of affairs has been produced because a number of people interested in the same problem came together and settled the essential details. Having reached a settlement, they went their several ways and governed their actions on that basis.

Air brakes and car couplers would be nothing like so far along in the progress towards perfection as they are now but for free, full and sometimes very spirited discussion in conference. The transmission of electric power at high pressure, enabling the wealth of the world to be increased by harnessing the water powers; the use of alternating instead of direct current for the lighting of sparsely settled districts; getting together and fighting out the issue not only has enabled a result to be reached much earlier than otherwise would have been possible, but has enabled harmonious and mutually beneficial action to be taken, and of a kind far better than likely would have been developed by the various interests acting singly. There surely is truth here for the telephone business. Such success as is to come to Independent Telephony, must come by gathering truth from all its sources; sifting things to the bottom; changing one's mind when one must. Those who went into the telephone business sanely and wisely, made haste slowly, and solved their problems carefully. We should aspire to perfection. The stability of our investments and the permanence of our cause demand the adoption of standard construction and equipment throughout the Independent telephone field. We are engaged in a fine business. The credit of telephone companies to-day is higher than ever before. They pay their bills more promptly, and earn on an average from 20 to 25 per cent. of their gross capital annually. Surely ours is a legitimate business, and we have a right to stay in the telephone field.

In the face of the feeling of the people at the present he would be a bold man who would dare stand up and advocate a monopoly in anything. The public is beginning to learn that competition is the most effective way to curb a would-be monopoly, and that only while competition exists will a combination of capital keep within reasonable bounds. This is especially true of the telephone business. The Bell is not competent to run a local plant as economically as a local company.

One of the hardest questions in the telephone business to-day, and one which vitally affects our Canadian public, as well as the telephone companies, has been carried before the Dominion Railway Commission by several Independent companies located in various parts of Ontario.

The vital point at issue, from the standpoint of the public, is whether the ownership of a limited Long Distance service can be made the controlling factor through which a monopoly or partial monopoly of telephone service may be built up by a group of capitalists largely foreign to the sections in which such control is acquired. The question is, whether a local community must await the convenience of those who control this foreign capital, not only for long distance facilities, but for the benefits

of local service which they are themselves willing to provide.

It is an established principle in the laws governing railway operation that the delivery of a commodity in the proper form and at the proper place, imposes upon the carrier an obligation to forward it to the point upon its line nearest the ultimate destination, and when the destination is not upon its own lines, it must deliver the commodity to a carrier capable of completing the transportation.

The Dominion Railway Commission, and also the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board, are primarily bodies created by the public for its protection from abuses which may grow up through the concentration of capital and control of public utilities. It must accomplish such protection however without doing wrong to the property interests represented in the corporations. Exceedingly broad questions of national importance were raised in this complaint made to the Dominion Board, and its deliberations were awaited with keen interest in the telephone world, as well as by the telephone using public.

From the above decision or ruling it is quite evident that the Dominion Board recognizes that the Independent Companies are engaged in a legitimate undertaking, and while we have succeeded in establishing our standing before the Board, it does not appear as if the Board expected the Companies interested to be entirely satisfied with the ruling. Provision is made by the Order for a rehearing of the subject at the expiration of one year if any of the parties interested so desire. The Commission seems to have adopted a cut and try method, and depend upon the future for the attainment of an ultimate result.

It therefore rests with the Companies who are both directly and indirectly interested in the Order, to determine as to what action should be taken either separately or jointly in the points at issue. I believe both the Dominion and Ontario Boards are trying to do justly by the telephone interests involved. Still the range of human attainment is now so wide and so varied that no man may know it all and the Boards as now constituted must turn to telephone men for their information on questions of telephony, and must accept their expert testimony as final. It therefore behoves the companies interested to see that their side in the controversy is well and fully presented. A standard form of agreement as proposed by the Bell is now before the Dominion and Ontario Boards for ratification. It would be well for this meeting to give this matter due consideration as well as to take some action to bring before the Ontario Board our ideas as to a standard agreement for connecting Independent Companies and Systems.

(The proposed contract was printed last month, Ed.)

(To be Continued.)

The Canadian British Insulated & Helsby Cables Co. of Montreal has just received from the Montreal Light, Heat & Power Co. what is the largest order ever given in Canada for electric cables. It will amount to nearly \$200,000.

The Robb Engineering Co., Ltd., have recently sold return tubular boilers as follows: One 48' x 12' to Albert Fraser, Clementsvalle, N.S.; one 42' x 10' to Frank L. Irving, Billtown, N.S.; and a 42' x 10' heating boiler to Gorman, Clancey & Grindley, Edmonton, Alta.