

About Things In General

HIGHER MAIL CAR RATES.

The Board of Railway Commissioners, at a sitting last week, heard a number of representatives from the C. P. R. supporting the company's demand for an increase in the Government mail car rates. Sir Henry Drayton presided, and after the cost of railway operation was well gone into, the board decided to make a recommendation to the Canadian Government in favor of the increase. The C. P. R. submitted numerous statements showing increases in the cost of railway operation, which met with strong opposition from representative of the railway mail service, who claimed that at the present time the C. P. R. realized more than a fair profit on the revenue collected from the Government for the handling of mail cars.

NEW JOINT STOCK COMPANIES.

Joint stock companies have been granted incorporation this week as follows: The Wendigo Power Company, Ltd., Guelph, capital \$1,000,000; Commercial Finance Corporation, Ltd., Toronto, capital \$2,000,000; Montreal Portland Cement Company, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$2,000,000; Ottawa and Hull Realty Company, Ltd., Ottawa, capital \$50,000; Canadian Railroader, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$50,000; Joseph Brothers, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$100,000; McGuire, Kirkland Gold Mines, Ltd., Toronto, capital \$350,000; Renfrew Elec. Products, Ltd., Renfrew, capital \$500,000; the National Safety Oil Burner Company, Ltd., Toronto, capital \$40,000; the Herald Publishing Co., Ltd., Montreal, capital \$300,000; Neptune Fisheries, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$500,000; Joseph Cote, Ltd., Quebec, capital \$250,000; the Mitchell-Holland Company, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$100,000; Grimsby Steel Furniture Company, Grimsby, Ont., capital \$60,000; the P. H. Secord and Sons Construction Company, Ltd., Brantford, capital \$500,000; Lumber and Ties, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$200,000; McLaurin Lumber Co., Ltd., Montreal, capital \$100,000; James Copeman, Ltd., Montreal, capital \$50,000; Thornton, Davidson and Co., Ltd., Montreal, capital \$100,000; H. H. Robertson Co., Ltd., Sarnia, capital \$200,000.

COLONIZE ABITIBI DISTRICT.

Colonization of the Abitibi district in the Province of Quebec, and the necessity of further railway facilities to increase it, was a subject that the Montreal Chambre de Commerce had under consideration at its meeting last week. The necessity of building a branch line of the Transcontinental Railway from Montreal to Amos was the subject that Mr. Hector Authier, ex-mayor of Amos, talked of specially to the Chambre. The main line now runs from the city of Quebec to Amos, thence to Cochrane and so on to the west, and Mr. Authier spoke of the great advantages that it would be for Montreal commercially to get such access to the Cochrane district by the proposed new route. The Ontario Government, he pointed out, had its own line from Toronto to Cochrane, and it was proposed by the Government to extend that line north from Cochrane to the James Bay. Now that the war was over, Mr. Authier said that it should be expected that the Province of Quebec would get its share of the public works of the Federal Government, and in the building of a branch line that would link Montreal directly with the Transcontinental at Amos there would be great progress, not only for commerce from Montreal to the northern Ontario district, but right through to Winnipeg. Also, it would mean in large measure the building up of the Abitibi region.

ONTARIO HAS WORLD'S FIRE RECORD.

Mr. Leighton McCarthy, K.C., was the speaker at the banquet given by the Insurance Institute of Toronto in the Board of Trade dining room on Thursday. In mentioning the report of Mr. Justice Masten on the fire insurance conditions in Ontario, Mr. McCarthy stated that fire losses were greater in Canada than in any part of the world, and greater in Ontario than in any other part of Canada. Mr. McCarthy quoted figures showing the various fire loss per capita in the different countries in the world in 1916. In Canada it amounted to \$3.24, while in Ontario it was \$4.61; in the United States, \$2.26; Great Britain, 64 cents; Russia, 27 cents, and Germany, 28 cents. The speaker believed that the people of Canada were prone to be careless in the way of fires. Referring to the Commissioners' report, the speaker said that the sympathy of the country was not due to those who had fires, but to those who had not, and had to pay for the loss of those who had. The man who had no fire was the good citizen, and the man who permitted his property to burn was stealing from the commonwealth, and should be so penalized. The whole inquiry, Mr. McCarthy declared, had been a vindication of the Ontario Fire Underwriters' Association. This, he admitted, was a combine, but not a combine in the same sense as a grocers' or coal dealers combine. The report of Mr. Justice Masten had, he said, put to sleep for many years to come the possibility of the State attempting to fix the rate of insurance.

THE WIRELESS TELEPHONE.

The rapid development of the wireless telephone is one of the romances of the war. In 1914 the wireless telephone was still in the experimental stage and was regarded as a kind of promising side-line to wireless telegraphy. But when the aeroplane began to be largely used for reconnaissance and for directing artillery fire, the demand for some more easy and flexible mode of communication from the air to the land became urgent. British inventors responded magnificently to the call, and the crude apparatus of 1914 became rapidly perfected so that it could be relied upon in speaking between aeroplanes and land stations up to fifteen miles and beyond. Owing to the necessities of secrecy very little was known to the public about the improvements which had been effected, but their extent may be judged by the generous tribute paid by the director of an American electrical company which had been engaged on the same field. He has stated that British wireless telephones were better, in range and reliability, than any which had been produced elsewhere. In the development of commercial aviation wireless telephony, as well as wireless telegraphy, is likely to play an important part, since the safety of a service depends upon maintaining contact with aerodromes and aeroplanes, but aviation is far from being the only field of application. The wireless telephone may supplement the newspaper as a means of international communication. As was pointed out by a leading British man of science, Mr. Campbell Swinton, F.R.S., a speech delivered in London may be heard simultaneously in Calcutta, Cairo, Paris, Petrograd, New York, and on vessels in mid-ocean; and by the use of loud-speaking telephones large audiences may listen to the transmitted tones as if they were being addressed by the original speaker.

BOARD OF TRADE DRIVE.

A big membership campaign is to be launched to-day by the Montreal Board of Trade in an effort to increase its membership from 1,400 to at least 2,800. Nine teams have been named to take up this work. The drive will conclude on Friday. In addition to the work of the various teams, circulars have been sent out to each member of the Board of Trade setting forth the features and reasons for the drive and asking them to secure at least one new member.

John Baillie, the president of the Board of Trade, is at the head of the campaign, and the vice-president, James Cleghorn, is in charge of the teams.

Scissors and Paste

OBEYING THE LAW.

A boy has been seriously wounded in Rockcliffe Park by another youth carrying a shot gun. The season seems a little early, even for Rockcliffe, where all through the summer young men and boys may be seen openly carrying firearms through the woods and along the roads of the park and adjoining district. In the intervals of shooting squirrels and birds they use the signs prohibiting the carrying of firearms as targets. —Ottawa Citizen.

THE POSITION OF FRANCE.

Other nations may do as they please about leaving themselves weaponless in a world whose peace armor will be the paper stuff of The Hague, but France will take no chances. She knows what Germany did in 1870. She knows what Germany did in 1914. For a century or two the Germans have sung about the Watch on the Rhine, but France has been compelled to maintain the watch. From the time of Caesar to that of the late Kaiser the Teuton has considered the Rhine as something to cross. With Russia no longer an ally, France, until other nations are willing to help guarantee peace, deems she has no option but to stand to her own defence. Strange, indeed, is it that French spokesmen are compelled to reiterate an argument which the dullest apprehension should be able to fashion for itself.—New York Tribune.

AS TO ROBBIE BURNS.

January 25 was the one hundred and sixtieth birthday of Robert Burns, Robbie is one of the fellows we have sadly missed during the past four years. Think what he could have done in the way of answering Lissauer's "Hymn of Hate," or revising his "Address to the De'il" to make it fit the Kaiser, whom he certainly would not have called "Holy Willie." It is generally said that the Scottish dialect is the supreme lingo for the celebration of two things—love and whisky; but there is another emotion that Scots are good at expressing, and that is blazing, contemptuous hate of cruelty and cowardice.

Burn's fame is secure, for he is almost the only poet who has ever had a cigar named after him. Also, he is probably the only poet who has lured the staid "Encyclopaedia Britannica" into a joke. That work says that "his thirst for stimulants passed all bars."—Collier's weekly.

ASSAYING OUR IMMIGRANTS.

Quality, not quantity, is required in our immigration, says Senator W. H. Bennett, who asserted in a speech in the Upper Chamber on Tuesday that Canada is now suffering from past sins in the matter of our immigration policy. The country is populated with "alien" immigrants, by which is meant immigrants from the countries with which we have been at war recently.—Ottawa Citizen.