

half from February 15th to July 30th. The normal duty is 69.7c. per hundred weight.

Everything points to Mexican development and expansion. The railways have shown unusual enterprise in connecting the Republic with all cities and ports which will bring trade to the country. Capital both from Canada and the United States has been invested freely. The Canadian and Mexican Governments have subsidized the new Canadian steamship line. It now remains for Canada once again to materialize its commercial motto "Canada first."

EDITORIAL NOTES.

An item that will interest Canadians engaged in the slate industry is to the effect that a company has been formed to work the slate quarries at Birchy Cove, Bay of Islands, Newfoundland. These quarries have been developed for some time already by an American syndicate. The new company has a capital of \$300,000, and the slate in the deposit is said to be equal to the best in the Penrhyn quarries in Wales. Fifteen expert Welsh slate miners are already at work, and \$12,000 worth of machinery has been installed. Thirty-five more miners are expected in March. There are 30 Newfoundlanders now employed on the quarry, and 60 more will be taken on later. In 1905 Canada imported \$93,238 worth of slate, of which \$82,513 came from the United States. This gives Canadians another opportunity for colonial trade. The quarries are conveniently situated on the west coast, and the slate can be shipped on vessels via the St. Lawrence to Montreal, and the larger cities on the Great Lakes. The conditions for the development of a considerable trade are very favorable. If the quality of slate is satisfactory, and the price right, Canada will no longer have to buy this material outside the British Domain.

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The independent telephone movement flourishes in Canada. The recent connection with the Stouffville Company and the Mount Albert Company marks an epoch in independent telephony in Ontario. The following six companies are in the York and Ontario Independent Telephone Union, with more than 420 subscribers:—The Scarboro, the Markham and Pickering, the Bethesda and Stouffville, the Central, of Altona, the Claremont and Ashburn, and the Mount Albert. These companies are absolutely independent, and cover a district of 39 miles by about 12 miles. There are 36 post-offices in the district, of which about 30 have independent telephones, as well as all the banks. Subscribers have intercommunication with all six systems. This work has been accomplished within about a year, which goes to show that the independent movement in Canada has taken deep root, especially in the smaller urban districts, where it is still impossible to get Bell telephones installed at any price. The Mount Albert Company will connect with another independent company in spring. When this is done the union will have a line of communication from within three miles of Toronto to Jackson's Point on Lake Simcoe, a distance of a little over 50 miles.

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An example of rapid bridge construction was recently shown on the St. Maurice Valley Railway, built to connect the Shawinigan Falls and the C.P.R. at Three Rivers. Prince Louis of Battenberg turned the first sod in the late summer of 1905, and work was commenced on the twenty-two miles of road early last year. To secure large subsidies from the Government the road had to be completed before the end of 1906. Work on two of the heavy bridges was delayed until November, but the first bridge was completed by December 1st. Work on the second bridge was started on December 15th, and finished fifteen minutes before the close of the

year. This bridge is 135 ft. high and 330 ft. long, not including the approaches. Three shifts were placed on the work, so that the construction went on continuously during the fifteen days. Before midnight on December 31st, 1906, the first train passed over the completed road, and the company won its reward. When it is considered that the winter months of last year were somewhat severe this piece of construction work may well be remembered as an almost marvellous accomplishment of the Canadian bridge builder.

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The farmers have begun the deposit of petitions against the continuation of the iron and steel bounties. On the other side, the unfavorable conditions of the revised tariff have produced such declarations as that which imputes to them the imminent closing of the Mal-leable Iron Works at Oshawa, which are the backbone of industry in that agreeable Ontario town. Meantime, tariff or no tariff, the users of iron and steel have more than they can do to meet orders, a condition which applies the world over, as business letters to the "Engineer" from Europe as well as the United States testify.

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The weekly edition of "The Canadian Engineer" was announced in the February number, since when three issues have been published with gratifying success. The papers have not been as complete as we would like, which is always the case with extensions in journalism. But the reception accorded the "Weekly Engineer" has been even better than we expected, and there is no reason why the paper should not continue to grow in circulation and influence, even as it has multiplied the number of its appearances. Except a summary of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers, none of the subjects dealt with in this number has been mentioned in the weekly edition, which means that the amount of reading matter has been increased by about 50 per cent., and still there is room and demand for more.

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The presidential address of Mr. Lumsden to the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers reads almost like a chapter from prehistoric Canadian times. It is a valuable contribution to the literature of surveying, the only fault of which is that it is too short. The discovery of routes between the Lakes and Hudson's Bay has involved an amount of exploring and hardship which the laying out of the Canadian Pacific did not entail through the Ontario wilderness; for a far greater stretch of country, much farther removed from the haunts of civilization has had to be covered by Mr. Lumsden's intrepid helpers. Mr. Lumsden lifts a small corner of the curtain which hides the pathos of railroad pioneering in the north when he tells of the loss of valuable lives in canoe accidents, of which the public knows little or nothing. There could be no more remarkable proof of the uniqueness of the conditions under which surveying parties work than the fact that for transportation of supplies—the most vital element in the work—winter is better than summer. The pioneer in railroading is like the pioneer in most other things. He has the heaviest labor and, comparatively, the least reward. But better times are coming, even for the hardy engineer.

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Every company its own lawyer! The Birmingham Small Arms Company have established a legal department, which will supply the professional advisors of the company with information, and relieve departmental heads of all matters in which legal difficulties may arise. The innovation should meet with great success, as, very often, large industrial establishments would save valuable time and considerable expense if advice from experts, on the premises, in legal matters were quickly available.