

Prominent Topics.

Quebec Elections The general elections for the Provincial Legislature of Quebec were held on Wednesday, and as a result the Gouin Government was returned to power by a slightly increased majority. From present indications there have been elected 59 Liberals, 18 Conservatives and 2 Labor representatives. Two elections have still to be held.

Anglo-German Naval Competition.

The Reichstag having passed the bill for the increase of the German Navy, Mr. Winston Churchill declares publicly that in accordance with the already announced policy of the British Government supplementary naval estimates will be introduced in Parliament this year. The only new and startling thing about the British naval policy is its frankness.

Chinese Loan. There is a hitch in the negotiations between the Chinese Government and the bankers representing Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, Russia and Japan, over the terms of the new loan. What is most remarkable is that the obstructions do not come from any of the foreign financial representatives, but from the Government itself. The Chinese, while insisting upon the urgent need of haste in completing the loan, so as to enable them to pay the troops, at the same time urge what the bankers regard as impracticable modifications in the terms proposed. There is no knowing what the troops may do if they do not get their arrears of pay soon.

Grand Trunk Presidency. Of all the ridiculous rumours published concerning the presidency of the Grand Trunk Railway, surely the statement that the position has been offered to the Hon. George P. Graham is the most ridiculous. The most essential qualifications for Mr. Hays' successor are that he shall be an able and experienced railway man, and *persona grata* with the Dominion Government. Mr. Graham is a good newspaper man and an able politician, whose experience as a railway man was gained in the short time he was minister of railways, and he has been spoken as Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Graham himself ought to know something about it and he gives the story an unqualified denial.

The Incorporation of Canadian Companies. The question of the respective rights of the Dominion and provincial governments in the matter of the incorporation of commercial and other companies was advanced a further stage yesterday when the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council gave judgment in the case of the attorneys-general for the provinces on Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and Alberta vs. the Attorney-General for the Dominion

of Canada and the Attorney-General of British Columbia, which was an appeal from a judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada of October 11, 1910.

The case arose out of the claims of some of the provinces in the matter of the incorporation of commercial companies. The Governor-General in Council, acting under section 60 of the Supreme Court Act, 1906, referred to the Supreme Court certain questions as to the powers inter se of the Canadian Parliament and the legislatures of the provinces to incorporate companies, and as to the effect of such incorporation. The questions were framed to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court as to whether companies incorporated under provincial statutes have power or capacity to do business outside the territorial limits of the incorporating province. They affect the standing of a great number of companies incorporated by the provinces since Confederation in 1867, and now carrying on business in two or more provinces, and they may also concern the legislative control over companies incorporated in the several colonies before their entry into Confederation.

The representatives of the provinces complained that although they were deeply concerned in the final answer to be given to the questions, they were not consulted in the framing of them.

At the same time the Governor-General in Council referred to the Supreme Court certain other questions as to the competency of the Legislature of British Columbia to authorize the Government of that province to grant exclusive fishery rights in certain inland waters and parts of the sea, and as to the validity and effect of the Insurance Act, 1910, passed by the Parliament of Canada.

The Attorneys-General for seven of the provinces protested against the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to entertain any of these references, and applied to that tribunal for an order that they should be struck out. They contended that the British North America Act did not authorize the Parliament of Canada to enact section 60 of the Supreme Court Act, which, they submitted, was therefore, *ultra vires* and a direct interference with the exclusive powers bestowed on the provincial legislatures by the British North America Act. The Dominion representatives, on the other hand, contended that no such conflict or difficulty arose.

The matter was argued before the Supreme Court, which, by a majority of four judges against two, decided that it had jurisdiction to entertain and answer the references submitted by the Governor-General in Council. From that opinion the appeal was preferred and yesterday judgment was given in favor of the Dominion Government's contention.

The next stage of this matter will be the argument on the questions themselves, and as the matter is of such great importance to both commercial and insurance interests throughout Canada, it is to be hoped that the matter will be taken up without delay.