

ELECTRIC LIGHT AND TELEPHONE.

Surprise has often been expressed that the Edison Electric Light people have not pushed their business more in Canada, seeing that the Ball and the Van de Poole systems are making vigorous efforts in Toronto and elsewhere in street as well as private illumination. The only reason we have heard given is that the company first named has its hands full in the States.

No such charge of lethargy will lie against the telephone people, however. The Bell Telephone Company has 900 subscribers to its exchange in Toronto, 1,200 in Montreal, 500 in Hamilton, besides its system of lines to various cities and towns in Ontario, boasting of nearly 1,000 miles of wire on 500 miles of poles.

But competitors in the manufacture and use of the Telephone appear upon the scene. The Telephone Company of Canada, chartered to make, sell, lease or operate telephones, capital \$200,000, provisional directors, C. C. Colby, M. P., and E. R. Johnson, of Stanstead; J. J. Webster, of Magog; John McDougall and R. A. Dickson, of Montreal, has a factory in Montreal, superintended by James A. Wright, proposes to sell its machines at \$30 each, and is erecting poles between Stanstead and St. John's in the Eastern Townships of Quebec.

Furthermore, we learn that a company is making preparations for a new Telephone Exchange in Toronto, the principal promoter being Mr. Pattison, formerly in the Dominion Telegraph Co.'s employ. Both these concerns, are, it is claimed, infringers on the Bell patent, and we very much mistake the temper of the Bell Telephone managers if they are not proceeded against promptly.

ANOTHER LESSON.—The village of Alliston has suffered from a serious fire. Had it not been that the wind took a fortunate turn, there would have been a repetition of the Port Perry disaster. When will places like Alliston, without fire protection of any kind, take warning, and provide against the possible destruction of the whole place by fire. Alliston is now proposing to grant a bonus of \$10,000 towards rebuilding the iron foundry in which the fire originated, and which was totally destroyed. It would be as well while the liberality of the citizens is aroused, to grant at the same time \$10,000 more to protect the place from a disaster similar to that which has just happened. The action of the underwriters in putting such places in the lowest classification and thereby subjecting them to pay the highest rates of insurance, is a policy the best calculated to induce such places to provide fire protection. This being done, the insurance companies will at once recognize it by lowering the rates. Before the Underwriters' Association was organized, risks were written in villages at nearly the same rates as places having fire protection. Common sense is now applied, and each place is rated on its merits—the better the means for extinguishing fires, the lower are the rates of insurance.

—Some reflection has been cast upon the people of the fire-swept village of Port Perry for not having provided proper fire appliances. So far as the business portion of the community is concerned, it would be unjust to blame them for the lack of these essentials. Only one merchant, we understand, voted against a bye-law recently submitted, authorizing the purchase of a steam fire engine for the village, and several of them not only voted yea, but offered a special subscription in aid of that purpose. But all this did not suffice to induce the Council to move in the matter. Now, however, those persons who reside away from the business centre of the place,

and who voted against the bye-law, will, if their property is saved, have to shoulder the burden of extra taxes in consequence of their folly and niggardliness in rejecting proposals of so necessary a character.

—We understand that the Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters has instructed the Secretary, Mr. McLean, to inspect the frame structure recently erected, immediately south of the Crompton Corset Factory, with the view of ascertaining whether the erection of such a building is, or is not, a violation of the fire limit by-law, prohibiting the erection of wooden buildings within certain prescribed limits. In Mr. McLean's opinion the erection of the building, which is used as a kind of a variety theatre, is a violation of the said by-law, and he has written to Commissioner Coatsworth to that effect. If the erection of a small summer kitchen in rear of a brick dwelling is forbidden, we do not see how a large wooden building, with a canvas roof, can be allowed.

—In its usual half-yearly review of the Clyde shipbuilding trade, the Edinburgh *Scotsman* gives the following comparative statement of the number and tonnage of the vessels turned out by the shipbuilding yards on that river during the first half of this and the previous five years:—

	—Month.—		—Six Months.—	
	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.
1884 ..	29	33,221	143	149,923
1883 ..	26	45,426	141	195,986
1882 ..	27	41,810	119	167,608
1881 ..	25	30,386	117	156,670
1880 ..	29	22,500	136	112,000
1879 ..	18	12,410	110	94,800

The average size of the vessels launched this year was thus 1,048 tons each, as compared with an average of 1,390 tons in the first half of 1883. The number of vessels in construction in the new shipbuilding yards at the close was 94, that being 41 less than at the corresponding date last year.

—The thirty-ninth Provincial Exposition is to be held this year at Ottawa. It is also entitled the Dominion Exhibition. The prize list which has been issued is a liberal one, especially in the agricultural exhibits. The interesting fisheries exhibition, composed of a large part of the exhibit which the Canadian Government collected to represent Canada at the recent Fisheries Exhibition in England, will also, we understand, be on view.

—The Nova Scotia loan of \$400,000, bearing five per cent. interest, according to a press telegram of yesterday, has been taken up by Mr. Charles Armand (? Annand), of Halifax, as representative of an English house, at 8 per cent. premium. There were no less than fifty-five tenders, and the whole amount offered was over five times the sum asked.

—The Bank of Montreal has been unsuccessful in the suits, by which it tried to recover \$83,000 of taxes paid on its capital, at Chicago. Judge Blodgett decided that as the Bank is incorporated under a State law, it must be treated as an individual institution. Were it otherwise, it is not probable that a foreign bank would long be allowed to escape taxes, which domestic banks have to bear. The case will be appealed to the Supreme Court.

—The traffic receipts on the seventeen principal railways of the United Kingdom, amounted for the week ending July 5th to £1,213,718, being a decrease of £10,266, on the corresponding week of last year.

Correspondence.

THE BOUNDARY QUESTION.

To the Editor of the *Monetary Times* :

SIR.—In your remarks this week on this question you do not do full justice to the Ontario case when you predict that it will certainly be lost if the Privy Council refuse to take into account anything besides the mere text of the Quebec Act. It may be lost, but an attentive reading of the above statute does not warrant the prediction. I presume you include the preamble as part of the Act. That preamble gives as one of the reasons for forming the statute the fact, that under the arrangements of the Royal Proclamation issued as the result of the treaty of surrender in 1763, "a very large extent of country, within which there were several colonies and settlements of the subjects of France, who claimed to remain therein under the faith of the said treaty, was left without any provision being made for the administration of civil government therein." Is it conceivable that the Privy Council could attempt to settle the *locus* of the boundary defined vaguely in the body of the Act without ascertaining where the French "colonies and settlements" were for whose benefit the statute was in part avowedly enacted by the British Parliament? If the western boundary is defined in such a way as to leave out these very colonies and settlements, surely such an interpretation of the Quebec Act would be manifestly erroneous. The moment this question is raised there comes up the inevitable necessity of applying for information, not necessarily to the subsequent "proclamations and commissions" which are *ex hypothesi* to be ignored, but to well known and easily ascertained geographical facts. A considerable number of the French settlements intended to be included under the Quebec Act were along the east bank of the Mississippi river north of Ohio; and if the word "northward" is interpreted by the Privy Council to mean "due north" as it was interpreted by the late Chief Justice Sewell in the De Reinhard case, and as you seem disposed to interpret it, these settlements will be declared by the Privy Council in 1884 to have been left more than a century ago "without any provision being made for the administration of civil government therein," though to make such provision was the specifically expressed purpose of Parliament in forming the law. In taking this position you are, it seems to me, making uncalled for imputations on the intelligence of the English Judges.

Toronto, July 19.

WM. HOUSTON.

OVERPRODUCTION IN WOOLLENS.

To the Editor of the *Monetary Times* :

SIR.—In October last, an experienced manufacturer, Mr. Clayton Slater, now of Brantford, made the statement that "Canada cannot possibly consume more than the production of 6,000 looms in cotton goods of all descriptions." * * It will only take 2,166 looms to produce all the grey cottons required in Canada. * * Then allow for bleached cottons, say 1,250 looms, this leaves for other classes of goods such as are made in the country 2,584 looms. These 6,000 looms can produce 67,500,000 yards of cloth per annum; and taking the population at 4,500,000 this gives exactly 15 yards per head. * * There being now over 9,000 looms in the country (and spinning for them) the question arises: *What shall be done with the 3,000 looms which are in excess, and what measures can be adopted to prevent absolute ruin to many of the mills, very heavy loss to all, and unprofitable working for years to come?*" The proposal made by Mr. Slater was to form the whole Cotton Industry of the Dominion into one corporation, have the mills valued by competent valuers, have a Managing Committee elected by representatives of all the mills, which committee should put each mill on the style of goods deemed best, and shut down mills or machinery as was deemed best for the advantage of the whole.

This I look upon as a reasonable statement of the position of our Cotton Industry, while not expressing any opinion upon the feasibility of the plan of relief proposed.

Now, Mr. Editor, I have a few words to say about the Woollens Industry of this country. The cost of woollen machinery in Canada, when freight, duty and other charges are put upon it, is fully one hundred per cent. greater than the cost of similar machinery in England. Interest on capital required to run woollen factories is double that of the English manufacturer. Fur-