

THE CEMENT MERGER.

**Marked Interest taken in Preference Stock issue.—
List opened on Wednesday of this week.**

The subscription list is now open for the Canada Cement Company's public offering of \$5,000,000 7 per cent. cumulative preference shares. Up to the time of the list's closing, on or before Wednesday 22nd inst., these shares may be subscribed for at \$93—and will carry with them a bonus of ordinary shares equal in value to 25 per cent. of the par value of the preference shares allotted. Particulars as to subscription are given in the announcement to be found elsewhere in these columns.

In view of the statement that firm subscriptions amounting to \$3,200,000 par value were guaranteed before the list opened, there is likelihood of considerable over-subscription. London firms alone are said to have taken over \$2,000,000.

The total capitalization of the company is shown by its prospectus to be as follows:

	Authorized.		Now to be issued.
Preferred Stock ..	\$11,000,000	7 p.c. cumulative..	\$10,500,000
Ordinary Stock ..	19,000,000		13,500,000
	\$30,000,000		\$24,000,000
Bonds	\$8,000,000	6 per cent. 1st Mortgage, 20 yrs. gold bonds	\$5,000,000

The plants which will be owned or controlled by the new company number among them some of the best constructed on the continent. Under a central management uniform standard of quality will be aimed at, as well as a profitable marketing of production. The prospectus points out that the demand for Portland Cement in Canada has increased remarkably during the last five years. In 1904 the total consumption of Portland Cement in the Dominion was 1,094,988 barrels, of which 784,630 barrels were imported. In 1908 the consumption, notwithstanding the general industrial depression, was 3,134,338 barrels, and no less than 3,495,361 barrels were manufactured in Canada. Existing trade conditions indicate that the consumption during 1909 will largely exceed that of 1908.

The organizers of the company give the following as their estimate of earnings.

NET EARNINGS.

The estimated annual net earnings of the Company, based on the quantities of cement being sold, during the present year, by the companies comprised in the merger, and on the costs of manufacture under existing conditions, amount to \$1,900,000

FIXED CHARGES.

Interest on \$5,000,000 of First Mortgage bonds, at six per cent. per annum	\$300,000
Sinking Fund payment on bonds, two per cent. per annum.....	100,000
Preferential Dividend of 7 per cent. per annum on \$10,500,000 Preference Shares	735,000
	\$1,135,000

Leaving available for dividends on Ordinary Shares of the Company..... \$765,000

It is stated that, owing to the large number of subscriptions already received, the lists will probably be closed at an earlier date than the 22nd inst.

In the unlisted department of the Montreal market yesterday there was considerable activity in the common stock of the Canada Cement Company, over 1,500 shares being traded in during the two sessions, the stock closing at 30½.

TOWN FIRE DEPARTMENTS.

Prevalence of Fires in Medium Size Towns—Headway Too Often Gained by Flames—Better Organization and Equipment Desirable.

Among August fire losses in Canada totalling some two and one-half million dollars, were a number of fires of considerable magnitude that visited several "medium sized" towns. While these calamities have been somewhat specially in evidence just lately, they are to be counted upon year in and year out—and more notably as the summer passes into autumn. Months of sun-drying bring about favourable conditions—for burning. That town fire departments as a general rule are not nearly so adequate as they should be is a truism of course. But one that needs "hammering home," nevertheless. Too little attention is given to the "counsels of perfection" volunteered by inspecting officials of the Canadian Fire Underwriters Association. Though their recommendations are not disinterested, it is after all more to the interests of the towns than of the underwriters that their views should be acted upon.

In the current issue of Insurance Engineering, the whole matter of fire protection for medium size cities and towns is interestingly discussed by Mr. W. H. Johnson, general inspector of the National Board of Fire Underwriters. Much that he says is as applicable to Canadian as to United States towns. For instance, he says that the "congested districts" of large cities have, in degree, a corresponding hazard in many smaller places where, owing to cheap priced ground and a low tax rate, large manufacturing interests have located. To protect such establishments in many instances there is but a single 4-in. or 6-in. diameter water main, affording an entirely inadequate supply and pressure of water for fire extinguishment.

General Requisites.

As a general proposition, says Mr. Johnson, an engine or hose company should be within one-quarter to one-half mile of any part of the town requiring adequate fire protection. Separate chemical engine companies would appear unnecessary, as their work should be done by modern constructed combination chemical hose wagons operating as part of an engine company or a separate hose company. For every three or four engine or hose companies a ladder truck should be provided, and there should be enough such companies that one would be within one-half mile of any point of the city.

At least one, preferably a quick raising aerial, should be in the mercantile district, and if a decided manufacturing district exists an aerial should be provided for service within one-quarter mile of it.

Drills and Training.

The value of frequent, thorough drills is often underestimated by departments, which expect prompt and systematic action from men who have received only haphazard instruction. Provision for keeping the men in good physical condition is often neglected.

Police Department.

This department is of more assistance to the fire department than would appear at first glance. Without well maintained police assistance, the fire de-