

### The Quebec Bridge Disaster.

In fairness to all parties concerned, public judgment as to the responsibility for the lamentable Quebec Bridge disaster should be suspended until more information has been brought out by the various investigations in process. That there is a serious financial and perhaps a great moral responsibility involved is manifest. Already it is ascertained that the engineers in charge of the work on the spot, had discovered a defect in the construction of sufficient importance for them to send a man to New York to report the matter to the consulting engineer. Obviously, however, no immediate danger was anticipated or the men would have been called off the work. It is satisfactory to know that the piers are intact. The accident is nothing less than a national calamity. So far as concerns the great money loss, ways and means will of course be found to get over this, and to carry to a successful conclusion one of the greatest engineering works of modern times. The loss of life is irreparable and not only sympathy, but help, should be forthcoming on a generous scale for the bereaved families.

### The False Alarm Nuisance.

James O'Keefe has for seventeen years enjoyed the reputation of being "a false alarm fiend." He has been repeatedly imprisoned for indulging in his favourite amusement of bringing out the fire brigade unnecessarily, which is a most mischievous practice fraught with considerable danger to life and property. The astonishing thing is that although he has been remanded several times to have the question of his sanity investigated, it is stated that no proof has been found of mental aberration. It would seem to a layman, that a grown up man being willing to go to prison time after time, for indulging in such an idiotic pastime, is proof enough of insanity. He is under arrest now for the old offence and while in the cell, attempted to set fire to the police station. Perhaps that will be regarded as an evidence of exceptional intelligence.

### Personal Notes.

MESSRS. SMITH MACKENZIE, general agents for the Atlas Assurance Co., Ltd., at Toronto, have formed a partnership with the firm of G. F. Marter & Son, for many years agents of the London & Lancashire Fire Insurance Co. The new firm will represent both companies with offices at 24 Toronto Street, Toronto, under the title of Smith, MacKenzie & Marter.

MESSRS. ST. GERMAIN & FRAAS, Ottawa, have been appointed agents there, for the London & Lancashire Fire Insurance Company. This company withdrew from Ottawa shortly after the big conflagration in that city, but has decided to resume business there again.

MR. M. C. HINSHAW, branch manager of the Atlas Assurance Co., Ltd., is visiting the agencies of his company in the Western Provinces.

### Financial and General

AT PRESENT THE WEST is holding its breath, watching the thermometer and studying meteorological signs of every sort. The next week or so means much to Canada as a whole. Aside from frost dangers the crop outlook seems generally encouraging—the year's smaller yield having as compensation materially higher prices. To be sure, London and Chicago have been flooded with pessimistic local reports, but their "bullish" interest is, in many cases, also their *raison d'être*. Government reports and reliable estimates from other sources alike indicate that wheat has in general ripened earlier than was expected, and that even a short continuation of favourable weather conditions will bring about a successfully completed harvest.

Mr. F. H. Mathewson, manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, informs us that the crop prospects have improved considerably recently, according to reports received from the various branches of the bank. He mentions that these reports are borne out by the representative of Messrs. Peabody & Company, who has just arrived from the Northwest. It is estimated that the crop will be between seventy-five and eighty millions of bushels.

CONSUL GENERAL NOSSE estimates that there are about 6000 Japanese in Canada, the increase during the last six years being at the rate of about 250 a year. This is hardly sufficient to justify a panic in British Columbia with reference to a Japanese invasion, or to warrant Parliament in attempting any legislation calculated to provoke ill-feeling between Japan and Canada. In the ordinary course of events Japan ought to be one of Canada's best customers and Canada ought to be one of Japan's best customers. To jeopardize even our business prospects (to say nothing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance) for the sake of an utterly unwarranted cheap labour scare would be the height of folly.

THE CAMAGUEY ELECTRIC COMPANY's earnings for the month of July amounted to \$7,328.11 gross and \$3,215.02 net. The total earnings of the first seven months of this year amounted to \$22,107.81 or at the rate of \$38,000 for the twelve months, being more than twice the amount required to pay the interest on its bonds. The gross earnings for July show an increase of \$2,103.11 over the corresponding month of last year.

THE ATLANTIC HORSE INSURANCE COMPANY, which was incorporated at the 1907 January session of the Rhode Island Legislature with a capital stock of \$150,000, has just been organized and is now doing business with the following officers in charge: President, William E. Telft; Vice-President, James Smith; Treasurer, Job S. Briggs; Secretary, Gaius W. Hubbard.

MONTREAL BANK CLEARINGS showed a marked gain in August, and the billion mark was passed, eight months' clearings being \$1,016,887,203, against \$982,521,917 last year, an increase of \$34,365,000. For the month of August this year the clearings were \$137,507,656 as against \$124,783,775 in 1905.