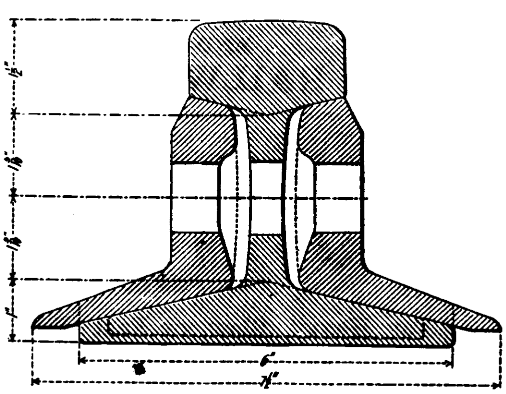
To the proposals before the Commissioners as outlined in our April issue, pg. 108 and 109, another was added by the Calumet Elevator Co.,of Chicago, offering to build two elevators without any guarantee, one to be of 250,000 bush. capacity for its own use, and the other to be of 1,500,000 bush. capacity. The Co. asked for free sites, exemption from taxation for 50 years with option of renewal, and the fixing of such rates for the use of the public elevator as would prevent the builders' business being injured by subsidized elevators.

A lot of negotiating was carried on between the Commissioners and the people making the offers, with the result that on April 22, the Canada Atlantic Ry. offer was rejected, and on the following day Capt. Wolvin's offer was declined, the Government having refused to guarantee the bonds of his Co. The Government offered to lend the Commissioners $1,000,000 at 3½% in order to enable them to construct their own elevators, and the Commissioners on April 23 accepted this offer.

Mr. Crathern has put forward a proposition to utilize this $1,000,000 for the erection of two elevators with a capacity of 1,250,000 bush. each, so situated that by means of grain carriers six vessels can be loaded at one time, while at the same time the contents of 250 cars a day can be transferred to the elevators from the tracks along the water front. The Commissioners on April 29 decided not to commit themselves to this or any other plan, preferring to wait until the Government bill authorizing the advance has been passed. Capt. Wolvin has asked to be given until May 10 to make some other proposals.

Wide Rail Base on the G.T.R.

In our issue of Dec. last we referred to the departure made by the G.T.R. on its second track which is being laid between Hamilton and Niagara Falls, in using a wider rail base than usual. The new rail is the American Society of Civil Engineers' standard 80-lb. section in every respect except that 1 in. has been added to the width of the base, and ⅛ in. to the height (in the base), making base of rail 6, instead of 5 in. wide, increasing the bearing surface on a tie with 8 in. face from 40 to 48 sq. in., or 20%. By this very large



increase of bearing surface, it is hoped to prolong the wearing capacity and life of cedar ties from 20 to 25%. The additional steel used in the rail, in order to provide the wider base, makes the weight 90 instead of 80 lbs. per yard.

The illustration given herewith shows the new rail, the broken line in the cut showing the usual A.S. of C.E.'s section The second track between Hamilton and Jordan has been laid with the new rail, the results so far being considered very satisfactory by General Superintendent McGuigan. Altogether the G.T.R. Co. used some 1,500 tons last year on 10-ft. cedar ties.

Canadian Ticket Agents' Association.

A meeting of the executive committee was held in Hamilton, April 25. Present :—F. W. Churchill, Collingwood, President ; W. Jackson, Clinton, 1st Vice-President ; W. H. C. Mackay, St. John, N.B., 2nd Vice-President ; E. De la Hooke, London, Sec.-Treas.; W. H. Harper, Chatham ; C. E. Morgan, Hamilton ; W. F. Egg, Montreal, and J. P. Hanley, Kingston. The Editor of THE RAILWAY AND SHIPPING WORLD was present by invitation, and also J. Paul, London, and J. H. Flock, K.C., Honorary Counsel.

W. F. Egg was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Letters having been read from General Passenger Agent Ussher of the C.P.R., and General Passenger Agent Bell of the G.T.R., recommending, on account of the Pan-American Exposition, that the annual convention to be held this year in Montreal be fixed for a later date than usual, it was decided to hold it on Nov. 6, and the Place Viger hotel was selected as the headquarters, provided the Sec.-Treas. can make satisfactory arrangement with the management.

The Manitoba Railway Contracts.

The discussion in the House of Commons on the bills to ratify the agreements between the Manitoba Government and the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Ry. Co., and the Canadian Northern Ry. Co. has reached the "Committee of the Whole" stage, and the subject was on the orders for further consideration on May 8, as this article is being written. At the different stages of progress the complications arising from the several forms in which the agreements came before the House were cleared away, and the only bill now before Parliament affecting the matter is a private bill introduced by Mr. McIsaac, confirmatory of both agreements.

In the bill amalgamating the Winnipeg Transfer Ry. Co., the Portage and North-Western Ry. Co., and the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Ry. Co. under the title of the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Ry. Co., which bill is now before the Senate, a clause was added ratifying the agreement between such railway companies and the Manitoba Government, but was withdrawn. This Co. already has a provincial charter authorizing the amalgamation, and the present application now is to have the four railways recognized as works for the general advantage of Canada, thus bringing them under Dominion jurisdiction. The bill has been passed by the Commons and was read a second time in the Senate, after certain standing orders had been suspended, May 3.

In the bill amalgamating the Canadian Northern Ry. Co. with the Manitoba and South-Eastern Ry. Co. and with the Ontario and Rainy River Ry. Co., a clause was inserted ratifying the agreement between it and the Manitoba Government for the lease of certain railways, but the clause was withdrawn before it reached the committee, and the bill thus amended was reported to the Commons as having passed the Senate, May 3.

On Mar. 29 Mr. McIsaac obtained leave to introduce two bills, one to ratify each of the agreements, without complying with certain of the usual requirements, and they were read a first time on that date, reaching the Railway Committee April 15. The two bills were amalgamated by this committee and the discussion is now taking place on the combined bill.

When the bills came before the Railway Committee Z. A. Lash, K.C., in presenting the case for the companies, explained their meaning and the objects sought to be secured. The Northern Pacific and Manitoba Ry. had a Dominion and a provincial charter, but the other three lines proposed to be incorporated with it had not Dominion charters, the bill granting such not yet having been passed. Notwithstanding this, inasmuch as they connected or crossed lines subject to the control of the Dominion Government, they were, therefore, to some extent subject to the same jurisdiction. These lines were by a contract leased to the Manitoba Government for 999 years, which lease was subsequently assigned by the Provincial Government to the Canadian Northern Ry. Co. in consideration of the payment of $210,000 a year for the first 10 years, $225,000 a year for the second 10 years, $275,000 a year for the third 10 years, and $300,000 a year for the balance of the term. The railway company was made a trustee to receive the rentals and distribute the money to the lessees. (See R. & S.W., Feb., pg. 39.) The present application was to make that contract binding on the C.N.R. It was proposed to insert two special clauses for the further protection of the public. These clauses affirmed the rights of the Governor-in-Council, and the Railway Committee of the Privy Council, notwithstanding anything contained in the contract, under existing or future legislation ; asserted that the Dominion was under no obligation or liability under the agreements, and set forth that the C.N. Ry. Co. could not charge any higher rates for freight or passengers than were now authorized or might in future be authorized by Parliament, the Governor-in-Conncil, the Railway Committee of the Privy Council or other competent authority.

W. Barwick, K.C., spoke on behalf of the Manitoba Government, and contended that the agreements were the consummation of the policy adopted by the Province in 1896.

W. Nesbitt, K.C., for the opponents of the bills, claimed that the bills passed by the Manitoba Legislature were not worth the paper they were printed on, and the Dominion was being asked to give validity to something which was invalid and illegal. The object in going to Parliament was to obtain validation of an agreement, and until it was obtained they had been advised it was not binding upon the Province. What the committee was asked to do was to transfer the functions of the Dominion Government, and endorse legislation which would be absolutely nugatory, and to do something which had never been done before. It was perfectly apparent that the Manitoba Government proposed taking over the N.P. system. If this was a deal between the C.N. and the N.P. companies Parliament could ratify the contract, because Parliament had control of both these companies. The first contract Parliament was asked to validate was one by which the Manitoba Government was to take over the N.P.R. reaching from Winnipeg out into the State of Minnesota and having other branches. He claimed that Parliament could not approve of such a contract because it would thereby be divesting itself of control over these railways and conferring it upon the Manitoba Parliament. There was no doubt that the Province could own and operate any local work or railway geographically situated within its boundaries. But it was clearly set forth that it could not own two classes of railways, and, therefore, could not make a lease to connection with them, viz., railways which connect the Province with any other State or Province, or extending beyond the limits of the Province. In other words, the N.P.R. system extending beyond the limits of the Province is clearly, under the B.N.A. Act, excluded by express language from the jurisdiction of the Province. In support of this view he cited a number of decisions and opinions and concluded by referring to Ontario's position and asking that the committee should let