

these accidents can properly be attributed to overwork or lack of opportunity for sufficient rest on the part of the employees who are held responsible; and that in collisions a large percentage of the loss of life is in second-class or smoking-cars, due, no doubt, to the fact that old and comparatively weak first-class cars, which have been in service for years, are often used as smokers or second-class cars, while there has been a great increase in the weight and strength of more modern coaches—baggage-cars, first-class cars and sleepers.

Further, one of the questions now engaging the attention of the board is whether it should not, from time to time, formally request the Attorney-General of each Province to put the law in motion and promptly proceed with a prosecution in every instance in which negligence, carelessness, or failure to observe working rules or orders has resulted in the destruction of human life. At present railway companies simply dismiss their negligent or guilty employees. Further punishment is rarely thought of; and when it is, the parties concerned are usually allowed to escape from the country. This does not tend to insure the safety of the travelling public; and it undoubtedly increases the risk to locomotive engineers, firemen, and others who are in charge of trains.

The Commission is also negotiating with the railway companies regarding certain matters which seem contributory to accidents, and for which it is claimed the companies alone are responsible.

As stated in our last issue, a committee representing the railways has been appointed to draft a uniform set of operating rules to be submitted to the Commission for consideration. The Chief Inspector is working independently on a set which will also be submitted to the Commission.

December Birthdays.

Many happy returns of the day to—

A. H. Anderson, Cashier, Paymaster, and Purchasing Agent, Quebec Central Ry., at Sherbrooke, Que., born at Cookshire, Que., Dec. 19, 1859.

J. H. Barber, Division Engineer, C.P.R., St. John, N.B., born at Cobourg, Ont., Dec. 20, 1856.

E. T. Boland, General Agent Dominion Steamship Line, at Toronto, born there, Dec. 20, 1869.

N. E. Brooks, C.P.R., Division Engineer, Calgary, Alta., born at Sherbrooke, Que., Dec. 25, 1866.

D. Brown, ex-Manager Milwaukee and Michigan Line and Grand Trunk Despatch, at Detroit, Mich., now at Chicago, Ill., born at Glasgow, Scotland, Dec. 21, 1843.

J. C. M. Buntzen, General Manager British Columbia Electric Ry. Co., at Vancouver, born at Copenhagen, Denmark, Dec. 16, 1859.

P. E. Demers, Trainmaster Central Vermont Ry., at Farnham, Que., born there Dec. 10, 1859.

W. N. Dietrich, Electrical Engineer C.P.R., Montreal, born at Perth, Ont., Dec. 23, 1872.

J. W. Donald, District Passenger Agent, Chicago and Alton Rd., at Detroit, Mich., born at St. John, N.B., Dec. 22, 1857.

H. P. Dwight, President Great Northwest-ern Telegraph Co., Toronto, born at Belleville, Jefferson Co., N.Y., Dec. 23, 1828.

R. Forget, President Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Co., Montreal, born at Terrebonne, Que., Dec. 10, 1861.

P. Giffins, General Manager Dominion Atlantic Ry., at Kentville, N.S., born at Harpenden, Herts, England, Dec. 25, 1850.

H. H. Gildersleeve, Manager Northern Navigation Co. of Ontario, at Collingwood, born at Kingston, Ont., Dec. 15, 1865.

A. J. Gorrie, General Superintendent Great Northern Ry. of Canada at Montreal, born at Raith, Kirkcaldy, Scotland, Dec. 10, 1868.

D. B. Hanna, Third Vice-President Canadian Northern Ry. at Toronto, born at Thornliebank, Scotland, Dec. 20, 1858.

S. P. Howard, General Freight Agent Eastern and Lake Superior Division C.P.R. at Montreal, born there Dec. 30, 1865.

R. R. Jamieson, General Superintendent Western Division C.P.R. at Calgary, Alta., born at Westover, Ont., Dec. 12, 1856.

W. Kennedy, Master Mechanic Middle Division G.T.R. at Toronto, born at Belleville, Ont., Dec. 23, 1869.

L. Macdonald, Division Freight Agent G.T.R. at Hamilton, Ont., born at Montreal, Dec. 10, 1871.

L. McLean, Superintendent Sydney and Louisburg Ry., Glace Bay, N. S., born there, Dec. 10, 1867.

J. F. Mundle, City Freight Agent C.P.R. at Montreal, born at Prescott, Ont., Dec. 20, 1857.

J. Niblock, Superintendent C.P.R. at Calgary, Alta., born in York county, Ont., Dec. 21, 1849.

E. C. Oviatt, Travelling Passenger Agent, C.P.R., at Battle Creek, Mich., born at Hudson, Ohio, Dec. 3, 1852.

J. V. Paul, Locomotive Fuel Inspector C.P.R. at Montreal, born at Mokelumne Hill, Cal., Dec. 29, 1863.

A. Price, Superintendent of Transportation Western Lines, C.P.R., at Winnipeg, Man., born Dec. 6, 1861.

C. Schrieber, C.E., Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, Ottawa, Ont., born at Bradwell, Essex, Eng., Dec. 14, 1831.

C. E. E. Ussher, General Passenger Agent C.P.R. lines east of Lake Superior, at Montreal, born at Niagara Falls, Ont., Dec. 29, 1857.

H. H. Vaughan, Superintendent of Motive Power, C.P.R. lines east of Port Arthur, Ont., at Montreal, born at Forest Hill, Essex, England, Dec. 26, 1868.

B. D. Webber, General Manager Canadian Pacific Despatch at Boston, Mass., born at Beverly, Mass., Dec. 3, 1851.

Victorian State Railways.

For the first time in fifteen years the State railways of Victoria, Australia, in which over £40,000,000 of public funds is invested, have paid their way, the result being as follows:—

Gross revenue	£3,438,140	17	2
Charges against working expenses	1,921,866	10	4
Net revenue	£1,516,274	6	10
Net interest charges and expenses	1,515,755	0	0
Surplus	£	519	6

It will be observed that interest is charged against net revenue, a totally different policy from that pursued here, the Intercolonial and Prince Edward Island Railways having never been debited with interest and frequently showing a deficit in net revenue. For years the Victorian railways had an appalling succession of deficits, commencing with £190,083 in 1888-9, and ending with £304,094 in 1902-3. One year the deficit was nearly £500,000, and in fourteen years the loss was approximately £4,000,000. Pensions and gratuities are bugbears which the Commissioners have to contend with. Last year they amounted to £100,536.

It is only a little over a year since Thos. Tait left Canada to take the Chairmanship of the Victoria Railway Commission. The ability he displayed on the C.P.R. has stood him in good stead in his new position. The excellent results which have been obtained are warmly commended by the Victorian press. The Melbourne Argus says: "The notable financial achievement is one of which the Commissioners may justly feel proud. Economies in expenditure and increases in revenue are revealed in almost every direction. The percentage of expenses to gross

revenue was 52.61, the lowest since 1879. How abnormally low such a percentage is may be understood by comparing it with the percentages on railway systems elsewhere. In New South Wales the percentage is about 68, in Queensland 69, in South Australia 58, and in West Australia 80. On the railways of the United Kingdom it averages 62, while for many years on our own 60% has been about the normal percentage."

The Melbourne Age says: "This year's railway report is a landmark and beacon of hope in the political and economic history of Victoria. The successful management during the past year was mainly due to the reorganization of the transportation and traffic branches, which, the Commissioners modestly remark, was productive of satisfactory results both as to efficiency and economy. Possibly no one outside the department has anything but a vague idea of the amount of hard work which devolved on Mr. Tait and his colleagues in instituting the new system. Mr. Tait's knowledge of transport matters has excited high admiration, and throughout the busy harvest season he scarcely allowed an item of available rolling stock to remain idle or perform unnecessary work. The result was that, in an extraordinary season, the harvest was moved to the seaboard with expedition, and shipped without any suspicion of a block such as was experienced in years gone by."

Nailing Grain Doors in Cars.—General Superintendent Bury, of the C.P.R. Central Division, has issued the following circular: "Cars and grain doors have been greatly damaged, and serious inconvenience has resulted in handling of grain at lake ports, by shippers nailing grain doors in cars. In the aggregate the expense and inconvenience has assumed such magnitude that extreme measures must be taken to stop this practice. Agents are required to see that grain doors are not nailed in cars at their station, and will notify shippers that persistence in the practice will result in legal prosecution. In any event consignors will be required to pay for the damage to rolling stock. The agent at Fort William will furnish each superintendent with a list of cars loaded on his district with grain doors nailed, so that it can be taken up with the consignors, and will also see the amount of the damage to the cars is charged against the grain."

The American Association of Travelling Passenger Agents will hold its annual convention in the City of Mexico, Dec. 10 to 14. The party, which will include a number of members from Canada will assemble at St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 3, and will enter Mexico at Eagle Pass two days later, reaching Mexico city on the evening of Dec. 10. On Dec. 14, the party will leave for a visit to Esperanza, Orizaba, Cardoba, Santa Anna and Puebla, returning to Mexico city Dec. 17, leaving again the same day for St. Louis, travelling by Monterey and Laredo. The party will travel all the way by a special train of sleeping cars, the itinerary outlined showing 5,581 miles to be travelled on the lines of eleven railway companies.

There are various press reports respecting the probable changes to be made in the operations of the Canada Atlantic Ry., when it is taken over by the G.T.R. One report says that it is intended to operate it in connection with the Central Vermont Ry., which the G.T.R. controls. This would give a thorough connection between Depot Harbor, Ont., and New London, Conn., where transshipment of freight to ocean steamers could be made. In this way, the report states, the G.T.R. could make a much more satisfactory bid for U.S. business, especially that offering in the New England States.