

## Prominent Topics.

**Minister of Militia to Visit Europe.** Colonel the Hon. Sam. Hughes, Minister of Militia, has returned to Ottawa from Western Canada. He says he found a splendid spirit existing amongst the troops. The cadet movement was particularly popular. "I find the respectable and reputable element are looking upon our volunteer system in a different light from the past."

The Minister will sail on Wednesday for England and take part in the manoeuvres at Aldershot. Subsequently he will visit France where he has been invited to be present at the army manoeuvres. He will also go to Germany and possibly some other European countries to study their respective military systems. Col. Hughes will be accompanied by several officers who will take part in the Aldershot manoeuvres. Col. Maunsell, Chief of the Engineering Staff, will study particularly aeroplanes and wireless; Col. Hartstone will study the question of arms and ammunitions. Other officers who are going with a view to making the Canadian army more efficient are Col. Morrison of Ottawa, Col. Hodgins, of London and Col. Landry, of Quebec.

**Binder Twine Famine.** Western Canada is threatened with a shortage of binder twine at a rather critical moment. The scarcity is attributed to two causes, the quality test, which keeps out a good deal of American twine; and the credit system, which has discouraged the English manufacturers. A Canadian dealer says that some of the principal English exporters have practically abandoned the market because of their losses, through the credit system prevailing. One of these firms on five-year-old debts was only able to collect forty or fifty cents on the dollar, and another lost twelve hundred on orders aggregating a little over three thousand. These English firms do business at home on a strictly cash basis, and were not prepared to undertake the very heavy expenses of collection here.

"The twine market is on a cash buying basis, and it requires a year's capital ahead to run it. It is unlike any other commodity, for it is impossible to take a lien note on it, like on farm machinery, as the security evaporates as harvest proceeds. If selling were on a cash basis, the selling price might be cheapened, and incidentally these British manufacturers would be encouraged to re-enter the field. But, of course, many farmers are in no shape to pay for the twine till after harvest."

The harvest is a bountiful one, and it ought not to be beyond the resources of Canadian ingenuity to get over such a difficulty as a shortage of binder twine on the spot. It seems to be largely a question of finance.

## Canadian Northern Developments.

Sir Donald Mann states that the Canadian Northern, from the north end of the Mount Royal tunnel to Vancouver, will be finished in eighteen months. He also says that the Montreal terminals will cost from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000. Regarding the movement of the wheat crop Sir Donald states that the C. N. R. brought out last year about thirty per cent. of the export and no doubt they would get as much as they would be able to handle during the present year. "We realize what it all means," he added, "and for this reason 9000 men are at work between Montreal and Port Arthur building the main line with all possible speed and about the same number on the British Columbia sections."

The Canadian Railway and Maritime World says the Railway Commission has approved of the location plans of the James Bay and Eastern Railway in the township of Roberval, P.Q. Grading on the line from outside Roberval was on July 19 reported to be completed to Chute à l'Ours, about eighty miles, and track-laying was to be started on August 1. J. P. Mullarkey is the contractor. It is said that the line will be extended along the valley of the Ashuapmouchouan River and through the Chibougamou country to Nottaway Bay or James Bay.

This extension of the Lake St. John route is said to be part of the Canadian Northern system.

## Montreal Harbour Statistics.

During the month of July this year vessels visiting the port numbered 21 less than in July last year, but there was an increase in their tonnage of 18,205 tons. Figures for this and the three preceding years are: 1909, 347 vessels, 899,128 tons. In 1910, 351 vessels, 1,041,721 tons; 1911, 372 vessels, 1,112,409 tons, and during July this year, 351 vessels and 1,130,614 tons. The collector of customs reported receipts amounting to \$38,000 during July, 1912, as compared with \$34,500 during July, 1911, from imports. Revenue from exports during the same periods, \$17,000 during the past month, and \$16,000 during July last year. Total, \$55,000, as against \$50,500 for July, 1911. The wharfinger for local traffic reported receipts amounting to \$67,530.74, as against \$57,381.71. Adding the amounts previously reported as having been received since the opening of navigation each year, totals are arrived at of \$191,729.16 for the present season up to and including July 31, as against \$176,380.73 for last year during the corresponding period. The increase is therefore \$15,348.43. The above totals were received, from imports \$105,000 this year and \$108,000 last; exports, \$38,000 this year and \$37,500 last; local traffic, \$48,729.16 this year and \$30,880.73 last. This shows a decrease of \$3,000 in imports, a small increase in exports, and an increase in local traffic amounting to nearly \$18,000.