

OUR ENGLISH OFFICE.

We have much pleasure in announcing that we have opened a branch office of THE RAILWAY & SHIPPING WORLD at No. 44 Fleet Street, London, E.C., England, in charge of Mr. W. H. Boffey, who will represent us for the United Kingdom & for the European Continent, & who will make contracts for advertising in this paper, receive subscriptions, &c.

The transportation & allied companies whose interests are represented by this paper, buy largely many classes of goods in Europe, & especially in view of the fact that the Canadian customs duty on goods of British manufacture will, after July 1, be still further reduced to two-thirds of the duty levied on goods from other countries, we consider this an opportune time to place this paper prominently before British manufacturers, &c.

CURRENT TOPICS.

From Whiskey to Water.

The vagaries of government control of public works are well illustrated by the recent appointment of W. O'Brien, a Montreal restaurant keeper, to the Superintendency of the Lachine Canal, at a salary of \$2,500 a year.

Halifax Ocean Passenger Travel.

The C.P.R. secures a marvellous proportion of the ocean-borne passenger business from Halifax. The Deputy Minister of Railways gives figures in his recent annual report showing that in the winter season of 1897 & 1898, 6,188 passengers were landed at Halifax, of which the C.P.R. carried 5,364 via St. John, 622 going via the I.C.R. & the G.T.R. In the winter of 1898-99 the arrivals were 7,641, of which the C.P.R. carried 7,180 via St. John, 461 going by the I.C.R. to Montreal. All of which speaks volumes for the enterprise of the C.P.R. Passenger Department.

Rainy River Navigation.

The shipping interests on the Lake of the Woods are much handicapped by the delay in improving the navigation of the Rainy River. A vote of \$25,000 was provided by the Dominion Parliament last year, but was not used, & is again repeated in the estimates for the ensuing fiscal year. The upper stretch of the river is in bad shape & until it is improved it is of no use building large steamers to run from Rat Portage, as there is no certainty of sufficient water above the Sault Rapids for anything but small steamers. The acting Minister of Public Works should have the improvements started without delay & a further vote should be taken sufficient to complete the work.

Red River Navigation.

There appears to be a serious hitch in regard to going on with the building of a dam & lock at St. Andrews rapids, between Winnipeg & Selkirk, which the people of Winnipeg have been strongly urging for many years. Two or three months ago it was announced that a contract for the masonry had been let. The contract has not been signed & there are no indications that it will be. It appears that after tenders were called for the Government introduced legislation respecting the rate of wages to be paid on public works, a contingency which was not taken into account in tendering. A simple solution of the difficulty would appear to be to ask new tenders & not to delay a work for which there is a very strong demand.

Railway Operating Rules.

The remarks we have made from time to time, recently, about the efficiency of the standard code of train rules as framed by the

American Railway Association are emphasized by the fact just announced that the membership of the Association is 233 roads, operating 184,215 miles of line. Surely the Train Rules Committee of such an association must be superior to any commission of so-called experts such as the Dominion Minister of Railways has asked Parliament to empower him to appoint to frame operating rules which may be made obligatory on all Canadian railways.

At the recent meeting of the Association in Chicago, the C.P.R., was re-elected a member of the Committee on Train Rules. The Co. is represented in this connection by Manager Tait of its eastern lines.

Grand Trunk Capital.

In speaking at the banquet tendered him recently by the Montreal Board of Trade, G. B. Reeve made two mistakes in referring to the early financial history of the G.T.R. He said the line was built by foreign capital, not by subsidies from the Dominion Government. Unless we are very much mistaken, the private capital put into the G.T.R. was almost entirely British, which is certainly not "foreign" in any sense of the word. The Co. may not have received any direct subsidies from Dominion or Provincial Governments, but it did get a loan of \$15,142,633.34 before Confederation, & which still appears in the Dominion Public Accounts, no portion of the principal or interest having been paid. As by the terms of an act passed in 1884, the Dominion's claim in regard to this loan was made to rank after the common Stock & Securities of the Co., the loan may now fairly be put down as a subsidy.

Delinquent Railway Officials.

The following paragraph occurs in the recent annual report of the Chief Engineer of Government Railways:—"Great difficulty has been experienced, year by year, in getting out the annual report of the Department, owing to many of the railway companies failing to make the returns required by law and taking no notice whatever of the communications addressed to them from time to time, urging them to forward their returns. I suggest that in future legal proceedings be taken to compel the delinquent railway companies to comply with the law; the costs of the suits to be collected from them." Similar paragraphs have appeared in previous reports & there is no doubt the law should be strictly enforced. It is in the public interest generally that the returns referred to should be made promptly as required by the statute & officials who are too careless or too lazy to comply should be compelled to mend their ways.

Recognition of Services.

The services rendered to the public by transportation officials are so seldom publicly recognized that it is a pleasure to read the Quebec press reports of the demonstration which recently took place at Chicoutimi in honor of J. G. Scott, the Manager & Secretary of the Quebec & Lake St. John Ry. Some 3,000 people were present from all parts of the district traversed by the line. Addresses were presented from the town of Chicoutimi & from the colonists of the Lake St. John district, as well as from several societies, &c., eulogizing the important work done for the district by Mr. Scott, to which he felicitously replied, making the following announcement in the course of his speech:—"The capitalists in London who furnished so large a share of the money to build the railway are ready to put in more money to improve it, to make it a better & more workable road, & to give it a larger equipment of rolling stock, so that we may give you a better train service. Unless we are disappointed we shall, within a few months, have the large sum of £170,000 sterling at our disposal for these

purposes. I think it is now no secret that the New York & Boston capitalists who have been associated with us in the Great Northern enterprise, are ready, if the conditions are favorable, to spend even a larger sum of money in industries near Chicoutimi, which will go far to make this town one of the most prosperous in Canada."

British Columbia's Danger.

The position we have taken as to the danger to British Columbia's best interests, which is threatened by the existing political situation there, is being very generally endorsed, even by leading Liberal papers. The Montreal Witness says:—"Mr. Martin's policy is, of course, a demagogue one, appealing to the Provincial prejudices of the people of British Columbia as against the Dominion & Imperial interests, to the interests of the miners as against the mine-owners, & to the prejudices of the Europeans against the Asiatics. His policy includes Government ownership of railways, which is perhaps a good, but is as yet an impracticable measure; construction of a new railway from the coast to Kootenay mining districts, a policy intended to catch the electors of Kootenay district & the coast; exclusion of all Mongolian labor, which is in contravention of British treaties, & cannot, therefore, be enacted; resistance to encroachment on the Provincial rights of British Columbia by the Dominion Government, a declaration of war against the Imperial & Dominion Governments for keeping British Columbia legislation against the Japanese within the limits of the treaty obligations, & an eight-hour labor day to catch the mining vote. There can be no doubt that this policy is popular with the unthinking classes who are strong in numbers in B.C. And it is quite possible that with Mr. Martin as Premier serious trouble may be caused to all Canada by his rulership. It is one of the dangers of our system of appointing political partisans to governorships that now & then one of them occasionally, from political prejudices, uses the royal prerogative as the Queen herself or the Governor-General would not think of using it."

Suspension of Coasting Regulations.

The position we took some months since that the Dominion Government's action in suspending the coasting regulations so as to allow U.S. vessels to run between Fort William & Port Arthur & other ports in Canada, was clearly ultra vires & illegal, has recently received emphatic endorsement from an unexpected source. A memorandum has been made public, which was sent to the Privy Council on Oct. 16, 1899, by the Governor-General's Secretary, as follows:—"His Excellency, having consulted Hon. David Mills, Minister of Justice, as to the legality of the minute (re the coasting trade), was informed that the order is distinctly a nullity, & that it assumes a power which it does not possess to cancel an Act of Parliament. On the other hand, the object of the order in question is distinctly to assist public interests. There have been frequent precedents of Governments taking action which was undoubtedly illegal when necessity was pressing & when the public good appeared to them to call for immediate action. The Government taking such action would, of course, rely upon the support of Parliament. The penalties in this case rest with the Government, & there would be, of course, no risk of any objection being taken to the course pursued as long as the present Government remains in power. But the statute lays down that penalties can be enforced within a period of three years, so that it is within the bounds of possibility that a succeeding Government, taking exception to the line now pursued, might claim to enforce a penalty. But considering there have been precedents for the action in question, & that public necessity undoubtedly at present calls for such action, it would appear to his