

future of the company have not been slow to grumble that all these extensions have brought little net grist to their mill. But taking a wider view it is clear that by its present policy the Great Western has assured for itself a magnificent position in the future, which could not possibly have been attained in any other way. The Great Western Railway is an object lesson, if ever there was one in England, of the advantages to the public of private as compared with state ownership.

Apropos of steamship services, the definite statement is made by the British Empire Trust Company, which represents the Canadian Northern Railway here, that "early in the New Year, the company will inaugurate its Transatlantic steamship service with two magnificently fitted fast liners equipped with turbine engines." Ports of departure and call on this side have, it is said, not yet been settled, negotiations being in progress with various port authorities.

It is understood that provisional arrangements have been made whereby the guarantee of the Canadian Northern Railway has been secured in respect of the payment of interest on a new issue of Quebec and Lake St. John Railway bonds (consolidated). The arrangements, of which an official announcement is expected shortly, are such it is stated that the Prior Lien bondholders will not be called upon to accept a scaling down of their capital.

Sir Alfred L. Jones.

It may be counted as a coincidence that the news of developments at the old western port, which has so many historic ties with Canada, should have come almost at the same time as the death of Sir Alfred L. Jones, who has done much for the development of Avonmouth in connection with the Imperial Direct Line to the West Indies. Sir Alfred also had ties with Canada. When the old Canada shipping Company got into difficulties, its fleet was secured by Elder Dempster & Co., of which firm he was the head. The fleet was re-organized and re-built and in 1903 transferred to the Canadian Pacific Railway. Sir Alfred's career would have delighted the late Dr. Smiles. He entered a Liverpool shipping office as a junior clerk; at 26 he was the firm's manager; before his death he had organized half a dozen shipping lines; brought prosperity to the Canaries by pushing the banana industry; given a lift to Jamaica, which was unfortunately rendered nugatory by the Kingston earthquake; founded the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, whose research work has made the west coast of Africa habitable by white men, and became a K.C.M.G.

Another Banking Amalgamation.

The Bradford Banking Company, which is being absorbed by the London City and Midland, was founded in 1827, but curiously enough—when regard is had to English banking practice—has never had more than one office. It holds a good position in the north, but judging from the fact that the dividend which for 1906 was 11½ p.c. was last year only 8½ p.c. modern competitive methods are beginning to have an effect upon it. From the amalgamating bank's point of view, however, the acquisition is a very desirable one, as by it the London City and Midland will secure

entrance to one of the most important of the centres of our woollen industry. As a result of this arrangement the London City and Midland deposits will probably go over the 70 million mark.

Success of Co-Partnership Scheme.

After nine months' trial, the co-partnership scheme organized by Sir Christopher Furness, M.P., in order to put a stop to the labour troubles which have of late years harassed the shipbuilding industry on the north east coast, would appear to be working satisfactorily. An arrangement was made, it will be remembered, by which employees were given shares in the company by which they were employed with a guaranteed dividend on their undertaking not to exercise their right to strike. After nine months, the employees of Irvine's Shipbuilding & Dry Dock's Company, one of the Furness concerns, have received their guaranteed dividend of 4 p.c. per annum and a bonus of 5 p.c. per annum, the dividend and bonus of the ordinary shareholders being 10 p.c. There is little doubt that with financial results of this kind—even though in part produced by orders for steamers given by Sir Christopher Furness himself—the men will be ready to respond to the directors' invitation to put the co-partnership scheme on a permanent footing.

The Blue Anchor liner "Waratah," which mysteriously disappeared last July on the 24 hours voyage from Durham to Cape Town, has now been officially posted as "missing." Underwriters, as a result, are settling claims amounting in all to about £250,000.

METRO.

London, 18th December, 1909.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION OF BANKS.

Mr. H. C. McLeod, General Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, Replies to Article in THE CHRONICLE of Dec. 17.

To the Editor of THE CHRONICLE:—

I desire to tender my congratulations on your progression to the conclusion that external examination is essential to small independent banks like those of the United States, and to express the hope that with a little further investigation you will boldly advocate for our banks, methods of safety that have done much good elsewhere and that are virtually incapable of harm.

While calling in question your statement that depositors were not in great danger of losing during the past three years, I may not argue on the subject of a crisis so recent. Silent reflection is the treatment indicated. Depositors were not losers even in the City of Glasgow Bank disaster, but that circumstance did not deter the authorities from taking the course that was necessary there and that is now urged here.

I appreciate your directing attention to the fresh capital put into National Banks under pressure of criticism by the Controller of the Currency. Undoubtedly this apparently unreported amount should be added to the losses of stockholders. This leads to noting that unpaid calls on shareholders of failed banks should also be added to American losses through mismanagement