

POLITICAL WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

The appointment of the three commissioners to administer the new Government scheme of workmen's compensation insurance in the province of Ontario has occasioned the publication of some interesting biographical details. Of one member we read that he has "exceptional platform ability, is a Conservative in politics, and was organizer for his party during three general elections." Another is an expert in liability law and also "a member of several lodges and has been a prominent Conservative." These gentlemen's abilities no doubt fully qualify them for the positions to which they have been appointed,—it is obvious that the one member's study of the subject will be exceedingly useful—and we are quite prepared to believe that they are quite as likely as anyone else to make a good job of the administration of an act that some responsible people declare to be unworkable. Still it seems likely enough that had these gentlemen belonged to the opposite party in provincial politics—study of liability law notwithstanding—they would not have occupied these positions to which they have now been appointed.

MONEY PERMANENTLY ON A HIGHER INTEREST BASIS.

From a Stock Exchange viewpoint the price level of securities can hardly in the long run fail to prove attractive to investors, although it is necessary to bear in mind that the money market of the world, of which New York has become such an important component part, must for a considerable period be accepted as occupying a much higher basis than that current before the war broke out, says an American authority. An example is the fact that New York city has just been called upon to pay 6 per cent. for notes which are usually considered a highly desirable investment. Railroads of high standing have recently been called upon to pay 7 per cent. in renewing their maturing notes, and it may be taken for granted that the new war loans of Europe will have to be placed on an attractive basis to encourage cordial response. This, of course, is an important factor in considering market values of securities. If money may be considered fairly permanently above a 6 per cent. basis, then prices of first-class securities must adjust themselves accordingly. This means that quotations must decline until the dividend or interest payment will provide 6 per cent. or more on the cash outlay. There is quite a considerable list of securities already on this basis.

The effect of the European war is to disturb very much the ordinary machinery for doing business, and measures such as those taken in England and Canada are absolutely necessary for the preservation of credit and for the interest of the entire public. In my opinion, the Canadian Minister of Finance deserves every possible praise for his promptness in taking measures, the main object of which is to preserve the gold supply of the country.—*Sir Edmund Walker.*

WISDOM OF THE VIA MEDIA.

That the middle course, neither to close down construction completely nor to attempt to carry out the full programme which had been planned, but to so revise the programme as to give the greatest amount of employment for the funds available is the wisest for Canadians to adopt is the advice given by Hon. W. T. White, Minister of Finance, in a speech at Gananoque, Ont.

In Canada, said Mr. White, the first effects of the war had been necessarily of a serious character. Being a borrowing country, Canada had experienced an almost complete cessation of the money-flow from which her immense capital expenditures, governmental, municipal and corporation, had been largely financed. Canada from the sale of Dominion, provincial, municipal and corporation securities in Great Britain and the United States had been in receipt of funds aggregating about four hundred million dollars a year, or over thirty million dollars a month. All great public works, whether by the Dominion, provincial or municipal governments or by railway or other large corporations, had depended for their financing upon the capital so raised abroad. The result had inevitably been a curtailment of programme on the part of all these public and corporate bodies. The instinctive Canadian caution which could always be depended upon in times of crisis had met the situation by prompt contraction and panic had been avoided. He had talked with representatives of provinces, of municipalities, of railway and other corporations and they were all of the same sound view, not on the one hand to close down construction nor on the other to attempt to carry out the full programme they had planned. Either course would be most unwise. The sound policy was the middle course, and this he believed was being generally adopted. Construction programmes should be so revised as to give the greatest amount of employment for the funds available. While international markets were at present closed, no doubt borrowing although on a much reduced scale would be possible later, and increased thrift on the part of the public would be a material factor in furnishing new national capital. The spirit with which the Canadian community had met the situation was wholly admirable.

A PROMISING OUTLOOK.

So far as Canada is concerned, the Minister said, we have been passing through a period of dislocation. Re-adjustment is taking place favorably, and the outlook is distinctly promising. Many of our industries have suffered, but the first and worst effects will gradually wear away. Others have been greatly quickened and stimulated. The higher prices for grains and other agricultural products will more than neutralize this year's shortage in amount. For the future agricultural production should be immensely stimulated and this for years past has been the great need in Canada. This will solve the problem of the high cost of living, the overcrowding of cities and consequent unemployment. It will also enable Canada to greatly increase its exports, thus ensuring payment of our interest and other obligations abroad and the preservation of our national credit.

The Bank of England yesterday continued its official rate of discount at 5 per cent.