

given this week by the fact that for the first time for over twelve months, the Board were able to report an increase in the gross receipts. But this has really done little to dissipate the general gloom caused by the previous long series of heavy decreases, intensified as that was last week by the charge of The Times that the company had paid its guaranteed dividend last half-year "by means of bookkeeping adjustments." There is, in addition, a feeling of impatience and anxiety with regard to the Pacific extension and the practical certainty that the plans for improvements and extensions, of which Canadian journals are now informing us, will necessitate an early appeal for further capital.

Other Canadian Interests.

This is not particularly cheerful reading, and it is pleasant to find a more satisfactory position and prospects in the other quarters of the London market where Canadian interests are particularly prominent. The Light and Power group have again been very active this week, and it is satisfactory to know that the Mexican dispute is at last in a fair way to settlement, although, at the moment, no official announcement of the exact terms has appeared. Rio's have shaken off the effects of the riots, which in the light of later happenings and information, appear to have been merely the manifestation of misdirected energy by a crowd of hooligans, whose congeners have also been making things unpleasant for an English railway company in another quarter of Brazil. The latest Canadian arrival on the London Stock Exchange is the bonds of the Western Canada Flour Mills. These bonds, issued in July last at par, are quoted 99-102 and are well spoken of.

Since THE CHRONICLE has frequently referred to the waste of forest resources in the Dominion by fire and it is not many weeks since President Roosevelt devoted one of his characteristic messages to Congress to the question of the impoverishment of forest areas, it may not be uninteresting to your readers to detail some of the principal points in a report on the subject of afforestation issued this week by a Royal Commission, who have elaborated a scheme for enabling us to replenish our own wood supplies. Parenthetically, I may say, as a comment upon our queer fondness for "muddling through" things that the real *raison d'être* of this Royal Commission was coast erosion, and that the subject of afforestation, on which they have now issued a thoroughly sane and businesslike report, which has been hailed with general approval, was only added as an afterthought. Briefly the proposals of the Commission are these: An area of 9,000,000 acres, they find, is available in the United Kingdom for tree growing without material encroachment upon land devoted to agricultural purposes. Of this, they propose that 150,000 acres shall be planted annually at a cost of £2,000,000. The deficit for the first year, to be defrayed out of taxation, will be £60,000, and this deficit will rise progressively for 40 years to a total of over three millions. Then, however, say the Commissioners, and in this and other statements, their tone is very confident, the forests will more than pay for themselves, while after eighty years the State will be in possession of property of a value of 560 millions—one hundred millions more than its cost—yielding a revenue of 17 1-2 millions calculated at present prices, which promise, of course, material enhancement in the future.

Expert evidence laid before the Commission showed how serious the problem of our future wood sup-

plies has come. Indeed, it was said, in effect that in thirty years from now, there will be no timber available unless the various countries of the world set about to replant forthwith and, that, even if this replanting be begun at once, the rate of production will be in nothing like a reasonable ratio to the demand. Sporting considerations have long prevented us in England from growing anything but a very mediocre quality of timber—Germany is far ahead of us in this respect—but it is to be hoped now that with this report before us, we shall do something to put our house in order. True, the prospect of forty years of deficits is not one to be lightly faced by chancellors of the Exchequer, who may well use again the jesting exclamation: "Hang, posterity; what has posterity done for us?" But posterity, in the shape of the thirty years of grace before the time of famine, is too near for any argument of that description to have weight. It will be a thousand pities if such a clear and suggestive document, as the report of the Royal Commission is not acted upon forthwith, but shares the common fate of Royal Commissions' reports of being shoved into a pigeon hole to gather dust and cobwebs.

French Trade and Foreign Investments.

Apropos of THE CHRONICLE's recent notes on the wealth of France, some curious information is contained in Paris advices this week respecting the French Government's policy in superintending the investment of that wealth. Your readers will remember a recent "incident" in which the French Government refused to allow the listing of an Argentine loan on the Paris Bourse, owing to the Argentine Government having passed over French armament manufacturers in favour of German ones, when ordering new artillery recently. This "incident" is said to be a manifestation of a settled political policy that French commerce shall receive preferential treatment from borrowers, who are anxious to avail themselves of the banking resources of Paris and the thrifty habits of the French peasant. The policy of Mr. Cailloux is summed up in "No commercial concessions or orders; no money." The development is an important one bearing in mind the position which France occupies, as an international money lender, and should this policy be vigorously carried out, the time can scarcely be far distant when its effects are put in the region of diplomacy.

An interesting announcement is made by the Institute of Chartered Accountants that they have suspended from membership a fellow of the Institute, who had given to a "bucket shop," a certificate which dealt only with selected cases of profits made by clients of the firm and made no reference to losses. The course pursued is a wise one, and should do something to assure the public that their interests are safe in the hands of those chartered accountants, who sign the auditors' certificates of public companies. In some respects, there is no more important position in the world of finance than that of a chartered accountant, who is an auditor, and it is good news that the officers controlling that body of professional men are determined that there shall be no lowering of the high standard, which has always attached to their certificates.

Further Rumours of Insurance Amalgamations.

In the insurance world, we are having amalgamations and rumours of amalgamations. No sooner was the Royal and British and Foreign Marine Insurance deal completed than circumstantial stories