

light rails with 80 lb. steel was going on, except in the mountain districts where a heavier rail was used, and the whole work would be completed in a comparatively short time. As to the proposed double-tracking between Port Arthur and Winnipeg, he said the gradual lengthening of the side tracks was being proceeded with, and although these are from 2,000 to 2,500 ft. long, and only four miles apart, the gaps will be shortened considerably before the close of the present year.

Sir Thomas started to make his annual inspection of the Atlantic division June 26.

Freight Claim Association.

The 11th annual meeting was held at Montreal, June 11 and 12. This Association was organized at Chicago, March 3rd, 1892, by the consolidation of the Claim Agents' Association, of the eastern, middle and southern states, which had been in existence since 1887, the Freight Claim Agents' Association of the west, which was organized in 1890, and the freight claim officers of the lines interested in Texas traffic, who were organized in 1891. The Association has a membership of 210, representing nearly 180,000 miles of line, and comprised of nearly all the principal railways in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, and many of the steamship lines. The mileage of the latter is not included in the figures mentioned. The object of the Association is to expedite the investigation and adjustment of claims for loss and damage to property in transit over two or more lines, and the settlement of claims for overcharge and terminal expenses, by the adoption of rules which are mandatory upon the members of the Association. In connection with the investigation of claims different methods of handling freight are suggested, and reports are made to the operating departments with a view of effecting a remedy, and subjects of this nature are brought up for discussion at the annual meetings of the Association. The various railways in the interim between the annual meetings correspond with the chairmen of the various committees, and a few months prior to the annual meeting there is a meeting of all the standing committees where this correspondence is gone over very carefully, and a recommendation made to the Association for consideration at the annual meeting. This has the object of very materially reducing the work of the members at the annual meetings, for the reason that the matters considered at the meetings of the standard committees are printed in pamphlet form and distributed to the members 30 days prior to the annual meeting, thus giving all members an opportunity of thoroughly looking into each question, and being prepared to intelligently discuss the subjects, based upon instructions they have received from the higher officers of their respective companies. There is an arbitration committee to which is referred all claims where carriers cannot agree upon a settlement, and the ruling of this committee is binding upon the members. There are also five standing committees, whose duties are confined to the following subjects: constitution and by-laws, loss and damage rules, overcharge rules, uniform blanks, car sealing devices. During the past year A. E. Rosevear, Freight Claim Agent of the G.T.R., was Chairman of the first-named committee, being the only representative of a Canadian railway holding office.

The Montreal meeting was of especial interest, being the first held in Canada, many of the members not having set foot in the Dominion before. It was largely attended. At the opening A. E. Rosevear introduced the Mayor of Montreal, who welcomed the members to the city.

J. Pullen, General Freight Agent of the G.T.R., being unable to be present at the

opening, sent a letter from which the following are extracts: "These international gatherings cannot be held too often for the good of the people on both sides of the line, because our ideas of each other and our respective countries are sometimes limited by a narrow vision owing to lack of contact. In precisely the same manner as the freight claim agents of all parts of the U.S. and Canada have banded together under this splendid organization to exchange ideas and formulate uniform practice for the more expeditious and satisfactory discharge of your duties, thus bringing the railway companies and their patrons into a better understanding each with the other, so these international gatherings serve to promote a better understanding between the people of these two neighboring countries. We all need this, and, therefore, you are the more welcome on that account. I should have been glad, as a traffic official, to have had an opportunity of saying a few words to you, and to congratulate you on the splendid work that you are doing. The railway service of to-day, in all branches of it, is calling loudly for the best talent that can be procured to conduct its intricate affairs. This is an age of specialists in the railway service as well as in commercial life. Few of us can expect to be ever adequately equipped with the experience and knowledge of details in all the manifold departments of railway work, but we can all hope to be the very best specialist in our chosen field. You have chosen the profession of freight claim agents, and I believe each one is trying to be the best in his profession. It is possible you may sometimes try to get the best of each other, but unless you succeed in a right cause, you do not deserve to experience the satisfaction that comes from labor well bestowed. Your traffic officers are high-minded men and expect you always to perform your duties in a strictly judicial and impartial manner. There are few branches of the service where one has greater opportunities for acquiring knowledge and practical experience than in the claims department, as you are brought into close contact with all classes of people, both in and out of the service, and with all conditions surrounding the transportation problem. A freight claim agent should have an even disposition, not be easily annoyed, yet having sufficient determination to firmly stand by the right. He should possess, not only a general knowledge of freight matters, but of the practice governing commercial life. He should be broad-minded enough to realize that the public have some rights which the railway companies should respect and be able to view his claims from all sides, before rendering a decision. He should be a diplomat as well, so that he may succeed in making a man believe that he has really done him a favor when obliged to decline his claim. He must have a clear discernment of human character, and be able to read men's minds, also their motives. He needs to have the capabilities of a judge on the bench, because he must have a knowledge of common law as well as transportation law, in order to keep his company out of expensive legal contests. In all these attributes you will, I am sure, strive to excel. The time has gone by when the merit of a freight claim agent is measured by his ability to bluff or bull-doze a claimant or a connecting line out of its just due, and his salary is not raised because he can show how much money he has saved his company by whatever means—fair or unfair. The freight claim agent ought to be not only one of the spending officers of the railway, but to be a large revenue producer as well, and so he surely will be if in his dealings with the public he is always fair and just, and courteous and considerate. I sometimes think the freight claim agent is a much-abused official, therefore I am glad to extend to you my sincerest sympathy in your work. Few are sub-

ject to such bitter revilings as a freight claim agent sometimes receives by letter from unreasonable claimants, and if he be at all sensitive, surely the discouragements must be many. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the claims work nowadays all over the country is being performed in what I might call a scientific manner. Claims are being adjusted with less expense to the railways, less friction with the public, and more expedition. I have read with deep interest your rules and proceedings from time to time, and have been impressed with the fairness shown throughout. It is too much to expect that each member will always agree with all the others, but it is nevertheless a matter of great satisfaction to find so unanimous a desire to stand on the decision of the majority. It is a safe rule to follow, the majority is usually right. Your traffic officials will always welcome any suggestions you make looking to an improvement in methods or results. The railway tonnage of the country is steadily increasing, and we may reasonably expect that the claim work is never going to grow less. Therefore, methods must be constantly improved to keep pace with the demands of the age."

During the first day the members attended strictly to business, but an entertainment was provided by the C.P.R., I.C.R. and G.T.R. for the ladies, including a drive round the city, visiting various points of interest. At 7.30 p.m. a trolley car ride round the mountain and city generally was enjoyed by all the members, including the ladies, and at 9.30 p.m. an informal reception was held in the ladies' ordinary of the Windsor hotel, which was very largely attended by Montreal railway men.

The session was continued on the second morning, and closed at 1 p.m., after which a drive to the top of the mountain was enjoyed, and an informal luncheon was tendered to the members by the city corporation, after which the party were driven to the G.T.R., and taken to Lachine by special train, then a trip down the rapids was very much enjoyed.

The discussions at the meetings related principally to the settlement of claims as between carriers. One of the most important features of the discussion was that relating to package freight checking over at various points without waybills, and the forwarding of same to marked destination. This action was taken with a view of saving delay to freight and consequent claims in connection therewith, and impresses upon shippers the importance of seeing that all less than car-load package freight is properly marked with either the name of the consignees in full or their initials and destination in full.

The following officers were elected:—President, J. J. Hooper, Freight Claim Agent Southern Ry., Washington, D.C. 1st Vice-Pres., A. E. Rosevear, Freight Claim Agent G.T.R., Montreal. 2nd Vice-Pres., W. S. Taylor, Freight Claim Agent, Hannibal and St. Joseph Rd., St. Louis, Mo. Sec.-Treas., W. P. Taylor, Traffic Manager Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Rd., Richmond, Va. The next meeting will be at Detroit, Mich.

The local committee of arrangements for the Montreal meeting comprised:—A. E. Rosevear, G.T.R., Chairman; J. E. Dalrymple, Central Vermont Ry.; T. Henry, R. & O. Navigation Co.; T. A. Riddell, C.P.R.; W. P. Hinton, Canada Atlantic, and A. L. Headburg. The ladies' committee were Mesdames J. E. Dalrymple, T. Henry, T. A. Riddell and A. E. Rosevear.

The G.T.R. in Michigan.—Since pg. 231 went to press, we are officially informed that there is no foundation for the report that the G.T.R. has secured an option on the Milwaukee, Benton Harbor and Columbus Ry.