

INTERNATIONAL NICKEL PLANT.

Considering the bad weather, much progress has been made on the new plant of the International Nickel Company at Port Colborne. On April 20th it was reported that with the exception of the power plant, the foundations were practically all in, the steel work on the main building was nearly completed, three of the smaller brick buildings were almost complete and with good weather and no labor troubles it is expected that the first nickel will be turned out in December of this year. The estimated cost of the completed refinery will be about \$4,000,000.

The plant is situated east of the entrance to the Welland Canal and consists of 350 acres, with a frontage of about one mile on Lake Erie. Transportation facilities are good, connection being established with the Grand Trunk and the Welland Canal may be utilized for the transportation of materials if necessary.

The entire construction is in the hands of the Foundation Company, Limited, Montreal, with whom the operating and engineering departments of the nickel company are co-operating, who have employed four hundred men during the winter and have made preparation to enlarge this number to one thousand this spring.

The initial output of the refinery will be 15,000,000 pounds of refined nickel a year, but provision has been made so that the capacity can be increased to two or even four times this amount, if necessary. The operating force will be about four hundred men. The two main stacks will be 350 feet high and 12 feet across the top, the whole resting on heavy concrete bases 40 feet square. Most of the supplies for the construction have been purchased in Canada, very little being imported.

In operation, the plant will consume 100,000 tons annually of bituminous coal, coke, cordwood, fuel oil, nitre cake, charcoal, silica, rock salt, soda ash, soda nitrate, sulphuric acid, fire clay and fire brick, in addition to the copper-nickel matte which will be supplied from the company's mines at Sudbury.

That every stage of nickel production should be carried out in Canada from the quarrying of the ore to the chemical and mechanical processes involved in making the scientific appliances and metal products which nickel alone can supply, is now the general conviction. This conviction is founded on the fact that roughly speaking eighty per cent. or more of the world's nickel is mined in Canada and the percentage is increasing rather than diminishing.

GRAND TRUNK'S FINANCIAL POSITION.

President E. J. Chamberlin, of the Grand Trunk System, speaking in regard to the government commission's report on the Canadian railway situation, said:—

"I have read the majority report of Sir Henry Drayton and Mr. W. M. Acworth, who with Mr. A. H. Smith, president of the New York Central Company, were appointed a special commission to examine the Canadian railway situation, I have not, however, seen the report of Mr. Smith, dissenting from the views of the other commissioners.

"I am extremely surprised at some of the statements made in the report with regard to the position of the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, which, with all respect to the commissioners signing the majority report, I am compelled to say are inaccurate and misleading. So far as that company is concerned, its credit at the present time is high and its financial position not at all as stated in the report.

"During the past five years the Grand Trunk has borrowed in New York for capital purposes over \$15,000,000, and had it not been for the war, which created abnormal conditions, further capital would have been procured and expended if prices had been satisfactory and deliveries could have been obtained.

"In view of statements contained in the report, and calculated to impair the credit of the company, I think it only just to the holders of Grand Trunk securities that they should be assured of the absolute safety of their investment.

"At a later date a full statement with regard to the company's position will be made."

TO DIRECT STEEL SHIPBUILDING.

Mr. W. I. Gear, of the Robert Reford Company, Montreal, has been appointed to take charge, under the Imperial Munitions Board, of steel merchant ship construction in Canada for the British government. Mr. Gear will establish an office at Ottawa and assume his new duties. It is understood that Sir Robert Borden on his return to Canada will at once take up the question of further stimulating shipbuilding in Canada.

MORE PAPER MILL ACTIVITIES.

The paper plant at Port Mellon, Howe Sound, established some years ago, but which has been idle for a long time, is being altered for the manufacture of kraft paper. The Rainy River Pulp and Paper Company has been organized by a syndicate of New York capitalists, headed by Mr. Robert Sweeny. Kraft paper will also be manufactured by the Pacific Mills Company, Limited, which has nearly completed its plant at Ocean Falls. A second and larger unit is now under construction directly across Link River from the present plant.

RAILWAY MATERIAL FOR FRANCE.

Another request for railway materials to construct roads behind the lines of the armies in France for use in the military operations on that front has been received by the Canadian government from the British authorities. This time enough rails to lay 300 miles of railway are required. These will be secured by dismantling a stretch of about 200 miles of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway where it parallels the Canadian Northern west of Edmonton.

BRITAIN MAY BUILD AT TORONTO EXHIBITION.

The Dominions Royal Commission have recommended in their fifth and final reports to the imperial government that that government should erect a building at the Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto. "We think," says the report, "that the governments of the other dominions might well follow suit in this respect, and that similar encouragement might be given to National Exhibitions in other parts of the Empire as soon as they have, by results, justified their existence in the same manner as has that at Toronto."

WINNIPEG ELECTRIC RY. CO.'S EARNINGS.

The annual report of the Winnipeg Electric Railway, just issued, shows a net surplus of \$445,251 for the year's operations, equal to 4.9 per cent. on the capital stock, compared with 5.5 per cent. the previous year. The gross earnings for 1916 were \$3,311,169, compared with \$3,663,895 for 1915 and \$4,101,302 for 1914. Operating expenses were \$1,939,041, compared with \$2,332,158 for 1915 and \$2,416,209 for 1914.

ENGINEERS' CLUB, PETERBOROUGH.

Mr. J. A. Shaw, of Montreal, chief electrical engineer of the C.P.R., delivered an illustrated lecture on "The Electrification of Steam Railways," before the Engineers' Club of Peterborough on Friday evening, May 11th. The lecture was preceded by a dinner at the Oriental Hotel.

R.U.V. CO. APPOINTS CANADIAN AGENTS.

The R. U. V. Co., 50 Broad St., New York City, announces that the Northern Electric Co., of Montreal, will hereafter have exclusive Canadian selling rights for Ultra-Violet Ray Water Sterilizers. These sterilizers have been installed for purifying water for municipalities, industrial institutions, residences, swimming pools, bottlers, breweries, etc.