

The Association should also find out what scholarships for mechanics, mathematics, &c., are given in each province, state or college for which our apprentices might compete, & publish them, special stress being laid upon the existing Master Mechanics' Scholarship at Stevens Institute.

The proposed science schools would not, of course, be confined exclusively to locomotive railroad apprentices. Apprentices from other shops who wished to join should be heartily welcomed on an equitable financial basis. Other organizations might wish to join in the plan of education, & should be encouraged to do so, but in the meantime the Master Mechanics' Association should go forward in the good work, & we, as its committee, should find out what ought to be done, what the railway companies are willing to do, & make the best recommendations within our power to further the highest interests of the apprentice, which no doubt lie in the direction of a scientific education side by side with careful training in the workshop.

Telephone vs. Railway.

The use of the long-distance telephone has diminished passenger travel on the railways. The extent of the loss suffered by the railways is not very well known & the importance of it is not admitted by all; but the newspapers have now & then given certain definite statements from well-informed men, & there can be no question that the value of the telephone is increasingly appreciated. Another bit of significant evidence, reported to us on good authority, is the statement of a railway officer that the business of one of the limited trains between New York & Chicago has been practically ruined by the telephone. This comes from the chief executive officer of "one of the lines interested," & as there are only 4 or 5 roads interested in these trains the reader can perhaps guess where the statement comes from.

This result is not very surprising. One of the definite objects had in view in putting on 25-hour trains between New York & Chicago was the accommodation of brokers & business men of Chicago & the Northwest, who demanded quick time. Their trips to New York were taken on occasions of utmost importance, when a little time meant thousands of dollars. By means of the "Limited" the broker or business man was taken to New York in the quickest possible way. He talked as fast as he rode & made an equally quick return to Chicago. The business man was willing to pay the price assessed for this development in rapid transit.

The patronage of people whose time was less valuable to them was not expected to contribute much to the income of these trains, so that their whole dependence was expected to be, & was, on two classes; the business men aforesaid & pleasure travellers to whom a few dollars extra was not a noticeable item. Then came the introduction of the long-distance telephone. People at first were slow in realizing its benefits. Slowly but surely they have, however, come to appreciate its significance. A broker or grain dealer in Chicago has in mind a "big deal;" he telegraphs to New York asking for certain information & adds: "Call me up by long-distance telephone & give me your answer." The result is that for 15 or 20 dollars a talk is held with the New York man. Having received the telegram he has had an opportunity to concentrate his expressions to the shortest possible statements; he has even jotted them down & at the proper time calls up his man & transacts his business. So it is done every day.

The railway president quoted said that in the past he had found it necessary to spend about 20 days of each month on the road, leaving but 10 days of his time at his office.

But now, by aid of the long-distance telephone, he has reversed matters; but 10 days are required on the road, giving him 20 days in the office. Half-a-dozen grain men who had been in the habit of making frequent trips between Chicago & New York said that for 3 or 4 dollars they could now transact business which formerly required a three-day trip.—*Railroad Gazette.*

Chapleau as a Railway Man.

Sir Adolphe Chapleau, who died last month, always had a great penchant for railways, & his name will for ever remain closely linked with the history of railways in Quebec. He was instrumental in building the North Shore & its branches, & after administering it for a time made it a part of the C.P.R. Mr. Dan-sereau, who was intimately connected with him in most of his railway enterprises, says:

"He has been the champion of railways in this country, & his eloquent word it was which revived in the Provincial Legislature the old subsidy to the North Shore Ry. & obtained one for the Northern Colonization Road, thus taking the original steps toward a national railway policy. He had his share in contributing to the success of these, financially, perilous enterprises; & he can boast of having directly brought about the building of 5 lines of railways, the Laurentides, the Pontiac, & the continuation of the St. Jerome, by his active & persistent co-operation, & the St. Eustache & Joliette roads, by his official & personal protection.

"In 1884, when the Ottawa Government seemed determined to refuse the Province of Quebec its just demands, regarding the debt contracted for the building of the North Shore Ry. as part of the C.P.R., almost all the Quebec contingent to the Federal Parliament begged him to take their lead in forcing the Government's hand. He had only a word to say (at least the probabilities authorize the statement) to hold the destiny of the Cabinet in his own hands; but he remained thoroughly loyal to Sir John Macdonald knowing that justice would be done in the end without violence."

Chapleau was very severely criticized for the manner in which he sold the North Shore Railway in two sections to the C.P.R. & to the Senecal Syndicate, refusing a much better offer made at the time by the Allan syndicate. It has been charged that this most valuable asset of the province was sacrificed, but his biographer in defending his act in this respect, says: "He it was who realized for the Province of Quebec \$8,000,000 by selling the North Shore Ry. This act, which has procured for him so many insults, will perhaps be his greatest title to glory, for it is a matter of public notoriety to-day that the C.P.R., which made the purchase, would be disposed to lose some millions upon the original price, could a purchaser be found. It is sufficient to read the reports which he published then as Minister of Railways to see how clearly he foresaw the construction of the Canada Atlantic & the Smith's Falls line of the C.P.R., two rival roads which reduced to a relative insignificance the old Q.M.O. & O. Ry."

Railways & Prairie Fires.

The most prolific cause of prairie fires, says the *Western Prairie*, published at Cypress River, Man., is the traction engines used for threshing. The burning of large piles of straw is another prolific source, for fire will remain for many days amongst the charred cinders ready to fly before a high wind, when the greatest danger is to be apprehended. The railway locomotives sometimes cause fires, but not very often, considering the number of trains that run at all hours on the various railways, even during the most windy

weather. Hunters, smokers & tramps start fires. There are fires kindled on purpose, fires by accident, & fires by carelessness. Some years ago the C.P.R. Co., knowing the dangerous & inflammable character of the natural covering of the prairie, attempted to have blue grass introduced all along their lines in Manitoba, & large quantities of seed were given free to those whose farms were near the roads. The season chanced to be dry, & the seed did not grow in a satisfactory manner, so the attempt failed. But the Co. was taking the only course that can ever be successfully adopted for the prevention of prairie fires; for until houses, barns, stacks, towns & railways are protected by fields of green grass that will not burn, danger will not be lessened or removed.

The Empire Route to China.

Sir George Baden-Powell writes: "Across the Atlantic & across Canada we have the straight & short route to China. Mr. Goschen, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, had the patriotic foresight to assist in establishing across the North Pacific an embryo line of British mail steamers connecting China & Japan with Canada. What is necessary now, & in view of the greater opening up of China, is that this service shall be improved into a regular weekly service. By this route already passengers, mails, & light goods pass between England & the far east all the way in British ships & through British territory. The route followed does not, like the Suez route, pass by the arsenals of a long series of possibly hostile Powers. Moreover, the route is a direct 'great circle' all the way in temperate latitudes, & has not to follow the sinuosities of the Mediterranean & Red Sea, or travel as far south as the equator at Singapore. It is calculated that with a 20-knot steamer service on the Atlantic & Pacific, & no more than the present speed on the great Canadian Pacific Ry., that the time of transit between Liverpool & Shanghai need not exceed 20 days. Thus the establishment of a first-class weekly service along this empire route would be of the most crucial value to our securing our fair share of the new development of China."

Liability to Pack Frogs.

The appeal of the defendants in the case of *Washington v. the G.T.R.* has been dismissed by the Imperial Privy Council. The case was brought by G. Washington, of Hamilton, Ont., who was employed in the Stuart St. freight yard, against the G.T.R. for damages for injuries received while shunting cars. He had his right arm so badly crushed that it had to be amputated. The case was tried before Justice Street & a jury in 1896, & a verdict was given for plaintiff for \$2,500 & costs. It was decided that the defendant had been guilty of negligence in not having the frog, where the plaintiff caught his foot, properly blocked or properly protected. The Court of Appeal reversed the verdict & dismissed the action with costs. Then the case was carried to the Supreme Court, when the decision of the Court of Appeal was set aside, & the verdict of \$2,500 restored. The G.T.R. carried the case to the Privy Council, desiring to have the ruling of the highest court on the liability of railway companies to pack frogs, the same point having been raised in the *Curran* case, in which the plaintiff got a big verdict.

A. H. Harris, ex-General Traffic Manager of the Canadian Government Ry. System, has been appointed Canadian Traffic Agent for the Fitchburg R.R., "The Hoosac Tunnel Route." This Co. operates 457 miles, its longest line being between Troy, N.Y., & Boston. The Fitchburg terminals at Boston are used by the Dominion Line steamships.