

Prominent Topics.

House of Lords Reform.

The debate on Premier Asquith's resolutions dealing with the veto power of the House of Lords, reveals a remarkable state of affairs in British politics. It shows a government just emerged from a general election groping and fumbling for a policy—any policy that will prolong for a few weeks its precarious existence. The party, which by courtesy Mr. Asquith is said to lead, has been aptly described as a conglomerate, and the Premier seems to have all he can do to keep in front of it, without pretending to give it direction. On the other hand there is no uncertainty about the position of the Unionists. Mr. Balfour declares bluntly that his party will take the first opportunity to repeal any measure restricting the veto power of the peers.

Montreal Exhibition. At a meeting of the Montreal Exhibition Association, held at the City Hall, on Tuesday, the following were elected as directors:

Mayor Guerin and Aldermen Ward, Monahan, Gauvin, Turcot, Leclair and L. A. Lapointe, to represent the city; Senator Beique, ex-Mayors Laporte, Ekers, and Wilson-Smith; Mr. Robert Bickerdike, M.P.; the Hon. J. D. Rolland, Colonel Labelle, Lieut.-Colonel Burland, Dr. Lalonde, Messrs. F. Robertson, O. S. Perreault, C. H. Catelli, Thomas Gauthier, Henry Miles, H. G. Elliott (G.T.R.), A. H. Harris (C.P.R.), W. G. Ross (M.S.R.), and N. Lachapelle.

A meeting of the board will be held on Monday next.

Railway Boom. Mr. James J. Hill, predicts that next fall and winter, the railways will experience the greatest traffic congestion in their history. No man of any prominence in the railway world makes more important or interesting predictions than Mr. Hill; but the people of this continent have learned by experience that he is the last man to "talk through his hat." He says that the railways ought to have about \$1,800,000,000 to spend annually for the next few years in catching up with the increasing demand for transportation facilities.

Earliest. Navigation on the Ottawa river will open on Monday, April 4th, the earliest opening in the history of Ottawa river navigation.

An encouraging sign of early navigation on the St. Lawrence is the fact that small vessels have already been moving about the river lower down.

Maritime Coal Railway Power Co. At the annual meeting of the Maritime Coal Railway & Power Company, the following were elected directors: Senator Mitchell, president; A. E. Dymont, Toronto, vice-president; N. Curry, Amherst, N.S.; William Ewing, E. Hanson, G. E. Mallory, Brockville;

Alex. McLaurin, Senator J. P. B. Casgrain, Aime Geoffrion, K.C., Montreal; Senator P. McSweeney, Moncton; H. J. Logan, K.C., Amherst.

As to a High Pressure Water System.

Some two years ago a Citizens' Committee was appointed to enquire into the question of the supply of water for protection against fire in Montreal. At that time there was only one aqueduct, and that an old one, for the purpose of supplying the water required; and this aqueduct was often so frozen in winter as to allow only a small supply of water to flow through.

A petition was prepared for signatures from proprietors of the West Ward, which was selected as the one in which to make a beginning, asking the City Council to take steps for the installation of a high pressure system.

Delay ensued, as the City Council decided that owing to the uncertainty of the wording of the Act of Parliament they could not act until they received the special authority of the Provincial Legislature.

The Board of Control has notified the Committee that they are now prepared to act. A great many changes have occurred, however, during the last two years. Owing to the exertions of the committee a second 12,000,000 gallon pump was ordered by the Council, making the pumping supply ample and giving sufficient reserve power to allow of one pump, or more, if necessary, being repaired at any time. The new, additional, covered-in aqueduct has also been finished by the Council, providing an ample water supply, the old aqueduct is now being greatly enlarged, and great improvements have been made in the Fire Brigade.

After consulting the Canadian Board of Fire Underwriters, the Committee is of the opinion that the high pressure system, while it would be needed should a conflagration occur, is not now a necessity in dealing with any ordinary fire. Under the changed conditions that now exist, the Committee expresses the view that it would be hardly fair to tax one ward for the installation of a high pressure system. Instead, they recommend that this, if considered necessary, should be done by the City Council at the expense of the whole city, and the system should be installed in all the business wards.

Montreal Charter. Too many bills are introduced into the Quebec Legislation every session affecting the public affairs of Montreal. There is always one presented by the city itself and that alone is one too many. These bills give opportunities to gentlemen with axes to slip in all kinds of amendments which are opposed to the public interest.