

**DANGER AND COST OF OVERHEAD WIRES.**

An object lesson was given recently as to the danger of overhead electric wires and the cost they are liable to entail. A youth passing through the Berri tunnel in this city, which runs from Craig St. under Notre Dame St. to the wharves, inadvertently grasped a loose electric wire, by which act he was seriously maimed for life. Suit for damages resulted in a verdict against the company defendant for \$3,500. During the hearing Judge Curran strongly condemned the stringing of wires where they are liable to create accidents of a very serious nature. Mr. Charles Mortan, manager of the Central Electric Company, is reported to have said in regard to such incidents as the above:

"Wires carrying 10,000 volts, practically unprotected, as he claims is the case with those in some parts of the city, is an infernal nuisance and an element of great danger.

"If," said he, "we had a storm like we had some fifteen years ago, when poles and wires were wrecked on McGill street, I don't know what would happen. Some of the wires are a menace to the public. In some parts of the city, protection against high voltage is afforded by a 'cradle,' but in other parts the full current runs through the wires.

"The whole system of transformers," he continued, "is a dangerous one, and the protection afforded represents about three sheets of paper."

The fire underwriters, he remarked, had been looking up the matter of unprotected high voltage, and they were going into it pretty soon in a somewhat strong way. He recommended that all wires be placed in conduits, this being the only really safe way, and expressed the opinion that it should be made compulsory to protect the public. The city should construct conduits, and rent them to companies desirous of using them.

**HOME LIFE ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.**

The absorption of the People's Life Insurance Company, by the Home Life marks another event in this era of amalgamations by which companies seek to still further strengthen their resources. By this mark the Home Life have added to its insurance in force at 31st December last, over \$2,500,000 and to its premium income some \$69,000 making the former over \$6,500,000, and the premium income \$200,000.

The Hon. J. R. Stratton becomes president of the Home Life, Mr. J. S. King retaining the Vice-Presidency. Mr. J. K. McCutcheon becomes managing director, and Mr. J. S. Kirby, secretary, with a good directorate.

THE LONDON AND LANCASHIRE is reported to have been fined by the Western Union for violating the commission rule at Detroit.

**QUERIES' COLUMN.**

In order to furnish our readers with information we propose to devote this column to replies to correspondents. Letters should be addressed to "THE CHRONICLE, Enquiry Department, Montreal."

Answers will only be given to such communications as bear the writer's name, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and only to questions referring to matters of general interest in regard to which the Editor of Queries' Column will exercise his own discretion.

1405.—R. C. J. Napanee. Your broker will attend to the collection of the dividends on stock you are carrying on margin and will credit your account with them on the day the dividends are paid. During the period that a stock is selling ex-dividend the amount of the dividend, although as yet unpaid, is always considered as so much additional margin.

1406.—G. O. B., Charlottetown, P.E.I. During the year 1904 there were sales of 114,197 shares of Canadian Pacific on the Montreal Stock Exchange, the highest price for the year was 136 in October and the lowest was 109¼ in March.

**CANADIAN RAILWAY ACCIDENT INSURANCE COMPANY.**

Mr. James Balfour, formerly special agent of the company, has been appointed superintendent of agencies, west of Winnipeg. Mr. Balfour is one of the oldest agents in the employ of the company, and has been very successful as a field worker.

**CASUALTY INSURANCE IN CANADA, 1904.**

The report of the Superintendent of Insurance for Canada covers statements of the business companies which transact various classes of casualty business other than accident insurance.

The business of sickness insurance has been carried on by 1 American, 4 British and 5 Canadian companies. Four of the companies combine it with accident insurance, four with guarantee and accident insurance, one with accident and plate glass insurance, and one with accident and steam boiler insurance. It appears, however, that sickness insurance not in combination or in conjunction with accident risks has been carried on only to a very limited extent, and returns of the premiums received in respect thereof and losses paid, etc., have not been made to the insurance department.

The business of plate glass insurance was transacted by 2 Canadian (one of which combined it with accident insurance) and 2 American companies. The companies, having adopted the system of insurance by replacement, instead of paying the value