

is about 1,000, of which three-fourths are supplied with telephones, and the demand, said the witness, for service "is greater than we can supply, and this without any canvassing."

The evidence submitted to the committee merely shows the necessity of setting free the long distance lines from monopolistic control, and making sure that there shall be no discrimination in regard to the right of all telephone users to connect with the offices of railway and transportation companies.

Much more evidence has to be heard, including that of the Bell Telephone Company, and we have no doubt from the manner in which the select committee is conducting the enquiry, that whatever policy is decided upon the result will be in the interest of the general public, and the telephone business will be relieved from the disabilities which now exist under the "Bell" monopoly. If the Government decides to own the long distance telephone lines, leaving free play to local enterprise and local control, the reform would gain to Canada an ideal service, and at the same time would bring to the Government a new source of income which would increase in importance as this greatest of all modern means of communication extends throughout the Dominion.



It is now apparent that the ice-breaking steamer *Montcalm* has not accomplished what she was expected to do in breaking up the ice of the St. Lawrence, and thus opening that great ocean avenue before Nature chooses to unlock the gate. The first attempt of the *Montcalm* resulted in the breaking of several of her propeller blades. After repairs she steamed out to attack the ice at Cap Rouge, seven miles above Quebec, but this was found to be about twenty-five feet deep, and the vessel had not sufficient depth of hull to cut a complete channel. After working some time she became stuck in the ice and it was several days before she was released. From the interviews of our representatives with captains of river boats and ferry steamers at Quebec, these river men evidently think it impossible to effect an earlier opening of navigation by means of these ice breakers. Russia has succeeded with ice breaking problems, however, in spite of similar predictions of failure, and the Minister of Marine is to be admired for his determination to see the test more thoroughly made, and not to accept mere prophecies of failure as the final word.



The past month has demonstrated the success of the two new turbine steamers of the Allan line, the *Victorian* and the *Virginian*, the first of the regular ocean liners to adopt the turbine principle of propulsion. The *Turbinia*, of Hamilton, placed in service on Lake Ontario last year, was the first vessel of that type to ply on the Great Lakes, and thus it falls to the honor of Canadian ship owners to be the pioneers of the turbine steamer in the western world. It is now ten years since the original *Turbinia*, a vessel of 100 feet, appeared in the Solent to astonish the world by doing her 34½ knots an hour. She was regarded as a freak by the majority of marine engineers, who had come to regard all types of rotary engines as among the impractical things; but it was not long before the steam turbine was shown to be even better adapted to large vessels and long voyages than the small craft, and the success of channel turbine boats, culminating

in the achievements of the *Victorian* and *Virginian*, ships of 12,000 tons, places the turbine engine in the front rank of marine engines of the present day. The last-named made the record voyage from Liverpool to Halifax, namely, in six days and eighteen hours, though she had been delayed somewhat by ice. One day's run was 403 miles. The *Victorian* was delayed much by fog and bad weather, but in both cases the engineers, captains, and passengers were convinced of the success of the vessels, the passengers in particular being delighted with the smooth running of the ships, and the absence of all vibration. It is just half a century—or to give the exact date, 1856—since the Allan Brothers started running steamers to Montreal with vessels of such primitive types as the *Canadian*, of only a few hundred tons, after carrying on trade with Canada for years in sailing vessels only. The Allan steamer *Hibernian*, which was sent out to Montreal in 1861, was the first Atlantic steamer with a promenade deck extending from stem to stern, affording protection to the deck houses. As these ventures were considered bold ones in those days so the present advance is an evidence of courage and foresight characteristic of the company, which has been so intimately associated with the progress of Canadian trade in the past half century. That the present directors of the Allan line appreciate the identity of interest which has led it to keep step with the development of the country is evident from the sentiments of Nathaniel Dunlop, senior member of the company, who, in the course of a speech at a luncheon at Liverpool before the *Victorian* sailed, said: "Canada has to bide its time, but I have the most absolute confidence that the day is coming, and is not far distant, when its trunk lines of railway will connect with a great terminal port nearer the open ocean than the existing one in the St. Lawrence, and then Canada will become the great highway of the American continent, and its ocean route will be unequalled for speed and comfort."



The troubles of the town of Napanee have served to set forth in a very strong light the extent to which a community may be made to suffer under the *Commee Act of Ontario* when a private company chooses to avail itself of every coign of vantage which that Act gives it in dealing with municipalities. The Act was intended to prevent a city or town from "confiscating" the property of a private company in the process of expropriation, and the framers of it have certainly succeeded in fortifying themselves against that contingency. It is a question whether they have not overshot the mark, as private corporations that deal with public franchises are apt to do, when the Act enables an enfranchised private company to play the dog in the manger to the extent of refusing to give service, and yet preventing a town from serving the citizens on its own account. By the sketch of the Napanee case given in another part of this issue it is apparent that grave mistakes were made in the designing of each of the three plants, and no one of them could have been reorganized without a loss. None of them paid dividends, and what the owners wanted was that the town should pay for the loss entailed by these errors of judgment. And when the town refused to be "held up" the company simply shut off its lights and power, and left the citizens to coal oil lamps and lanterns. When the town proposed arbitration, the company replied in the lan-