

VANCOUVER HARBOR COMMISSIONERS

The Vancouver Board of Harbor Commissioners has been reorganized with the appointment of Lieut.-Col. G. H. Kirkpatrick as chairman, Major A. R. Mackenzie and Mr. Samuel McClay. The first two mentioned are engineers and will take the places of Messrs. F. L. Carter-Cotton and James Fullerton, who retire. Mr. McClay continues on the board.

THE SOLDIERS' RE-ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

Sir Thomas White, whose statements regarding the national finances before the Soldiers' Re-establishment Committee of the House of Commons were reported in *The Monetary Times* last week, also reviewed the position he, as Minister of Finance, had taken with reference to vocational training and other measures. "It seems to me," he said, "that the attitude of the government has been of a very generous character with regard to the matter of gratuities. I know I was desirous, and I think all the members of the government were desirous, that so far as pensions were concerned they should be placed upon as fair a basis as possible, that the disabled men should be well taken care of, and that every effort should be made by the government to re-establish in civil life the man who went overseas. With regard to the gratuity, when that matter came up, the amount being a very large one, naturally it was given very close attention by myself as well as by other members of the government. So far as I know it is the largest gratuity, by far, which has been given by any of the nations engaged in the war. Now, I am very glad of that. I think the country can afford not only to be just but to be generous in regard to the returned men. I have always held the view myself that to the extent that it is necessary the government should not hesitate to expend in this last year, which, as I have said, is a war-year, such amount as is necessary to prevent hardships and to enable the men to get re-established in civil life.

"The principle of the gratuity now asked for has not appealed to me. It is indiscriminate; it applies to all; and in my judgment—and I am only putting forward my own views—the amount is so great, having regard to the general financial condition of the treasury, that I was quite unable, as minister of finance and acting-premier at the time, to see that the government should consider it favorably. That was my view about it then, and it is my view now."

Following upon the statements of Sir Thomas White, R. W. Breadner, Commissioner of Taxation, gave evidence on October 9th, as to the possibilities of further taxation. He thought it would be better if the income tax rates were made lower in Canada than in the United States, because capital and immigration are essential to this country. Mr. Breadner stated his belief that if the income tax had been in effect from the beginning of the war the revenue would not have been increased by twenty million dollars. He also said that a wrong impression existed as to the number of really wealthy men in Canada, there being fewer than most people supposed.

Several witnesses were called from industrial concerns which had employed men taking vocational training. Among these witnesses were W. G. Ellis, general manager of P. W. Ellis & Co., Ltd., manufacturing jewellers, Toronto; G. M. Wilson, superintendent of motive power, Grand Trunk Railway; R. W. Gifford, superintendent of the Toronto works of the Massey-Harris Co.; C. Kyle, of the Angus shops of the C.P.R.; F. T. Downs, assistant to the general superintendent of the Toronto Carpet Co. In practically every case the Canadian system was highly approved.

The Quebec Court of Appeal a few days ago upheld a decision of the Superior Court against the General Fire Insurance Company of Paris, to the effect that the use of gasoline in a boathouse was not a violation of the clause which prohibited gasoline being taken into the insured premises. The court held that this was unavoidable.

NEWSPRINT PROBE AGAIN POSTPONED

The investigation of the paper controller, R. A. Pringle, K.C., into the price of newsprint was resumed on October 9th, but was immediately adjourned to a later date, probably about six weeks hence. The adjournment was on account of the official of the government, Geoffrey Clarkson, not having completed his re-examination of the books of the mills bringing the late costs up to date. It was stated that at least another six weeks would be required before these figures could be gathered and placed in presentable form. The reason for the re-examination of the books is to determine the manufacturing costs for different periods, other than that dealt with, from July 1st to November 30th, 1918, by the Judges of the Paper Control Tribunal, who fixed a price for that period at \$66 per ton. A new order of the controller has ordered the continuation of the \$69 price for the remainder of October. The adjournment was made with the consent of counsel for both sides. During the brief session it was intimated that in the event of A. E. Sharpe, auditor for the paper manufacturers being able to secure further figures, the case of the differentials between the mills will be dealt with during the interval.

MUST REIMBURSE MANITOBA GOVERNMENT

Thomas Kelly and Sons, contractors, must pay \$1,207,351 to the Manitoba government, according to a decision of the Manitoba Court of King's Bench, issued on October 3rd. This is by way of refund for over-payments made on account of work done on the new legislative buildings. The history of the action brought against Thos. Kelly by the government dates back to the session of the public accounts committee in March, 1915, when the present government was in opposition. The opposition headed by Premier T. C. Norris and Hon. A. B. Hudson, demanded a Royal Commission to investigate the charges of graft made in connection with the construction of the buildings in the legislative chamber, and the latter staked his reputation that \$800,000 had been wrongfully paid to Thos. Kelly. The day before prorogation the Roblin government announced the appointment of a Royal Commission to be headed by Chief Justice Mathers, and while the commission was in session the government resigned. The Norris administration assumed the reins of government in May, 1915. The Royal Commission found that Thos. Kelly had been overpaid, presumably some \$800,000. There followed criminal suits against the ex-ministers and the civil action against Kelly for the recovery of the money.

The first hearing of the case resulted in a judgment that an appraisal board should be established to fix the amount of money that had been wrongfully paid. This board reported on May 25th, 1917, fixing the amount at \$1,207,351. An application to appeal against the decision of this board was then made, and was denied in the judgment just issued. The board of appraisal appointed under the first judgment given by Justice Curran was composed of S. C. Oxtun, deputy minister of public works, representing the provincial government; H. J. Burt, of Chicago, representing Thos. Kelly, and R. H. MacDonald, architect, of Montreal, as umpire. The purpose of the board was to come to an agreement as to the exact amount of money that had been wrongfully paid to Thos. Kelly, which decision under the judgment would form the amount that would have to be refunded by Kelly to the provincial government.

A transportation commission was a short time ago appointed in Toronto to consider taking over the street railway in 1921. It has now presented a report recommending the appointment of a committee of six members to formulate a policy for the purchase, and to run the railway when it is taken over. The members of the committee, the report states, should be the mayor, the finance commissioner, and representatives of labor, the Board of Trade, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and the Hydro-Electric Commission.