

Alberta provincial government and others interested allowed their province to become the playground of financiers and company promoters. One, Mr. W. R. Clarke, hailed from Missouri, a State which requires demonstration before action. Its proverbial expression, "Show me," might have been adopted by Premier Rutherford and his colleagues before committing themselves to an important enterprise such as a railroad for colonization and development purposes.

Here is a sample of the childlike business methods employed. The only material the members of the provincial government had on which to form an opinion, other than official documents, was that furnished by Mr. Clarke and his friends. Though the premier and the attorney-general at least had known for months that an application for financial assistance would be made to the government as soon as surveys had been completed, they took no steps to have a survey made or to obtain any reliable information as to the cost of building the railway. They had nothing to rely upon except such evidence as might be submitted by persons who were seeking an advantage, and who were almost absolute strangers. The only evidence submitted by the attorney-general were reports and estimates by colleagues of Mr. Clarke, the Kansas City financier, "all of which," says the Royal Commission's report, "appear to have been prepared for this purpose, and were misleading, unreliable, and in many respects absolutely false." Indeed, what was furnished to the provincial government as a copy of a certain report has the figures raised in several instances, indicating an even greater cost.

When it came to a question of interest on the bonds, Premier Rutherford fixed it at five per cent. In reply to criticisms, he stated the usual rate recently had been 4 per cent., but his decision in this case was because it was a pioneer road, and had to go on the market in competition with roads that were guaranteed to run through prairie country, easy country, settled country. That may be so, but, as the commissioners remark in their report, it is "a very poor reason for making the annual fixed charge against it one-quarter greater."

The commission's report appears to get near the heart of the matter when it discusses the provincial government's relations with Mr. Clarke. The evidence shows that in 1908, when encouragement or assistance by way of a bond guarantee was given to Mr. Clarke, an absolute stranger from the United States, who had no interest whatever in Alberta, only a few months had elapsed since the Athabasca syndicate, composed almost entirely of Western Canada men, had been refused any assistance, although they had asked only for a small bond guarantee.

The commission's report does not charge anyone with dishonesty, but the report lacks a homily which might well have been given. The commissioners were unable, in the absence of Mr. Clarke as a witness, to estimate his personality or persuasive powers. These assets were of great advantage to Mr. Clarke, on whose behalf much anxiety was shown that the least possible publicity should be given to the legislation effecting the railway company's incorporation. The outcome reveals a well-defined lacking of business acumen on the part of the provincial government representatives who matched intellects with that of Mr. Clarke, of Kansas City. The railway bonds have been sold. Mr. Clarke has drawn his profit. He now has the pleasure of seeing the railroad scheme collapse, obliterating the cabinet and badly blotting the credit of Alberta province, and in propor-

tion, the credit of the Dominion. How can we hope to encourage the flow of British and foreign capital to this country in the face of such extraordinary exhibitions of infantile business methods?

THE BENCH MARKS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

The reports of the United States Geological Survey show that since 1897, when Congress authorized the work of determining elevation above sea level and the setting of bench marks, over 200,000 miles of spirit levelling have been run by that bureau alone, in connection with which more than 24,000 substantial metal bench marks have been set.



Fig. 1.

Bench Mark Tablets Used by Geological Survey.

One of the types of bench marks used by the survey is shown in the illustration. The tablet is $3\frac{3}{4}$ -in. in diameter with a stem 3-in. long. They have been cast of brass, aluminum, and recently of aluminum bronze, and are used whenever substantial masonry structures, large boulders, solid rock, and rock or cement posts are available. Drill holes are made for the stems, which are fastened therein with cement.

NEW INCORPORATIONS.

Alexandria, Ont.—Eastern Pipe & Construction Co., \$50,000; E. J. Mullaly, F. H. Mackay, F. M. Carbray.

Guelph, Ont.—J. & A. McHardy Co., \$100,000; J. McHardy, A. McHardy, W. E. Buckingham.

Trenton, Ont.—Loomis-Morden Cooperage Company, \$30,000; C. Loomis, Armada, Mich.; H. B. Loomis, W. A. Morden, Trenton.

Montreal, Que.—G. H. Anson & Co., \$50,000; E. Languedoc, C. G. Greenshields, E. R. Parkins. Canadian Mono-Rail Car Corporation, \$2,000,000; L. A. David, J. H. Brittle, J. J. Robson. Bishop Construction Co., \$500,000; R. C. McMichael, R. C. McMurty, F. G. Bush. Mercantile Lumber & Supplies Co., \$50,000; P. E. Brown, E. E. Kent, Ste. Anne de Bellevue; P. Deslauriers, Montreal. Tooke Bros., \$600,000. W. J. White, A. W. P. Buchanan, J. H. Dillon. St. George Dillon, \$50,000; L. Barry, E. A. Barnard, E. D. Maguire. Mexican Mahogany & Rubber Corporation, \$1,000,000; L. Barry, E. A. Barnard, E. D. Maguire. Imperial Engineering Company, \$100,000; J. J. Creelman, A. Jodoin, C. S. LeMesurier. Brinton Carpet Co., \$350,000; R. O. McMurtry, F. G. Bush, G. R. Drennan. Ogilvy Engineering Co., \$10,000; R. F. Ogilvy, J. A. T. Richards, R. Genest.