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THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND AMALGAMATIONS. **T**HE Public Utilities Commission has a good opportunity at the present time to justify its existence. If some of the mergers now looming so large in the public eye do not call for its investigation and intervention it might be well for it to explain for what purpose it exists. If concerns can pay dividends on such immense capitalizations it is only reasonable to infer that the public are paying very much higher for services rendered by companies in the enjoyment of public franchises than the actual cost of such services warrants. Of course it must be admitted that this has been an exceptionally rainy summer, which may account for some stocks getting well watered.

ST. JAMES STREET OBSTRUCTIONS. **Y**OU cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs and you cannot have city improvements without some temporary inconveniences to the public. These inconveniences, however, can be and should be minimized. The condition of St. James Street at the corner of St. Francois Xavier Street just now is about as bad as anything ever seen in the way of obstruction, even in Montreal. The smaller street is absolutely closed for pipe laying and the bigger one is half closed on account of two big buildings being in course of erection opposite each other. That the situation is a difficult one is obvious, and the contractors must be credited with a desire to do everything in their power to make things as little uncomfortable as possible for the great number of people who have to use the street. One thing that might be done in the interests of public safety is to minimize and severely control the traffic on that section of St. James Street. Many heavy carts are driven along the street, that might just as well take some other route, and while some automobilists, who happen to be gentlemen, show a decent regard for the safety of pedestrians, there are many who are not entitled to that rank and act accordingly. The "cad on casters" is with us once more and should get a good deal of attention from the police. Pedestrians have no choice but to use the roadway and have the first legal right to its use. No doubt it is great fun for the rich—and others—who ride in gasoline chaises, to make us poor people run like — well, like chickens on the Dorval road; but the sport needs regulating and restricting.

LORD BRASSEY ON ANGLLO-CANADIAN TRADE. **A**T the meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce at Leeds this week Lord Brassey described his recent trip to Canada and Newfoundland and discussed the tariff question. He expressed the opinion that it would be in vain for Great Britain to look for the open door into the Canadian markets, because the Canadian manufacturers are unable, as yet, to compete with the huge factories of the United States; or with the skilled factory labour of the United Kingdom. The distinction here made is suggestive. Bigness is one thing and greatness is another and each may be good in its way. Canada needs to build up its manufacturing industries by importing the best available skilled labour, both male and female and by the technical education of its own people of both sexes. It is really in the best interests of the unskilled workmen of Canada to bring in the most skilled workmen of other countries. That is how the manufacturing industries of England, the greatest in the world, were built up; and the poorest and most inefficient mechanic in the country is the better off for this policy. On this continent we have deliberately adopted the policy of excluding the class of immigrants most needed to advance the interests of Canadian labour by improving the standard of production. In the Province of Quebec there is a belated recognition of this fact; and Sir Lomer Gouin is entitled to infinite credit for his courageous attempt to make up for our exclusive disposition by the liberal encouragement of technical education. There are some things that can be grown better in Canada than anywhere else in the world, besides snowballs; and there is no reason why Canadian labour should be inferior to any labour in the world. But we need the best of models to imitate and the best of workmen to emulate.

FORT WAYNE AND WABASH DISASTER. **T**HE accident on the Fort Wayne and Wabash Valley electric railway, is the most serious railway accident that has occurred for many years. Through the usual misunderstanding of orders, two cars, crowded with passengers and travelling at a high rate of speed, came into collision. As a result, forty-two passengers were killed and seven seriously injured. The cars met on a curve, where the motormen could not see each other until it was too late to apply