

These calculations, of course, are rough and go on the assumption that the weight of the material remains the same through all the process.

\* \* \* \*

MAYOR DUNNE OF CHICAGO seems to have gone back on himself in regard to public ownership. He first advocated this system, then, after interviews with Mr. Dalrymple, of Glasgow, he saw how unfit were the corporations on this side to have control of public enterprises, and now he is back again to his original opinion. He considers that all corruption would be removed were all public services, as railways, telegraphs, telephones, street cars, gas supply, electric lighting placed in the hands of municipal corporations.

Recent events do not support this view. The United States Post Office has had a corruption scandal of great magnitude, so has the Printing Bureau, so the Statistical Department, while no less than thirteen municipal officers, and one Senator are in jail for having committed corrupt acts in connection with public enterprises.

Such a record gives small encouragement to the proposal to give municipal corporations the control of public utilities. A private company managed in the interest of stockholders is the least open to corrupt influences. Business transactions are conducted under the eyes of the shareholders, so that irregularities are almost certain to be detected and exposed. The fear of this is an effective deterrent on the salaried officials.

\* \* \* \*

UNITED STATES RAILWAY STATISTICS.—The annual report of the United States Interstate Commission gives the length of American railways as 297,073 miles, owned by 2,104 companies. The par value of the railway capital on June 30, 1904, was \$13,213,124,670, which represents a capitalization of \$64,265 per mile. Of this capital \$6,330,800,320 was stock, of which \$5,050,520,460 was common, and \$1,280,360,860 preferred. The remainder was made up of \$5,746,808, mortgage bonds, \$723,114,806 miscellaneous obligations; \$220,876,687 income bonds, and \$173,334 equipment obligations. The current liabilities for the year were \$881,628,720, or \$4,288 per mile.

Of the total capital stock \$2,606,472,010 paid no dividends. The average dividend paid in dividend paying stock was 6.00 per cent.

The gross earnings in 1904 were \$1,975,174,001 an increase of \$74,327,184 over previous year. The operating expenses were \$81,357,401 in excess of 1903.

The number of passengers carried was 715,410,682. The freight carried was 1,300,800,165 tons. Both classes of traffic showed large increase over previous year.

## PERSONALS.

THE NEW AUDITOR GENERAL.—A pleasing event took place in the Finance Department recently, being the presentation of a handsome silver salver to Mr. John Fraser, who for thirty years has been identified with the department, and who recently left to assume the responsible position of auditor-general. The presentation was made by Captain Boville, acting deputy minister on behalf and in the presence of the staff of the department. Mr. Fraser responded in happy and most appropriate terms.

## Notes and Items.

### AT HOME AND ABROAD.

OTTAWA CLEARING HOUSE.—Total for week ending August 10, 1905—Clearings, \$1,904,973; corresponding week last year, \$2,338,043.

THE RUSSIAN CENSUS.—The results of the census of the Russian Empire, taken eight years ago, have just been published for the first time and give the total population of Russia at 125,680,682 inhabitants, of whom 62,512,698 are men and 63,167,984 women.

The number of illiterates is returned at 99,070,436, or 79 per cent. of the population.

As to the several classes, the monijks (or peasants), are numbered at 96,896,548, and the middle classes at 13,286,392 persons, while the members of the nobility are given as 1,850,285.

The clergy of all denominations number 588,947 men and of Cossacks there are 2,928,842.

TRAMS AND TRAINS.—A keen competition exists in the Black Country Staffordshire, England, between trams and trains. The railway managers are making many alterations and extensions in their train services. The Sunday and week-day service of trains is being extended on all lines, and motor cars are being employed to afford increased travelling facilities. Branch lines, upon which, up to the present time, there has been no Sunday traffic, are being opened, and more important departures are expected. The railway companies are said to be contemplating the provision of stages along their routes, so that passengers may be picked up and put down between the stations. To these and other changes the railways must conform if they are to get their share of traffic. Meanwhile, our Scottish companies are allowing the tramways to cut them out, and the securing of the diverted traffic again will become increasingly difficult as time goes on.

FIRES IN JAPAN.—Mr. Marshall P. Wilder describes what happens when a fire occurs in Japan. Fires are industriously looked for by public officials in high towers all over the city. These men ring a bell when they see a blaze; then every one who hears the bell gets out of bed—which merely requires arising from a mat on the floor—and proceeds not to run to the fire, but from it, if it is near his own house; and to make assurance doubly sure he carries all his household goods and gods with him. It isn't a big job, for almost any Jap except of the higher classes can carry all his belongings, especially if he has wife and children to help him, for "light housekeeping" reaches the dignity of an art in Japan.

Whenever I heard fire bells I looked for the engines,