

## AS SEEN BY OTHERS

### Why?

**The News.**—When the City Engineer declares that a certain type of boiler is not the kind required for the pumping station, why should Council insist on shouldering it on the department?

### Noise in Subways.

**Inventive Age.**—Investigations are being made to decrease the noise made by trains in subways. The reflection of the sound waves from the walls causes a deafening roar, unpleasant alike to travelers and to those in the vicinity. One chief cause of the noise is the friction of the wheels on the rails, especially on curves. A remedy for this has been found in replacing vehicles on fixed trucks by long cars on bogie trucks. Mufflers are also to be installed on rails and wheels, which are the principal sources of vibration. The shaking of the earth itself is to be deadened by the use of asphalt instead of concrete foundations, and the walls of the tunnels are likewise to be coated with asphalt, which has the property of absorbing sound. It is also suggested that the wheels should be made of disks, separated by some deadening substance such as wood, papier-mache or rubber.

### The Bonus System.

**The Mail and Empire.**—That the time has come when the offering of money to industries to move from this place to that should cease everybody must admit. The plan creates uncertainty, and its results are seldom what are expected.

### The Factor of Safety in Structural Design.

**The Practical Engineer.**—As our knowledge with regard to the nature of the stresses in materials of construction increases, the so-called factor of safety will become a much more definite quantity. At present it is a combined factor of safety and ignorance, and when we design a mild-steel structure with a working stress of 7 tons per square inch, and say that the factor of safety is 4, we do not really mean that four times the estimated load could ever occur, or that it is necessary to allow for such a large increase in load. It is necessary, however, to use such a factor in order to make ample allowance for emergencies due to additional loads and also to additional stresses that we do allow for in our calculations.

### Swallowing a Camel.

**Electrocraft.**—The old saying about straining hard at a gnat and complacently swallowing a camel seems to find some application in the existing situation in the inspection field. New installations, which, generally speaking, have but few serious defects, are religiously inspected, whereas old installations, which frequently reek with horrors are, as a rule, calmly ignored; and all the while inspection bureaus and underwriters' associations and electrical committees take on airs of vast importance and beat the official tom-toms with great vigor.

One feels that the situation logically calls for tears, but there is such a delicious touch of human nature in it all that amusement usurps the deeper feeling. But the humor of it should not be allowed to conceal the fact that we have been making a terrible fuss over the inspection of new, and relatively safe, work and cheerfully forgetting that the real seriousness of the electrical fire hazard is mostly to be found in old and decayed installations.

### Quebec's Wants.

**The Quebec Chronicle.**—There are four things more particularly important to Quebec in this stage of her history. These four things are, first the construction of a graving dock sufficiently wide and capacious to accommodate

the naval leviathans of modern days; secondly, the infusion of new blood into the Harbor Commission, and its reorganization on a similar basis to that of the Harbor Commission in Montreal; thirdly, the equipment of the harbor with wharves and freight sheds, elevators, cranes, and all the requisite paraphernalia that go toward making a first-class port, such as it is fitted to become by its natural advantages; and fourthly a thoroughly friendly and satisfactory understanding with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

### The Cause Of It All.

**The Monetary Times.**—The change in the aspect of things is partly due to the prevalence of extravagance during the times of prosperity, and to the present wave of economy during equally as good times. The careless, spending spirit of the past largely accounts for the tendency of the present to think twice before spending. Really easy money may not be this year. Probably during March, April, and May a slight loosening of the purse-strings will be observed. When thoughts of the harvest are in mind, Western Canada will have the ear and coin of the East. During the present trifling setback neither panic, fiasco, nor anything of that ilk has occurred.

### Plant Trees.

**The Brockville Times.**—What is Canada doing to preserve its forest wealth? For many years we have advocated the formation of a strong Department of Forestry at Ottawa which will not only preserve what is left of Canadian forests but will also carry on a vigorous system of tree-planting with a view to the future.

Furthermore, tree-planting ought to be encouraged from one end of Canada to the other in town, village and country. Let us have plenty of trees. They are good for the land, good for the eye, good for the mind, and last—and least—they are direct revenue producers.

### Railways Ask Fair Play.

**The Railway World.**—Hardly a week passes that some railway official does not in an address or interview bring forcibly before the minds of the producers and shippers, the baneful influence of restrictive railway legislation not upon the railroads, who have ceased their useless appeals for sympathy, but upon the shippers, the class which has inspired the attacks upon transportation interests. . . . The railroads do not ask what is unreasonable. They only demand to be allowed to earn the same rate upon their investment that is freely accorded to all other classes of business. If this permission is given them, they stand ready to do their part in the industrial development of the State.

### The New Rector.

**The Times.**—In appointing Professor Bovey, F.R.S., Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science in the McGill University, Montreal, to the responsible position of rector of the Imperial College of Science and Technology, the governors of that institution have taken a bold step, but one for which there is ample justification, as we believe will be proved by results. . . . Professor Bovey has shown not only that he can impress influential and wealthy citizens and corporations with the advantages of advanced scientific training, but that he can also successfully organize the extensive resources provided by the liberality of such donors. Moreover, Professor Bovey's appointment to the newly-established rectorship has a wide and Imperial significance, which alone is commendable. This appointment may, therefore, be welcomed both from the practical and from the sentimental point of view, and the governors may be congratulated on having taken a step which should advance the Imperial College a stage further along the difficult path towards the realization of the high ideal which its well-wishers have imagined for it.

### Mr. Sothman's Position.

**The Hamilton Herald.**—In the circumstances the Herald can see no reason for accusing Mr. Sothman of dishonesty in agreeing to prepare the specifications for the civic lighting plant which it is proposed to install in Hamilton. If, however, there is anything objectionable in his acceptance of this commission, the only persons who have any cause to complain are the members of the Government Commission—and they don't appear to have made any objection.