

the Commission, but with narrower powers than were given to it in dealing with railways.

The procedure of the Board is informal as suits the nature of its work, for experience has shown that hearings in strict legal form give the parties to the argument uncompromising attitudes. If possible, matters are settled by recommendations to the railway company or the shipper; thus, during 1921, 88 p.c. of the applications to the Board were settled without formal hearing. The Railway Committee had kept its station at Ottawa, giving only formal hearings, so that the grievances of those who could not afford to appear in person or pay a counsel went unredressed. The itineraries of the Railway Commission are arranged so that evidence may be taken at the least expense to those giving it.

Any one of the Chief, Assistant or Deputy Chief Commissioners, depending upon which one is presiding, gives final judgment on points of law. On questions of fact the findings of the Board are final and are not qualified by previous judgments of any other court. Questions of law and jurisdiction are differentiated. In the first case, the Board may, if it wishes, allow an appeal to the Supreme Court; in the second the applicant needs no permission to present his appeal.

The Railway Committee of the Privy Council being a committee of the Cabinet was responsible to Parliament. When the powers of the Committee were made over to the Railway Commission the responsibility was retained but necessarily by a different means. There is now provision for an appeal from any decision to the Governor in Council, who may also of his own motion interfere to rescind or vary the action of the Board, but the power to rescind or vary usually consists in referring a matter to the Board for reconsideration. In the period 1904 to 1918 there were appeals from 62 of the 6,900 cases given formal hearing, which is to say 0.9 p.c., and of these less than one-sixth have been granted.

Statistics of Steam Railways.

Mileage of Steam Railways.—The increase in the steam railway mileage of Canada for the calendar year 1920 was 326 miles, the largest increase since 1917. On December 31, 1920, the total railway mileage in operation was 39,384. Until 1919 the railway year ended on June 30, but in that year it was changed to the calendar year, consequently in most of the tables 1919 appears twice. Table 1 records the steam railway mileage in Canada as at the end of each railway year from 1835 to 1920, and Table 2 the steam railway mileage of Canada by provinces, as at the end of each railway year from 1914 to 1920.

Capital Liability of Steam Railways.—The capitalization of the steam railways of Canada as at the end of the railway years 1876 to 1920 is given in Table 3. In the latter year the total capitalization was \$2,170,030,128. This amount included \$1,323,705,962 of stock and consolidated debenture stock, and \$846,324,166 of funded debt.