

The Bank Act. The proposed changes in the present Bank Act have been made known to the country by the Minister of Finance, and the bill containing the amendments has been sent to the Committee on Banking and Commerce, where the Government will receive any suggestions that may be offered by those interested in this most important measure. The excellence of the present Act, with the framing of which the bankers had very much to do, was admitted by Mr. Fielding, and the few changes which he deems it desirable to make are evidently such as the bankers themselves desire.

The only amendments likely to be discussed at any great length are those giving control over the preparation and issuing of circulating notes to the Canadian Bankers' Association, and the vesting in the same body of the power to provide a curator to take possession of and manage the affairs of a suspended bank.

If there is any strong opposition to these somewhat important changes in the Act, it will probably proceed from the dislike of some banks to being in any sense controlled by the Canadian Bankers' Association, which is now seeking incorporation. However, to the bankers themselves can safely be trusted the settlement of these questions, as their interests and those of the public are in both cases almost identical.

We are glad to note the provision made for the sale of the assets of any bank desiring to go out of business. Anything tending to make the absorption or amalgamation of one bank by another easier of accomplishment is a subject for congratulation. The fusion of several Canadian banks would be good for their shareholders and the public.

As before stated in these columns, it is almost certain that any system of Government inspection for the chartered banks would be unsatisfactory. The subject was thoroughly discussed when the present Act was framed, and it is to be hoped that in this, as in any important amendments, Mr. Fielding will be largely guided by the opinions of the leading bankers of the Dominion, rather than by those who may wish to create an army of officials to undertake the work increased supervision would entail upon the Department of Finance.

The Strathconas at Sea. The daily papers have been flooded with letters (not always judiciously selected) from Canadians who are now serving their Queen in South Africa; yet the narration of personal experiences has never ceased to interest their countrymen. So we cannot refrain from quoting a few sentences culled from a diary kept by one of the Strathcona Horse. His narrative of life on board the troopship has a peculiar interest and charm, because the writer does not indulge in any heroics, does not shout "Rule Britannia," and then kill Kruger with his mouth; but, in plain and simple language, per-

mits us to see with his observant eyes the daily occurrences on board the "Monterey." It is true that he does not endorse the published opinion of Colonel Steele upon the 'board and lodging' supplied the soldiers. On the contrary, he says the latter was indifferent, and the former not appetizing, and complains that the comforts presented to Strathcona's Horse could only be obtained by purchase. Yet, he lodged no complaint when questioned in the ordinary way by officers. He merely remarks in his diary "Of course, this is only for your personal information, for soldiers are not supposed to grumble." He gives us just a glimpse of that form of melancholy known as nostalgia, when, in describing the daily routine of a soldier's life on shipboard, he hints at homesickness by saying, "I think of you all every night, and, in fact, all day too."

Evidently impressed with the solemnity of a night at sea, with the great ship holding its direct and certain way to South Africa, he recalls places and people dearly loved, and, perhaps mindful of the uncertainty of life in the land he is nearing, writes:—"It makes one think of all his sins." And perhaps of a neglected pastor.

After the Monterey crossed the line (the ceremonies and incantation scenes attending which he describes), she spoke a ship homeward bound, an event described as follows: "We met the 'Dictator' from Cape Town, taking wounded soldiers home. She passed within fifty yards from us. We cheered each other wildly. Some of them were all bandaged up—poor fellows!" The sight of these wounded men was not calculated to enliven any homesick lad. Yet the men of Strathcona's Horse "cheered wildly," and the poor bandaged beggars returned the greeting, even if feebly, knowing, as they do, that the men from the West are going to take up the work they have had to reluctantly abandon.

It is a good story of a voyage from Nova Scotia to South Africa, and we regret our space forbids further extracts from this soldier's diary. It closes with the arrival of the Monterey at Table Bay.

It is strange how the sight of land sweeps away this trooper's nostalgia, the melancholy resulting from absence from home; how it removes all unpleasant recollections of the discomforts endured during weeks of confinement on board ship. Here is his closing entry: "They say our squadron will go to the front soon as possible. We feel it would be an honour, and are very, very willing to go."

It is in this spirit our lads are fighting for the Mother Land—for the honour of the great Empire of which Canada forms a part, and not from any desire to secure immediate representation at Westminster.

Gasolene and acetylene hazards will be considered at the meeting of the Consulting Engineers of the National Board of Fire Underwriters in Chicago this week.