

THE DECLINE IN SPECULATION.

One of the hopeful signs of the present situation is that business men are in a position, whether by choice or force of circumstances, to concentrate all their energies on their own regular business. There is no doubt that legitimate business has suffered in the past through the dissipation of capital and energy which should have been given to it in speculations of various kinds. Some time ago, the banks began an active campaign of discouragement of speculation "on the side" by declining to finance the requirements of their customers for speculative purposes and confining entirely their support to regular business. It may be presumed that this policy will be continued, not only for the present, but that the reins will be kept firmly in hand when possibly the present urgent necessity for caution has ceased. This will be all to the good, however badly individuals may think about it. If Canadian production and legitimate business is to receive that impetus which is not only desirable but necessary under present circumstances, it will require all the energy and Canadian capital that can possibly be devoted to it. There will be none to spare for speculative side-lines.

MANITOBA'S MORATORIUM LEGISLATION.

Representatives of the largest loaning agencies in Winnipeg met representatives of the provincial government this week, and a discussion of the measure which will be submitted to the house at its special session, relating to land purchases, occurred. The mortgage companies presented their case, urging that the period, provided prior to action, when borrowers were in fault, was too long. It was pointed out that a change in the law along the lines suggested would interfere with the flow of capital to Manitoba, and that it would tend toward an increase in the interest rates and that the burden would eventually fall on the borrower. It was also urged that in the majority of cases where mortgages were foreclosed on farm lands the farms had been abandoned. If so long an interval was allowed it was possible that the security might deteriorate materially owing to the fact that the borrower had left his land.

No decision was announced by the premier, but it was considered likely that some minor changes might be made in the bill before it is submitted, and it is of course possible that other changes will be made during the discussion in the house.

DETAILS OF THE BILL.

The bill as drawn up for submission provides for a six months period in which the borrower may be in default before action is taken. The important clauses of the bill are sections two and three, which are as follows:

Notwithstanding any provision in any mortgage of land, or agreement to purchase land, or in any other instrument charging land with the payment of money, not including liens under the Mechanics' and Wage Earners' Lien Act, no proceedings for the sale of any land under any power of sale contained in any such instrument or otherwise existing for default in payment of any such moneys,

shall be taken by or on behalf of the mortgagee, vendor or other person to whom such money may be payable until after the lapse of six months from the first day of August, 1914, if such default took place on or before that date, or until after the lapse of six months from the happening of such default if the same took place after the said first of August, 1914, or takes place after the coming into force of this act, and any such proceedings now pending are hereby stayed until after the lapse of six months from the said first day of August, 1914, or six months from the date of default, if such default took place since the first day of August, 1914. Any sale made or purporting to be made in contravention of this section shall be absolutely null and void.

In all actions or proceedings for foreclosure or sale of land under any instrument referred to in section 2 hereof, the period to be allowed for redemption, whether by the court or by the master on a reference or by the district registrar, shall be one year, and in all pending actions for such foreclosure or sale in which the time fixed for redemptions is after the 31st day of July, 1914, the same is hereby extended for one year from the date so fixed for redemption, and no final order for foreclosure or sale shall be made in any such action until after the lapse of such extended period.

The concluding sections of the bill provide that actions may be brought for the payment of interest, insurance premiums and taxes, and writs of execution may be issued and enforced against the goods of defendant, but not against the lands, until after the lapse of six months. It is provided that a vendor may enforce an agreement for a share of a crop.

SIR EDMUND OSLER ON THE OUTLOOK.

Interviewed on his return from Europe, Sir Edmund Osler, president of the Dominion Bank, stated with regard to the re-opening of stock exchange business, that, as Britain had few of its securities held abroad, and had absorbed not only practically all of her own issues, but those of almost every country in the world, the London Stock Exchange might be able to open without fearing any great avalanche of selling of its own bonds and stocks. In the case of the United States, hundreds of millions of railroad and other securities were held by the countries at war, and it was inevitable that a flood of liquidation would occur if opportunity for it was provided by the New York Stock Exchange. With regard to business generally he said that conditions could not be good if the war continued, but he was much pleased with the manner in which trade was being let down gradually, both in Great Britain and here. Business generally was effecting an orderly retreat, although there were the exceptions of the industries stimulated by the necessities of the armies in the field.

"When peace is finally declared, I would expect to see a very large immigration to this country resumed," said Sir Edmund. "The survivors who will come out of the campaign in good physical condition, with a dislike for their former occupations, and a taste for adventure in their veins, will likely seek a new country, and Canada should come in for a very large share of these disbanded soldiers. I expect that the foreign exchange situation in New York should be righted shortly, and, in any event, a way will be found for financing our exports of agricultural products this autumn."