

of one class and pays dividends of 2 per cent. monthly, or 24 per cent. a year. The shares sell at 100. The Biograph Company, formed in 1905 under New Jersey laws, was one of the first of the moving picture makers to sell stock to the public, although it is not widely known. Most of the producers are close corporations with ten or a dozen stockholders.

In the case of the Canadian company mentioned above, the objects were to consolidate moving picture theatres in Buffalo, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. The prospectus stated that the companies amalgamating were "all making handsome profits." A striking feature of the amalgamation was that the people selling their interests in the component companies took payment therefor entirely in shares of the new company and got no cash out of the transaction. The prospectus further stated:—

"The business is a cash business. Every class in the land contributes. This applies most strongly to the working classes, as this particular form of amusement is the only thing outside of the necessities of life on which practically all of those comprising the masses regularly spend a portion of their earnings. It is unnecessary to dilate upon the extraordinary profits made by these theatres."

CANADA INTERESTED IN AUSTRALIA'S TRADE

Interstate Commission's Powers—What Has to Be Investigated

The Australian Interstate Commission has been made the subject of a report by Canadian Trade Commissioner D. H. Ross, as a result of Canadian enquiries, which in part is as follows:—The commission is composed of a chief commissioner and two other commissioners, the former being a lawyer, while the others are respectively an engineer and a former comptroller-general of customs who is a recognized expert on tariff matters.

To facilitate investigation, in regard to tariff revision, special confidential forms are set out enumerating a comprehensive series of questions which must be completed by applicants soliciting amendments of the existing tariff—either for increases or decreases—and accompanied by a statutory declaration.

General Application Form.

Established industries must set out in detail particulars respecting the capital, value of plant, raw material used, and the number of and wages paid to employees. Prospective industries are required to submit estimates in relation to the capital, plant and employees, etc., to be engaged, should sufficient protection be granted by parliament. In both instances, information is desired respecting imported goods of similar character, the rate of wages paid by oversea manufacturers, and evidence is solicited in regard to the articles being exported to Australia at less than the fair market value at which they are sold in the country of production (otherwise "dumping").

The general application form may be filled in for (1) the abolition or reduction of present duties, (2) to oppose suggested increases, (3) to seek extension of preference provisions, (4) in regard to the excise tariff, (5) for assistance by bounty, (6) for assistance by export duty, etc.

In addition to the written application for amendments to the customs tariff, applicants are closely examined and cross-questioned by the commissioners as to the merits of the representations made. Where there is suspicion of manufacturers (who made application for higher duties) having combined for the purpose of advancing prices to distributing houses or consumers, the examination of witnesses has been most drastic.

The commission is charged with the duty of investigating, from time to time, all matters which in the opinion of the commission ought in the public interest to be investigated

In a letter from the president of the company to the brokers offering the stock, the following statement was made: "The auditors calculate that we have total earnings applicable to the holdings of the company at the rate of \$101,773.34. I place as a conservative estimate of the probable earnings of the \$300,000 to be obtained under the present issue when this money has been fully invested in new enterprises \$100,000 per annum. The total should then amount to approximately \$200,000, and as the preferred dividend on the \$630,000 preferred stock now being issued will be \$44,100 per annum, this would leave a net profit of approximately \$156,000, or 13 per cent. on the common stock issued. It is the intention to provide a reserve fund to be used in the redemption of the preference shares in the discretion of the directors, and a reasonable proportion of the above net profits could be utilized in this manner, the balance being available for dividends on common stock."

Moving picture company stocks may yet become the centre of exciting speculation. Investors should, however, reflect seriously upon the changing appetite of the amusement-loving public, remembering at the same time the lessons learned from speculative gallops into the wireless telegraph, oil, skating rink, and mining stock arena.

affecting (a) the production of and trade in commodities; (b) the encouragement, improvement and extension of Australian industries and manufactures; (c) markets outside Australia, and the opening up of external trade generally; (d) the effect and operation of any tariff Act or other legislation of the Commonwealth in regard to revenue, Australian manufactures, and industry and trade generally; (e) prices of commodities; (f) profits of trade and manufacture; (g) wages and social and industrial conditions; (h) labor, employment, and unemployment; (i) bounties paid by foreign countries to encourage shipping or export trade; (j) population; (k) immigration; and (l) other matters referred to the commission by either house of the parliament, by resolution, for investigation.

Under a section of the act appointing this body, the commission is empowered to investigate all matters affecting the use of river waters where such rivers, by themselves or by their connection with other waters, constitute highways for inter-state trade and commerce, and may also investigate any legislation of the Commonwealth abridging the rights of any state to the reasonable usage of the water of any of the rivers for conservation or irrigation, and the violation by any state or its people of the rights of any other state in these respects. Under other provisions, the powers of the commission are made to cover all proposed diversions from any rivers, and their effect upon the navigability of such rivers as constitute inter-state highways.

DOMINION BRIDGE COMPANY.

Monetary Times Office,

Montreal, July 7th.

An official of the Dominion Bridge Company denies a report which was in circulation during the week to the effect that the company proposed closing its plant during the month of July. He states that there is no intention on the part of the management of closing a single department, even temporarily, and that no men are being laid off for several months.

Dominion Bridge has not been very active on the exchange for some time. About the middle of last week a broken lot sold at 109¾, as compared with the last previous board lot sale at 111. It is possible that somebody was trying to find an explanation for the weakness in the stock.

It is generally considered here that a falling off in the activity at the bridge works and other structural and iron and steel companies need not occasion great surprise, inasmuch as railway construction has undoubtedly fallen off in a marked manner and this will affect firms of the character under discussion.