

**THE BANK ACT TAKING SHAPE.**

**Committee takes a Conservative Line—Many Amendments Voted Down—Nothing Startling Yet.**

The Banking and Commerce Committee has been continuing its labours this week getting the new Bank Act into shape. So far, nothing new that is very sensational has materialised. On Friday, Mr. F. B. McCurdy put forward several amendments. One referring to section 18 suggested the making mandatory instead of permissive the power of shareholders to regulate by by-laws specified matters regarding the management and administration of the affairs of the Bank. To this Hon. W. T. White objected on the ground, *inter alia*, that it would not be possible to make the shareholders act upon the statute, if they declined to do so. Mr. McCurdy defended the amendment on the ground that it would have the effect of encouraging shareholders to take more interest in the affairs of their banks, not as blind followers, but as intelligent critics. However, the amendment was lost by 13 votes to seven.

Another amendment by Mr. McCurdy to the same section was in favor of allowing shareholders to fix the amount of salary of the general manager as well as of the directors, but this was withdrawn.

**DEFINING A SHORT LOAN.**

Section 54, which prescribes the form of the banks' annual and special statements, was amended in several particulars. One amendment referring to call loans defined them as not exceeding 30 days. Mr. McCurdy put forward an amendment by which the bank statement would include a memorandum showing the total assessed value of bank premises owned by the bank. This, he explained, was in order to get information as to how the real value compared with the value given in the statement, which had certain amounts written off. But the proposal was voted down. A similar fate befel another amendment by Mr. McCurdy to compel the banks to include in their statements a full and complete list of all bonds, debentures and other investments. However, better luck was in store for him with yet another amendment in favor of shareholders being supplied with copies of all by-laws that are passed, this amendment being carried.

**LIMITATION OF LOANS.**

On Wednesday, Mr. J. A. M. Aikins put forward an amendment to section 76 prohibiting foreign agencies except as auxiliaries to Canadian banking business. This was not encouraged by the Finance Minister, and Mr. Aikins eventually withdrew it. An amendment moved by Major Sam Sharpe on clause 76 to add clauses restricting lending operations of banks to mining companies in which officers were interested, also to any company in which they had interest above a specified amount, or to lend in excess of ten per cent. of paid-up capital to foreign persons or corporations, drew forth some comments from the Minister of Finance. Hon. Mr. White pointed out that the British banking system had never placed any restrictions upon loans in this way, but had left it to the judgment of directors. The Americans had sought to limit loans to individuals and corporations, the result of which was an elaborate system of evasion of the law. Such legislation had always proved ineffective. The amendment was lost.

**REALTY INVESTMENTS.**

Hon. H. R. Emmerson offered an amendment which would forbid banks to expend more than five per cent. of combined capital and reserve in real and immovable property, and that banks should be required to show in monthly and yearly statements the real value of such property held, but this was defeated. Upon clause three of section 88, which provides that "the bank may lend money to a rancher upon the security of his cattle," an amendment was put forward by Major Sharpe, for the compulsory registration of securities of this nature. The Minister of Finance said there was only one reason that would influence him to make this legislation, and that was the transportation and storage problem. Apart from that it was bad legislation. There was a danger of creditors being interfered with if liens were not registered. That, however, had to be balanced against the advantages that would accrue to the farmer; but if this lien had to be registered it would defeat the purpose of the bill. Major Sharpe's amendment demanding registration in the case of security upon threshed grain and upon cattle was carried, the voting being sixteen to nine, and several members abstaining. A further amendment by Major Sharpe whereby a bank might lend to a farmer as well as to a rancher upon security of live stock was voted down.

**PRINCIPAL FIRES IN CANADA, INVOLVING LOSS OF \$5,000 AND OVER, APRIL, 1913.**

April, 1913.	PLACE.	RISK.	Loss.
1	Hallfax, N.S.	Wood-working plant	\$ 50,000
1	Ridgeway, Ont.	Business block	35,000
1	Brockville, Ont.	Residence	15,000
4	Toronto	Warehouse building	30,000
4	Langdon, Alta.	Business premises	30,000
5	Maitland, N.S.	Business buildings	10,000
6	Nelson, B.C.	Planing Mill	12,000
6	Kamloops, B.C.	Residence	6,000
9	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Iron Works	12,000
10	Swan River, Man.	Warehouse	5,000
10	Montreal	Sash and blind factory	10,000
10	Grayson, Sask.	Milling building	10,000
10	Rodney, Ont.	Lumber, etc. factory	20,000
		Business building	7,500
11	St. John, N.B.	Business block	7,000
11	Liverpool, N.S.	Business buildings, etc.	100,000
12	Michel, B.C.	Dwelling, garage, etc.	17,000
16	Vegreville, Alta.	etc.	10,000
17	Vancouver, B.C.	Brass foundry	7,000
17	New Westminster, B.C.	Store	25,000
18	Medicine Hat, Alta.	Hardware store	125,000
18	Calgary, Alta.	Business block	40,000
19	St. John, N.B.	Business premises	125,000
20	Beaver, Man.	Business district	32,000
20	Toronto	Summer cottages	8,000
21	Montreal	Business premises	
22	Brockville, Ont.	Skating rink and houses	50,000
		Residences	20,000
22	Vancouver, B.C.	Iron plant	15,000
23	Brantford, Ont.	Furnace building	10,000
24	Merriton, Ont.	Business bldgs. and residences	25,000
24	Viceroy, Sask.	Station and freight sheds	6,000
25	New Lowell, Ont.	etc.	33,500
27	Winnipeg	Oil Warehouse	300,000
28	Gretna, Man.	Business district	5,000
28	Shawbridge, Que.	Barn	25,000
29	Delhi, Ont.	Factory	