

Saskatchewan Prepares Financial Legislation

Measures Introduced for Higher Taxes on Banks, Insurance and Trust Companies—
Province Requires Greater Revenue—New Fees for Distress and Judicial Seizure.

THE legislature of the province of Saskatchewan, which recently opened its new session, has introduced legislation which greatly effects banks, insurance, trust companies and other companies doing business in the province.

After transacting merely routine work during the morning of the 12th inst., in the afternoon the legislature approved a recommendation revising the rules of the assembly. The aim of the revision is to introduce a simpler process for dealing with financial bills and bills containing financial clauses.

Heavier Tax on Branch Banks

For the purposes of supplementing the revenues of the province considerable increases in the taxes payable by corporations are provided for in a bill which was given its first reading. Banks, insurance companies, express and trust companies are more particularly affected by the proposed new legislation.

The tax for branch banks in towns is to be increased from \$100 to \$150 and other branches from \$25 to \$50. The original tax of \$300 for city branches is retained, but a head office in Saskatchewan will be required to contribute \$1,200 annually, a new fee. There is no change in the additional tax of \$200 for private banks, but it is proposed to make the banker rather than the bank responsible.

Insurance Companies

Existing legislation provides for a tax of 1 per cent. on the gross premiums of insurance companies doing business in Saskatchewan under the Saskatchewan Insurance Act, or registered and licensed under the Companies' Act. The new bill provides for a graded scale of taxation for these institutions as follows: One per cent. on gross premiums up to \$50,000; 1½ per cent. where the total business is less than \$100,000; 1½ per cent. where the business is between \$100,000 and \$150,000; 1¾ per cent. between \$150,000 and \$200,000; and 2 per cent. where the gross premiums exceed \$200,000.

The bill makes provision for a reduction on the minimum value of investments of insurance companies in the province on which a tax of 50 cents per thousand is payable from \$50,000 to \$25,000.

Express Companies

The bill makes no change in the rate of taxation to be paid by land, loan and telegraph companies, but in the case of express companies a new basis is provided. Instead of paying \$10 in each city with an aggregate maximum of \$500 in addition to \$100 in each city where they have been operating from three to five years, or \$150 where they have been in business over five years, they will be required to pay \$150 in each city irrespective of the length of time in business. In towns under the existing legislation, they are required to pay \$25 where they have been in business from three to five years and \$35 for a period of over five years. They will in future be called upon to pay \$50 for each town and \$10 for every office in any other place with a population of more than 200.

Trust Companies

A new basis is also provided for the taxation of trust companies. Hitherto, these companies have been required to pay 40 cents on every thousand dollars worth of business transacted in the province. The new bill proposes to exact a tax of 1½ per cent. on the gross revenue received by the company from funds used by the company in investments in Saskatchewan.

Other Changes

The minimum tax of \$50 on unpaid purchase money on lands up to a total of \$500,000 and \$75 for over \$500,000, is

changed in the bill to a minimum of \$100 where the authorized capital of the company is \$100,000 or less and a minimum of \$175 where the authorized capital exceeds \$100,000.

The bill to amend an act respecting drainage is a consolidation of the old act and contains no new principles. It makes provision, however, for handling larger drainage schemes than was possible under the old Ditches Act.

The bill to amend the Highways Act makes some minor changes in the dates of reports to be submitted to the government by municipalities to secure the automobile grants and also provides a change in the dates when these grants will be payable. The bill makes provision for the minister to notify the municipal councils of the amount of grants to be paid between January 1 and April 1 and for the municipal council to notify the department by June 1 how and where the moneys will be expended. Where the plans are wholly or partially disapproved the local council is given the right to amend its resolution, but any municipality failing to report by June 1 will lose the grant for that year.

The bills respecting masters and servants and to amend the Chattel Mortgage Act are consolidations and do not contain any new principles.

The bill respecting the law of landlord and tenant codifies the law and puts on the statute books the common law with respect to the relations between landlord and tenant.

Fees of Judicial Seizure

New schedules of fees payable for distress and extra-judicial seizure are provided in another bill which has also received its first reading. Under the existing law a uniform scale of fees is provided, but the bill now under consideration provides for a different scale of costs on distress than on seizure under chattel mortgage. The costs on distress in the bill are sub-divided where the amount demanded does not exceed \$100 and where the amount levied exceeds this sum.

The new schedule of fees is as follows:—

Costs on distress where sum demanded and due does not exceed \$100: Levying distress, \$1; one man keeping possession, per day, \$3; printed advertising not exceeding \$3; catalogues, sale and commission and delivery of goods, five cents on the dollar; where amount due is satisfied before sale, three cents on the dollar.

Costs of distress where sum demanded and due exceeds \$100; levying distress, \$1.50; one man keeping possession, per day, \$3; costs of advertising, expenses incurred in keeping and removing goods, catalogues, sale and commission and delivery, three cents on the dollar; where amounts satisfied before sale, three cents on the dollar; mileage in going to seize, 15 cents per mile, one way.

Costs on seizure under chattel mortgage: Receiving, entering and return, 50 cents; perusal of chattel mortgage, 50 cents; warrant to bailiff, 50 cents; seizure, \$1; bond from creditor, each 50 cents; bond from debtor, each \$1; possession fee, \$2.50; actual expenses for keeping possession, appraisal, advertising and sale of goods; mileage, 10 cents per mile; poundage, 2½ per cent. up to \$400, over \$400 1¼ per cent. for excess over \$400.

A bill amending the grant to the Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League from \$150,000 to \$300,000 for the construction of the sanatorium at Fort Qu'Appelle was given its first reading.

A bill to amend the Legislative Assembly Act read a first time provides that nothing contained in the act shall be held to vacate the seat in the legislature of a member who, having served overseas during the present war in the military forces of the empire, becomes a member of the executive council.