

taxing a form of enterprize which is the mainspring of commercial activity. It is fortunate for the inhabitants of some cities that the inflow of currents of fresh air cannot be checked by taxation, for, were it possible to tax fresh air it would be done by some civic and governmental authorities.

A tax on banking business is a tax on the very source from which tax revenues are derived. The cost of those facilities for carrying on business which banks provide is enhanced by taxing banks the burden of which taxation is ultimately transferred to the mercantile community.

The whole business of municipal taxation is in a chaotic condition. A Royal Commission might investigate this subject with material advantage to the whole country.

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**THE HAGUE CONFERENCE.**—The Russian Government has proposed that the Hague Conference be convened early next summer. One object of the Conference is stated to be the securing the formal assent of the powers to a mutual arrangement for referring matters in dispute between nations to arbitration even to the extent of a majority of the Powers compelling the disputants to adopt this course.

Russia is a great exemplar of the doctrine, "Do as I say, not as I do." She proposed and took a leading part in the Hague Conference some years ago, that was convened to establish a reign of peace, yet at the very time, she was engaged in an aggressive movement against Japan which brought her such terrible disasters. As a promoter of universal peace Russia has no record.

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**THE EXODUS FROM ONTARIO TO THE WEST.**—Already this year there have been 5,000 persons who have left Ontario to settle in the Northwest. A few were immigrants from England, who had only recently arrived, but the great bulk were sons of farmers, and others who have been induced to take up land in Manitoba and the new provinces, where, as many of them are familiar with farm life in Canada, they will at once adapt themselves to western ways and develop into good settlers.

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**THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE** has acquired the business of the Merchants Bank of Prince Edward Island and will assume control at the end of next month. The Merchants of Prince Edward Island has a paid-up capital of \$350,400, a reserve of \$331,000, deposits \$833,046, and current loans, \$1,553,773.

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**THE MOROCCO AGREEMENT.**—The protocol drafted for the signature of the delegates at Algieras, which embodies the agreement arrived at, expresses the desire of the Powers to promote the peace and prosperity of Morocco without violating the sovereignty of the Sultan or the integrity of his dominions.

The policing of Morocco is to devolve upon France and Spain, contraband traffic in arms is to be suppressed, a State bank is to be established which will be practically a French institution, the fiscal policy of the country is to be reorganized so as to ensure commercial equality to all desirous of

trading in Morocco, and the customs laws and general financial administration of the State are to be reformed and maintained in accordance with the usages of civilized powers. The reforms under the new regime will not be established until the 31st December, 1906.

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**CANADA'S NEW INDUSTRY.**—Whatever may be the opinion of a person regarding the evils attendant upon the running of automobiles, there must be general gratification at the manufacture of these vehicles being now an established industry in Canada. There are over a thousand hands employed in the manufacture of motors in Ontario. The building of this class of carriages in Canada gives promise of being able to supply the home demand. The tariff is 35 per cent. on foreign, and 25 per cent. on British motors. Not only will this industry employ a large number of men, but it will enlarge the market for Canadian-made steel, and other articles, including rubber tires, the wooden parts of wheels, lamps, etc., etc.

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**MORE INSURANCE BILLS PASSED AT ALBANY.**—The Legislature of the State of New York seems to have a rapid process of passing Bills. The Senate on 10th inst., passed unanimously, without debate, two of the ten insurance Bills drafted by the Armstrong Committee. One Bill amends the general corporation law as to the acquisition of real property by life companies, the other amends the penal code so as to prohibit the giving of rebates in the life insurance business.

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**NEW RUSSIAN LOAN.**—As we intimated last week Russia is reported to be in the market for a loan of \$400,000,000, to be distributed as follows: France, \$240,000,000; England, \$40,000,000; United States, \$20,000,000; Belgium and Holland, \$20,000,000; Austria, \$80,000,000, and banks in Russia, \$40,000,000. These details will probably be readjusted. The terms are not stated, but, as a large part of the loan is required to make up an enormous deficit in the national finances, and political conditions are not yet wholly satisfactory in Russia she will have to pay a high price for this loan.

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## Notes and Items.

### AT HOME AND ABROAD.

**SOMETHING LIKE A RISK.**—The British admiralty is arranging for insurance to cover the risk to which a large number of vessels will be exposed by naval manoeuvres to be carried out on an unprecedented scale this year. The policy would amount to or group of policies would aggregate \$50,000,000.

**BOILER INSPECTION AND EXPLOSIONS.**—In 1905 the Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Co. examined 291,941 boilers and found on them 155,024 defects of which 14,209 were dangerous. Such conditions indicate an extraordinary lack of skill on the part of engineers, such an official is not a proper person to be in charge of a boiler if he cannot detect such defects as lead to explosions and other accidents.