

QUERIES' COLUMN.

In order to furnish our readers with information we propose to devote this column to replies to correspondents. Letters should be addressed to "THE CHRONICLE, Enquiry Department, Montreal."

Answers will only be given to such communications as bear the writer's name, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and only to questions referring to matters of general interest in regard to which the Editor of Queries' Column will exercise his own

1484.—D. T. N., Oshawa, Ont.—If you have the stocks you mention fully paid up, or even well margined, we think you would be fairly safe in continuing to hold them for higher prices. They are all standard dividend payers and will likely recover promptly from any market reaction that may occur.

1485.—A. F. Q., Woodstock, Ont.—(1) We cannot attempt to guess the immediate action of the stock you mention, at the best it is of a very speculative character. (2) We should be inclined to advise you holding your United States Steel common. If the present activity continues in the iron and steel trade the stock is likely to advance considerably within the next twelve months.

1486.—B. S. W. S., Hamilton, Ont.—This stock is not listed and the officers decline to give any information on the position of the company. We should prefer leaving it severely alone unless prepared to lose all the money put into the shares. The company's business is speculative.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

CANADIAN PACIFIC ANNUAL MEETING.—The 24th annual meeting of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company took place on 4th inst., in this city. The retiring directors were re-elected. The report presented, which we gave with comments in a recent issue, was received with much satisfaction. Authority was given for further capital expenditure of \$7,500,000 when required for new rolling stock. The several resolutions authorizing purchases and extensions as detailed in the printed report were adopted. These chiefly apply to British Columbia and are largely on Vancouver Island, where the railway transportation service will be practically in the hands of the C.P.R. New steamships for both the Atlantic and Pacific service are to be constructed. Altogether it seems quite evident that the C.P.R. is determined to have its equipment and facilities up to date. In the course of his remarks Sir Thomas Shaughnessy stated that the Grand Trunk Pacific would not be likely to interfere with the business of the C.P.R. We concur in this view believing that the great development now in progress will provide business for both these great railways, not only so but for all other branches and projected extensions. This is an era of great progress of which the chief factor is transportation.

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY. THE REPORT FOR LAST-HALF YEAR of this company gives the gross receipts for half-year ended 30th June last, as \$13,645,000, against \$12,796,000 for same term in 1904. The net revenue is stated to be \$4,538,000. After deducting interest on debentures, and other charges there was a surplus of \$1,245,000, with \$1,458,000 brought forward from previous year, which provided for dividends and left \$37,115 to be carried forward.

The directors report that the surveys for Grand Trunk Pacific are being pressed forward, and a contract let for 275 miles west of Winnipeg.

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THE PROVINCIAL TAX ON STOCK, ETC., TRANSFERS.—There is some degree of relief anticipated from the oppression of the provincial stamp tax. But nothing short of its absolute withdrawal will give the relief to which the brokers and all who buy or sell securities are entitled. The stamp tax is a most unjust impost as it is liable to be collected from the same property quite frequently in the course of the same year. If A. sells a block of shares to B., the transfer is taxed, if B. sells these shares to C., the same shares are again taxed; if C. sells them to D., the tax is imposed on the same stock a third time, and if D. sells them to E., and E. to F. and so on, as is no infrequent experience when the market is lively the very same shares are taxed over and over and over again. Inevitably the effect is to seriously hamper business and to depreciate all securities being dealt in.

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TAX THE BROKERS, BUT DO NOT DAMAGE THEIR BUSINESS.—It would be at least a legal impost, which the stamp tax has been declared not to be, if a tax in the form of license were levied on the brokers, which might be arranged, to some extent, to be proportional to their business transactions and collectable through the Stock Exchange itself. Such an individual business tax might bear heavily on some members, but it would leave their business free from the stamp tax obstruction and be the least objectionable and most profitable way for the Provincial Government to get out of the difficulty created by an impost on security transfers.

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BANK OF MONTREAL AND BANK OF NEW BRUNSWICK.—The positive reports published last week relative to the absorption of the Bank of New Brunswick by the Bank of Montreal are announced to be premature. The Bank of New Brunswick is one of the oldest in Canada having been established in 1820. For many years the paid-up capital was \$1,000,000, but it was reduced to \$500,000 some time after 1880, the sum of \$500,000 with the large reserve fund being found sufficient for the business. The reserve fund is now \$800,000, which exceeds the capital by \$300,000. The deposits amount to