

stitute representatives attending meetings in respect of those companies whose headquarters are outside of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

The new officers elected for the year were as follows:—President, Mr. David Burke; 1st Vice-President, Mr. J. F. Junkin; 2nd Vice-President, Mr. J. G. Richter; Auditors, Messrs. E. W. Cox and John Milne; Secretary-Treasurer (*Pro tem*) Mr. T. Bradshaw; Executive Committee, the foregoing officers, and in addition Mr. T. Hilliard, Mr. D. Dexter, Mr. L. Goldman and Mr. W. C. Macdonald.

THE PROMINENT TOPICS.

THE QUEBEC TAX ON TRANSACTIONS IN STOCKS AND SECURITIES.—The details in connection with the stamp tax on transfers of stocks and securities in this province have been modified, simply because this was found necessary, for, as we have contended, the tax was unworkable in detail and impossible to be carried out as it was originally enacted.

THE OPERATION OF THE STAMP TAX SHOULD BE WHOLLY SUSPENDED, and this necessary step should not be delayed until it is forced upon the Government by the irreparable injury it is inflicting upon the province.

Recent incidents forcibly exhibit the damage which is certain to follow the continued enforcement of the stock and securities transfer stamp tax.

We have learned that certain companies are arranging to remove their transfer offices to other provinces in order to escape the restrictions, the annoyances, and the responsibilities which are caused by, or involved in this unwise tax.

Another very serious illustration of the mischievous effect of this tax is that two important issues of new stock, which, under ordinary circumstances would be issued in Montreal, will be floated outside this province.

The plain fact is, investors will not purchase stocks or securities which are surrounded with any complications such as, or are liable to, attend the operation of the stamp tax in connection with the flotation, or sale of stock or securities. Thus business conducted with advantage to this city and province, will naturally, be driven to other centres.

A GRAVE PROVINCIAL QUESTION.—Can the Province of Quebec afford to drive capital for investment elsewhere?

In this connection we regret that members of the Montreal Stock Exchange did not at once, and some do not even now, realize the embarrassing, the restrictive conditions which, as experience has proved, were bound to follow the enactment of the transfer stamp tax.

It is scarcely a question worth much consideration whether the province will impose some other tax

which may prove a more burdensome impost than the stamp tax, if that is abolished, for, in our judgment the existing tax will have a far wider and deeper reaching effect.

COMMISSION ON STOCK EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS.—Considerable difference of opinion exists on the Montreal Stock Exchange in regard to the commission rate on the purchase and sale of stocks and securities.

Some desire the rate to be reduced from $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1 per cent. to $\frac{1}{16}$ th of 1 per cent. so as to bring the local rate into conformity with the rule in New York and Boston.

The conditions here are, however, not identical with those in New York, or Boston. It may be wise to reduce the commission rate to the same figure as prevails in those cities provided that the same rules are adopted in this city in regard to stock and security transactions. One of these rules is that, the unit of trade is 100, whereas in Montreal it is only 25 shares. It is suggested that the $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1 per cent. rate be continued on such transactions as are for a less amount than the unit number of shares.

ANOTHER POINT FOR CONSIDERATION.—If the commission rate be reduced to the New York and Boston figure an "unlisted list" of active American securities should be traded in under the supervision of the Montreal Stock Exchange. The object of this would be to broaden the local market.

MONTREAL CITY LOANS.—A contemporary, when referring to the half-yearly interest charges, this city has to meet on its loans, refers to several that were floated a number of years ago.

Some of those loans were specimens of stupid financing. For instance, the flotation of a permanent loan bearing interest at 7 per cent.! Fortunately the amount was not large—less than \$600,000. It would be good policy for the city to buy it up as opportunity occurs.

Take again the loan of \$7,000,000 floated in 1888 and 1890, at 3 per cent., by which the city became involved in a debt of \$7,000,000 by a loan out of which it received about \$5,250,000! This was rushing from one extreme to the other, some will say, the change was, "jumping from the frying pan into the fire."

MONTREAL EXPROPRIATION LAW.—Over and over again we have expressed regret at the unwise course taken by the council of this city in having the Consolidated Charter amended, more especially in connection with expropriative proceedings. The error then committed is now generally recognized.

Those conversant with the conditions existing in this city must realize that it is not in the best interests of this municipality for any further expropria-