

higher tariffs so that they can boost the price of their product and thus sell their watered stock at a high figure.

There are persistent rumors that a merger of all the steel and iron interests of Canada is in process of negotiation. There is good reason to believe that these men have some such move in view. Then we will have a millstone like the United States Steel corporation, with a capital of \$1,500,000,000, half of which is water, and steel rails doubled in price, hung round the necks of the Canadian people. It will not make the burden easier to bear to have some Canadian Steel King giving away libraries and hero funds, when the cost of them has been wrung from the common people.

If the government yields to these greedy capitalists it will mean that the cost of production of everything containing iron and steel will be enhanced and the selling cost also. If the people of Canada are to be saved from this cruel burden it will have to be done by members of the House of Commons who have the interests of the people at heart. The same proposition was endorsed by the Government last year but was killed in caucus. It is time someone in the House stood out against the Barons of Privilege. Surely they are not going to be allowed to be supreme dictators.

SASKATCHEWAN WOMEN'S CONVENTION

The Saskatchewan Grain Growers' association is to be congratulated on being the first body of organized farmers in Canada to recognize the equality of women by calling a women's convention to be held side by side with the regular convention of the Association. The women's convention will be held at Saskatoon, in the Assembly Hall of Saskatchewan University, on February 12, 13 and 14, and while the full program has not yet been announced it can be said that the three days will be brim full of interest to the women who are the homemakers of the prairies.

To make the women's convention a success it is necessary that as large a number as possible should be present, and we urge the delegates to the regular convention to take their wives and daughters with them to Saskatoon for convention week. The women folk will enjoy the convention even more than the men. It will be a bright spot to which they will look back all through the year, and they will carry away from the convention ideas and information which will make the home happier and better.

BANK ACT AMENDMENTS

As usual when the Bank Act is being amended the most important changes are aimed to benefit the banks, and are no doubt proposed and drafted by the bankers' lawyers. The amendment allowing banks to loan on farm products is a step in the right direction and, if the banks are so inclined, it will enable them to help many farmers. But as we have said before, this amendment will not bring nearly the relief commonly expected from it. Another amendment permits the banks to further increase their note circulation without paying anything for the privilege. The banks of Canada enjoy one of the most valuable franchises that can be bestowed by Parliament—that of issuing notes for circulation. This is the privilege that puts millions into the pockets of the bank directors every year. There are two amendments that should be made to the Bank Act this session of Parliament.

The banks should not be allowed to charge more than seven per cent. on loans. They are not now able to collect by legal processes over seven per cent, but they charge it and get it, no one daring to refuse for fear of having all credit curtailed. Seven per cent. provides a wide margin over the three per cent. paid on deposits and will leave plenty of profit.

The other amendment should be to compel the banks to pay for their franchise, the same as is done with municipal franchise holders. Banks in other countries pay for their franchises. The Government would be quite justified in demanding that all profits over 10 per cent. be returned to the public treasury so long as the banks are allowed to issue notes. This would give the country a revenue of about \$10,000,000 annually and ever increasing.

Of course, there will be no such drastic amendments made. Bank directors and shareholders are plentiful in the Commons and Senate.

FOOD TAXES IN GERMANY

For a third of a century Germany has had the benefit of a tariff policy almost ideal from the protectionist standpoint. And while the Fatherland still keeps up its high tariff walls there is by no means the unanimity one should expect if that system were filling the promises of its champions. The Socialists recently introduced into the German Parliament an amendment "to abolish the import duties on the necessities of life." It was voted down by 174 to 140, but it required all the ministerial influence to secure the narrow majority of 34 in a vote of 314. A feature of the spirited debate was the frank admission of the Imperial Secretary of the Home Office, Dr. Delbrueck, who, after speaking of the serious meat scarcity prevailing throughout the nation, added, "Of course, our whole tariff policy has as its object to raise prices. In all my life I have never found that a nation surrounded itself with a wall of protective duties without intending to influence its internal economic conditions." Canadian apologists for Protection are probably the only specimens belonging to the world-wide communism of pelf and pillage who still hug the delusion that the foreigner pays the duty or that a protective tariff does not raise prices and so increase at a hundred points the cost of living.

Some of the protectionist papers and politicians have claimed that free trade in cement would be of no benefit to consumers, because the American Cement companies increased their prices as soon as the Canadian duty was lowered. We have been investigating this charge and have letters from the Lehigh Portland Cement company, of Cleveland, Ohio, and the Atlas Portland Cement company, of New York, two of the largest cement companies doing business in the United States. Both of these companies state definitely that they did not charge any more for their cement in Canada than they did in the United States, except the cost of transportation. They also stated that if there is free trade in cement the Canadian consumer could get the full advantage of the American price. This should be sufficient reply to those protectionists. Let us have free trade in cement.

When the protective tariff was inaugurated in Canada, it was declared by Sir John A. Macdonald to be for the purpose of encouraging industry. It was his idea that those industries that might meet severe competition from abroad should be encouraged by a tariff for a few years until they got on their feet and were able to make a reasonable profit. But experience has proven that protection has not been a success, as the older an industry gets the more greedy it becomes and the more tariff favors it demands. We have industries in Canada making over 50 per cent. profit and they are still begging for tariff favors.

A fire broke out in the German Kaiser's palace at Potsdam a few days ago. A Canadian paper containing one of Col. Hughes' speeches must have been lying around.

An Ottawa dispatch states that the Dominion Government will ask the British Government to interfere in Mexico and prevent injury to the Canadian capital invested in the country. The Canadian money that is invested in Mexico has mostly been taken out of the Canadian people through special privilege. If they cannot take care of their own property, then they should sell it out and bring their money back to Canada and use it for Canadian enterprises, where it is more than safe. It is enough to be plundered once without being called upon to maintain a navy to protect this money after it has been taken from the people. If all our knights and patriots were as loyal as they claim to be, they would not have any money invested in Mexico.

Though we publish in The Grain Growers' Guide advertisements of land in Florida, we are not advocating that our readers purchase this land, nor would we guarantee that the land is all that it is claimed to be. We believe that every one intending to purchase land should make a very careful investigation and should be sure that he is getting full value for his money. No man should invest money in land without either seeing it himself or having advice from some person in whom he has perfect confidence. This applies to all real estate advertising.

During the next few weeks there will be a tremendous demand for seed grain from all over the three Prairie Provinces. Thousands of farmers have some choice wheat, or other grain, they wish to sell, and we would suggest that the best way for them to do it would be to put a small advertisement in our classified page. This will help the man who wants to sell the grain, the man who wants to buy it, and The Grain Growers' Guide. Look on our classified pages for prices and terms.

Timber owners in Quebec are greatly delighted that the export duty on pulpwood has been removed and they can now ship freely into the United States under the only free trade clause in the Reciprocity Agreement that went into effect. Sir William Van Horne, who fought reciprocity so strenuously, is one of the big pulpwood men and his loyalty does not prevent him taking full advantage of sending his pulpwood across the line without paying duty.

The Springfield Republican, a newspaper noted for the accuracy of its statements, says that "one reason why newspapers in Canada are still so much party organs is the system of rewarding party editors and publishers with titles conferred by the King." Could the Republican have in mind the rabid partisanship of The Toronto News, and now the knighthood of Sir John S. Willison?

It is rumored that officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian Manufacturers' association have secretly encouraged the American Senate not to accept the British demand for fair treatment in Panama Canal tolls. These interests would find British competition in British Columbia via the canal route so serious as to compel a reduction in charges if British ships were not discriminated against. Now their loyalty is being tested and found wanting.

Sir Rodmond Roblin again condemned Direct Legislation in the Legislature on January 14. In another year or two, when public opinion compels the Legislature to grant this reform Sir Rodmond will declare that he has favored it all his life. The day of autocratic power by the politicians is passing.

Next week we will publish the Direct Legislation bill passed by the Saskatchewan Legislature.