

Our Letter from Ottawa

BY AGNES C. MACPHAIL, M.P.

Habit is an impelling force. We should carefully watch our thoughts, our acts, our habits. Habit becomes our master. If it's a good one, we are carried forward by the momentum of it to accomplish what without habit would have been an impossible task. Let me illustrate.

For years now I have been writing an article a week for the home papers. It was a tremendous effort, requiring preparation and a good deal of time. But week after week I ground them out—poor stuff, often. The habit grew. The work became easier, bringing each time a satisfaction to me. It completed the week, somehow. It became part of the fascinating, irritating and yet satisfying parliamentary life.

Unexpectedly, I was called home Friday, on account of a worsening in my mother's condition. She has been seriously ill for months. I had done nothing at all on the weekly stint. In the haste of getting off, I asked my secretary to inform the editors that no copy would go forward this week. But, I reckoned without the strength of a long-established habit. When I had spent some hours with my mother and found her free from pain, though extremely weak, had a consultation with the doctor, had shopped for the household, had established a second nurse, my mind reverted to the unfinished task of the week.

Habit was strong enough to carry me from the supper table in my home at Ceylon into an automobile, into the overnight train at Toronto, into a taxi which brought me to the door of the Parliament Buildings, on to my feet, to my desk, this Monday morning, from where I now talk to you.

It looked as though the budget and the trade agreement with Great Britain would have to be voted on at the same time, which would have been quite embarrassing, since some members who would wish to vote for the one would be against the other. But, in deference to Mr. Bennett's request, they were separated. And, to the surprise of the House, no vote was called for on the budget; not even yeas and nays, though some members called out, on division, which records that the House was not unanimous.

The trade agreements have yet to be dealt with.

Only two matters, other than the budget, came up for discussion during the week. Tommy Church, Broadview, Toronto, moved the second reading of Bill 22, by which he seeks to amend the Criminal Code for the greater protection of the public by more severe punishment for careless or reckless drivers.

Mr. Church says, quite truly, that, if any devastating diseases were to

take the toll which the motor car is taking by night and day, science and medicine would know no rest until they had found a cure. "The death toll by motor car constitutes Canada's greatest scandal. The slaughter goes on all over the country and the economic losses are appalling. But the worst thing is the indifference of the public."

In speaking of his own City of Toronto, Mr. Church says that 13 people were injured the week-end before and that already in 1937 eleven had been killed and 538 hurt in motor accidents, while in 1936 the figures were 69 killed, 3,475 hurt and drivers jailed 104. In the whole of the United States in five years 125,000 people were killed and 4,000,000 injured on highways—twice the number killed while serving overseas with the United States expeditionary force.

Continuing, the doughty fighter from Toronto said: "No invention has contributed more to the education, pleasure and enjoyment of the people than the motor car; but it's use is one thing, it's abuse another. The abuse has caused tremendous annual losses. untold sorrow and suffering, intense pain and grief, comparable only to plague, pestilence, famine. 95% of drivers want to obey the law. It is the 5% about which I am complaining. In England this question has been taken up but in Canada no interest is taken in the slaughter. A driver having caused a death ought not to drive for two years. While it is true that this matter is under provincial control in part, still the criminal law of this country is under this Parliament and we should be able to take some action."

The stress of the last half dozen years, the desperate need of people for a little money, the difficulty which those who need it most encountered in securing it, has led to the establishing of many loan and finance corporations which cater to this particular business. Two of them have bills before the House at the moment. These, in all likelihood, will be sent to a committee for examination, though, personally, I would much rather see them defeated without the preliminary. They are permitted by law to charge a rate of approximately 2% per month, which is exorbitant. Once a family gets in the clutches of such an interest collecting organization, they are unlikely to get out without great effort.

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GORING

Ten members of Ebenezer Women's Association met at the home of Mrs. John Murray on March 11th and completed their knitted quilt. All report a good time and lunch.

Mrs. Will White of St. Vincent is spending a few days with her sister, Mrs. M. E. Parker.

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Carruthers and Keith of Kimberley visited with the latter's mother, Mrs. M. E. Parker, on Sunday.

Miss Ina Parker of Owen Sound and Mr. and Mrs. Clare Muxlow visited on Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Herb. Parker.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Shaw and family of Clarksburg and Mr. and Mrs. Allan McPhatter and family of Bognor visited with Mr. and Mrs. Ryerson Sparling on Sunday.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Archie Kirkpatrick and the other friends in their recent bereavement, also to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Cathrae in the loss of their baby boys.

Born—On March 15th to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Cathrae, twin boys.

Born—On March 15th to Mr. and Mrs. Emerson Kirkpatrick, a daughter.

Quite a number attended the shower on Friday evening for Mr. and Mrs. William Hannah and report a good time.

Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Williams and daughter, Alice, of Toronto visited recently with Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Woods.

Mr. Dunning broke in at that point to say: "I agree so thoroughly that just a few months ago, upon one of these advertisements coming to my attention, I instructed the Superintendent (of Insurance) to take it up with the parties concerned and have it stopped. Whether the effort has been entirely successful I cannot say." Mr. Stevens went on to say that it is time Parliament took into consideration the erection of a loaning body that would take care of this class of loans at a reasonable rate.

By far the best of this week's speeches were made by Mr. W. H. Moore, once chairman of the Tariff Board, now member for Ontario County, and by H. H. Stevens of Kootenay East, B.C.

Mr. Moore's speech was particularly arresting. He is a thoroughly informed, thoughtful man, and, though he spoke in a low, quiet way, he shocked the House into complete silence by arguing against the trade agreement with Great Britain, which his government has but lately concluded. These agreements, of course, are really a continuation (with some changes) of those negotiated by the Bennett government. Mr. Moore believes that when the whole Empire arranges trade agreements and maps trade routes for themselves, the psychological effect upon the rest of the world is bad. We called such an arrangement economic imperialism and said that we could not leave others to defend the trade routes for which we have bargained.

Mr. Stevens thought that the budget offered little hope to the unemployed, to the farmers or to the average business man. He favored the trade agreement with Great Britain but warned the government that external trade was not everything, and suggested that more attention be paid to domestic problems. He showed by a telling concrete example that the prices of primary products are out of all relation to the prices which the primary producers must pay for the goods and services they require. He told of visiting a fishing village and of talking to a fisherman who had caught and sold 500 pounds of haddock, for which he received the sum of one dollar. The major cause of the fishermen's trouble in the Maritimes is the overbearing, dictatorial power exercised by the great distributing companies. More of the profits should go to the fishermen, he argued.

The dissatisfaction among the masses of the people had not abated, Mr. Stevens told the House. "Men everywhere are laboring under a feeling of hopelessness. There is an increasing number of our fellow citizens convinced that many of these injustices are unnecessary and that the inequalities that prevail in this country could be remedied without the destruction of the present economic system."

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AGNES C. MACPHAIL.
OTTAWA, Monday, March 15, 1937.

Can You Name the Two Best Known Men

throughout the County of Grey and Living in the following Municipalities:

Artemesia, Chatsworth, Euphrasia, Flesherton, Glenelg, Holland, Markdale

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SEE PAGE 1 FOR FULL PARTICULARS

BALLOT

Name two men from each municipality whom you consider the best known

- No. 1, Artemesia
- No. 2, Artemesia
- No. 1, Chatsworth
- No. 2, Chatsworth
- No. 1, Euphrasia
- No. 2, Euphrasia
- No. 1, Flesherton
- No. 2, Flesherton
- No. 1, Glenelg
- No. 2, Glenelg
- No. 1, Holland
- No. 2, Holland
- No. 1, Markdale
- No. 2, Markdale

Signed

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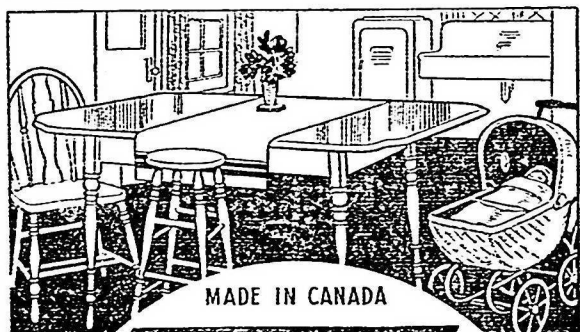
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