

The Ottawa Spotlight

By Wilfrid Eggleston

Ottawa, February 2—The constitution has occupied the centre of the political stage in the past few days. It is not a subject which can ever expect to have a wide box-office appeal. You can write a fairly bright column about the abolition of hanging, or a new Canadian flag, or even Canada's defence policy. But what can you do with the legal and constitutional arguments, the lengthy historical views, the division of jurisdiction, and all the rest of it, in a review written for others than lawyers and politicians? Yet you can't ignore it. Once upon a time I taught Canadian history, and I confess that I found the constitutional part of it pretty heavy sledding. Just the same, there is no choice: I shall have to devote some space to the subject now.

The matter was thrust into the centre of things by Mr. Bennett, who made, in the course of a co-operative and illuminating speech the suggestion that a constitutional convention of the several parties, provincial and federal, be called to discuss amending the B. N. A. Act. He apparently had in mind some such historic meeting as those at Quebec and Charlottetown at which the foundations of the present Dominion were laid. He took it for granted that the constitution needed revising. Most people, who have been in a position to see how the present Act stands in the way of reform, will agree with him. But how is it to be done? There must be reasonable unanimity of the nine provinces and the Dominion. Can it be attained? An effort was made last year, but what with the attitude of the Senate and the objections raised by several provinces even that minor change could not be proceeded with. What hope would there be of an overhauling aimed at bringing the constitution of 1867 into mesh with the conditions of 1937.

A Round Table Talk

Mr. Bennett, advocating a convention of parts and parties, thought that a roundtable meeting of this sort would get the revision hopefully on its way.

The Mackenzie King government, accepting Mr. Bennett's suggestion in the constructive way in which it was offered, still did not think that such a convention was necessarily the best way about it. Mr. Mackenzie King, putting finger on what he thought was the place where the shoe pinches most at the moment, namely the taxing powers and the social obligations of province and Dominion, seemed to favor a royal commission or series of commissions, not, perhaps, to go into the whole question immediately, but to bear down on these immediate matters which demand adjustment, and for which indeed, some temporary relief might be needed even before a commission could report.

Before the week was out news from London added emphasis to need of discussion between the provinces and Dominion on this subject. It is now clear that, as the B. N. A. act stands, the Dominion government has no administrative rights in the field of social legislation. It cannot enforce an unemployment insurance scheme, nor minimum wages, nor limitation of hours of labor, nor even old age pensions. These are, as the constitution is written, provincial measures.

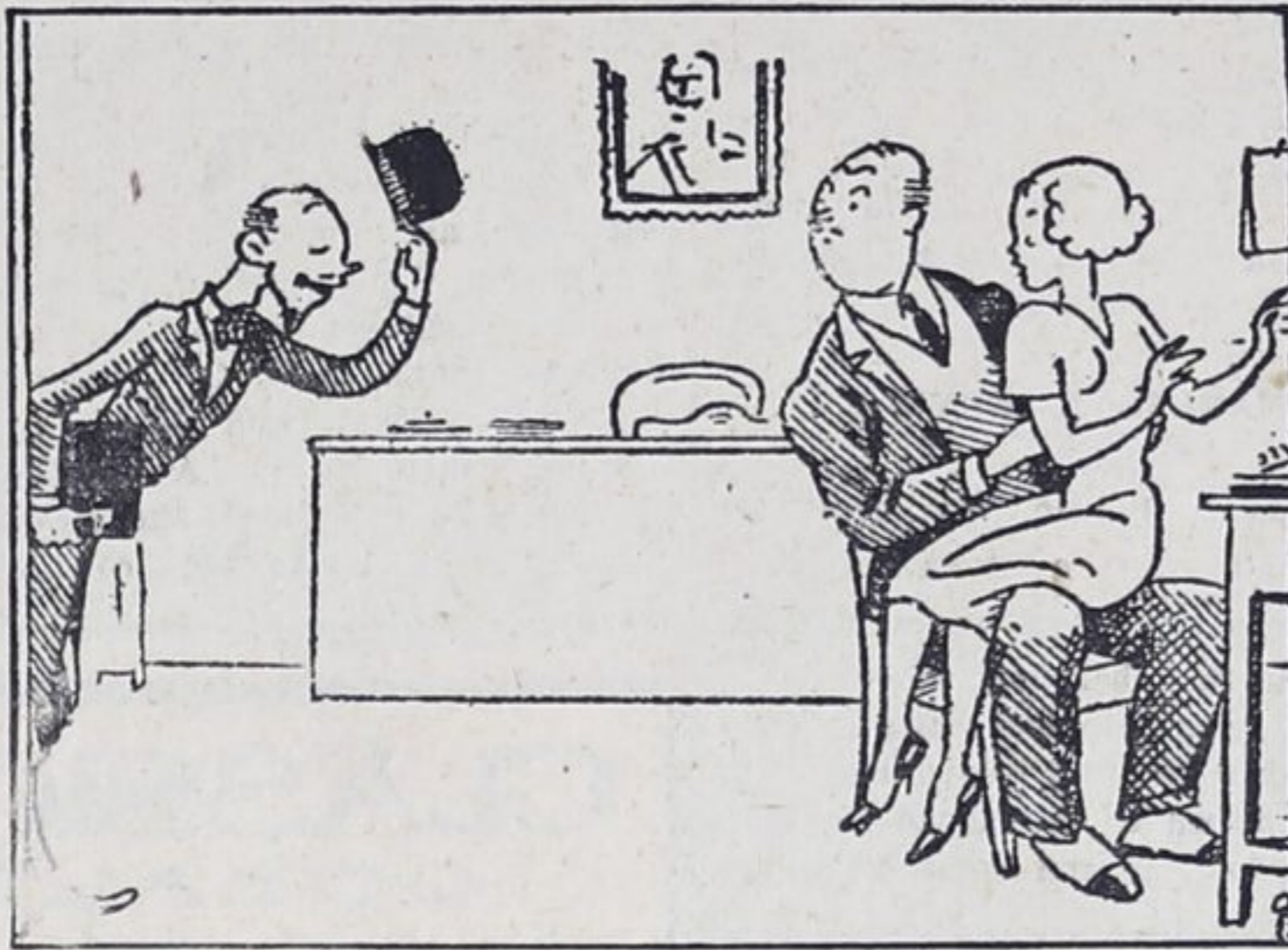
Questions Being Asked

Should they be left provincial measures? If so, then we must give up all our ideas about national social legislation along the lines listed above. Any province that wishes can put these measures into force: others need not. One sees what that means, and

what problems of competition in industry, of migration to provinces where social laws are better, or to provinces where production is cheaper, what problems in the far division of federal monies are involved.

Should the federal government be given power to administer social legislation by a re-writing of the constitution? Will there be the same minimum wage laws in P.E.I. as in B.C. or in Quebec as in Alberta? Is it desirable to have uniformity in such a diverse country? One sees the problems, here, too.

Now it seems more imperative than ever to make a determined effort to discuss the constitution. Canadians now know how the present constitution divides the powers and responsibilities. If the provinces are to set up unemployment insurance, minimum wages, old age pension schemes etc, then obviously they will need to have their sources of revenue enlarged. If these social measures are to be made national other sections of the B.N.A. act will have to be re-written. But either way, the constitution must be changed.



"Good morning, sir. I should like, if I may, to demonstrate a machine that will enable you to do dispense with typists."
—Guerin Maschino, Milan



"Oh, this is easy! It's Mr. Smith!"
—Der Lustige Sachse, Leipzig

HEALTH

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TOILET HABITS

"When should my child have good toilet habits?" There is no fixed time for these things, but if we mean by good training that the child recognizes his needs and asks for attention, we should not expect training in bowel and daytime bladder control until the second year, and night-time bladder control until the third year.

In all this period of training we should remember that the child should never be shamed or blamed. Praise gets better results, and is easier for all concerned. Accidents will happen, and the less said the better.

Bowel control comes first—after three months of age—after the morning and evening nursing the child should be placed on a warm chamber. He should never be kept on longer than fifteen minutes and, if necessary, gentle rubbing of the stomach be tried. As he grows older, we should teach him to ask for the toilet by name when he needs it.

The child will probably pass urine with each movement and when the bowel movements are established we should then consider bladder control. Starting at 6 to 9 months of age, he should be placed on the chamber at frequent intervals throughout the day. By this means we may keep him dry and as he grows older we lengthen the periods and also teach him to ask for attention.

When he can keep dry and ask for attention in the daytime, usually about the eighteenth month, we should begin his night training.

Give thyself leisure to learn some good thing, and cease roving and wandering to and from—
Marcus Auerlius.

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ing. We get him out of bed at 10.00 p.m., waken him thoroughly and take him to the toilet. He should go back to bed and is not wakened again that night. This simple routine is usually all that is needed to cause good control. Regularity is all-important in the training and too often bed-wetting in older life is the result of either irregular habit training or no habit training at all. Questions concerning Health addressed to the Canadian Medical Association, 184 College Street, Toronto, will be answered personally by letter

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