

### The Ottawa Spotlight

By Wilfrid Eggleston

Ottawa, Feb. 9th. — Defence, the control of transportation, farm implements and the high price, war profiteering, free ports, home repair, the employment of Canadians on subsidized shipping, and the constitution all had a part of some sort in a week which cannot be characterized as breath-taking. The committees are just getting under way, the Senate has resumed after a brief recess, the budget and the British trade agreement are still in the offing. The private members are still plugging away at their resolutions, some of which provoke highly academic debates, others serving the highly useful purpose of delineating public opinion, giving the government of the day a chance of hearing what the country is saying, and also, if it has made up its mind, what government policy is to be.

#### Not Too Enthusiastic

One hears that in party caucuses, which are not reported and are supposed to be held in considerable secrecy, the merit of Canada's new defence estimates is being dwelt upon. There is no suggestion of a violent uprising among government members from Quebec. But neither is there any zealous enthusiasm about adding \$13,000,000 to the tax burdens of the country for such a purpose. Some of the French-Canadian spokesmen are arguing that, purely for the defence of Canada's coasts, some further expenditures are imperative. Others are saying that with communistic outbreaks not impossible even in Canada or in the neighboring country, it is as well to bolster the forces of law and order. A few are opposed to any increase. There will be some mutterings, but the whole affair has been skilfully staged by the government, and I should be surprised if any demonstration is put on within government ranks.

#### The B.N.A. Act Again

The constitution insists upon thrusting itself into discussions, and we had a further statement of policy from the government spokesmen. It now appears that the Dominion will leave it to the provinces to make the next move. The latter have the legal right to inaugurate health and employment insurances and similar social measures. If they want them and can't afford them, and would like the Dominion government to take the mover, then they can say so. And if the provinces are sufficiently enthusiastic about the request, and sufficiently in harmony to secure an amendment to the constitution, presumably we shall see some day national measures of this sort.

It would, however, be idle to suppose that the Privy Council rulings have not postponed these matters for several years. I will be surprised to see a national unemployment scheme in effect during the life of this 18th parliament. It may, of course, be that we shall never have such a measure; that the provinces will decide to keep the right to operate

such schemes, and will put forward the alternative of requesting more revenues. To many people, a diverse country like Canada lends itself to a series of provincial schemes, adapted to the peculiarities of the several economic areas, rather than to the uniform national scheme. For example, one would expect unemployment insurance to appeal much more to industrial provinces, than to those in which the majority of the people are rural, and so, under the usual schemes are not eligible for the benefits. The same is true of some of the laws respecting minimum wages and hours of labor.

#### Prairie Problems Again

Though there has been a lull in public announcements, the financial position of the prairie provinces continues to cause much concern at Ottawa. Manitoba and Saskatchewan are exploring every opportunity of meeting their obligations, but they are

running behind and cannot step up their taxation much further—if at all—without running into the low of diminished returns. The alternative will be either a loan from some outside source, or some relief from their security holders. The latter might be voluntary or arbitrary. The Bank of Canada is engaged in making a study of the finances and economies of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It is said to be for the benefit of security-holders, who are reported to be scattered up and down the continent. If the Bank of Canada reported that these provinces were essentially solvent, and only needed a year of grace to put them on their feet again, they might be more inclined to accept some temporary compromise about the interest payments. This may be the explanation as I have had advanced from reliable quarters. Or there may be more than that to the visit of the Bank of Canada officials.

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#### CROSSED EYES

Children may be born with crossed eyes or develop them before the age of eight years, rarely after that age. In the past, parents were advised to do nothing about the condition until the child was about 14 years old because the eyes sometimes became straight. Modern science, however, has shown this to be very poor advice. The child does not use the eye that is turned and the delicate nerves in the back of the eye do not develop because the eye is not used. So in time the affected eye becomes blind. It is most important, therefore, that treatment be started as soon as the condition is recognized.

No child with crossed eyes should be allowed to reach the school age without proper corrective treatment. A child with a squint suffers the jeers of his playmates and is sometimes regarded as mentally subnormal. The effect of this is harmful and the child may develop an inferiority complex.

If you think that your baby's eyes are not straight, seek the advice of your family doctor. Sometimes the bridge of the baby's nose is very wide so that more of the white of the eye is seen on the outside of the colored part than on the inside. This gives the appearance of squint although the eyes are straight.

The eyes, for proper examination, must be tested with drops which enlarge the pupils. The Doctor will likely advise covering the good eye for a certain period each day so that the child will be forced to use the eye that is turned to develop its sight. Certain eye exercises will also help to develop the vision. Some

times glasses will straighten the eyes, but if they do not become normal in six months, it is wise to have them straightened by a slight operation by a competent eye surgeon.

Crossed eyes can be cured and no child should be allowed to go

through life suffering a tremendous handicap because competent medical advice was not to correct his condition.

Questions concerning Health, as treated by the Canadian Medical Association, 184 College Street, Toronto, will be answered personally by letter.

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