

SLATS' DIARY (By Oliver N. Warren)

Sunday: Well, I can think of lotsa places I druther go today than to S. S. & church. But I aint a goin to none of them. I aint no free Ameriken citizen.

Monday: Looks like Blisters are a geting ignoranter evry day. Today the teacher ast him whair does rinoseroses cum frum & he replide & sed from the river Rhine. When anybody noes they cum from Rhireland. They just as well take Blisters outa skool & let him start diggen ditches and etc.

Tuesday: The littel boy acrost the streets tooth got to aken & his Pa sent him to the dental shop & when he arived back & was ast did his tooth still ake he sed he dunno I aint got it. I xpect it was pulled clean out of his fase.

Wednesday: Mister MacGregor, are Skotch naber next dore has got twin babys & had a pitcher of 1 of them fotografred. Pa ast him why diddent he get a pitcher of the other 1 & he sed it aint no use to waist money. They both look prezactly like each another. Sounds okay by me.

Thursday: The teacher ast Jake how old would a person be witch was borned in 19 and 7. Was he a man or a wimmen, teacher, sed Jake & I confess I at 1st diddent no why Jake wanted to no that, but I finely cot on.

Friday: We was out injoying spring in the ford & cum to a place whair we neerly run off a turn into a crick. When we got stopt Pa ast a man why they wasnt no warning sign there & the man sed they ust to be but they tuk it down. Becos no boddie ever run off into the crick it wassent needd. So he sed.

Saturday: I aint doing none 2 well in skool & Pa got after me about it. He sed he diddent think no thing of studyen sevrul hrs. at night when he went to skool. & I dont neether I replide & sed.

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The Week in Parliament

By Wilfrid Eggleston

Ottawa, March 16.—The budget debate this year was of interest chiefly because of the light it threw on the condition of the country, of the feeling of the people, and of the solutions being discussed for the country's ills. No one was concerned much about the vote at the end of it, because everyone knew before it started that the government's top-heavy majority would smother all opposition then. Only one Liberal—W. H. Moore of Oshawa—attacked the trade agreement, and voted for the 'want-of-confidence' amendment moved by Mr. Bennett.

Criticism of the government for its failure to do more than it has done in remedying conditions; for its reliance on export trade to cure unemployment; for its inadequate treatment of the single homeless men and women; for the futility of the national employment commission; for its 'fire-sale' wheat policy; for its acceptance in 1937 of an agreement with the United Kingdom which it attacked so trenchantly in 1932: these were the major charges of opposition members. Conservatives, C. C. F. and Social Credit took turns in denouncing the administration for sins of omission and commission.

However, when one came to examine closely the speeches of opposition members, there was not very much of a useful or constructive character about them. No new solutions were suggested. The value of protective tariffs was dilated upon, but not with the same enthusiasm as before they were thoroughly tested out in 1930 to 1933. The Social Credit members continued to urge the particular type of monetary reform with which they are associated as a way out of the woods. The C.C.F. group asserted that a program of socialism was necessary to save Canada and the world. Hon. H. H. Stevens, lone Reconstruction candidate, urged members to 'drop politics' in dealing with the grave problem of the Canadian National Railways deficit, advised the government to call a special session of parliament this fall to cope with it, creating three parliamentary committees, members and senators, to deal with the several aspects of it (Bore Brunt of Attack).

The National Employment Commission came in for a great deal of attack. It will be recalled that this was one of Premier Mackenzie King's own personal ideas dating back to the early years of the depression. Many of his own followers were never very enthusiastic about it. It was injected into the election campaign and the Liberals loyally defended it as well as possible. Nine months after they came into office they set it up. It has been, I fancy, as valuable as most detached observers thought it would be. But it has not worked any miracle. It has produced a crop of fertile suggestions, some of which have been adopted; other of which have been pigeon-holed or flatly rejected. Hon. Norman Rogers was driven, in the House of Commons, to admit that the usefulness of the commission might not be interminable, that in two months, or six months, or some other period, its work would have been done. But he defended warmly the work it had accomplished to date.

The truth is that the National Employment Commission never lived up to the expectations aroused by many who heard the Prime Minister promise it and dilate upon it. It was to be, among other things, a body of cooperation and supervision of all unemployment expenditure. It was to work with the provinces and municipalities, so that Canada would get a maximum of return for all moneys expended on unemployment works and relief. It has, unquestionably, done useful work. It has not cost anything like as much as some press comment would suggest. But, after being as charitable as possible about it, and estimating that the good it has done far outweighs the financial cost to the treasury, the fact remains that it has barely touched the fringe of the unemployment problem in Canada. The Home Improvement Plan—its prize accomplishment to date—has stimulated home repairs. So far less than \$2,000,000 has been spent across the Dominion through the scheme. Some of this would have been spent anyway. Perhaps when the better weather comes the program will expand materially. The Youth Employment Committee, starting out with an ambitious \$7,000,000 scheme, has voted \$1,000,000 by a begrudging treasury board.

Trade expansion by treaty, the main plank of the government's recovery program, hit its first serious snag in Australia, where the Minister of Trade and Commerce resigned in protest against his own government's refusal to back him in his proposal to abrogate the trade

agreement now in force if Canada would not concede extensive new tariff reductions.

(Cross Section of Debate)

A vivid cross-section of the budget debate is provided by the following snatches gleaned from members' remarks:

"This budget, I submit, with all due respect to the minister, was perhaps the longest, and apart from the presentation of the British agreement, about as barren a budget as any I have listened to in 26 years."—Hon. H. H. Stevens, Kootenay East (Reconstruction).

"In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, never since Confederation has the power and influence of parliament been at as low an ebb as it is to-day."—Hon. H. H. Stevens.

"We all know that the mother country is a wonderful thing, and I have every respect for it; but mother is a sharp trader."—W. H. Moore, Liberal, Ontario.

"An increase in our total wealth, which can come about only by the expansion of our external trade, will not solve all our problems, for the problem of the equitable distribution of that wealth will still remain with us. But I submit Mr. Speaker, that an increase in our total wealth constitutes our best hope for solving the problem of unemployment."—J. T. Thorson, Liberal, Selkirk.

"The file factory at Port Hope is the only factory in Canada producing files, and that plant is doing a bigger business than ever before, notwithstanding the fact that during the last election the men were told that if they voted for King and the Liberal candidate the doors of the plant would be closed the next morning and the men would be out of work."—W. F. Rickard, Liberal, Durham, Ont.

"During the course of his remarks the chairman of the (national employment) commission drew an analogy between a boy's knowledge of a lobster and a lobster's knowledge of a boy. When he finished we did not quite understand whether the lobster knew more about the boy or the boy about the lobster, but he did suggest that the knowledge of the people of Canada regarding the unemployment problem was somewhat similar in character."—W. A. Walsh, Conservative, Mount Royal.

"Here are some of the suggestions that have been made: produce less grain; raise more stock; produce more grain and keep the railways busy; produce less in the factories; give shorter hours to men; put the tariff up higher; lower the tariff to any country that will trade with us; stop immigration; fill up the prairies; bring more people into the country; spend; save; make war on Russia; copy Russia; get back to the simple life; break up machines and revert to hand labor; close the universities; cultivate trade within the empire; complete the lake route and get another means of transportation even if there is nothing to transport. And, above all, find fault with everyone who is trying to do something."—H. R. Fleming, Liberal, Humboldt.

"There is no doubt that the Conservative party is a hard luck party. We were not born with horseshoes. We always seem to come into power just in time to save the country from being ruined by the Liberals. Then we get kicked out and the Liberals get the credit for bringing the country back."—David Spence, Conservative, Parkdale.

"I do not believe it is proper to permit coal to come in from foreign countries, particularly when we are faced with an unemployment problem."—C. E. Johnston, Social Credit, Bow River, Alta.

"We in the west are sometimes met with cries of dissension and secession. Well, Abraham Lincoln once said that the union could not live half-slave and half-free, and I will go so far as to say that you cannot maintain this nation if you speak of it in terms of east and west. The unity of Canada depends upon that unity among us that is necessary for the survival of all."—J. A. Glen, Liberal, Marquette, Man.

"The farmers of this country are too often held up to ridicule. You cannot go to a moving picture show and see the character of the farmer depicted without discovering that he portrays the part of some hayseed hillbilly ignoramus from the backwoods somewhere. I claim that the farmers of western Canada are as well-informed as any one body of men you can find in Canada today."—E. G. Hansell, Social Credit, Macleod.

"The turning point in the improvement of Canadian trade dates back to the Ottawa agreements of 1932. It is a self-evident fact, a fact which every Canadian citizen acknowledges whose mind is not rancid with partisanship."—Grote Stirling, Conserva-

tive, Yale, B.C. "If the answering of questions in questionnaires could have brought relief to the unemployed, they would have been on easy street long ago."—Angus MacInnis, C.C.F., Vancouver.

Widow of Former School Principal Dies At Chatham

Mrs. Sarah Ann Brackin, widow of the late James Brackin who was principal of Richmond Hill Public School many years ago, died at her home in Chatham February 23rd. The Brackins will be remembered by many of Richmond Hill's older residents. Mr. Brackin was principal here when there were but three rooms in the Public School. He is fondly remembered by his old pupils for his striking personality and his exceptional ability as a teacher. He had marked ability as a story-teller, and he told many to his pupils, possibly when he saw them tired or restless. A High School teacher recently paid a tribute when he said "the history I learned from Mr. Brackin has stayed with me all my life. He could present a mental picture never to be forgotten."

The following is from the Chatham News of February 25th: "Mrs. Brackin was born at Elgin's Corners near Richmond Hill, her maiden name being Sarah Anna Livingston. For over half a century she has lived in Chatham, her husband coming here as the Principal of the McKeough Public School, a position in which he established an enviable reputation and a successful record. It was here that her family of five children grew from boyhood and girlhood to young manhood and young womanhood—a family which has had a deep and lasting effect especially upon the cultural side of Maple City life through their exceptional ability in many departments of artistic endeavor, especially music. The sons were William who passed away 33 years ago, Robert L. who after a

brilliant record in law and public life died in Windsor in 1926 and Garnet G. who gave up his life on the field of honor while fighting the nation's battles in the World War. The daughters who survive are Mrs. Mary Brackin-Jacks of Wallaceburg and Miss Bessie Brackin who lived at home with her mother. There are also three grandchildren, Madge and Bob Jacks and Bob Brackin. Mrs. R. L. Brackin is a daughter-in-law. The deceased and her husband the late James Brackin were great lovers of music. James Brackin established one of the first Boy's School Bands at the McKeough School during his principalship, and it was a natural thing to find the members of their family becoming proficient in various forms of musical endeavor. William the oldest son excelled both as a vocalist and instrumentalist and was one of the most competent organists and choir directors of his day. Robert also excelled in music, but chose the profession of law as the outlet for his talents. Captain Garnet G. was a baritone soloist well remembered in this city, and his exceedingly attractive personality made him one of the most popular soldiers who ever left this city in the war years. The daughters Mrs. Jacks and Miss Bessie are today musicians of recognized talent, excelling in the direction of church choirs, and in the teaching of piano music.

RADIO LICENSE FEE

The radio license fee of \$2.00 charged by the federal government has never been popular and it is not likely that it ever will. Even the one dollar fee was greatly resented. The radio license can well be classed in the "Nuisance Tax List" and the government would do well to discontinue it. Everyone of this opinion should write both the Minister of Marine and their local member at the House of Commons, Ottawa, asking that the license fee be discontinued. If your letter to your member is addressed to the House of Commons while the house is in session it will go free. A letter to the Minister of Marine, Ottawa goes free at any time.

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