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**OTTAWA LETTER**  
by  
"Jack" Smith, M.P.  
North York

Members of the House of Commons returned after the Easter recess to find the lawns carpeted in rich beautiful green and the tulips in full bloom on Parliament Hill. The Dominion-Provincial Conference here has pretty well held the centre of interest this week, and whenever time permitted we sat at these conferences held in the Senate Chambers. Premiers of the nine Provinces are here armed with reams of papers containing masses of figures and information, and supported by colleagues and secretaries. It was a dramatic scene as the Provincial Premiers sat around the conference table with representatives of the federal government. Prime Minister the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King sat at the head of the table, as chairman of the conference. As Prime Minister he made some important pronouncements on behalf of Canada, but in the main he contented himself with carrying out the role of chairman and left to members of his government the responsibility of debating the issues. On either side of Prime Minister King sat Finance Minister Ilsley, Justice Minister St. Laurent, Reconstruction Minister Howe, and Health Minister Claxton. As the conference dealt largely with finances and taxation, Mr. Ilsley bore the brunt of the burden of debate, although Health Minister Claxton had considerable to do, due to the relation of social security legislation to future taxation.

Next to Mr. Howe sat Ontario's full in oratory and somewhat belligerent in his attitude. Beside him sat Nova Scotia's Angus L. Macdonald, mild, deliberative and determined. Premier Stuart Garson of Manitoba probably won more recognition for his ability at the conference than any other provincial premier. Small of stature, Garson is recognized as a very able fellow and it is hinted he may soon enter the federal arena. If he does, he would be following the footsteps of his predecessor, the Honourable John Bracken, who resigned the Manitoba premiership to become leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. Premier Jones represented the Island Province, Prince Edward Island, Premier Manning the Province of Alberta, Premier T. C. Douglas, Saskatchewan, Premier McNair, the Province of New Brunswick, white haired Premier John Hart the Coastal Province of British Columbia, and fiery Maurice Duplessis the Province of Quebec. We had the pleasure and privilege of meeting several of these provincial premiers and it was an interesting experience to meet them and listen to them in action around the conference table.

Three provincial premiers represent Liberal Governments, two represented Union Governments, one a C.C.F. government, one a Social Credit government, one Conservative, and in Quebec, a Party known as Union Nationale led by Premier Duplessis.

From among the maze of reports

**Sculptor At Thornhill**  
(Continued From Page One)

which will mark for posterity the activities of the Canadian army abroad. This work brought him both official and personal commendation from Prime Minister Mackenzie King and General McNaughton. In one letter the General especially mentioned the sheer intrinsic beauty and craftsmanship of the monument at the Leather Head bypass.

Though sculpture is one of the oldest arts in the world it offers a precarious living in Canada to all but a few long established artists. Being a married man with a young family Stephen Trenka prefers the security of a steady job as wood carver and furniture decorator with a well known Toronto firm. The original, creative work he loves to do is accomplished in the little spare time that he can muster.

Made By His Hands  
In the cosy Green Lane home there are a number of interesting things made by his sensitive hands. Among them are several beautiful wall plaques in bas relief, a hammered pewter mask, a Madonna and child, a woman's head, the figure of a young girl (in black walnut), and the enchanting head of a child for which his own curly haired son may have been the model. The pieces carved from wood have such an exquisite polish that one feels tempted to handle as well as look at them.

Stephen Trenka has shown his sculptures at numerous exhibitions, including the Centenary of Canadian Art at the Tate Gallery, London, England, in 1938, and at the New York World's Fair. At present there are four photographs of his work in the exhibit of Canadian Art which is travelling through Russia. On account of the difficulty of packing and shipping the sculpture section could only be represented by pictures.

Mr. Trenka has practically promised that he will show something at the Handicraft Fair in Thornhill on June 8th. Then you will be able to say, not only, "I have heard about Stephen Trenka," but, "I have seen and enjoyed some of his sculptures."  
Doris M. Fitzgerald.

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The federal government is expected to announce soon what type of personal savings plan it proposes to put forward to encourage continued thrift by individuals after war savings certificates and stamps are discontinued this autumn.

Finance Minister Ilsley announced some time ago the government planned to discontinue the sale of stamps and certificates when the final instalments are paid this fall on bonds purchased in the Ninth Victory Loan campaign.

He said at the time the government was desirous of offering wage-earners some system whereby they could invest their savings.

Among the plans that have been mentioned in unofficial circles have been low denomination bonds which could be paid for over a comparatively short period.

There might also be a wider appeal for investment in government annuities and in long term bonds.

There always is a lot of criticism of the time wasted by needless talking in Parliament. Speaking off the record this week, Dr. Beauchesne, Clerk of the House, said the length of sessions could be cut if Hansard were abolished. Hansard is the record of the House and many members talk for electioneering more than with any view of contributing to the business of the House.

"If there were no such thing as Hansard there would be fewer long speeches," Dr. Beauchesne told a meeting of the Public School Teachers Association this week.

Dr. Beauchesne said that members had been known to buy up thousands of copies of Hansard and send them post free to relatives and friends. He quoted figures stating that 25 translators were hired to translate Hansard, 10 reporters, 18 typists, and three messengers, which ran into a yearly expenditure of \$450,000.

The recent increase in the price of farm implements allowed by the War-time Prices and Trade Board has been the subject of considerable discussion. The Minister of Finance in answer to a question in the House this week said he had nothing to add to the statement made last week.

No one likes increased prices for what we have to buy, but the fact is that at the moment so great that farmers are paying much more than 12 1/2 percent over regular prices for not-so-good second-hand machinery whenever they can get it. This may be seen at any York County auction sale. Larger supplies of new machinery will be encouraged by the new price and help eliminate the shortage. All duties are now taken off farm machinery and implement manufacturers will compete with the world market prices.

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