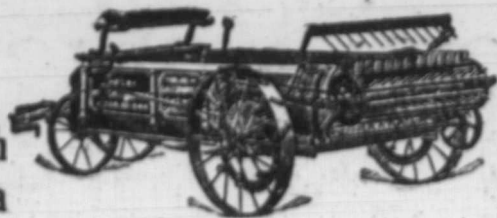


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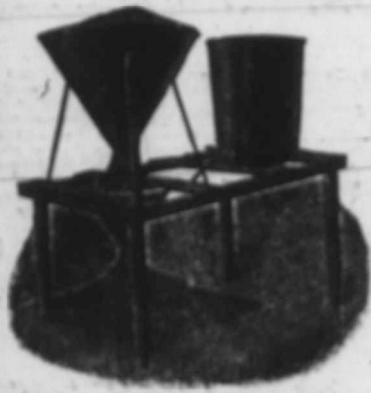


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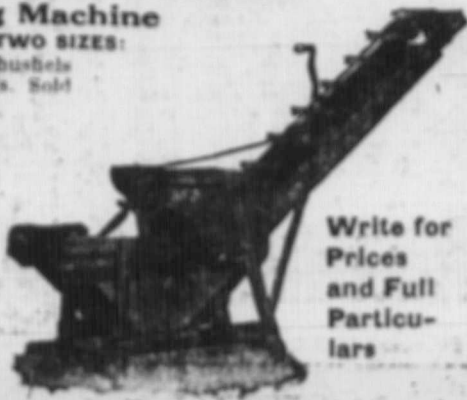
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Our Ottawa Letter

Financial Estimates Quickly Passed

Ottawa, February 2.—Parliament got into a good business stride this week. After spending two more days debating the address it was disposed of without an amendment being moved or a division taken. That was expected after Sir Wilfrid Laurier made his proposal to Sir Robert Borden that only non-contentious business should be taken up previous to an adjournment to allow the Prime Minister to attend the Imperial War Conference. Having adopted this conciliatory attitude the opposition could not with propriety move an amendment to the address which is a straight want of confidence challenge to an administration.

With the address disposed of on Tuesday the short Wednesday sitting—the House does not sit on Wednesday evenings in the early part of the session—was occupied with bills and motions by private members. And this reminds me that mention was omitted last week of a bill introduced by Geo. McCraney, of Saskatoon, to enable the minister of the interior to issue patents to pre-emptions and purchaser homesteads subject to the payment of the moneys due to the government, in cases where all the other requirements of the act, including residence and cultivation have been complied with. The object of the bill is to facilitate the borrowing of money by farmers who require financial assistance when they are getting a start. The amendment would enable such men to get an advance by way of mortgage despite the circumstance that something was still owed to the government for the land.

Private bills dealt with on Tuesday included one by Mr. Oliver Wilcox to further restrict race track gambling, by amending the provisions of the Miller bill, and Mr. Robert Bickerdike's hardy annual which proposes to do away with capital punishment in Canada. The Wilcox bill was sent to a special committee but no headway was made with Mr. Bickerdike's measure which was for the time "talked out."

War Appropriations

On Thursday the decks were cleared for government business. The supply bill which includes one quarter of the main estates for the next fiscal year was passed without discussion. The amount provided for was slightly over fifty million dollars which will carry on the business of the country until the end of June. The total estimates, three-fourths of which will be discussed and passed in April, amount to \$203,472,765, a decrease of \$67,842,779 as compared with the expenditures for the current fiscal year. Of course there will be supplementary estimates later but they will not be so heavy as they were last year when several millions were voted to purchase the Quebec and Saguenay Railway and the C.N.R. and G.T.P. were given heavy financial assistance. The estimates included heavy increases in interest due to war borrowings and aggregating eighteen millions and in pensions which total almost nine millions. On the other hand ordinary expenditure has been reduced while thirteen millions have been cut off from public works and twelve millions from railways and canals.

Growing National Debt

While there was some discussion of Sir Robert's Borden's resolution providing a war expenditure of half a million dollars for the coming fiscal year and Sir Thomas White's \$100,000,000 borrowing bill there was no opposition to the measures. The Premier in reply to questions stated that Canada's war expenditure up to the end of January had been approximately \$435,000,000. This does not include what the Dominion owes to Great Britain for the maintenance of troops in the field and which Sir Thomas White said was probably some fifty or sixty million dollars. It was announced that the arrangement with the Imperial authorities is that Canada shall pay at the rate of six shillings per man per day for equipment, food, clothing, etc., provided by the British government. Australia and New Zealand have the same arrangement

with the Imperial government. Sir Thomas White estimated that by March 31, the end of the present fiscal year, the National debt will be \$800,000,000, while we will have to borrow on war account alone shortly another \$250,000,000. The domestic loan of \$100,000,000 will probably be raised partly in Canada and partly in the United States. An encouraging feature is that for the current fiscal year there will be a surplus of from sixty millions to apply to the war expenditure.

EARL GREY ON CO-OPERATION

Earl Grey has made a strong appeal to the Northumberland farmers to improve their industry by co-operative methods and by better education. Addressing at Alnwick the Northumberland Agricultural Supply Association, he showed that "Denmark had obtained an increased yield during the last ten years of 25 per cent., while the average yield of Holland and Belgium was 25 per cent. higher than our yield."

"In Denmark, where they had co-testing associations, the average yield of milk was 700 gallons per cow. Many farmers in Ireland and elsewhere were keeping cows which yield only 350 gallons per cow. Where this was the case it would be possible at the same cost to increase the output by 100 per cent."

"The Association might help to bring producer and consumer closer together. 35 per cent. of the price paid by the consumer should suffice to cover the cost of distribution. Anything above this percentage was an unnecessary tax on both consumer and producer."

"The day was gone when farmers thought it wrong to agitate in their own interests," he said. "He hoped some action would be taken by members of that association to establish a powerful agricultural organization in this district. He had been told that farmers were so individualistic that they could not combine, and were proud of it. This was odd, because individual isolation was the mark of the savage, and the farmers who were opposed to co-operation were really writing themselves down as barbarians."

"In those countries where there was real combination and co-operation, farmers were making bigger profits. Rural poverty and decay must be looked for in those countries where there was no agricultural combination."

"He hoped the war would give us a new England, and that the new spirit of perfect comradeship which existed in the trenches between officers and men would extend to the workshops and the fields."

"After the war we could no longer afford the luxury of strikes. We had all to pull at the same end of the rope to enable us to repair the wastage of the war, and to hold our own against foreign competition."

"The capitalist might make the worker into a partner by sharing with him, on some principle of equity, the surplus profits that might remain after capital had received its fair reward. The worker, on the other hand, might do his best, instead of each man seeing how little he could do in the longest possible time."

"This new spirit, he hoped, would extend to agriculture, and could only be realized if there was an active co-operation of farmers between themselves, and also between landowners and agricultural laborers."

"The minds of the people hitherto had been indifferent to the prosperity of agriculture. We had been governed by the towns, which drew their food supplies from all quarters of the earth, and were comparatively indifferent as to what might be produced in the United Kingdom. Now the position had been completely altered, and the mind of the nation was being increasingly engaged upon those two questions—how much food did the land produce and how much could it or ought it to be able to produce?"

"As a small illustration of what could be done, Earl Grey quoted the action of the Howick Co-operative Store, which since February last had sent 500 dozen eggs to the Newcastle Co-operative Society, which had a membership of 32,000. This was only a small beginning of what, if properly managed, would grow to a large business. On these eggs not one penny had gone to the middleman. The whole benefit of this arrangement was shared between the consumer and the producer. He hoped it might be possible to extend this organization to vegetables, fruit and other farm produce."—Public Opinion.