

# EDITORIAL

THE MOST IMPORTANT MAN in the National Registration squabble was the man who wasn't appointed secretary: G. M. Murray. The resignation of Sir Thomas Tait was a serious loss because Sir Thomas is not much of a partisan and R. B. Bennett is. But Bennett is clear-headed and forceful and will have the C. P. R.'s cooperation in securing data and formulating plans. Murray's usefulness would have been great. He is not only the Secretary of the Manufacturers' Association but he is a keen observer and a shrewd analyst, and such is Murray's temperament, he could have been relied upon to give disinterested advice. Probably no one in this country knows the history of Canadian manufacture better than Murray and perhaps no one is more willing than he is to admit its weak points. Murray's general knowledge and his standing with the manufacturers would have been invaluable assets to the committee. One of the very qualities that would have made him an excellent committee-man is that blunt out-spokenness that caused the Government to refuse his appointment. Murray would rather refuse any position or any honour than disguise his feelings. Meantime it is only fair to see what Bennett will accomplish. His first manifesto calling for a party love-feast is not a brilliant beginning. It somehow suggests that the Government is afraid it won't accomplish anything and so wants to drag the Opposition into joint responsibility. If it had any real purpose or plan it is safe to hazard it would have been slow to share the credit with the Liberals. However, as we observed before, it is only fair to Bennett to give him time, and keep up hope.

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"PARISEES!" IS THE WORD the Vancouver World hisses against us because we refused to join the Globe's jubilation over British Columbia's flop to Liberalism. The World says the other Provinces were no better politically than British Columbia, and that they, too, were peck-marked by real-estate-wild-catting. The answer is partly correct. Ontario's sins are no more savoury than anybody else's, but the British Columbia's peculiar folly was revealed in the fact that in her whole legislature there wasn't an Opposition worthy of the name. In the other Provinces there have always been at least a few men able to resist the seduction of Government hand-outs,—men with enough courage to criticize, to oppose. But British Columbians were so unanimous in their passion for government favours that they abandoned all pretence of organized criticism. So long as the Provincial Government kept them happy with showy measures that promised immediate prosperity, nobody doubted. But mark you, the instant hard times came and the Government faced the results of its neglect of agrarian interests—that Government was pitched out on its head. The Vancouver World complains that Ontario might well be prosperous now because Ontario had factories and farms to fall back on. True. And if British Columbia had been half alive to her responsibilities she'd have maintained such a force of opposition in the B. C. legislature as would have compelled McBride and Bowser to foster the development of British Columbia's farms, and even industries. All that our good friend the World proves by its retort, is its failure to grasp this fact: that any Government, Grit or Tory, will make a fool of itself and its electors if it has no opposition. A province with no competent critics in its legislature is like a blind sage being led by a fool.

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NORMAN DUNCAN was a peculiarly sensitive, delicate and gentle writer and is likely to be remembered for his almost woman-like insight into the hearts of the people he wrote of. To remark this characteristic of his writings is not to take away from his high reputation. For though he saw like a woman he judged like a man, and his studies of folk, particularly humble and misunderstood folk, have a double value. Canada gave Duncan birth, but the United States exploited him, just as it is exploiting others of our writers and artists in New York. He would never have been a nationalist in his viewpoint, however. His studies were international and his audiences international. Doctor Luke, and "Mother" and Billy Topsail were fragments of humanity in general, not localisms. Not Canada but the whole world of letters is the poorer for Norman Duncan's death.

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WILLIAM MELVILLE MARTIN, the new Premier of Saskatchewan, will not sin for want of brains or want of using them. Nor will he sin by habit, nor by habit condone sin in others. He is less than forty. As a school teacher, as a student at the University of Toronto, and at Osgoode Hall, as a practising lawyer in Regina, and as a member of the Opposition at Ottawa, he has acquired a reputation for trustworthiness, scholarliness and force of character. His selection as Hon. Walter Scott's successor is a token that Saskatchewan Liberals intend to live down whatever bad odour may, rightly or wrongly, have attached to them in connection with the road scandals in that province. They have chosen a man of singular integrity. Premier Martin may be taken as a sample of the new type of politician in the Dominion. He is a man of education and sober ideals. He may justly be called a radical, a democrat and even a socialist, yet

the presiding quality is his sanity. He is further to be remarked for a curious orderliness in thought and deed, and modesty. It is common in Canadian public life to observe young men—and useful men too—striving for advancement. This cannot be said of Martin, perhaps on account of a sort of Persian belief in predestination. There is plenty of work for the new Premier: good roads, encouragement of mixed farming, practical education for farmers, and the assimilation of the foreign-born. His chief problems concern education. Possibly Saskatchewan may show the other provinces how to teach farming so as to turn out—not more teachers of farming but farmers.

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TWO WEEKS AGO election bets in New York were being made at two to one in favour of Hughes defeating Wilson for the Presidency. As this is written the odds have been wiped out. In other words, Wilson is running evenly, if not ahead of Hughes. Hughes has NOT caught public fancy. He has not become a personality. He has failed to get on friendly terms with the Americans. Wilson, on the other hand, scores a triumph in the fact that Robert S. Lovett, Chairman of the Union Pacific Boards, and F. D. Underwood, President of the Erie Railroad, have declared themselves on the side of the Democratic candidate. That speaks well for Wilson's standing in the eyes of the very man against whom his recent railway-strike legislation appeared to be directed. Wilson's course as President of a neutral power has alternately chagrined us and amused us, but we expect nothing better of Hughes, if as good indeed, and on the other hand our West—or such part of it as is clamouring for access to the United States wheat market—is impatient to see Wilson win. The election of Hughes means the wiping out of the present offer of reciprocity.

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SIR WILFRID LAURIER may have been right or wrong in declining Premier Borden's invitation to serve on the National Registration Board. Probably there were politics on both sides of the incident. Sir Wilfrid's letter to Sir Robert was not convincing, but neither has the government's conduct with regard to the Registration question deserved that adjective.

A great deal of difficulty is being made about a very simple matter. Two things are required: First, a knowledge of the facts of the man-power situation in Canada. How many men are needed at home and how many are available for military service. No commission of great men is needed to obtain these facts. The Census and Statistics Department at Ottawa has far better qualifications for the work than anyone else. The second requirement is—A Decision. Knowing the facts, what is the country to do? If there are no men to be spared from our necessary industries, let us say so and abandon frankly all talk of raising more troops. If there are men to be spared—what are we going to do about them? Are we to continue a system of bullying and cajolery? Or are we to have the logical and sane development of all our talk—compulsion.

It is totally unnecessary to appoint a commission to settle the first point, and it is absolutely impossible to have it settle the second point. The truth of the matter looks suspiciously like this: the authorities know that to answer the first question means to decide the second. They are AFRAID. Unhappily for us, it isn't clear either, that the Opposition is any more valiant.

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CALGARY'S MAN'S ENQUIRY for our views on universal military training is a reminder that this question is in some danger of neglect. In the midst of war we seem to have enough of militarism. After the war we shall probably abhor the topic. Yet it would be very foolish were we to yield to inclination. For some system of military training for all young Canadian men is highly desirable, in fact almost necessary.

The defence of the country is the least of reasons for making such a statement. Even though all the evils of militarism be admitted, and though the older nations such as France and England, when Peace comes, abandon military training, it has special significance for Canada. Taking first the point of view of the individual it is obvious that the physical benefit would be great. But taking the point of view of the nation it is clear that many problems may be solved, or partly solved, by the adoption of a carefully considered scheme of military training. First, it would be an off-set to the individualism and general lack of discipline and sense of duty-to-the-state which mars society everywhere in the western hemisphere. Second, it would school Canadian manhood in the art of team-play, co-operation, co-ordination and the art of giving and taking orders. Third, it would help to knit the foreign-born immigrant, or his Canadian children, into the fabric of Canadian life. The great point is the first one. For too many years we have looked up on the state as a sort of cow, to be milked of rights, privileges and, if possible, money itself. By requiring universal service of her people, she would remind us of her true character, a glorious figure, commanding our devotion.