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### Our Ottawa Letter

By The Guide Special Correspondent.  
**Senate Amends Highways Bill—May Hang Up Naval Bill—Budget Debate Shows Strong Protectionist Views—Bank Act Passed—Railway Subsidies This Week.**

Ottawa, May 23.—This has been another busy week in Parliament. Such satisfactory progress has been made with business before the House that it is not improbable that prorogation may be reached by Saturday, June 7. In the Commons the budget debate has been disposed of, a third reading has been given to the Bank Act, government legislation of a minor character advanced and a great deal of supply voted.

The indications at the moment point to a struggle between the Upper and Lower Houses as the feature of the closing fortnight of the session. After a two or three days' debate the Senate today passed the Highways Act after introducing into it the same amendments adopted last year and which the government would not accept. The chief of these is one providing that the monies to be voted for good roads must be divided between the provinces on the basis of population as ascertained at the last census. The government in putting this bill through the House both last session and this has declared that this is to be the guiding feature of the bill. The supplementary estimates brought down this week contain a sum of \$1,500,000 for the improvement of roads and it is divided amongst the various provinces on the basis of population. For some reason, which it must be confessed is not altogether clear, the government declines to stipulate in the bill that the money is to be divided between the provinces. The result has been that the Liberals have repeated the cry of last year that the object behind the measure is to build up an effective political machine and for that reason the opposition majority in the Senate has again declined to pass the bill in the form in which it reached them. There is apparently no reason to believe that the government will on this occasion accept the amendment and if it does not the effect will be to kill the bill and the \$1,500,000 will not be voted.

#### Senate and Navy Bill

The difference between the two Houses about which public interest will centre more particularly will be in connection with the naval bill which comes up for second reading in the Upper House early next week. The Liberal majority in the Senate met in caucus this week and while no official statement was subsequently given out they make no secret of the fact that it was determined that the bill will not be allowed to become law. The senators are, however, maintaining strict secrecy as to just what they propose to do with the measure, but the general impression is that they will add to it a rider declaring that it must not come into effect until the people have been given an opportunity to express an opinion at the polls. The reasons for this action will be given in a speech to be delivered by Sir George Ross on the second reading on Tuesday or Wednesday next about which time it is expected that the interest in the Senate proceedings will reach fever height. A variety of opinion is being expressed as to what the government will do if the bill is rejected but the majority agree that there is not much likelihood of a general election this summer. If

# The Grain Growers' Guide

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Published under the auspices and employed as the Official Organ of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, and the United Farmers of Alberta.

The Guide is designed to give uncolored news from the world of thought and action and honest opinions thereon, with the object of aiding our people to form correct views upon economic, social and moral questions, so that the growth of society may continually be in the direction of more equitable, kinder and wiser relations between its members, resulting in the widest possible increase and diffusion of material prosperity, intellectual development, right living, health and happiness.

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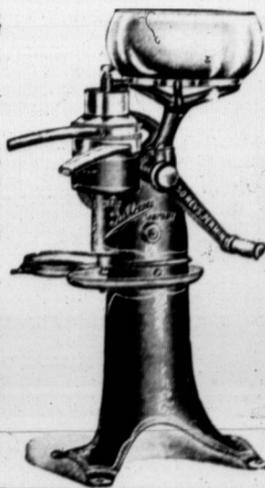
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there is an election before the government runs its full term it is likely to come after the next session of Parliament and subsequent to the passing of a redistribution bill.

#### Budget Shows \$55,000,000 Surplus

The budget debate this year, to use an expression of the minister of finance, "synchronized" with the placing on the table of supplementary estimates amounting to \$23,000,000 and which brings the total estimates for the year up to a sum exceeding \$202,000,000, not including railway subsidies to be brought down early next week. The result was that the budget debate related largely to the surplus of \$55,000,000 announced by Hon. W. T. White in his annual financial statement and the large expenditure proposed for the current year. The opposition did not move any amendment although it had been reported during the session that they would move for an increase in the British preference. That they did not do so is probably due to the fact that they feared that in the event of a general election this summer it might be unwise from a political standpoint to distract the attention of Eastern Canada from the naval issue. The free trade wing of the Liberal party are of the opinion that if no general election intervenes to upset present political conditions the opposition will next year declare for an increase in the preference and a decrease in the duties all along the line. This year A. K. McLean the chief opposition critic, Hon. Frank Oliver, F. B. Carvell and others demanded, in view of the large surplus and the possibility of bigger surpluses in the future, reduction should be made in the tariff taxation. Mr. Carvell came out flat footed in favor of an early increase in the British preference.

#### Protectionists Support Budget

The ministerial defence of the budget, the proposed expenditure and the maintenance of the tariff wall as it stands today was for some reason or another left to three of the high protectionist members of the House, H. B. Ames, W. F. Cockshutt and Dr. Edwards, of Frontenac. Mr. Cockshutt openly declared that the revenues are abundant because the government is collecting more duties than were collected by Hon. William Paterson. He said that the customs staff had been strengthened and all the duties called for by the law were being taken in.

Mr. Ames argued that the opposition speakers had failed to make out a good case for a reduction of duties. He admitted that the per capita tax today stands at \$17 per head as against \$8 or \$9 ten years ago. It was not a question, he said, of the amount collected but of the ability of the people to pay and with the complacency characteristic of all high protectionists he contended that the Canadian people are better able to pay \$17 per head today than half that sum a decade ago.

Dr. Edwards, of Frontenac, contended that the farmers of the Dominion are in favor of protection and that a reduction in duties would be to their disadvantage, as well as to that of the manufacturing interests.

#### Extending Lead Bounties

From the standpoint of the man who is anxious to see a reduction in the burden of taxation imposed by the protective tariff there was an interesting debate on Monday when Hon. W. T. White moved for the consideration of his bill to extend for another five years the bounty on lead ores. This bounty, which is governed by the price of lead

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