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GOOD PROGRESS MADE WITH THE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Parliament Settles Down to Work After the Easter Vacation—
Discussion Over Bill to Penalize Those Who Fail to Observe Fire Regulations—Three Private Cars Attached to a Train Which Met With an Accident.**

Ottawa, April 22—A small attendance of members at the first sitting of the commons after the Easter recess did not prevent good headway being made with government business and the voting of supply. Efforts of the government to proceed with contentious legislation such as Hon. J. D. Reid's bill to incorporate the Canadian National Railway Company, were successfully objected to by the opposition, on the plea that many absent members desire to discuss these bills.

There was a long discussion in committee on the bill providing penalties under the criminal code for people who fail to obey dominion, provincial and municipal fire prevention regulations. Several members on both sides of the house thought the provisions of the act were too severe nevertheless it was reported from committee and stands for third reading.

During consideration of the railways and canals estimates at the evening session, B. C. McCoig gave voice to some rather sharp criticism because three private cars were attached to the Toronto-Ottawa government railway train which was derailed this morning. The burden of his complaint was that because of the number of private cars it was impossible to attach another sleeper to the train, with the result that many people, including himself, were inconvenienced. One private car was occupied by Sir Thomas White, another by Major-General Mewburn, and the third by Sir Henry Drayton and D. B. Hanna.

Dr. Reid in reply said it was only an accident that three private cars happened to be attached to this train. He asserted that fewer private cars are being used now than in the past.

During consideration of \$3,500,000 vote for Welland canal construction, the opposition criticized the government for its decision to carry on the work at present on the cost plus, or forced contract, system.

Dr. Reid explained that under present conditions it is practically impossible to get contractors to take work on tender. It was necessary to proceed with construction, in order to give employment.

The opposition persisted in their objection to the vote passing until the contracts are produced. The vote stood over with the understanding that they would be brought down.

Hon. C. C. Ballantyne took his seat in the house this afternoon for the first time this session.

The Premier's Return

Sir Thomas White stated in reply to Mr. Lapointe of Kamouraska, that he had no definite information regarding Sir Robert Borden's return; but he presumed the prime minister would be back as soon as his duties overseas would permit. The house then took up second reading of the bill to extend, until the end of the present session, order-in-council passed under the war measures act. Mr. Meighan pointed out that it was essential the bill receive assent before peace is proclaimed. It does not prevent the governor-in-council cancelling any orders in the meantime. Second reading of the bill was eventually postponed until tomorrow.

Sir Thomas White's bill amending the insurance act was referred to the committee on banking and commerce.

Hon. A. K. MacLean introduced a resolution to amend the fertilizers act. The bill based upon the resolution provides that lime be included as a fertilizer and that there be a tax of one cent per hundred pounds to cover the cost of inspection of fertilizer. The resolution was carried and a bill based upon it introduced.

The house then went into committee on Hon. T. A. Cretar's resolution providing for the adoption of the live-stock and livestock products act. One purpose of this amendment is to standardize the size of packages of wool. It also provides that farmers and drovers may buy and sell at stockyards, and makes provision for importation of certain livestock products coming into Canada from foreign countries.

The resolution was adopted and the bill based on it was introduced.

Bill For Fire Prevention

The house went into committee on the senate bill to amend the criminal code in respect to the prevention of fires. In presenting the bill for second reading, Mr. Meighan said its purpose was to make it a criminal offense on behalf of a tenant, owner or occupier of the buildings to fail to obey the requirements of any law intended to pre-

vent fires providing that the jury found that such fire or loss of life would not have occurred had the law been complied with. The bill also makes it obligatory on the part of an owner occupier and tenant to carry out instruction of any dominion, provincial or municipal fire officer in regard to the removal of materials or the supply of apparatus.

In the year 1918 Mr. Meighan said Canada's fire loss was \$33,000,000, of which 75 per cent was believed to be wholly preventable. The loss was about \$4 per capita.

Mr. Meighan said that the Retail Merchants' Association, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Fire Underwriters' Association, the United Farmers of Ontario, the United Farmers of Alberta, the Canadian Bankers Association, the Wholesale Grocers' Association, the Fire Chiefs' Association and others had approved the bill.

D. D. McKenzie thought that it would be wise to hesitate before passing such an amendment. The people who recommended that it be passed, judging by the list of names which the minister had read, were those who stood to gain something out of it through economy in insurance. It was ridiculous to suggest for instance, that a little child who accidentally caused a fire, should be sent to the penitentiary for two years. He thought that the house would be wise to wait until a very decided request was received from the people for such an amendment.

After some further discussion the bill was held over.

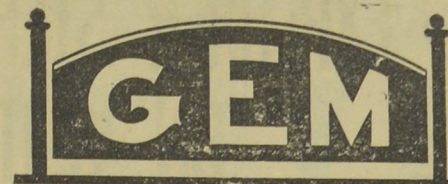
SHOULD STUDY PROBLEMS OF THE TARIFF

The President of the Independent Labor party in Toronto, Mr. James Ballantyne, is on solid ground in urging wage-earners to study the tariff question. He says, in a Forum address that it has been too long their habit to let the controversy be settled for them by other classes. He would not have erred in saying that the majority of factory operatives have been content to be bell-wethers by the protected interests. Not so many of them will in future be shepherded into the high-tariff pen if they take the advice of Labor leaders of the type of Mr. Ballantyne, who can discuss economic principles and can expose protectionist sophistries. Mr. Ballantyne does not contend that free trade is immediately practicable. He argues for a moderate industry of agriculture and of the wage-earners of the cities and towns, Canada must import a certain volume of manufactured goods to pay for the exportable surplus of farm products and to raise revenue, but the demand for the products of Canadian factories is diminished when consumers have to pay higher prices for them than similar imported articles would cost if admitted duty free. The less that is paid for one commodity the more money the wage-earner will have left to purchase other labor products. This is an elementary truth which high protectionists conveniently ignore. Organized Labor in Canada has entered the political arena, and if it will listen to such teachers as Mr. Ballantyne it will find common ground with moderate and reasonable men in other progressive groups and parties that believe a high tariff is not compatible with a real national policy which will unify the country and serve its highest interests.

SEEDING STARTS IN MANITOBA

Winnipeg, April 22.—Seeding started all over Manitoba yesterday, J. H. Evans, deputy minister of agriculture, announced last evening. Reports, he said, have come from all points along the Canadian Pacific Railway main and Yorkton lines as well as from southern Manitoba. "The outlook," he added, "is better than I have seen it for at least twelve years."

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