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— ON PARLIAMENT HILL —

By a Member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery

OTTAWA, July 24th, 1924.—Hansard is now nearing page 5,000 at a cost of somewhere between \$50 and \$100 per page—and still the tide of talk continues despite the efforts of the Government to bring speedy pro-rogation by dint of late hour sittings and a minimum of talk from the Government side of the House.

The main obstacle to quick winding up of the business of the session lies in the loquaciousness of the so-called "ginger" group representing the more radical element of the Progressives who recently broke with their leader, Robert Forke, and of half a dozen of the Conservative Opposition anxious to make some political capital before the session closes long distance speakers, Sir Henry Drayton. This week when the Government with a view of hastening the end proposed Saturday sittings objection was taken from the Conserva-tive benches on the ground that Saturday the 12th was sacred to the glorious memory of King William and a number of the Opposition had arranged to speak at Orateur day which at a time threatened to become somewhat heated and in which members from Quebec sarcastically pointed out that arguing from similar ground there was no reason why the House would not adjourn also on St. Patrick's Day and St. Jean Baptiste Day, the Government allowed the motion to be amended to start morning sittings on Monday of the coming week instead of beginning on Saturday. Protraction, however, is in sight, and unless the debate on the Redistribution Bill and possibly also on prospective legisla-tion to reimburse Home Bank de-positors is unduly protracted the end of the present session of Parliament will come within a week or ten days.

LEGISLATIVE GRIST GOING THROUGH

Meanwhile, the Government has been steadily putting through the balance of the session's program, al-lowing ample time for discussion but sticking to its guns in respect to all necessary legislation. The Bank Act amendments including the major pro-posal for government bank audit thru an independent government inspec-tor; the Civil Service Superannua-tion Bill, a much needed measure pro-viding superannuation of veteran em-

ployees, and paving the way for a thorough re-organization of the ser-vice; new trade treaties with Bel-gian and Finland giving Canada the "most favored nation" treatment with these countries; the final stage of the Church Union Bill and bills provid-ing for the establishment of advis-ory boards dealing with tariff and taxation revision have been passed during the past week. In addition to this a considerable proportion of the remaining estimates for the coming year have been put through, and a number of minor bills have been passed on to the Upper Chamber.

HOTEL SCRIBE PURCHASE JUSTIFIED

The Committees of the House, not-ably the banking, private bills, rail-ways and pensions committees, have practically concluded their work. On Thursday the committee which has been considering the estimates for the Canadian National Railways pre-sented its final report recommending the passing of all the estimates for the Canadian National System, de-claring that the evidence showed eco-nomical and efficient management and suggesting all possible co-operation between the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific systems to avoid duplication and unnecessary com-petition. One paragraph of the report referred to the purchase of the Scribe Hotel in Paris. The conclusion of the committee was that the European headquarters of the Canadian Na-tional had been purchased at a rea-sonable price and that no loss would ensue from the bargain made by Sir Henry Thornton. In this connection it is interesting to note that the facts disclosed completely nullify charges made by the Opposition as to graft or scandal in connection with the purchase. The Ottawa Journal, which is wont to seize every opportunity for attack upon the Government in an editorial summary of the evidence in regard to the purchase of the Hotel Scribe, declares "the property seems to be worth the money. All that Sir Henry Thornton has done in Paris is to secure first class quarters for the Canadian National Railways of- fice at a cost which may be consid-erable but cannot be excessive."

THE WEMBLEY-EXHIBITION DELEGATION

A mild flurry has been caused in the House on a vote of twenty thou-

and dollars to send an official dele-gation of members of Parliament and representative newspapermen to the British Empire Exhibition at Wem-bly. The sending of this delegation, which a few years ago when economy was not a first consideration of gov-ernment, would never have been a seized upon by the Opposition as an example of great extravagance by the Government. As a matter of fact there will be only three members of Parliament, namely, the Chief Whip and Assistant Whip of the Liberals, and four newspapermen sent to Wem-bly at a total expenditure of not more than \$7,000. Chief Conservative Whip Boys would have gone as a member of the parliamentary dele-gation but for personal reasons as he explained to the House. The dis-ruption in the Commons occupying several hours of time cost the country probably considerably more than the \$7,000 involved in the sending of a representative delegation to the great- est exposition ever held of Imperial resources illustrating to the Empire opportunities for inter-Imperial trade

and development.

RECIPROCITY WITH U. S. POSSIBLE

The proceedings of the Democratic convention in New York have been followed with keen interest on Par-liament Hill, it being recognized that the coming election in the United States is fraught with more than or-dinary interest for the people of Can-ada. Reference to it was incidentally made in the Commons on Thurs- day when Acting Minister of Finance Robb declared that the Government followed the course of political events in the United States with keen anticipation. The implication being of course, that if the Democrats suc- ceed in regaining office there would follow a lowering of the tariff bars with a renewed opportunity for ac- ceptance of the standing offer of a reciprocal trade agreement opening the United States markets to Cana- dian cattle and other farm products.

RESENTMENT AT SENATE'S ACTION

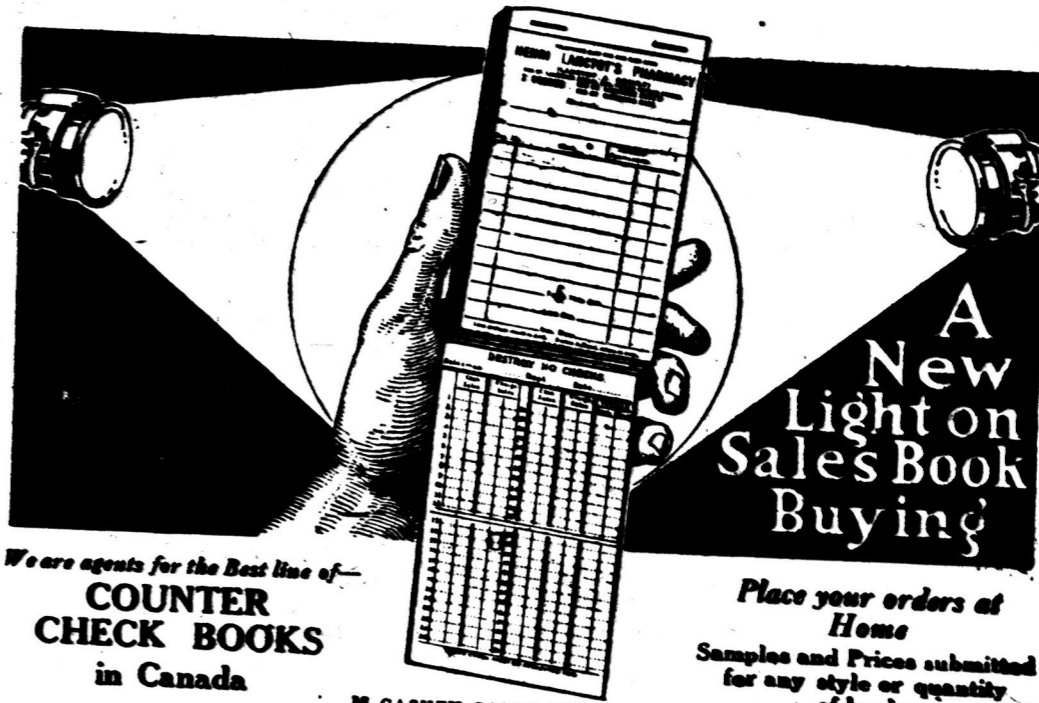
The action of the Conservative Sen-ate with respects to the Canadian Na- tion branch lines program has very

seriously interfered with the plans of Sir Henry Thornton. Nineteen of the bills were passed with certain amend- ments in certain cases. Seven were killed, all being highly important, and vitally needed extensions. The high- handed action of the Conservatives brought forth a warning from Lib-eral senators, who declared that such action on the part of the non-elective body could not long go unchallenged in the country.

The injury done is not confined to the killing of the seven bills. Delay in the passing of the remainder se- riously interferes with the carrying on of the projected construction work. As a consequence of the action of the Senate, strong protests have already been received from the Saskatchewan Government, from grain growers' or- ganizations, and other bodies in the West, and an instant demand for reform of the Upper House has been made.

ECONOMY PROMISES FULFILLED

As the Session draws towards its close, it becomes more and more ap- parent that the promises of econo- (Continued on last page)



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