

OUR OTTAWA LETTER

By RIDEAU

THE national stage is set for the Confederation Jubilee. The stage carpenters, scene painters, press agents and impresarios have paused to survey their work.

It was only last March that Canada decided to go into the show business, and three months is a short time in which to organize a company of nine million actors on a three-thousand-mile stage. Actually that is what has been undertaken by the National Committee in charge of the celebration of this Jubilee of Confederation. It is to be a national festivity in which every Canadian has a part, but actors are famous and infamous for their temperaments and nine million amateurs would break the heart of all the Tex Rickards and Cecil de Milles and D. W. Griffiths.

Yet the job has been done well. The newspapers bear the evidences of a shrewd publicity; the jubilee has swung on publicity and the press. Parliament could have sat on until June 30 voting money and passing resolutions about the sentimental significance of the Diamond Jubilee but the project would have collapsed if it had not been for friendly editors who threw open their columns to preliminary publicity. Under the leadership of Mr. Walter Thompson of Canadian National Railways, the birthday party of the country has had "a press" that a private show could not have bought for millions of dollars. After all, it is only fair that we should remind ourselves occasionally of the virtues of Canadian journalism!

Medals for school children, prizes for essays, the distribution of patriotic pictures the distribution of literature, the special issue of stamps, of coinage, of carillon broadcasting (the very bells have arrived in Ottawa), the airplanes converging upon the Capital the scheme to make a blaze of light across the continent on July 1, the preparation of articles and photographs for the press—all these things required a tremendous amount of what the success magazines call "executive ability."

The presses of the National Printing Bureau are shuddering under the burden of producing *Sixty Years of Canadian Progress* a worthy volume selling for ten cents, compiled by R. H. Coats, dominion statistician.

The stage managers, the press agents, the scene movers and general paraphernalia of management of the Jubilee are housed in a quiet old gray stone building on Wellington street overlooking Parliament Hill. However, the quiet is external. In headquarters offices all are busy, Fat mail bags go bumping down the stairs. Telegraph messengers struggle to pass each other in the doorways. Telephones ring endlessly. Typewriters clatter on and on. Doors slam. Fragments of quick conversation rise—"Where's that . . . " "How many copies go to . . . " "Tell him there are no jobs vacant . . . " More telephones. Thump, thump—and more mail bags go downstairs. Confederation is grim business in Ottawa.

When the actual celebration is on in July, it is not likely that many will think of the brains behind it, so we pause to do them homage before they are forgotten in the sky-rocketing.

The Great Original Idea for the birthday party is shared between the Prime Minister and the Canadian Clubs. Parliament handed out \$250,000 on a platter and a national committee was formed to organize the celebration. It is giving a lead to all Canadian communities, urban and

rural, most of which individually will do their share of financing the Jubilee.

The grave members of the National Committee meet from time to time, make suggestions and give approval, and depart to their separate homes while a toiling handful of workers set up the vast machinery of the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation during three short months.

The committee is led by Their Excellencies the Governor General and the Viscountess Willingdon both of whom have taken an active part. The



Miss Mildred Bennett, B. A., who, because of the fact that some day she may be the Capital's leading hostess (her distinguished bachelor brother, R. B. Bennett is prominently mentioned as the next Conservative leader), as well as for the charm and vivacity of her own personality, has been welcomed in the leading drawing rooms of Ottawa. The picture shows her wearing the gown in which she was presented to Their Majesties at Buckingham Palace last year

honorary presidents are the Prime Minister and Hon. Hugh Guthrie, leader of the opposition. The lieutenant-governors of the provinces are honorary vice presidents. The presidents are Sir Robert Borden and Sir Lomer Gouin; and the vice-presidents Rt. Hon. George P. Graham, chairman of the executive committee; and Hon. Charles Marcell, vice-chairman of the executive committee. The honorary treasurer is Hon. H. M. Marler, and the honorary secretaries are Mr. C. G. Cowan and Mr. Jean Desj.

On the executive committee are Mr. Thomas Ahearn, chairman of the federal district commission, Mr. J. O. Apps, Mr. J. P. Ballharrie, mayor of Ottawa; Hon. R. B. Bennett, Hon. W. A. Black, Hon. Hewitt Bostock, speaker of the senate; Mr. P. M. Buttler, Mr. M. J. Caldwell; Mr. J. W. Dafoe; Dr. A. G. Doughty, Dominion Archivist; Hon. W. E. Foster, Mr. A. J. Freiman, Sir George Garneau, Hon. Andrew Haydon, Mr. H. P. Hill, Mr. T. O. Lambert, Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, speaker of the commons; Mr. D'Arcy McGee, Mr. J. E. Macpherson, Mr. Tom Moore, chairman of the Trades and Labor Council of

Canada, Mr. P. J. Mulqueen, Sir George Perley; Hon. Mr. Justice Rinfret, Mrs. H. H. Rowatt; Mme Rene de Salabery, Hon. J. D. Stewart, Mr. Walter Thompson, and Mrs. J. A. Wilson, president of the National Council of Women.

This committee is attempting to guide all communities in Canada towards the proper celebration of Dominion Day, July 1; July 2, which is also to be a public holiday this year, and Sunday, July 3, when special thanksgiving services are to be arranged. The committee even offers to provide orders of service for this. It urges the marking of historic sites, the decoration of the graves of the Fathers of Confederation community decorations, parades, gathering of militia, the making prominent of old settlers, sports programmes, plus . . .

When on July 1, the streets are crowded, bands play, and orators hold forth; when you feel rather exalted about yourself and your country; when on July 3 your pastor tells his flock about the glories and goodness of this country; when you drop into your midsummer night's dream after the Jubilee week-end glowing over the fact that you live in one of the most comfortable corners of the earth . . . Remember that it was all first an idea, and that a few gallant souls in Ottawa worked many hours by day and night to make you and me aware of all the worth-whileness of this country.

Personally, I am hoping that in all the advice as to how to celebrate, practical things will not be overlooked. For instance —*Earnscliffe*, Sir John A. Macdonald's Ottawa home, set in a small park on a cliff looking over the broad expanse of the Ottawa River, is, so far as I know, unmarked by any national tablet. It has one of the finest sites for a home in Canada, is a beautiful place, and certainly one of the most historic homes in Canada. Weathered and gray, the house seems to speak the sturdy spirit of another generation. It is a home built for the centuries, four square to the winds, sheltered by great friendly trees, and commanding its own view of Parliament Hill.

The present owner, Dr. Charles Harris, of international fame as a musician, maintains *Earnscliffe* with a profound regard for its traditions. During the thirty-six years since Sir John's death, alterations and improvements have been made, but the atmosphere of the eighties and nineties has never been lost. Sir John Macdonald, the first prime minister of the Dominion of Canada, lived and died in *Earnscliffe*. Why should the sixtieth anniversary of Confederation be allowed to pass without some stone or bronze being placed in the walls or on the grounds of *Earnscliffe* to mark for all time this great Canadian's home?

Hon. James A. Robb, minister of finance, and Mrs. Robb leave early in July for England on their first holiday since parliament closed. It is to be a real holiday, spent in Guildford, Surrey, with relatives. They expect to return to Canada in August. The minister's visit to the Old Country has been postponed for several seasons because of elections and other political complications.

The probability is that the prime minister will spend most of the summer in Ottawa—which really means Kingsmere, for as soon as the snow disappears, Mr. King visits his country estate high on the wooded hill above Kingsmere Lake. His chief hobby these days is the plan for the confederation building which is to flank the west

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