

THE GUARDIAN

Morning Daily (Founded in 1871). Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

President, Ian A. Burnett; Vice-President, Wm. R. Burnett; Secy.-Treas., G. M. Burnett; Editor and Managing Director, J. E. Burnett; Associate Editor, Frank Walker.

"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink."

CHARLOTTETOWN, TUESDAY, DEC. 23, 1947

Orders Of The Day

Oral questions in the House (questions asked of Ministers before the "Orders of the Day" are called) should be abolished, according to a recommendation made in the House of Commons.

But MP's during "question hour" (the thing actually takes no more than 10 or 15 minutes) don't ask the sort of questions which are concerned with routine administration, or demand of Ministers that they "carry everything in their heads."

Says the Ottawa Journal: In the British House "question hour" is among the most valued of its proceedings. During that hour Ministers are not merely questioned; they are literally subjected to a running fire of cross-examination.

Yuletide Fashion Note

With comparatively little hope of new and luxurious clothes for Christmas, women in Britain, being feminine and therefore ingenious, are doing the next best thing. They are concentrating on a novel and surprising hair-do's which, while attracting the maximum of attention within and without the family circle, take the minimum of time to attend to.

Butter Higher, Cheese Lower

Production of creamy butter rose 86 per cent in November to 15,051,000 pounds as compared with 13,859,000 in the same month last year according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

Cheddar cheese production showed a further decrease in November, amounting to 3,411,000 pounds compared with 5,717,000 a year ago, a decline of 40.3 per cent.

Output of concentrated milk products advanced in November to 17,068,000 pounds from last year's total of 14,911,000, bringing the cumulative figure to 320,824,000 pounds as against 287,753,000 in the like period of 1946.

Carols Are Born

Somewhere about 1750, Charles Wesley wrote the words of the popular Christmas hymn: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. More than a hundred years later, the words were set, by a principal of the Guildhall School of Music, London, to music written by Felix Mendelssohn for quite another purpose.

Christmas Awake was written, not as a hymn but as a Christmas greeting. The words are the work of Dr. John Byron, of Salford, near Manchester, England, whose daughter, in 1745, asked him to compose some verses which she might copy and send to her friends.

Five years after Dr. Byron's words were written, they were set to music by the organist of Manchester parish church and sung outside the author's window. Dr. Byron's home, dating from the 16th century, is now public property, and a trained choir of fifty voices sang Christmas Awake there, at midnight on Christmas Eve two

years ago, in honour of the 200th anniversary of the hymn.

Unfamiliar to most Canadian readers is the name of Nahum Tate, who was at one time Poet Laureate of England; but almost everyone has sung, or heard sung, his Christmas hymn, While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.

A manuscript copy of Bishop Heber's Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning, written in an exercise book, offers an amusing illustration of the fact, that familiarity breeds contempt. The words of the hymn, presumably in the Bishop's hand, are beautifully written. The backs of the pages are scribbled over with problems in geometry, supposedly by the Bishop's children.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Christmas rush should pretty well clear the shelves of merchandise.

The Russians, it seems, are not pessimistic about the possibility of reaching agreement at a future meeting of foreign ministers. Why should they be pessimistic? They don't have to negotiate with Russia.

The darkest day, yesterday, being safely over, we may resume our optimism in view of the sun's gradual return. Yesterday the length of the day was 8 hours, 24 minutes. Today we gain a minute, viz., 8 hours, 25 minutes.

In accepting the verdict of the court of inquiry that the commanding officer of the Micmac was at fault it is well to bear in mind that the events which the members of the court have been considering for five months took place within a matter of minutes.

Certainly the Province has reason to be grateful to Federal Members for the stiff fight they have put up for referer cars. It is significant that the West had no occasion to do so, to bring their beef to Halifax for export; the Government making the Island play second fiddle to them in regard to our export of potatoes to a dollar area.

The Financial Post argues that a 25 per cent tax at the manufacturer or wholesale level will only amount to about 10 per cent of the price paid by the consumer. The Post apparently does not expect distributors to figure their mark up on the whole cost including tax but merely pass on the goods at their usual price plus the amount of the tax.

For the great majority of Islanders their Christmas, in a world of scarcity and turmoil, Robbie Burns' Selkirk Grace is singularly appropriate:

Some hae meat, and canna eat, And some wad eat that want it, But we hae meat and we can eat, And sae the Lord be thankit.

Samuel Smiles, British homilectical writer and social reformer, born this date 1812; was the first popular author of books for boys and those having ambition to get out of the common rut; became known throughout the English speaking world, and by translations, abroad for his series of books, of which Self-Help had the most extensive circulation. "The great and good do not die even in this world. Embalmed in books, their spirits walk abroad. The book is a living voice. It is an intellect to which one still listens."

An American young man spent eight days in a box car without food or water, and suffered mostly from the want of the latter. An Indian told a Guardian representative Saturday that both he and his grandfather used to spend twelve sleepless days and nights fasting in the open studying the sky and stars in order to predict the weather for the farmers for the ensuing twelve months. He said they were none the worse, but rather the better physically for the experience, though financially it did not pay them, their only reward being possibly a sack of potatoes in the fall and fowl at Christmas.

In Camden, N. J., they have a school principal, Mr. Donald Barker, who sticks to his principles. He objects to girls wearing slacks, and sent one home to get "properly" dressed. Her parents objected and kept her from school. Mr. Barker, principal of the 1,300-pupil school for the last 14 years, says it is his duty to see that students are "appropriately dressed." The controversy started a week ago when a fourteen-year-old girl was sent home to "get a skirt." Another pupil appeared at the school in slacks next day, but borrowed a dress from a teacher and made a quick change. The first girl's father refused to allow his daughter to return to school where the principal has ruled she would be kept apart from her classmates if she continued to wear slacks.

In the House of Commons Mr. F. D. Shaw, Social Credit member for Red Deer accused Mr. Tucker, Liberal M. P., for Rosthern, of being guilty of "pure and sheer political dishonesty," in attributing socialist doctrines to the Social Crediters as well as the C. C. F. Agriculture Minister Gardiner took exception to this language as unparliamentary. Graciously, Mr. Shaw agreed to withdraw the objectionable word. But since the sentence would not read right if the word were omitted, he substituted for "dishonesty" the word "skulduggery." It is rather difficult to understand why this satisfied Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Tucker. The best available dictionary does not list the word "skulduggery" dished out in Hansard. It does, however, contain "skulduggery," "Skulduggery," and "skulduggery"—all apparently synonymous. They are defined as follows: obscenity, grossness, mean, contemptible actions, conspiracy or plotting; often used in a political sense. Personally, one would take "dishonesty"

Notes By The Way

Train your children in the way they should go, and later on they will tell you where you made your mistake. — Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph.

Light on this modern world is now being provided by an oil lamp over the outside doorway of a well-known cigarette and soft drink shop on Rubidge Street. Next we expect to see horse-drawn carriages. — Peterborough Examiner.

A medical columnist writes. "Neglect your health year after year and you will wake up some morning to find that it has left you." If it has left you completely, of course, you won't even wake up. — Peterborough Examiner.

Rain, Inc., has been formed as a non-profit corporation to get more rain for California's Santa Clara county. Directors of the corporation propose to use the same rain-making method used elsewhere "seeding" of clouds with dry ice, and will send a commercial pilot up whenever they see "a likely looking cloud." Officials of the association anticipate no legal difficulties from other areas jealous of their rainfall since clouds when float over the Santa Clara valley without dropping their moisture usually move out to sea. — Engineering News-Record.

One of the big grain companies which gathers precipitation data from a great many points month by month tells us that the present moisture condition is 141 percent, of normal for the moisture-conserving months of August, September and October for the three Prairie Provinces. The average in Alberta is 151 percent, in Saskatchewan 139 and in Manitoba 121. In other words we are starting out the coming year with nearly one and one-half times as much stored moisture in the crop lands as normal. Here in South Alberta we had a very wet August, we had over 30 inches of snow in September show us about double the average September precipitation, and we are getting more than usual here in the pre-Christmas period. Reserve moisture does not always make a big crop, but it goes a long way towards guaranteeing at least an average crop. — Lett-bridge Herald.

Perhaps the most important effect of the Second Great War has been to make manufacturing the largest single employer of labor in Canada, instead of agriculture. Here in the Sudbury Star. According to the census of 1941, some 25.8 percent of all fully employed were working in agriculture, as compared with 23.1 percent in manufacturing. By May 31, 1947, the percentage of those engaged in manufacturing had increased to 27.8, while that of those in agriculture had decreased to 24.1. Further significance is given to these figures when it is remembered that Canada's population has increased substantially in the last few years. In 1941 to 1944, there was a large exodus from rural areas to urban communities, especially to those in which there were industries engaged in war work. Most of those from rural districts who moved to the cities during the war have remained, and, in addition, large numbers of those who came from rural communities to join the armed forces have, after being discharged, remained in the cities.

The Chancellor of the University of Chicago, declares that when atomic energy is fully applied to peacetime uses, it will make man live as long as Methuselah. He recalled that Methuselah was a son of Enoch and the grandfather of Noah. He is said to have lived 969 years. It is certainly a somewhat startling prospect. Three scores and ten will become nine hundred, three score and nine. Insurance salesmen now have to pursue their clients through the years. Then they will have to pursue them down the centuries. And think of the graduates of 900 years crowd back to the campus. The place will look a bit different after 900 years. But the memories will be there. For the raconteur the opportunities for telling tall tales has to be taller than ever. The difficulties in finding an audience will probably be as great as now. It is a rather dismaying prospect. Well still settle for the old three score and ten. The brief span will both sharpen our pleasures and diminish our sorrows. Let it be as it has been. — Montreal Gazette.

The problem of bringing down our smoking to the level enjoyed by the ex-Chancellor, and no doubt by his successor is still with us. If too few smokers have yet solved it it may be (as a clerical correspondent suggests) that we are counting too much on will-power, thus emphasizing the idea of a weary struggle. Why not (he asks) make a game of it, with a pack of cards and a notebook and the simplest of rules? The preliminaries involve writing in the notebook one for each card in the pack. There can be plenty of variety and wide scope for the imagination. For instance: King of Spades—No smoke till noon Ace of Hearts—One smoke after each meal. Ten of Clubs—No smoking today. Two of Diamonds—No smoke till 5 p.m. Queen of Hearts—As much as you like. The morning do into the pack to learn your fate for the day is the one simple rule by which the game has to be played. The result is claimed to be a real sense of relief and the enjoyment of "a flutter which all sportsmen love." — Manchester Guardian.

Ocean Travel

(Sydney Post-Record) Although trans-Atlantic travel in 1947 is still below pre-war records, it nevertheless is showing a marked increase over 1946, and if the number of air passengers be added to those travelling by ocean steamships, the total is almost as high as that of 1937, and is not far below that of 1938.

Preliminary figures published by the Civil Aeronautics Board, and the principal steamship companies of the United States, indicate a combined total in 1947 of approximately 625,000 sea-air travellers between American and Canadian ports on the one hand, and Europe, including the Mediterranean, on the other hand. These statistics are for the entire year up to the end of November.

They show that approximately 460,000 persons will be found to have travelled by ship and about 160,000 by plane during this year.

The sea-borne total shows a drop of almost 200,000 persons from the 653,769 carried by ship to and from European ports alone in the last normal travel year of 1937. The 1947 figures compare favorably, however, with the total of 487,540 trans-Atlantic sea-travellers. But it is to be remembered that traffic was sharply restricted in 1938 by the rising menace of war in Europe.

Since the close of the war, the competition of air lines has made heavy inroads into sea-borne traffic. But the chief reason for the reduction in sea travel is not attributable to this competition as to a serious lack of passenger tonnage.

Potatoes For Livestock

(Saint John Telegraph-Journal).

The New Jersey cattle raiser who is reported to have proved, in a practical way, that potatoes can be made as palatable and as fattening to steers as corn, may have found the answer to more than one of the United States' national problems. The Boston Post. The newspaper points out, as it now promises, he will not only show the way to ease the grain shortage and the meat crisis but the potato surplus as well. "If Maine potato growers should supply mid-west corn raisers as the suppliers of the best diet for the nation's herds."

New Brunswick potato growers and livestock breeders undoubtedly will follow the progress of the New Jersey experiment with interest. Farmers in this province for generations past have fed some cull potatoes raw or cooked, to pigs and other livestock. The Dominion Experimental Farm at Fredericton has conducted extensive tests with the feeding of potatoes to pigs, and at least one prominent cattle exporter in the Woodstock area before the war found it was possible to feed substantial quantities of potatoes to steers. He learned, however, that it was something that had to be done carefully, that the cattle would eat only about half the quantity of potatoes that they would of corn, for instance, and that the potato proportion of their diet could not be increased too quickly.

If New England breeders have found a way to utilize a high percentage of potatoes to the benefit of their livestock, the New Brunswick will be looking forward to making similar large-scale experiments. The plan might be an answer to our remoteness from the western feed-grain producing areas, might help to stimulate our beef cattle industry, might provide another valuable alternative use for our potato surplus in years of heavy harvests and reduce the possibility of disastrous losses to our growers.

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The Poets Corner

DECEMBER

High in the hills bemused December wakes. (This is Narcissus seeing in himself The thing he loves). No longer Serenely smile, for dark storm-clouds, wind-whipped, Sweep the pine-crowned summit, rough-edged and ripped; Stark trees that moaned beneath untroubled skies Sing wildly and sweetly where the thick snow flies; Swift snow that rides the deep stairs of the night. Spilling in splendor, shining ghostly white: Irish-lacing the grim-browed mountain side; Velling the forest like a virgin bride. Walking the lonely storm-bound heights I brood. Yielding myself to wild December's mood. — Bluebell Stewart Phillip, The Montreal Gazette.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

UNSAFETY OF THE ICE

"We are now in Xmas week and although we have had the harbor frozen over for four weeks, the ice is still in a very dangerous state—in fact, unsafe for traffic from Southport or West River. One gentleman in crossing this forenoon, says the ice was like waves, and his horse was 18 inches deep in the slush, while the horse of another coming behind him put one leg through. Two others, having to come over, brought a sleigh without a horse, alternately pulling and pushing it through the slush. Should this weather continue for a few days longer we would not be surprised to see the Southport steamer running again." — The Island Guardian, Dec. 24, 1880.

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By Ken Reynolds



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