

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than
the Weakest Ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN, MONDAY, DEC. 19, 1949

Publishing Party Accounts

The British House of Commons has passed a Government motion requiring all political groups to publish financial statements. The measure presumably, is directed chiefly at the Conservative opposition which has not made a practice of disclosing its finances. In this country it has long been compulsory for candidates and their official agents to make a full disclosure of election costs but little attempt is made to uncover the receipts and disbursements of the party organizations.

In today's political campaigns these figures on the cost of getting into office are a very small portion of the whole. All parties have long gone beyond the stage of financing their campaign out of their own resources, and compete in buying the taxpayer's vote with his own money. Every party dangles promises of more Government spending before the eyes of the electorate, and any accounting of election costs that did not take these enormous sums into consideration would be decidedly unrealistic.

Manx Gaelic

One of the most ancient dialects of the British Isles, Manx Gaelic, has been preserved for posterity through use of modern scientific devices.

The dialect was the sole language 200 years ago on the Isle of Man, which lies between Ireland and England, but Manx Gaelic is so little used nowadays that surveyors were sent into the villages with sound-recording machines in an effort to compile the dialect before it became extinct.

Though fewer than 500 people speak the tongue today, as compared with 20,000 in 1820, the careful questioning of older Manx people enabled researchers from the Manx Museum and Irish Folklore Commission to make a valuable record of the oral traditions and speech-ways of Manxmen. The collection of recordings, together with documentary photos of the people who contributed to the survey, is in the archives of the Manx Government.

Doukhobors Again

The citizens of the Nelson, B.C., territory have again been menaced by Doukhobor terrorists and it is not surprising that they are showing signs of exhausted tolerance and patience. An emergency meeting of the Nelson Board of Trade demanded immediate suppression of the danger, or authority for the board members to settle the matter themselves.

Obviously, says the Vancouver News-Herald, there is no room for extra-legal measures in any Canadian community. The Government must act. The time has come for a final showdown with these pacifists whose armory includes arson, dynamite and murder. Matters have reached a climax in Canadian-Doukhobor relations when guards have to be posted on railway bridges, and when patrols have to safeguard the right-of-way of a trans-continental railroad. Surely, the need for strong government action is self-evident when railwaymen have declared they can no longer operate by night "until such time as suitable steps are taken to ensure the safety of the men."

Watch The Fire Hazards

It is not too early to call attention to the fact that at Christmastime there are special dangers of fire hazards. These arise from many causes. The seasonal decorations are for the most part inflammable. The lighting arrangements on the traditional tree may be dangerous, particularly in country districts where small lighted candles are used to brighten the ornamentation. These have accounted for many serious fires in which lives as well as homes have been lost. Carelessness or incompetence in setting up or connecting strings of colored electric lights around the tree also cause numerous fires. It is in the interests of all-round safety, when such lighting has been used for a few seasons and the cords are becoming worn, to buy new lights rather than risk the danger of a flash fire that might wreak untold damage before being extinguished.

Then there are curtains in the proximity of any open light which lend themselves to easy and quick ignition, while the Christmas tree or greenery that has become tinder-dry is most dangerous. In reducing the fire hazard in the latter two, frequent sprinkling with water is helpful, but vigilance should never be relaxed. And one should always be alert to the danger inherent in putting the tree too near to a fireplace, stove

or furnace, an electric heater or other like equipment.

Nor should it be forgotten after the excitement of opening presents has subsided to dispose of the wrappings safely. These shouldn't be allowed to pile up or be pushed into a corner where a carelessly discarded match or cigarette or cigar end might easily start a blaze. Smokers are also reminded to refrain from using matches or lighters in the near proximity of a Christmas tree or to house or hall decorations.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King who celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday Saturday, is happy in retirement in realizing that he can now spend half-an-hour with a friend instead of five minutes as formerly. To that he might well have added—"and without making or refusing promises," the bugbear of a statesman's life.

It is both startling and refreshing to find a U. S. A. Congressman advocating a mental test for legislators. Representative Robert F. Rich's proposal is that such a test should be enforced, "starting at the White House and going all the way down." He does not indicate what would become of the incompetents, but perhaps they would go on pension.

Canada's latest constitutional amendment is entitled "The North America Act" and, as the Parliament at Westminster does not alter a jot or tittle of the text as proposed by Ottawa, the Canadian Government has the doubtful honour of having avoided using the term "British" in the title of the amendment.

Toronto City Council is considering a poll tax on all non-residents who work in the city. They say there are thousands of workers who enjoy all the privileges of an up-to-date city without paying for them, making their residence on the fringe of the city. At a time when there is a house scarcity it seems tempting Providence forcing people to live in the city—or else!

"How much does it cost per can to advertise the leading brands of soup? Is it 1c? 2c? 3c per can?" "It costs less than 1/30c per can to advertise the big-name brands of soup. That's only half the story. Advertising lowers the cost two ways: Cuts the selling costs. And by helping make mass production possible, lowers the production costs, too."

Cartoonist David Low has resigned from the Conservative Evening Standard to join the staff of the Daily Herald, a supporter of Britain's Labour Government. In his former post Low had a free hand in attacking even the paper's owner, Lord Beaverbrook. It will be interesting to see what happens when his wit chances to touch socialists to the quick.

Charlottetown is not the only city to obtain a new post office, etc. Works Minister Fournier reports the Government will be ready to call for tenders for construction of a new post office in Winnipeg next June or July. Mr. Fournier said tenders would be called for post offices at Armadale and Bedford, N. S., when plans and specifications for them were ready.

The Federal Government has taken the stand that the cost of land for a right-of-way for the Trans-Canada Highway is not a "construction cost" and must therefore be borne solely by the Provinces. The point is arguable, but there are numerous other costs involved which are not strictly chargeable to "construction" which nevertheless must be met if the highway is to be built.

Sir William Edward Parry, English Arctic explorer, born this date 1790. He accompanied Captain John Ross's first expedition for discovery of the North West Passage in 1818; he commanded the second expedition in 1819, winning the Government reward of \$25,000; after three more expeditions he became controller of the steam department of the Navy, and later governor of Greenwich Hospital. In 1828 he wrote and published his "Narrative of an Attempt to Reach the North Pole."

Woodstock, N. B., is looking ahead for the celebration of its Old Home Week in August. Plans for a commission to handle the event were discussed at a recent meeting, organizations represented being the Woodstock Rotary Club, Y's Men's Club and Canadian Legion. Mayor F. O. Creighton, who presided, told the meeting the Rotary Club had expressed their willingness to take whatever financial risk was involved. The Rotary Club would expect to take from the profits an amount to be determined for their own commitments, the rest of the proceeds to go into a fund for community youth welfare. Support for the project was pledged by the Legion and the Y's Men.

Those Cheery Greetings; Points Of View



Too Forehanded

(Saint John Telegraph-Journal)

Nearly two weeks to Christmas and not a thing left to do! Everybody else is bustling, busy and apparently happy preparing for Christmas, but not we. That is because just about everything has been done. Of course, a few trifling duties remain, but hardly more than might be pending any time in the year. And all this because we have obeyed injunctions. We have shopped early. We have mailed betimes. Cards for the city lie in the advance mailing bureau and their delivery is guaranteed with ruthless precision on Christmas Eve. Lists have been checked and double-checked. Now remains naught but boredom.

We gaze enviously on those who are still rushing round spilling parcels. We wish we could feel as frantic as some of them look. We have the sensation of being superannuated before our time. We have Christmas itself to look forward to; but so has the scurrying throng. There are sure to be one or two unexpected senders of greetings; but so deadily has been our efficiency that there are cards in reserve for even that contingency and stamps to stick on them. All too well we have executed the plan. All too completely has it succeeded. We have had our fun and must now sit back and watch those with less prevision have theirs.

Of course, we have that sensation of inner satisfaction inasmuch as we have made things a bit easier for the clerks in the stores and the postal employees. But would the little additional burden we might have imposed on them be noticed? We shall not be around during the last rush to note that they look less tired than otherwise, and let us confess that there was something exhilarating in that mad scramble. It belongs to Christmas and this year we shall miss it. By shopping early we had just

about the whole stock to choose from; but had we? Have not one or two rather attractive things come forward since we made the rounds? If we had taken a little longer to make up our minds, we should not now be indulging in these vain regrets.

The fact is that, if things go wrong, we yell; and, if they go too commuted. If we are not mistaken, no one under 18 years of age has been hanged in Canada in the present century. A boy of 17 was hanged in 1898, and one of that age in 1863. These seem to be the only modern instances.

It is human nature at its most perverse. We ought to be pleased about what we have done. We ought to keep out of the way and settle down with an improving book; but we do not want to. We want to be out Christmas shopping with the others, as we should be if our Christmas shopping were not done, wrapped, sealed and what had to be mailed on its way to its recipients. Next year we shall not be quite so forehanded.

The Age-Old Story

God sent forth His Son—to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

KELVIN, Perthshire, Scotland (CP)—Each Christmas villagers place stones from the gables of an ancient mill into a nearby stream. Legend says the stones were used centuries ago by the village's patron saint, St. Pillan, to cure ague, sprains and other ailments.

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The Poet's Corner

CHRIST IN THE UNIVERSE

With this ambiguous earth
His dealings have been told us.
These abide:
The signal to a maid, the human birth.

The lesson, and the young Man crucified.
But not a star of all
The innominate host of stars has heard

How He administered this terrible ball.
Our race have kept their Lord's entrusted word.

Of His earth-visiting feet
None knows the secret, cherished, perilous.

The terrible, shameful, frightened, whispered sweet.
Heart-shattering secret of His way with us.

No planet knows that this
Our wayside planet, carrying land and wave.

Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss.
Bears, as chief treasure, one forsaken grave.

Nor, in our little day,
May His devices with the heavens be guessed.

His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way.
Or His bestowals there be manifest.

But, in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare to gather, hear

A million alien Gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

O, be prepared, my soul!
To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars unroll

When in our turn, we show to them a Man.

—Alice Meynell (1850-1922.)

Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.)

HICKEY'S STEAM PLANT

"Patrick Hickey and Co.'s wood-work manufacturing have just completed their three-storey building, east of the Wellington Hotel, on Sydney Street, the only one of the kind in this Island where steam power and the most improved machinery now in use is employed for saving manual labour. In the establishment is a drying room, in which lumber is thoroughly seasoned by the heat of steam. They having engaged the services of a competent machinist and general engineer from Boston, are enabled to undertake repairing all kinds of machinery, including lock, gun-fitting and screw-cutting, having imported self-acting lathes and other machinists' tools for that purpose. Also planing, straight and sweep sawing, mortising, tenoning, moulding, boring and turning machinery. All kinds of iron turning done to order."
—The Examiner, Dec. 28, 1857.

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OPTOMETRIST
'Specialists in the fitting of glasses for the correction of ocular defects.'
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Notes By The Way

The old world is constantly redressing the balance of the new, and has done it again. A firm of ice-cream manufacturers, to encourage its departmental heads to keep trunk calls short, has equipped them with three-minute egg-timers, which trickle beside the telephone. It seems a homely old remedy for a fairly new complaint.—The Times (London)

A 16-year-old Toronto boy, Dale Alfred Childs, has been found guilty of murder by a Nanpew jury which made no recommendation of mercy, and he has accordingly been sentenced to be hanged on February 10. There should be no hanging, and Childs should not have to wait until the last moment to be told so by the government. The sentence should be commuted. If we are not mistaken, no one under 18 years of age has been hanged in Canada in the present century. A boy of 17 was hanged in 1898, and one of that age in 1863. These seem to be the only modern instances. — Toronto Star.

A discordant note entered the annual "harmony dinner" prepared by Representative Frank W. Boykin, a Democrat from Mobile, Alabama, for Democrats in Washington, when a game warden arrived to confiscate the bear which was to have provided the meal. Mr. Boykin was left with only the bear skin. His choice of bear steak must have made the Russian Embassy suspect that all the Titoist tendencies were not tied up in Yugoslavia. The warden may have been no warden at all. He may have walked out of the General Assembly only that morning. — Saskatoon Star-Phoenix.

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