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

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1941.

Mr. King's Responsibility

As the Dominion Government prepares to meet Parliament again there is a growing feeling throughout the country that the Prime Minister and the war effort are seriously hampered by the presence in the Cabinet of several mediocre men who ought to be replaced by leaders of dynamic energy, wide experience and good jurgment who would command the respect and support of the nation. The Toronto Globe and Mail (Independent) thus comments on the situation:

Some months ago the Prime Minister realized that his Government, notwithstanding its unprecedented majority in the House of Commons, was elected by the votes of only 54 per cent of the people. He recognized, moreover, that he could not hope to win the wholehearted support of the public so long as he persisted in the partisan and non-British course of ignoring the right of all elements of the population to representation in a war Administration. But his feeble effort to strengthen his Ministry by the inclusion of certain Conservatives was foredoomed to failure because he approached them by the back-door instead of seeking the co-operation of the official head of the Opposition.

The principal objection which many originally had to a National Government, namely, the fear of conscription for overseas service, no longer exists. This is a war of mechanization rather than big battalions, and the enthusiasm which a truly national Government would ensure would produce by voluntary methods all the manpower needed.

National Government would strengthen the morale and promote the unity of all Provinces.

A National Cabinet could organize for war with singlenes of purpose, unhampered by political considerations.

Coalition would guarantee that what went on behind the doors of the Cabinet was for the national good, rather than for the good of one party.

Canadians do not care who the new Ministers are or where they may be found, provided they have dynamic energy, good judgment and the physical strength which war demands.

There is not a competent man in this whole Dominion who is not ready to put his services at the disposal of the nation.

If Mr. King seeks to organize an all-out effort, if he wishes to mobilize the nation for a worthy part in smashing the greatest military machine ever hurled against the British Empire, he will undertake without further delay to strengthen his Cabinet by the inclusion of the best men in Canada regardless of their political affiliations.

No Rationing In Canada

With the scarcity of food for most of the people of Europe and many countries severely rationed, Canadians may well be thankful for their plentiful supply. There is a limited rationing in Britain, including sugar and fats. But on the continent of Europe there is nowhere anything like the consumption of bread, meat, sugar or fats that there is in Canada—except in Finland and Switzerland—according to a comparison compiled by the Financial Post.

The average weekly consumption of bread in Canada is given as 102 ounces per person. In France the ration is 87 ounces, in Germany 80, in Poland 62, in Belgium 56.

Canadians use a weekly average of 36.5 ounces of meat, while Belgians have 22 ounces, Germans and Netherlanders 17.5, France 12.8, and Italy has four meatless days every week.

We use an average of 31.6 ounces of sugar, while the highest consumption on the continent of Europe is 17.5 ounces in Switzerland and Slavakia, and Germany uses 8 ounces per person, Italy 5.3, France 4.5, Britain 8 ounces.

Canadian consumption of fats is 14.1 ounces, but in Germany it is 9.5 ounces, France 3.5, Italy 7, Great Britain 8, Netherlands 9.

Many other things are rationed in Europe. The list in Germany includes coffee substitute, jam, cheese, eggs, oatmeal.

Our worst worry in Canada has been over a possible temporary shortage of butter, and it makes us dizzy to think of what to do with our surplus wheat.

When Canadians see the comparison between their food supply and that of most of the people of Europe—largely due to the war—perhaps the gratitude for their good fortune will stimulate their efforts to help deliver the world from its present terror.

Canada's War Programme

Col. Ralston makes no apologies for spending without stint to arm our army for the coming fray. The army tank brigade and the armored division will be formed by taking some units now existing, by collecting other units and by recruiting a certain number of units to complete the strength. "We are going as 'full out' as we can go on all production," said Col. Ralston. "We will take as many of our own tanks for the brigade as we can get and supplement the necessary supply from tanks we can get in Britain. "Our position is that we can pay for all we are physically able to do," said the Defence Minister "and, let, me say, the program is what Britain wants us to do. In this war, necessarily, we are living from month to month, if not from week to week, and things are subject to sudden change, but we had to have a broad plan." A change has been made in the establishment of coast defence troops, but east and west, so that they will be placed on a regular infantry basis, instead of "garrison" basis as at present. Col. Ralston makes it plain, too, that the additional troops going to Britain this year are for overseas service. Defence authorities decline to make any prediction as to the nature of the work Canadian troops will be called upon to do but they will not necessarily be stationed in Britain.

— EDITORIAL NOTES —

The busy bees of our service clubs will be improving the shining hours from now on.

* * * *

Dublin and Kingstown children are to be evacuated because of the fear of German air raids—neutrality means nothing to Hitler, and now President Delavera is realizing it, so far as the children are concerned.

* * * *

Quebec is calling a loan for $15,000,000. This announcement was officially made by Provincial Treasurer Mathewson after Opposition Leader Maurice Duplessis declared the call "had been kicking around for a long time."

* * * *

The Marquess of Willingdon, now seventy-four has found the special mission he undertook in the interests of trade to South America more than his health could stand. He completed successfully certain of the visits but before reaching Colombia and Venzuela he deemed it necessary to return home, leaving to his colleagues the duty of interviewing the powers that be of these two countries.

* * * *

Thomas Alva Edison, inventor, born this date 1847; among his many inventions are the phonograph, megaphone, aeroplane, conematrograph, incandescent electric lamp, microlasimeter for estimating temperature changes, carbon telephone transmitter, multipler telegraph system, electric railways, and a submarine torpedo. During the last war he was instrumental in discovering processes of dyes, medicinal and other chemicals, which hitherto had been the monopoly of Germany.

* * * *

The air strength of the Nazis is evidently anybody's guess. The English technical magazine Aeroplane estimates that the German air force has 4,000 first-line planes immediately available for the battle against Britain. Of this number, it added, "the structure of the Luftwaffe makes it certain that not more than 1,500 are fighters." The magazine's figures conflicted with those of the Sunday Times' air correspondent, who placed the number of planes available to Germany for "full operation at any given time" at about 9,000, and her total air strength, including all types of planes, at about 40,000. Informed sources say they considered the Sunday Times' figures, to be more nearly accurate than those of the magazine.

* * * *

Social Credit legislation is again to run the gauntlet of an appeal. Mr. C. F. Newell, counsel for the North American Life Assurance Company, announces he will institute an Alberta Supreme Court action seeking to show the provincial Debt Adjustment Act is invalid as it conflicts with federal bankruptcy and insolvency legislation. Mr. Newell said he will begin a mortgage foreclosure action against an Edmonton man, contending the foreclosure should be allowed and the Debt Adjustment Act should not prevent such proceedings because they come under the bankruptcy legislation. Mr. Newell will contend the act is part of the general Social Credit scheme "that has been declared invalid by the courts."

* * * *

The old haunting fear of uncontrolled inflation has again been voiced in the British House of Commons when it granted Sir Kingsley Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, vast additional sums with which to carry on this most costly war. The discussion that followed Sir Kingsley's appeal for funds disclosed the importance that the members attached to the passage of the Roosevelt lease-lend bill in Washington. If the bill supplants the cash-and-carry policy, it was pointed out by several members, one of the severest strains on British reserves will be relaxed, but even so, it was recognized, the Government must take more and the people must spend less and turn over a greater proportion of their savings to the Treasury if the increasing gap between income and outlay is to be narrowed. Sir Kingsley asked a credit of £600,000,000 to round out the fiscal year ending March 31. Then he asked a credit of £1,000,000,000 for next year, not because he thought this sum would prove enough, but because it was the largest amount he could "reasonably" ask Parliament to approve at one time.

* * * *

The federal Government, through legislation prohibiting the export of used postage stamps in time of war, has succeeded in "freezing" thousands of dollars. Much more than a hobby, stamp collecting is "big business" with perhaps ten per cent. of the people interested in stamp collecting and trading. Through legislation enacted shortly after the outbreak of war the federal Government prohibited the export of stamps. In this they followed the lead of Great Britain. The British Philatelic Association, on the advice and with the assistance of the British Government, set up a special control system of the exportation of stamps and collections. Canada has not yet introduced any remedy. As a result a valuable quantity of stamps is lying "frozen" in the collections of thousands of people from coast to coast. The world market for stamps and stamp collections, and more especially the American market, has jumped since the outbreak of war, as it has during every war waged since the invention of the postage stamp by Sir Rowland Hill over 100 years ago.

* * * *

Mr. P. G. Wodehouse has had the hardest luck of all the English authors on the Continent caught in the Nazi Blitzkrieg says New York Times. From his pleasant home at Le Touquet on the Channel he has been transferred to a German concentration camp in Saxony. But it is some time since Somerset Maugham succeeded in making his way out of beleaguered France, and now London announces the arrival of E. Phillips Oppenhelm from Lisbon and the arrival in Lisbon of Norman Douglas from somewhere in Hitler's farflung net. Mr. Maugham told us the other day how he was held up by red tape on board a small yacht in Southern France for more than a month, in the course of which time he read three detective stories a day. He may have read several books by E. Phillips Oppenheim. It seems odd that Mr. Oppenheim's complete mastery of international intrigue and the resourcefulness of the incomparable Jeeves should have failed, between them, to foresee and checkmate Hitler's fell designs.

NOTES BY THE WAY

A bombed office and a bed in the shelter entitle any man to be a trifle more negligent in his dress than he used to be and to take unorthodox measures to keep the cold out. When he spends his days scrambling over wreckage and rescuing papers and ledgers from what were his private rooms he is not frowned upon if he comes to the City in skiing boots, as quite a number of men have done in the last week. But I have seen nobody else so reckless of public opinion as the City gentleman whom I observed yesterday bicycling along the Strand in a Balaclava, macintosh trousers rather too short and spats. — Manchester Guardian.

The news of these British successes (in Africa) must have come at a most inopportune time — for Herr Hitler. His cajoling of the Soviet Prime Minister will tax his eloquence very severely when he attempts to explain away the total inefficiency of his Italian partner's naval forces in allowing nearly half of his battle fleet to be put out of action. The very daring which the British Fleet Air Arm showed in this night attack on the Italian naval units, and the lie which the British Admiralty has given to Herr Hitler's claims to have completely destroyed the convoy which the Jervis Bay was escorting, cannot fail to create a profound impression on M. Molotoff's mind, and all the lunching and dining and waving of flags in Berlin will not be able to clear away the doubts which he must be feeling about the advisability of throwing the lot of his country in with the Axis plans. — Kong Kong Press.

Alfred North Whitehead, the greatest of living philosophers, from his retirement in Cambridge, Mass., in a letter to the Boston Globe, has put the case against the appeasers in about a hundred words. Many eminent people, including highly respected Harvard professors, have published reasons why American activity should be restricted to defence within her own borders. We now know how the Prest and Levite explained to their friends their conduct during their famous walk from Jerusalem to Jericho. They were influenced by three reasons: 1—The assault happened "on the other side." 2—They had an inherited distrust of "Samaria." 3 — After the incident had blown over, a profitable trade could be established with the thieves. These considerations justify the Priest and the Levite, if we put aside the moral issues upon which the parable insists. In the present case, the moral issue is the defence of freedom. — Winnipeg Free Press.

South Africans may be of good cheer. Hitler's chance of conquest in Africa is even less than his diminishing chance of further conquests in Europe. In Europe, with the possible exception of a rampage through Spain and Portugal—and the Communist element is still very strong in Spain — his walk-over career has come to an end. Hitler's luck is changing. He fears Great Britain. He fears the United States. He fears Russia. But, lest South Africans, relying wholly on geographical protection, should be lulled into a false sense of security, it would be well for them always to bear in mind that the African contingencies outlined in the foregoing observations are fundamentally dependent, in the ultimate upshot on British seapower. — Johannesburg Times.

—Sir:—To all who are interested in the maintenance and preservation of English cathedral music it will be welcome news that the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury have decided to keep open their choir school unless it should later become financially impossible, and to recruit new members for both sections of it. The boarders are in Cornwall, singing a daily service in the parish church of St. Blazey, and on Sunday services in various churches of the Truro diocese; the day boys (those whose parents wished to keep them at home) are maintaining full choral services every day in the Cathedral at Canterbury. It is much to be hoped that this action by a body whose material losses due to the war have been very heavy will be an encouragment to other Deans and Chapters to maintain their choral institutions unimpaired, even at the cost of personal sacrifice, so that a unique feature of our national life may not be wanting when peace returns. — Gerald H. Knight. Cathedral Organist. The Choir School. St. Blazey, Cornwall.—Letter to London Times.

Tiny roots of grass and cover-crops and undergrowth and bigger roots of forest plantations will be the main weapon Victoria will use in its fight to reduce the loss of £4,000,000 a year caused by soil erosion. They will be pitted against forces of wind and water that have swept millions of tons of dust and soil as far away as the Southern Alps of New Zealand and caused total losses of millions of pounds. It is on these roots that the soil conservators will have to rely to prevent dust storms that have swept up to 11,000,000 tons of soil a day from the dry inland areas. When the Soil Conservation Board, to be appointed under a Bill before Parliament takes over its job of trying to stop erosion, it will find that approximately 20,000,000 acres —two-fifts of Victoria — are subject to erosion by wind or water. In its campaign, the board will use every available means to impress on farmers and others the menace of increasing erosion and what should be done to stop the scouring away of vital top soil. — Australia Press Union.

After eight months of occu-pation Denmark has now an outstanding clearing account with Germany of 400,000,000 kroner. That means a German debt of about £20,000,000 for which amount Denmark theoretically is entitled to buy goods in Germany. But the latter neither can, nor will, supply the goods required, and it appears clear from all official Danish statements that even the promises of very limited fuel deliveries have been broken. As importation of the required foodstuffs is impossible, Danish farmers have had to reduce stocks whether they wanted to sell or not, and the result is that the stocks of cattle, pigs and poultry are now halved. The farmers are paid with money which the National Bank must produce, but the country as such must give credit on the clearing account. That is not the whole story. Denmark also must pay for the honor of being "protected" by an army of occupation, and the latest information is to the effect that the price amounts to about 40,000,000 kroner a month. — Manchester Guardian.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open for the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Charlottetown Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions of correspondents.

HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS, ETC.

Sir:—Congratulations on the new feature in your issue of the 8th in the shape of a letter signed "Arthur L. Wright."

I have not the pleasure of knowing this party, and feel that I have missed some real enjoyment.

He is evidently not a self-made man, and by what process he has reached man's estate is not disclosed, but he rushes in to support his friend Mr. Hemming with additional "words" which is about the last thing that Mr. Hemming's writings require.

Had he studied my previous letters he would know that I asked for support of the proposed improvements to Charlottetown harbor.

What I did question was the ridiculous statement that such improvements would give us 14c oats and this would result in an end to our difficulties.

My last letter which has annoyed Mr. Wright simply called attention to the statement of J. Walter Jones, M. L. A., whose knowledge and experience in matters of agriculture are known to those of us who have lived here and watched unhappy developments of late years. He is capable of giving advice, but such advice is not acceptable to certain parties who perhaps would not know a bushel of oats if they saw it, and whose letters certainly disclose the fact that its weight is yet a mystery to them.

I am, Sir, etc.,

PRODUCER.

FARM PRICES

Sir:—If the agricultural population is to survive, and maintain themselves on a decent level we must look for an adjustment of present farming conditions, and put into practice some of the methods of the manufacturer. We are manufacturers of farm product. The manufacturer finds the cost of producing the finished article and adds his percentage of profit, hence the price to the purchaser. This price we must pay or do without. When our potatoes are ready for market we must take what the buyers offer whether the price is below the cost of production or not. I mention potatoes in particular, because potatoes are to the east what wheat is to the West, the chief cash crop. The prairie farmer decided if he is to survive he must receive a price for his wheat above the cost of production. He asked for it. In fact, he demanded it and the result was the Federal Government guarantees Western wheat growers 70 cents a bushel. The potato grower can do the same thing, and why not? If it's good for the Western wheat growers it is good for the Eastern potato grower. Although the wheat grower's wheat acreage is not limited, would it not be a good thing to have a guaranteed price on potatoes with a limited acreage, say, roughly 10 per cent of the farmer's land. This would eliminate the potato speculator. The inspection of acreage could be completed during the usual inspection of the crop.

We hear lots right now about pegging prices of butter, cheese and pork. If the "powers that be" are going to peg those farm products why not go all the way and peg every thing. Machinery, cars, clothing, labor and so on. Then, if they are going to peg some things down, why not peg some things up such as potatoes. A guaranteed price of 50 cents a bushel would be all right on potatoes for the season of 1940-41, but will it be for the season of 1941-42 with farm equipment, fertilizer, labor and other necessities steadily rising?

Farm owners are leaving our communities not because they are not needed to keep the plow going, and thereby keep up wartime production, but because they wish those dependent on them to survive in decency. The lumber camps and factories offer them the needed dollars to do this and possibly pay interest on the farm mortgage.

During a discussion on farm conditions with a businessman in Charlottetown, he remarked that he wished he had the opportunity of paying $5.00 per bushel for his supply of potatoes, then, he said, "my business worries would be over." I am sure we all realize that without prosperity on the farms, we cannot have prosperity in our towns and cities. Therefore, let us all ask for an adjustment from the only source we can ever hope to obtain it, "Our Government." I would take from the speech made at the Rowell-Sirois session in Ottawa by our Provincial Premier, that the price of our potatoes was bothering him considerably. A portion of his speech was as follows: "Potatoes during this year have been sacrificed on a market which we feel with a certain amount of regulation could have operated at more satisfactory prices." Would it not be a good move to ask our Premier, or our Minister of Agriculture to call a meeting of potato growers and endeavor to work out some plan which will eliminate some of the gamble in growing potatoes, and let us have it in action for the 1941-42 crop.

I am, Sir, etc.,

F. C. RAMSAY.

Montrose,
Prince Edward Island.

MR. HEMMING COMMENDED

Sir:—The writer was pleased to note in your edition of the 8th inst. two letters devoted to the defence of our friend H. K. S. Hemming, against the attacks of "Producer" which appeared the previous day. I would just like to add my commendations on the excellent work Mr. Hemming has been performing to arouse public interest in the deplorable economic situation of the farmers of this Province. The letters of Mr. Hemming are always constructive and while they may contain some statements and deductions which are open to debate, much of the material is highly constructive and is always based on the most authoritative information available. In the writer's opinion, it would be highly unfortunate for this Province, were Mr. Hemming's contributions withdrawn through the action of anonymous letter writers who, through their anonimity, are permitted to stoop to vitriolic personalities, far below the high level and gentlemanly conduct of Mr. Hemming's correspondence.

It sometimes appears to me that the anonymous contributors to Public Forum letters in our Island Press do more to refute the supposed reputation this Island has for kindliness and hospitality, than any other aspect of our Provincial life.

With few exceptions, all that this Island and its people own, has come from the fertile acres and the prolific fisheries around its shores. Charlottetown with its beautiful streets and splendid churches and business blocks, fine residences and schools; Summerside with its magnificent stores and hundreds of fine homes, as well as our lesser towns and villages, owe existence to the work of the primary producers of our farms and fisheries. Unlike the other Provinces, we have no other natural resources, no forest and mineral wealth, no water power, no large industrial employers of labor. Either our farmers and our fishermen secure a modicum of security in the way of adequate prices and steady markets or the whole financial structure of this Province, both rural and urban, will crumble. With the statistics compiled by Dominion Government experts and printed in the Canada Year Book, clearly indicating a loss of some hundred million dollars since 1929, in the value of farm products of this Island as against the figures for that year, it is time that our business men took an active interest in the plight of the agriculturists of this Province. The redistribution of wealth which is now taking place through war expenditures in this Dominion will scarcely affect our Province in any permanent measure whatever. True, we will have a couple of airports; but how can this be compared to the immense industrial development of government subsidized plants which is going on in the other Provinces? According to present indications we will be even more the poor relative of Canada at the conclusion of this conflict.

This Province and its people need leadership desperately today and a large number of our farmers are now admitting this fact. Constructive criticism by Public Forum writers like Mr. Hemming will assist greatly; destructive criticism and personalities have no place in the discussion and will be treated with contempt by the intelligent reader.

I am, Sir, etc.,

K. S. ROGERS

Charlottetown,
Feb. 10, 1941.

PRIMARY READING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Sir,—In your issue of February 4, Mrs. Ruhammah S. Frank honors me with a reply to a letter of mine that appeared in your issue of Jan. 28, dealing with the subject of primary reading in our schools. Although Mrs. Frank reveals in her letter a decided temptation to digress widely into her favorite theories of education, she nevertheless replies in part quite pointedly to the real question now under consideration, namely, the merits of the old "spell and say" method in comparison with the present letter-phonetic method for teaching primary reading in our public schools, and especially our country schools.

Mrs. Frank practically tells us that both of these methods as formerly practised are now equally discarded—in up-to-date centres, I presume she means. She tells us plainly enough, too, that she herself does not approve of either method as practised not so many years ago, and she suggests in broad outline her ideal system: a vivified pictorial system—in brief a delightful method free from the dry-as-dust drudgery of the old days when Shakespeare's boy crept like snail unwillingly to school!

I confess that on my first reading of Mrs. Frank's letter, I felt somewhat like the group of western farmers who once applied to Bill Nye's newly-edited paper asking for a decision on the question as to which was the better method of pulling turnips; to pull them first and then clip their tops off, or to clip their tops off first and then pull them. Bill Nye, according to this, his own story, knew absolutely nothing about practical farming, but nevertheless he had just recently been forced into agricultural journalism as a desperate resort of a man who could turn his hand to nothing else in a strictly farming centre such as his newly-adopted town was. He judged, however, quite correctly on receipt of the above question that a controversy was going on in his little western town between two parties with conflicting views on agriculture. Knowing the general character of both parties, he hesitated to offend either, and replied to their question, that he did not believe in either of the proposed methods of pulling turnips; he believed in the simple and easy method of climbing the tree and shaking the turnips off. On the following day, so Bill Nye tells us, an infuriated group of farmers appeared before his office and threatened to have his life if he did not immediately leave the town.

I confess again, that on my first reading of Mrs. Frank's letter, her solution to the question now under discussion appeared to me just so exasperatingly lovely and easy that I felt somewhat like one of the western farmers, somewhat vindictive and inclined, metaphorically speaking, to resort once again to the old buried hatchet. On a second reading, however (and Mrs. Frank's letters to my mind at least, always improve on a second reading), the thought occurred to me: After all, is this awfully modern teacher so far removed in her ideas from my own conception of the ideal method for teaching reading to primer classes in Prince Edward Island? For did I not say in my last letter that in my opinion, the ideal method for doing this would be the old "spell and say" method, skilfully combined with the "look and say" method, and I certainly intended the "look and say" definition to be a comprehensive one, and see no reason why it should not include the fas-

(Continued on page 7, Col 8)

The Poets' Corner

"RIVERS UNKNOWN TO SONG"

Wide waters in the waste; or, out of reach,
Rough Alpine falls where late a glacier hung;
Or rivers groping for an alien beach,
Through continents, unsung.

Nay, not these nameless, these remote, alone;
But all the streams from all the watersheds—
Peneus, Danube, Nile—are the unknown,
Young in their ancient beds.

Man has no tale for them. Oh! travelers swift
From secrets to oblivion! Waters wild
That pass in act to bend a flower or lift
The bright limbs of a child!

For they are new, they are fresh; there's no surprise
Like theirs on earth. Oh, strange forevermore!
This moment's Tiber with his shining eyes
Never saw Rome before.

Man has no word for their eternity—
Rhine, Avon, Arno, younglings, youth uncrowned!
Unwelcomed, unrenowned.

—Alice Meynell.

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