THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18 1945

The Little Red School House

The "little red school house" with its single room accommodation is pretty well condemned by modern educators. Even in this Province, where transportation facilities are limited, there will be many to agree with a *Windsor Star* commentator that the small rural school has "more of a romantic than a practical value" and that it is doomed to pass from the scene.

The *Ottawa Journal* takes a different view. The romantic atmosphere of the country school, it says, becomes visible only to those who view it from the vantage point of distance—actually it was, and is, essentially practical. Those who have attended a typical one-room school will recall that it was totally lacking in "frills"—the teacher had in that room classes from beginners to high-school entrance, and had no time for theory, for experiment, for anything but straight instruction in the prescribed subjects. The *Journal* adds:

"That sort of instruction, with all its faults, its shortcomings may have to disappear, but not because it is a bad system — rather because better ways now are within reach. The one-room school perhaps is least fair to the few students slower than the average to learn, because a teacher has no time for coaching and coddling. The average student gets along, and the occasional brilliant student finds great opportunity in such a place for rapid advancement, because he profits not only from his own class-work but from all the classes above him.

"Now the trend is towards fewer, larger and more diversified schools, and that is possible because good roads and the motor vehicle have taken the country school out of its old isolation. Perhaps the Little Red Schoolhouse is on its way out of the picture, but not because it failed. It is possible now to give rural boys and girls all or most of the educational advantages enjoyed by their city cousins, and that means a radical change in the system, but the old-fashioned country school is not thereby proved a failure, any more than the horse-and-buggy is made a failure by the faster automobile."

A Good Start At Least

In the opinion of the *Financial Post*, much was accomplished at Ottawa by the Dominion-Provincial co-ordinating committee. No immediate settlement was reached or is in sight but the known facts augur well for ultimate and satisfactory agreement.

Chief accomplishments are:

1. Demonstration by Dominion and Provincial authorities of a genuine desire to co-operate and work toward an agreement.

2. Setting up of a continuing economic committee to study specific proposals and differences in view.

3. Exploding of Ottawa's "take it or leave it" attitude and realization that only by considerable give and take on both sides will any proper and workable scheme be reached.

It is now quite clear, says the *Post*, that final agreement will not follow lines originally proposed by Ottawa last August. The so-called "brain trust" proposals were found to be lacking and unacceptable in many respects. Even Federal cabinet ministers themselves repudiated large chunks of their own plan.

Thus the first and perhaps most important single item of business turned out to be the redrafting of Bill 15. Provincial Premiers delivered an ultimatum to Ottawa that they would do no further business unless this Emergency Powers bill were redrafted. Mr. King assented at once. The results were tabled in the House of Commons a few days later.

The same thing will happen when the Premiers get at the real heart of Ottawa's original proposals, namely, the transfer of certain tax powers to the Dominion Government. As yet Ontario and Quebec have not shown their hand on this matter. But it does seem clear that several, if not a majority of premiers believe that a sound and solid fiscal arrangement can be worked out without the far-reaching "centralization" of tax powers which Ottawa originally proposed.

In The Levant

The Anglo-French agreement on the Levant provides a working basis for close Anglo-French co-operation in the Middle East for the economic advantage of the Middle East peoples. In the wording of the joint communique issued 14th December "the two Governments have recognized that it is to their joint interest to encourage within the frame-work of international collaboration the economic well-being and security of the peoples of the Middle East."

By their emphasis on international collaboration the two Governments indicate that their joint policies will not be exclusive and that they look forward to the approaching time when security in the Middle East, as elsewhere, will be in charge of the United Nations Organization. The communique states that both the United Kingdom and French Governments are "equally desirous of assuring to Syria and Lebanon the full exercise of the independence proclaimed by France in 1941, and consecrated by the admission of these states into the United Nations." This is not the least important of the connotations of the agreement signed Dec. 14, and it will assuredly be noted accordingly in the Levant States in particular, and in all countries of the Arab league in general.

The communique further expresses the desire of the British and French Governments "to eliminate in a lasting manner all the differences of policy capable of prejudicing their respective interests and damaging the good understanding which they propose to make even closer."

This phrase contains two important statements of policy. Firstly, both Governments recognize that each has its own interests in the Middle East and agree that these interests shall be mutually respected. Secondly, both Governments are resolved to make the present agreement a springboard for wider agreements. This is evidently a discreet reference to the cherished project of an Anglo-French alliance. It is well known to be the wish of both Governments to achieve this, once the path has been cleared of obstacles, and notably of the Levant imbroglio.

The agreement is in the form of an exchange of notes, one dealing with the withdrawal of British and French troops from the Levant States, and the other with Anglo-French policy in the Middle East.

The agreement on the withdrawal of troops provides for a meeting of British and French military experts in Beirut on December 21 to draw up the programme of simultaneous withdrawal which is to start very soon on a date to be fixed by the military experts. Details will doubtless be worked out in consultation with the Syrian and Lebanese Governments which have been duly informed of the terms of the agreement.

—EDITORIAL NOTES—

"Who ever knew truth to be put to the worse in a free and open encounter?" asked John Milton in his famous defence of freedom of the Press.

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One of the foremost Australian statesmen says that the role of the Press in a democracy is that of a "public opinion parliament" in which every kind of grievance can be aired and investigated.

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This Province headed the list of enlistments throughout the Dominion, and now it is announced we headed the list that sent men to take jobs in war industries in other provinces. On the other hand, we showed the lowest increase in employment from 1941 to 1944.

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In 1890 the average value of production per employee in Canadian Industry was only $1,273, and that in the same year only $955 was invested in plant, tools and equipment per employee. In 1939 the average sum invested in plant, tools and equipment per employee was $5,542. The more capital invested in Canadian Industry the greater the value of goods produced the greater our income.

* * * *

Britain's Air Ministry have prepared extensive plans to make gliding a popular pastime. Two-seater gliders of the most modern design are to be used as training planes, whereas hitherto single-seater gliders only were available for training. The few two-seaters which have up to now been available have, for the most part, been used for high-flying instruction and for other purposes not applicable to beginners. As, however, the lesson is made considerably easier if the instructor can go up with his pupil, large orders have now been given for two-seaters The delivery of the new machines is to take place very soon so that mass-instruction of pupils may begin in the coming spring. Furthermore, orders have been given to the flying schools to obtain accommodation for the expected pupils.

* * * *

The first pulpit hour-glass inaugurated in Compton Bassett Church, Wilts, England, this date, 1623; from the days of Luther, the length of sermons increased until the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Puritan preachers inflicted discourses of more than two hours; to regulate these enthusiastic talkers something had to be done, and so we read, at the church mentioned, the preacher, "being attended by a man that brought after him his book and hour-glass," entered the pulpit. Some churches were provided with half-hour glasses as well as hour ones, and one may imagine with what anxiety the congregation would regard the choice made by the parson. L'Estrange tells an amusing story of a parish Clerk, who had sat patiently under preacher "till he was three-quarters through his second glass," and the bulk of the congregation had withdrawn, tired out by his posing; the Clerk then arose at a convenient pause in the sermon, and calmly requested that "when you have done, if you will be pleased to close the church door and push the key under it" as he and the few that remained were about to retire.

* * * *

Hydro-electric production has been increased greatly in the central provinces, and especially in Quebec, during the war, and they are now facing the need to secure peace-time users, while the other provinces are seized of the need for development of power and the servicing of many municipalities and farm homes hitherto without electricity. The fear of some that there will be an uneconomic glut in the first several peace years is unfounded, according to widespread opinion among leaders in the electrical field, because new uses, adaptable to peace time, have been developd, new machines will call for greater current and more employees, while extension of domestic service to municipalities not now served will help take up the slack. The *Royal Bank Letter* concludes: "Further promotion of the use of electric power may well be one of the projects helping toward prosperity in peace. Attention of those who express fear that increasing use of electricity will mean fewer jobs should be directed to the new industries which can arise only upon the basis of plentiful and cheap hydro power. New products will be made, and the general standard of living will improve. In its peace-time use, electricity has given more than 60 per cent of Canada's population the use of light, home conveniences and labour-saving machines which help living conditions. All provinces are determined that this boon shall be extended as quickly as possible to as many as possible of the remaining 40 per cent."

Notes By The Way

Rice water can be saved to starch collars, lace edgings and dainty things.

The Ottawa Journal declares "the plain fact is that only a fool, a lunatic or a drunken person drives a motor vehicle in winter at a speed which does not assure instant and complete control of the car or truck." The case could not be better stated. And the only inference to be drawn is that there are fools, lunatics or drunks behind the wheels of some of the cars and trucks that travel the streets of Kingston. — Kingston Kingston Whig-Standard.

One of the real successes of this age is the number of people ready to train themselves, to take special courses, to prepare themselves for what they wish to work at. There is an objectivity behind it which speaks well for the young men and the young women of today; they will be runnings things after a few tomorrows. One suspects that they will follow fewer mirages and test the foreground more carefully than many of the generations that have gone before. They will have a world of mistakes to profit by avoiding. —Victoria Colonist.

This year, to date, Ontario has seen twenty-one trials involving the charge of murder. Commenting on this grimly alarming situation, Deputy Attorney-General Cecil Snyder says that not only is this the largest number on record, but that a particularly disturbing feature consists in the fact that many slayings were the result, not of premeditation, but of "extremely brutal attacks" by youth.—Brantford Expositor.

The last thing the nations expected after the end of the war was a glut of rubber. Japan se seizure of the main rubber-producing areas, war consumption and costliness of synthetic production were supposed to have made a shortage certain. Now, with the slump in military demands, the recovery of the rubber-fields from the enemy, and an enormous output of synthetic rubber, the world may face an excess production of eighty per cent in the next two years. —Ottawa Citizen.

Revolutionary experiments in plastics by a British boot and shoe company have resulted in discoveries which are going to strike a new fashion note in footwear, reveals the London Sunday paper, Reynolds News. The company has invented and patented shoes equipped with heels made of tubular steel. "The effect of the new heel is one of smart, modern simplicity. From the wearer's point of view it is lighter, stronger and more springy than the orthodox heel of wood or leather, and can be produced in a variety of heights and colors."

The Scottish crown jewels which were brought back from the hiding place, where they have in safe keeping during the war, are once again on view to the public in the Crown Room at Edinburgh Castle. Included among the jewels shown with the "Honours" is the Jewel of St. Andrew—which has on its reverse side, a miniature of Maria Clementina Sobieski, the Polish princess who was mother of Prince Charlie—which is the Sovereign's Badge of the Order of the Thistle and has been worn by the present King and by King George V on ceremonial occasions at Holyroodhouse. The total intrinsic value of the metal and jewels has as far as is known, never been computed, but some years ago the Crown was valued at £5,000. —Edinburgh Scotsman.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom" has again become the centre of a controversy, after fourscore quiet but flourishing years as one of the hardiest stalks of corn in the field of American literature and drama. Only this time poor old Tom is on the other side of the controversy, The Calgary Herald notes. It all began in Bridgeport, Conn., a few weeks ago, when a trade union council, a Negro organization, a group of ministers and local members of the Communist party objected to a forthcoming theatrical performance of this beloved chestnut. They said, in effect, that it held the Negro up to ridicule, recalled his former degradation, pictured him as irresponsible and subservient, and tended to promote anti-Negro sentiment. We should hate to see the oncoming generation denied those same joys by the efforts of well-meaning liberals. The motives behind those efforts may be the highest. But in expressing them the well-meaning liberals a[re] again exhibiting the[ir] estness, devoid of humor, sentiment or perspective, which makes them a bit tiresome troubled world of today other jobs for the well-meaning liberals more importa[nt] than ning this museum piece of the liberal- slavery-hating Mrs. Stowe as anti-Negro. With a little searching they can find several dozen flesh-and-blood characters more menacing to our way of life than Topsy or Uncle Tom.

There was a time when a farmer's woodpile was a generally accepted criterion of his all-round competence. A big woodpile with plenty of solid maple, oak and birch meant ample dry fuel for the kitchen range and the gleaming nickel-trimmed base burner in the parlor. When the time of killing frosts arrived and a countryman spent the quiet leisurely late-Fall days getting ready for Winter, he liked to check his woodshed against the coming months of cold and snow, says The New York Times. There is a good satisfying smell about a woodshed, compounded from the inches-deep layer of debris, splinters, sawdust and pieces of bark. It is a dry, tangy nostril-tickling aroma. A man who knows his woods can distinguish various species. There is the heavy bland smell of the maple, the sharp acid aroma of red oak, the resinous zip of the pine branches trimmed out from last Winter's lumbering. The hemlock sticks that snap and crackle in the stove have a pungent penetrating smell. The apple wood chunks that came from the old Baldwin behind the icehouse have a spicy fragrance. The symmetrical tiers of split wood for the kitchen range are piled high. Neat and orderly, they wait to be carried in the old bushel basket to the woodbox beside the stove. In one corner is the pile of gnarled and knotty chunks, those irregularsized, hard-to-split pieces which will carry a fire all night long in the parlor burner. In another corner is the pile of short pieces of pine kindling—brittle, quick-catching pieces that get a fire going easily in the kitchen on mornings when zero cold is popping the nails in the clapboards. At night when a man comes in from the chores, he likes to stop a minute in the ell and let the lantern light shine on the results of his labors. A woodshed, heaped high with dry fuel, is a satisfying thing as Winter draws on.

The Poet's Corner

'THE WORLD'S A STAGE'

In these confusions of a passing age
We may recall that many times before
The earth has cast from its revolving stage
Dramas that served it purposes no more;

But under all chaotic shifting scenes
The theatre itself is never changed,
The reckless outward show alone careens,
The underlying laws are not deranged.

The planetary stage still holds its own,
The endless spirals whirl forever past,
The stable angles are not overthrown,
The chemical affinities stand fast;
Poor acts and actors — all — cannot reverse
The sane and geometric universe.

—Myra Perrings, in the New York Times.

Newfoundland's Second Chance

(Globe and Mail)

The British Labor Government's announcement of a National Convention to decide the future status of Newfoundland was not unexpected. While in Opposition, it was a frequent critic of Government policy toward the former Dominion. The proposed Convention, which will be elected early next June, will review the position of the colony, and make recommendations regarding possible forms of government.

As a result of the desperate financial plight into which mismanagement and the depression had plunged the Dominion, a Royal Commission in 1933 recommended that representative government be suspended, and that the Governor, advised by six commissioners, three for the British Government and three for Newfoundland, assume responsibility for administration. When the British Parliament put these recommendations into effect, near the end of 1933, assurance was given that when the Government was again self-supporting responsible government would be restored, upon the people's request.

Though the deficits, which reached a record high of $4,000,000 in 1934, were somewhat reduced there still were in 1939 as many as 85,000 out of the island's population of about 300,000 on relief. After the war began, when Canada and the United States established bases, an artificial prosperity was induced which substantially increased Government revenue, and has now created a surplus of about $28,125,000. Ordinarily, however, Newfoundland's economic structure is highly precarious, depending heavily on both exports and imports. If the external economic situation is bad, Newfoundland is bound to suffer heavily. This factor coupled with the urgent need for improvement in health and education, for more roads and railways, and for substantial capital investment in development of natural resources, will impose a heavy responsibility on any local Government.

It often has been suggested that Newfoundland should join Confederation as a tenth Province. It has twice—in 1867 and again in 1869—rejected an invitation, but, according to a clause in the British North America Act, may still, upon address from the Legislature, ask admittance. Opinion does not seem strong for the move, however, on either side. Due to Newfoundland's heavy dependence on imports substantial change in Canadian tariff policy would be necessary. The danger of financial responsibility does not encourage Canadian moves toward what would seem a logical conclusion.

There is a sharp difference of opinion regarding the future of Newfoundland. Some incline to the belief that nothing essential has been changed in its condition, and that the old problems of poverty, ignorance, bad health and undeveloped resources still remain. Others insist that definite progress to overcome these social weaknesses has been made, and that Newfoundland's position on the transatlantic air routes open up new economic possibilities.

In either event, Canada felicitates the Ancient Colony on its opportunity to regain command of its own household. The exercise of self-government by British people anywhere has a special significance in this country, which was the first to win the right to representative self-government within the British Commonwealth. Canada and Newfoundland have much they can give each other. Both have come out of the war with a new importance and new responsibilities. May the partnership which has been sealed with the blood of both peoples long endure!

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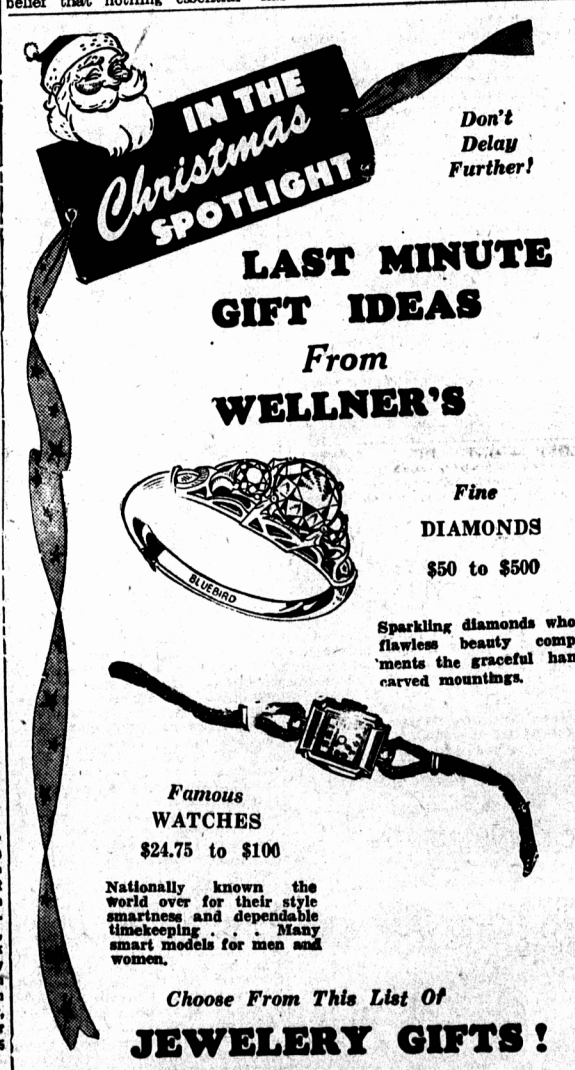

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