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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY, 3, 1940.

Col. Ralston's Election

Elected by acclamation yesterday to the Prince County seat in the House of Commons, Finance Minister Ralston has wired his appreciation in a message which appears in today's Guardian. He rightly attributes the fact that his nomination was unopposed to the desire of the Conservatives of the County to place no barrier in the way of the Government's prosecution of Canada's war efforts. This is the all-important issue at present. There is no doubt as to Colonel Ralston's ability and importance in the King Cabinet, and the action taken by the Prince County electors has met with general approval.

The occasion is opportune of reminding Prime Minister King and his colleagues again of the solemn assurance given at the last session of Parliament, that political patronage and other forms of partisanship would have no place in Canada's war activities. We note with regret that this promise went by the board in the Liberal appeals made in the recent federal by-election in Saskatoon, where four-column advertisements were widely distributed by those who sought to have the Governmen candidate returned. The *Financial Post* reproduces one of these advertisements, in which electors were reminded by clippings from recent newspapers that millions of dollars were being spent by the Government on war orders. There was no attempt to appeal on patriotic grounds, but only to purely selfish interests. The advertisement was headed "Will Saskatoon Get Its Share?" and the inference was clearly drawn that unless the electors "voted Government" the city would not get its share of this war business. In fact in the body of the advertisement, businessmen and workers were warned against what might happen if they "refused to offer . . . co-operation to the Government."

This bait proved ineffective: the Government candidate was defeated. But this does not relieve the King Government of the onus of such partisan appeals, which would be bad enough in peace-time but under present conditions are absolutely indefensible. More about this discreditable campaign will likely be heard when Parliament meets at Ottawa this month. It is a far cry from the patriotism shown by the Prince County Conservatives in this Province in permitting Finance Minister Ralston to take his seat unopposed, and this deplorable return to partisan Liberal politics in Saskatoon.

A Staggering Toll

Canadians, deeply impressed by the most revelation that this country will spend a million dollars a day in our war effort, will have no trouble in appreciating the enormous financial burden now placed on the people of Great Britain. With only about four times the population, Britain is spending just thirty times as much money as the Dominion. By the end of August the struggle to end Hitlerism will have cost roughtly twelve billion dollars.

To make this contrast the more striking, it is only necessary to compare the national debt of Canada, about seven billion dollars, to that of Britain of forty-five billion dollars. As Britain's national debt in 1914 was only three and a half billion dollars (and the bulk of Canada's debt was incurred in the last struggle), the people of the Mother Country may have to consider a subsequent national debt interest toll that will absorb half the government's revenue. Economists and financial experts are already deeply concerned with the ultimate results of this vast spending. Taxation, which has climbed so steadily during the past years, may climb still further when the war is over; the cost of living may go higher, and savings may be hit severely. Somehow, they want to cushion the repercussions of the aftermath. And this time there are precedents to go by. The solidity of the British public in accepting the present sacrifices — and their general wage level is considerably lower than it is in Canada—is an eloquent testimony to their determination to end a menace that turns the potential forces of construction to destruction.

Insurance "War Clause"

Insurance taken out by the soldiers before the war is still good, it is not affected by their going on active service abroad, and the premiums are not increased. In insurance policies taken out since the war began, there is a war clause which increases the premium or reduces the benefit rate in the case of soldiers who go overseas.

Why this war clause is inserted, instead of allowing all the policy holders of a company to carry the heavier risks of soldiers who assume them in the service of their country, was explained by Mr. Arthur B. Wood of the Sun Life, in a recent address to presidents of life insurance companies of the United States. He recalled that when the United States Government provided war risk insurance for its soldiers in the last war at peace time rates, the amount received in premiums paid only one-quarter of the amount of the claims which were afterwards met. No company, he said, could afford to insure many soldiers on such a plan. The whole population, and not the policy holders alone, should assume the responsibility for any such provision made for the soldiers.

The nation does provide insurance, of course, in the form of pensions for a soldier's dependents and for himself if he is incapacitated by his war service. And this is fairy generous provision.

Quoting the effect of other features of Mr. Wood's statement, the Montreal Star says:

"The new war clause does not affect civilians other than those traveling beyond the territorial limits of Canada, Newfoundland and the United States; but even these may obtain full coverage through the payment of an extra premium. Soldiers and sailors serving within the home area are entitled to full benefits, but have to pay an extra premium when on active service abroad. For aviation service abroad, limited benefit only applies. But, he emphasized, these provisions only apply to new policies issued since the war started. All insured before then are in the same position as regards benefits as if there were no war, and no matter whether they enlist or not. He holds that it is probable that at the close of the present war practically all life insurance companies will waive the war clause in their policies, as was done after 1918."

= EDITORIAL NOTES =

Both town and country were satisfied with the year-end weather—it suited both cars and sleighs.

* * * *

The next excitement, apart from the war, will be the reopening of Parliament on Thursday 18.

* * * *

Mainland University students were on the move yesterday in large numbers. They will be away now till Easter, which falls on March 24.

* * * *

R. L. Stevenson died this date 1894. "I hate cynicism a great deal worse than I do the devil; unless, perhaps, the two were the same thing."

* * * *

An informed source states that Ontario's share of the deepening of the St. Lawrence scheme would be in the region of $50,000,000. Quebec Government is giving the project consideration also, said Premier Godhout.

* * * *

Professor Findlay must now realize that blending history, love and romance at this time of active warfare is a dangerous and unnecessary luxury, though he got off cheaply for a paltry seven or eight dollars.

* * * *

An Edmonton Journal despatch from Prevost, Alberta, reports that Mr. Fred Hicks, a Blackhill farmer, has just finished seeding 115 acres of crested wheat grass, brome grass and sweet clover, while another farmer who sowed 90 acres about November 1 has grass two inches high showing. These are records for late fall seeding and were possible because of the unusually mild weather.

* * * *

With the Russian army unable to disengage itself from the Finnish trap, Germany must give up hope of obtaining succor from Moscow. If the Russians can be kept occupied in the Arctic, that is the equivalent of an extension of Allied blockade to the east frontier of Germany. For that reason alone, apart from moral reasons, the Anglo-French Entente would be foolish not to aid in the largest measure possible the brave defenders of Finland's independence.

* * * *

Native languages have not been fostered in Canada because no tribe is large enough to become a self-sustaining economic unit and sooner or later "must fuse completely with the white population of the Dominion." Chief of the museum's division of anthropology and retiring president of the section on anthropology of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Diamond Jenness told the association's annual meeting that "Canadian Governments steadfastly have held to the belief that the aboriginal population of the Dominion should and would gradually fuse with the white. Consequently they have directed their efforts toward raising the status of the Indians and establishing them on a secure economic basis. Most of the tribes are now increasing in numbers and adapting themselves to changing conditions."

* * * *

In Orillia, Ont., they are both good farmers and good story-tellers. Mr. Gordon Bartlett told the Orillia Packet that a great big rabbit had located in his vicinity and was proving a holy terror to the neighbourhood. For Christmas the jack rabbit, which recently ripped Bartlett's trousers in a playful attack while he passed through the wood, and later chased a full-grown St. Bernard full tilt out of the bush, stood outside the farmer's window and flicked a stick through the glass by way of greeting. Bartlett told the story when he went to town for a new pane for the window. I heard the noise beneath my window and looked out to see the jack rabbit thumping the ground with his four feet. Just then he caught the stick with his feet and it came flying through the window. I guess he came to wish me a Merry Christmas."

* * * *

The three fleur-de-lis on the flag being flown by the Canadian Active Service Force in England—an ensign which some quarters are urging as Canada's national flag—are unnecessary, and furthermore may be considered uncomplimentary to the French, Mr. E. T. Adney, of Woodstock, N. B., Canadian authority on heraldry, said in an interview. The three golden lilies on blue, as incorporated in the C. A. S. F. flag, were the arms of the former kings of France, and were used only by them or their personal representatives, Mr. Adney stated. The white background of the Canadian troops' flag was sufficient to symbolize the early days of this country, he added, for from 1670 up to the time of the Republic, the ensign of France was a pure white flag. The three lilies he added, had an English emphasis which savored of war and conquest, for the fleur-de-lis had been incorporated in the arms of King Edward III at the time of the Hundred Years' War to signify his claim to the throne of France, and were also used by the English to mark the capture of the French King John. Therefore, in Mr. Adney's opinion, the lilies were hardly a compliment to the French. Neither were they a compliment to the present French Republic, he said, because of the royal association.

NOTES BY THE WAY

It is suggested that before the war is over some of the gasoline used by cars which contribute to the traffic problems in Toronto may be taken for military purposes. Some of the cars themselves would look well in barbed wire entanglements. — Toronto Globe and Mail

Two peace-loving nations are this week remembering that something more substantial than fortifications and armaments guarantees the natural concord and security they cherish. Cannon and soldiers and ships of war have not kept the peace between the United States and Canada for 125 years since the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814. Nor, perhaps, has the mere absence of forts and gunboats done so. Back of the physical disarmament, brought about by the subsequent Rush-Bagot Treaty, has been the mental disarmament of the people and their leaders. There has been no desire for war because racial enmity, jealousy, mistrust, prejudice, and fierce commercial rivalry have largely disappeared. Canada and the United States have enjoyed unusual opportunities for developing friendship. When mutual trust, esteem, and enlightenment shall replace fear, hatred and ignorance, boundary fortresses will disappear everywhere. The Maginot and Siegfried lines will become weedgrown and untenanted, and doves of peace will soar serenely where now war eagles scream.—Christian Science Monitor.

We are giving the Finns bread, but what they ask are stones, the stones of war—bullets to rain upon the red horde, airplanes to shower a leaden hail from the skies, cannon to smash the advance of mechanized forces. What Finland gets from us are chiefly food products and clothing for the home population. Is there any reason why, if we really sympathize with the Finn cause, and really want Finland to hold off the invader, we should coldly refuse to give her the aid she requires? Our failure to invoke the Neutrality Act, through a transparent sophistry that fools nobody, is heartily appiauded by the whole American people At least, then, let us be forthright in our hypocrisy. So long as the laws application is withheld in this case there is nothing whatever to prevent us from supplying the Finns with guns, munitions and 'planes. These, at the moment, constitute not only the best guarantee for the safety of our loan but also of a successful stand against the invasion. And the latter is what we really want to see, is it not? — Chicago Daily News.

First among New England cities Providence began on Monday the use of the food stamp plan tried originally in Rochester and now in successful operation in other areas. If it works the plan will be extended to other Rhode Island cities and may be established by the State itself. The Mayor of Boston, as the result of personal observation by himself and the manager of the city's welfare department, has already directed the proper officials to apply to Washington for the installation of the system here. Springfield and Worcester and Manchester in New Hampshire also are interested. The Rhode Island capital apparently is to serve as an experiment station for New England. The system has come to be widely understood since the New York city began its use last May. The depots through which surplus food commodities have been distributed for some years are closed. Needy persons no longer form in line for a dole. Instead the relief agency sells 25-cent orange stamps to applicants presenting identification cards. The minimum quota is $1 a week a person. Each buyer receives free 50 cents in blue stamps. A family of four is thus able to obtain $6 in food for $4 in stamps. —

The decision of the Federal Government that canteens in the military camps throughout Australia shall be "dry" has aroused widespread controversy in New South Wales, where most of the camps (and that of the 2nd A.I.F.) are situated. Considerable criticism of the decision has come from army officers, who declare that "wet" canteens enable officers to exercise better control over men, and to establish good feeling in the camps They point out that where canteens are dry, there is an inducement to men to break camp and frequent hotels and sly-grog shops, and also to smuggle liquor into camps. Where there is a wet canteen, they point out, control of the amount of liquor consumed is possible. As against this body of opinion, many people strongly support the Government's decision. The synod of the diocese of Sydney has passed a resolution commending the Government's decision. There were, however, some dissentients, even in clerical circles. A further statement from the Minister for Defence (Mr. Street) that the Government had no intention of altering its original decision ended the controversy. Privates must now reconcile themselves to camp life without alcohol. —Australian Press Union.

It is indeed of the greatest importance to us and to our cause in the world that we should not allow the splendid and spontaneous outburst of loyalty and enthusiasm in the Colonies to be dissipated or neglected, and that our Colonial fellow-subjects should be made to feel that their co-operation is really necessary to us. The British people should now be told more about their Colonial Empire and their responsibility for it; the Colonial peoples should be told clearly and simply (and as far as possible in their own languages) that we are fighting for their freedom, to develop on their own lines, as well as for our own; they should be made more aware of each other and of their essential unity in the Empire. Above all, we should declare to the world our own conception of Colonial trusteeship, and our proposals for the solution of the so-called Colonial Question when peace is restored. That question has been made one of the many excuses for Nazi aggression, one of its alleged grievances as a "have-not" Power; we should leave the world (and our own Colonial peoples) in no doubt of our attitude on this important matter. — The Crown Colonist (London)

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.

PROHIBITION

Sir:— Replying to "Prohibitionist's letter in today's Guardian, the responsibility for non-enforcement of cour.e rests mainly on the authorities who are sworn to carry out the provisions of the Act. But let anyone try to get it enforced, either under this or any other Government, and see how far they get! I challenge any person using his powers of observation at all to show any instance within the last 30 years, in any country in the world, where Prohibition has not at least doubled the consumption of alcoholic liquor especially among the young, as well as bringing a breakdown in the enforcement of all laws.

Therefore the W. C. T. U., S. of T. etc, in spite of their good intentions, must bear a large share of the blame, because of their blindness to the most obvious facts. With the example of Ontario and the United States before us, can't we learn anything at all? For an abstainer and one who hates alcohol, the United States under Prohibition was about the nearest thing to Hell, being just one vast open saloon.

The answer is as plain as daylight. When the necessity for Prohibition arises, the possibility of enforcing it has already gone, as both drinking and non-enforcement come from the same cause—abandonment of religious belief. even in the case of a religion like Christianity which does not especially demand total abstinence.

It is urgent that the troops in training at Charlottetown be removed to one of the neighbouring Provinces, where they will not be subject to these temptations.

As I am a life-long total abstainer, probably "Prohibitionist", with characteristic Prohibition logic, will call me also an "old soak."

I am, Sir, etc.,

C. N. MURRAY

Crapaud, P. E. I.
Dec. 30, 1939.

TAXES

Sir:— When Mr. Hemming reminded us that the city has a charter under which regulations we must have an election in February, he has evidently overlooked some of the "regulations" of that Charter.

One insistent regulation, Sec. 23, (1) and (b) Cap. 31, 1951, re-affirmed in 1932, Sec. 1:—"Who shall have paid on or before the 31st day of December then next preceding the time of holding such election all rates, taxes and assessments then due by him or her."

Now sir, how many taxpayers will there be disfranchised on this account from no fault of their own under the chaos of our finances, and who will be held responsible.?

Every taxpayer whose legitimate taxes have been duly paid has a statutory right to vote. For depriving him of this in one form the Provincial Election Act provided a $100. penalty, while in other forms, there is the common law penalty fixable by the Court or jury. If hundreds of voters are shut out, as they are liable to be, by fictitious and untenable tax claims, against whom will actions for penalties lie? I doubt if disfranchised electors wil exult with Mr. Hemming over this "exceptionally" good work.

Some may seek consolation in a "Resolution of Council" changing the financial year to end January 15th. That may lull the gullible and unsophisticated, but if it comes before any Court of justice, the judge will quickly point to the statute as the law, and the "resolution" as only a scrap of paper.

Will any one contend that this state of affairs does not show a need of reform? The interests of those having thousands of dollars property, upon whom the burden of taxation is heavily laid, because of a single dollar debt of fiction, have no right to voice their choice of men to administer their affairs, while others enjoying the spoils and benefits of civic expenditure, whose solitary poll tax is paid, have the whole say as to who shall hand out the doles or the sweets of office? This scheme was instituted as a lever to accelerate collection of taxes, but what a travesty upon the intelligence of administration that those who have to shoulder the whole burden of expense, must be outlawed to give full control to those without material interest in the technique of government.

I see by advertisement, that this is another clause in the Incorporation Act, amended by "resolution of Council" or else by some other unknown power. While this may help to mitigate the evil it cannot justify it, and is surely "exceptional" in its irrelevance rather than in repute for "good work". It is risky, in that it assumes the Legislature to be obedient in servitude, with a whitewash bucket and brush at hand ready to obliterate the stain with a cleansing lime- wash coat. But the worm sometimes turns, and will His Majesty's parliament at all times be subjective to those commands?

We are in a chaotic sea of "irregularities". Sometimes errors, and irregular processes, while not "according to Hoyle" are beneficial, and as in this case a whitewash may be justified. In most cases however the principle and the practice is bad, and should not be established as a fixed standard of administration.

I am, Sir, etc.,

REFORMER

CIVIC REFORM

Sir,—Your correspondent "Reformer" scolds me quite ardently because I differ with his suggestion that the long established system of Charlottetown's civic government can be re-formed, with radical alterations,— supposedly with the hoped for improvements in method,—in the few short weeks that will elapse before the February elections.

To reform is always desirable, alike in public and private life, provided better conditions accrue. There is, however, no object in changing simply for the sake of making a change. This has proved true from time immemorial. One could cite hundreds of warnings that have come to us from the past, such as "Look before you leap," "The devil you know is better than the devil you don't know," "Beware of hasty, ill-considered action," etc.

The people of Charlottetown are living, in these still democratic days, on the community principle. There are possibly 15,000 of us, of whom somewhere from 5,000 to 8,000 are of mature age and therefore feel that they have a right of at least some say in so important a matter as the particular method of having their collective interests looked after at the City Hall. On the other hand, how many of our people have made a sufficient study of the principles and methods of civic government to be regarded as experts upon the subject? Very few will lay claim to having such special knowledge.

Mr. Reformer will have to suggest some better way of changing our City governing methods before we can expect that it will meet with fairly general approval; and I still hold to the plan of having a few of our public spirited and capable citizens give of their best thought and study to this important matter, before any attempt at change be made.

So far as abiding by the City Charter is concerned, any serious breach of same would render all the acts of the City Council and of its employees liable to endless litigation.

As to the "good service" which I stated has been rendered by our present Mayor and Council, that is simply my own opinion. The practice, however, all too prevalent, of criticising our elected representatives, seems to me to be self condemnatory. We, the citizens, have the right to select and elect our Mayor and Councillors, and if any of them fail in the performance of their duties, a full share of the responsibility for such failure must of necessity, rest upon our own shoulders

I am, Sir, etc.,

H. K. S. HEMMING.

A Check On Our Pens

(Ottawa Journal)

A woman was charged in Halifax police court with writing a letter to a woman in Oklahoma containing information which might "prejudice the safety of the state and efficient prosecution of the war". She was acquitted (because "the prosecution was not pressing for conviction"), but the case served its purpose of bringing home to Canadians generally the limitations they must set upon their pens as well as their tongues.

Even in casual friendly letters to persons in other countries the law says we must refrain from mentioning defence measures, and it is a sensible precaution. Tourists from the United States come and go freely in this country, diligent enemy agents obviously can learn a good deal about what is being done without great danger, and some people may say it is silly to put restrictions on the things Canadians may say or write. Actually however, Canadians learn through their employment or in casual social conversation things not likely to come to the attention of the passing stranger, things which would be secret in any coutnry engaged in war, and there is no telling the harm which may be done by communicating them to persons outside our borders. A woman in Oklahoma, for example, is under no obligation to respect Canadian secrets given her by a Canadian citizen, and there is no possible check on the direction of her friendships.

It is safer and wiser to stick to generalities, in conversation if there are strangers present, in letters even to our own people. This is a form of censorship imposed by the law, but its necessity is indicated by common sense.

PANTLESS SOLDIERS

AUCKLAND, N. Z.—(CP)—Military authorities are up to the old tricks. Following mass desertion of their cots by 50 soldier patients here, their trousers were removed to prevent repetition.

The Poets' Corner

SUNRISE

I saw the shining-limbed Apollo stand,
Exultant, on the rim of Orient,
And well and mightily his bow he bent,
And unseen-swift the arrow left his hand.
Far on it sped, as did those elder ones
That long ago shed plague upon the Greek—
Far on—and pierced the side of Night, who weak
And out of breath with fright, fled to his sons,
The nether ghosts; and lo! his jewelled robe
No more did shade a sleep encircled world;
And there upon the faery legions furled
The silk of silence, and the wheeling globe
Spun freer on its grand accustomed way
While all things living rose to hail the day.

—W. D. Lighthall.

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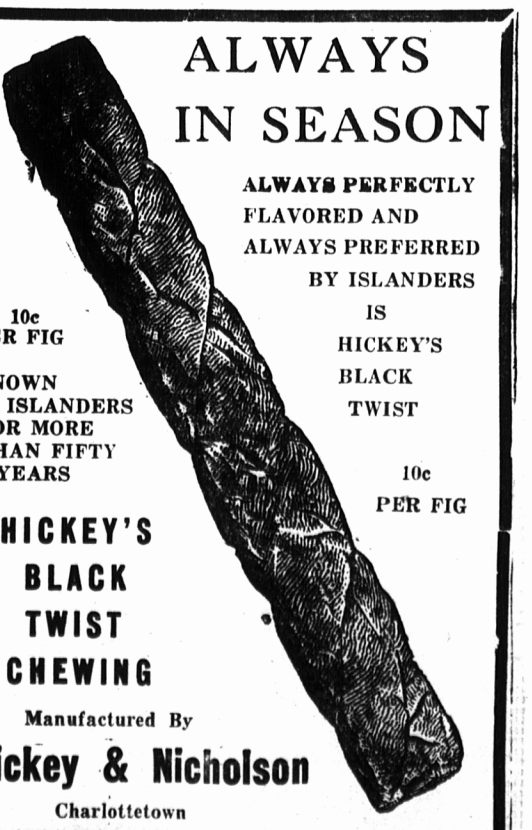

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