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UNION NOT WANTED

Reference has been made in these columns to the gratuitous advice offered by the Hon. W. D. Euler, M.P. former Liberal Minister of National Revenue, that the Maritimes and the Prairie Provinces should unite into two large Provinces. The Maritime union idea finds no press support in this section of Canada, and it is interesting to note that the Winnipeg Free Press is equally skeptical of the alleged benefits which would result from a union of the Prairie Provinces. "How much economy," it asks, "would there be if the prairie province were administered as one province? The new government would be on a much larger scale than any of the present provincial governments. There would be one Department of Public Works and one Department of Education, but all the departments would be necessarily larger than those at present. The various boards would be cut down in number, but they would all be larger. And could departments and boards covering a much larger field operate with the same efficiency and economy as in a smaller field under closer supervision? . . . In the case of a union of the prairie provinces, what would be done with the legislative buildings of two of the provinces? The capital charges would still have to be met on the capitol at Winnipeg and Edmonton, and extensions would soon be necessary to the capitol at Regina."

Even admitting that economy would, in the long run, be effected in local administration by a union of the Prairie Provinces, the Winnipeg Free Press adds: "There is something more to be considered, however. . . . It is because the functions of provincial governments involve so many details and come so close to the lives of the people that the government should keep in touch with the people and be accessible to those who wish to discuss matters of administration or the needs of their districts. Innumerable delegations every year approach the provincial governments for this legitimate purpose. This would be much more difficult if the people had to travel 500 miles or more."

"Economy," concludes the Free Press editorial, "is a vital consideration at the present time, but true economy involves consideration, in public as in private affairs, not only of the amount of money spent but also of what is obtained for the money. If the provincial administration were not quite as good, or if the people lost some of their right to approach the government and influence the administration, would the economy by forming one large province be desirable?"

HUMANELY TREATED

The treatment of Canada's women convicts at the Women's Prison, Kingston penitentiary, forms the subject of a most interesting article, contributed to the Canadian Home Journal for October by Norma Phillips Muir. On the day of her visit there were 43 inmates, of whom 15 were there for murder or manslaughter. She was given every opportunity for inspection, and she knows that the prison was not dressed for the occasion. "I saw much which left me sad, but nothing which made me ashamed of the way in which my country is meeting the need of caring for her women convicts."

The details of accommodation, routine, food, privileges and punishment, given by Miss Muir justify the conclusion which she reached. Personal possessions are not taken away from women prisoners. They are allowed to keep what they brought in with them. Clothing worn on arrival is hung in the cell. Even toilet articles, powder, a photograph, these are not taken away,

They are given several changes of clothing depending on the type of work to be done. They are not forced to leave as misfits, unkempt, ill dressed, stamped as criminals. They are given a complete new outfit—not of prison-made clothing, but of apparel purchased definitely for them at a good store at a cost of approximately twenty-five dollars per outfit. In addition to their freedom suits or outfits, they are given ten dollars and their transportation to their home or to the place where they are going to establish themselves.

Punishments such as whippings, solitary confinement in the "hole" and chains and manacles have no part or place in Canada's Federal prison for women. "Solitary" was abolished by law in 1898 and what has taken its place is a segregation cell without any daylight in it, a cell measuring three feet six inches by seven feet six inches, the door of which is all bars. The limit to which a prisoner can be sentenced to the segregation cells for punishment is thirty days. The limit has twice been imposed upon "incorrigibles" during the past year and a half or two years, but as a general thing two hours is the period in the punishment cell. Corporal punishment in any form is prohibited. Chains and leg irons and manacles are no part of the corrective treatment in the Women's Prison at Kingston Penitentiary. One convict, a woman who had served a term in Kingston for manslaughter, referred to the "dungeon," but Miss Muir learned that it was merely prisoner parlance for the segregation cells.

Referring to demands for a Royal Commission to investigate Canada's penitentiaries, Miss Muir says: "Knowing conditions as they exist actually in the Women's Prison at Kingston, one cannot feel that a mere difference in sex between convicts would account for a difference in administration and accommodation as wide as the difference between daylight and utter darkness." She declares that there is no reason for her to make conditions out better or worse than they actually are in the Women's Prison; and that her opinions as to the treatment given prisoners there have been checked not by officials but by ex-convicts.

THE DOUKHOBORS

According to the Lethbridge Herald, a breakup of the Doukhobors of Western Canada would not be a surprise to those close to the sect. According to the report, there seems to be a spirit of discontent among the members, which is believed to be due to the fact that the powerful influence that Peter Verigin I wielded is not in evidence under the present Peter Verigin, nephew of the leader who met death mysteriously in a railway train explosion. The leader of today is said to lack the sure grip of his predecessor. The community spirit is rumored to be fast ebbing and instead a general individualistic trend is visible. The discontent in the sect's colonies is stated to be most pronounced among the younger element, the growing spirit of restlessness being attributed to a weariness with community life. If this be the case, the trend might be called to the attention of those agitators who have been openly or secretly working for the introduction of communism into Canada.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The new Liberal Government in Nova Scotia is sending a garage manager to England to sell Nova Scotia lumber. He worked hard in the election a few weeks ago and possibly deserved a trip, but some old-fashioned people think a man engaged in the lumber business should have been sent on this particular mission.

Notes By The Way

There is more than a prospect that one effect of the N.R.A. will be to bring about some uniformity in prison labor in the United States. It has been discovered, perhaps to the general surprise, that prison labor comes under the code. This has always been a problem. On the one hand is the demand of free labor that it shall not be exposed to competition from the product of prison labor which can be turned out more cheaply. On the other hand is the demand of prison authorities that convicts shall be permitted some useful toil. Nothing so corrodes character as enforced idleness or the kind of occupation that used to be provided by breaking stone, or moving a pile of earth from one side of a jail yard to another, then dumping it out and wheeling it to the other side. At one time convicts were restricted to such labors which did them little good, but which at least had the advantage of quieting the protests of organized labor.

More than a hundred years ago, there was a certain member of the United States Congress who habitually made long, futile speeches when there were very few people in the House to hear him. This voluble gentleman represented the County of Buncombe in North Carolina. On one occasion a fellow-member interrupted an angry harangue to ask him why he was making so much fuss. To so little purpose. "I am not speaking to the House but to Buncombe!" retorted the pompous orator. His answer caused the name of that unfortunate constituency to be for ever synonymous with hypocrisy and humbug—though at first it simply meant "playing to the gallery."

Accounts of the height, energy and destructive force of ocean waves in scientific works on shore processes would be hard to believe many of them, if read in less sober context. Some stories told by dynamometers especially constructed for measuring wave energy seem pretty tall talk even to those who have been rolled and scraped in a heavy surf. Dynamometer readings for a full summer on the Scottish Atlantic coast, for instance, showed 611 pounds to a square foot as the average impact of the surf in its off season. For winter storms a maximum of more than three tons a square foot was recorded. Is there a surf bather who could take such a wallop in his ribs?

Since the Europeans showed no sign of being so conscience-stricken over their debts as to give up their armaments, and since the United States has obviously at last to consider the question of the debts on their own economic basis (for almost nothing of them is now being paid), it is not profitable any longer to pretend to connect the two questions. If, for instance, the United States were to say to France, "Unless you disarm we cannot let you off your debt," the French, who do not propose to pay in any case, would remain completely unmoved.

While Europe is disturbed by rival ambitions and the atmosphere is decidedly cloudy, it is worthy of note that Greece and Turkey, old time foes, have signed a ten-year pact of non-aggression, and seek to have it extended to some other countries in the Far East. They also are endeavoring to co-ordinate their economic policies so that trade may flow more freely. Other nations might well follow their example instead of showing their teeth with such monotonous regularity.

It would be more reassuring to the understanding of the business men if they were able to believe that the improvement in business was, in fact, not entirely the product of Washington-made policies, but that, on the contrary, the foundation was laid on the sound basis of supply and demand, of which we have heard so little of late, but which, strange as it may seem, still is a factor. It would help confidence if God and the Forgotten Man were given a little credit now and then.

A press despatch from Chicago the other day reported the gratifying results secured from an experiment in the glandular treatment of a group of 172 hitherto incurable mental patients at the State Hospital at Egin, Illinois. It illustrates the possibilities of active study and treatment afforded by recent advances in knowledge of endocrine disorders and their relation to mental disease that might profitably be followed by more hospitals in connection with a particularly difficult class of patients, but it conveys the impression unwittingly no doubt, that as a general thing patients in mental hospitals seldom recover.



By James W. Barton, M.D. THE COMPLETE EQUIPMENT FOR LIFE

In examining the boys in a reformatory school some years ago I came across a boy who was eight years of age physically and less than eight years mentally. He was transferred to a hospital for mental defectives.

Thus there is always the mental age and the physical age in every boy and girl.

There is now a feeling that even the mental and physical age do not give the complete picture of the individual and that the emotional, the social, and the moral age must also be considered.

What we are, mentally and physically, is usually what is handed down to us by our parents, but what we are from the emotional, the social, and the moral standpoint may be due more to our surroundings and circumstances and the way our parents guide or misguide us.

"If a youngster is not up to normal in emotional, social, and moral equipment it is because the parents lacked the knowledge or the selfishness or both, to arrange for his social contacts and activities in a satisfactory manner and failed to teach habits of discipline of the body, the emotions, and the mind."

"A youngster who doesn't fit in with his school life, his home life, or his outdoor play life is always a problem."

All problem children are such because of wrong handling and can generally be brought into better adjustment with life by someone who has the necessary knowledge and intelligence to apply it wisely.

Thus if the child in addition to attaining physical and mental growth is to acquire emotional, social and moral growth, he must learn to mix with other children in all their social, emotional, and moral undertakings in social, playground, debating, religious or other organizations.

It is for this reason that play gives really the best all-round development because it gives strength of body, keeps the mind alert, makes for sociability, helps control the emotions of quick temper and selfishness, and gives the main idea of fair play (of doing as you'd be done by) which is the highest moral emotion.

Do Indians Swim?

After Mr. Helga Instad had lived in intimate contact with the Indians in the Northwest Territories for four years, he concluded that the Indian never swims. Can this be so? Does the Indian not swim? The question might be unwarranted did it not, somehow, seem appropriate. It raises a doubt. If the Indian swims, how can it be that to pluck a phrase in passing, a swimming Indian does not swim into the mind's recollection? A swimming Indian does not stand out from all the tales read of Good and Bad Indians. Braves may be remembered who did brave deeds and Braves who did anything but brave feats; but among them all, not one Brave is swimming.

You recall Indians stealthfully gliding without turning a leaf or flattening a blade of grass as they squirmed their greased bodies along river banks; and though they always seemed to be skillfully tracking an enemy or tactfully removing themselves with becoming haste, they always were on the bank and never in the river. They canoe but never swam.

The word of Mr. Instad on this point must be taken, for he has spent four years studying the Caribou-Eater Indians who pitch their topees between the Mackenzie river and Amundsen gulf between Great Slave lake and the Thelon and Coppermine rivers. Mr. Instad is a Norwegian lawyer who found himself at a loose end at Edmonton, and becoming bent on trapping, he found himself eventually living with the Caribou-Eaters, who gave him their confidence, even if he declined to be mated to their seventeen-year-old "Little Hare." And when Mr. Instad says in his book, "The Land of Feast and Famine," that those Indians are never taught to swim, and never learn to swim, acceptance of the familiar probability is the readier for knowing how cold must be the waters of the region.

This is singular, for the Indians, perhaps most of all people, have not only laid their trails by their water courses, but they were bent on sticking to those river-trails long after even the White intruders had sunk deep ruts with their ox-carts across the continent.

Politics And Poetry

(The Edmonton Journal) Commander Caylon Bellaire, naval officer, member of Parliament, writer and poet, wonders why poets do not deal with politics. He writes in a recent issue of the Poetry Review as follows:

If Mr. Alfred Noyes is right in saying that "true poetry deals with a real world," does it not follow that since a real world from man's point of view is the intimate concern of politics, the poet must deal with politics? . . . Is there any inherent difficulty in marrying politics and poetry?

Having approached the poets themselves on this question, he states that one and all have in effect made answer: My humble verse demands a softer theme,

A painted meadow or a purling stream. To which he is moved to retort: They turn the page and let their senses drink

A lay that shall not trouble them to think. It does seem, however, as though Commander Bellaire is unduly harsh with the weavers of words. He himself has published a book of poems called "The Ghosts of Parliament" which sounds political, at least. But he is not the only poet who has touched on economic and political problems. "In Memoriam" is filled with passages that might have come from the lips of a great political reformer and others that might even be accused of socialistic tendencies.

The late Harold Begbie wrote some magnificent poetry of a similar nature. One could hardly imagine a more lofty appeal for the success of an Empire economic conference than the following lines from his gifted pen:

And tho' we weave on a hundred shores, And spin on a thousand quays, And tho' we are truant with all thewinds, And gypsy with all the seas, We are touched to tears as the heart is touched By the sound of an ancient tune At the name of the Isle in the western seas With the rose on her breast of June,

Come, let us walk together We who must follow one gleam. Come, let us link our labors, And tell each other our dream; Shakespeare's tongue for our counsels And Nelson's heart for our task— Shall we not answer as one strong man

To the things that the people ask? Fine as is such verse, no lover of poetry would care to see undue emphasis laid on politics, much less on a realism that runs to battered ash cans. His delight is rather to fare far afield "on the viewless wings of Poesy" and quite forget The weariness, the fever and the fret

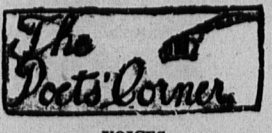
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan . . . Where, but to think is to be full of sorrow And leaden-eyed despairs. He prefers the spell of words and skillfully wrought phrases. What vistas lie before Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn!

How the simple phrase "Childe Roland to the dark tower came" spurs the imagination! Politics may be all right once in a while as poetic fare but for lasting enjoyment in verse, the majority will vote for the "linked sweetness long drawn out" of a Milton, a Keats or a Shelley, or the pageantry of passion, the cavalcade of events marching to Shakespeare's sonorous rhythms.

New York's Lightning Rod

(The Toronto Telegram) The Empire State building in New York city is the tallest, most elaborate and most successful lightning rod ever erected by man. Time and time again it has been struck. In fact, hardly a thunderstorm sweeps over lower Manhattan Island that does not single it out to hurl a bolt at its towering mooring mast. No one in the building is aware that flashes which may have a potential of 10,000,000 volts at times are drawn to the mast, only to be dissipated by the intricate steel structure into the ground.

Once some electrical apparatus connected with a weather vane on top of the building was fused, but probably the safest of all places in New York city during a thunderstorm is an office in the tallest of steel structures. Not long after the Empire State building was opened "St. Elmo's fire" could be seen on the eighty-sixth floor, and its hissing heard.



VOICES

What is not written, dies when it is said; The casual dust of lips is lightly blown On ageless highways. Ask what words are known Of those whose once indomitable tread Ten thousand muted years have halled as dead. What laughter lightly born, what courage flown. Upon a phrase, what dismal treasure grown From strata of despair, have faced With their desires, the world they habited? The ears that heard them mingle with their own. The crumbled laughter with the crumbled bone They only, on their deep perpetual bed Unturning, speak, that revered alone The sullen memory of the bitten stone.

—F. M. Howard in North American Review.

All the outer metal work glowed beautifully with what the engineers call a brush discharge. Generally the "fire" is seen at sea or on high mountains. Any physicist can produce it artificially on a small scale in the laboratory. It is simply an electrical discharge, less violent than lightning—an evidence that electricity is being drawn off from a strongly electrified body to a conductor. Mountain climbers are puzzled when they see it during a snowstorm. Falling drops, hailstones, snowflakes, all highly electrified, explain the phenomenon. Stroke a cat in dry weather and you get a miniature sparkling display of St. Elmo's fire, says an article in the New York Sunday Times.

It has been known ever since Franklin's time that an electric spark—and lightning is nothing but a huge spark—picks out the tallest of two points presented to it. So it is with the Empire State building. Its enormous steel frame projects not only itself but all the buildings near by. A piece of stone may be knocked off when a spark leaps between two isolated points. With the stepped-back construction this entails no great danger. The stone falls on a terrace. Even if it struck the street the odds are many thousands to one against its killing any one for the simple reason that everybody rushes for cover during a storm.

Experiments which were made by Faraday and later by Sir Oliver Lodge proved conclusively that the best of all safeguards is not a lightning rod (although that has its merits when it is properly installed) but a cage. And a cage is exactly what the steel frame and plumbing system of a skyscraper is. The energy must be divided and subdivided, something that a cage does very effectively. A battleship or a trans-Atlantic liner—in fact, any steel ship—is also a fine place for safety during a thunderstorm, provided you keep away from the metal hull.



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The Oxford Accent

(Exchange) The records of Anglo-Saxon speech have been searched in vain by the experts of the British Broadcasting Company and professors of phonetics to discover the origin of the so-called "Oxford accent," or hybrid stage English. It has remained for H. St. John Rumsey, Professor of Anatomy at Guy's Hospital, University of London, to reveal its purely anatomical origin. He says it is merely a misuse of the mouth.

He even declines to call it an "accent," according to an article he has written for the magazine New Health of London, and asserts that "it is not the result of pronouncing syllables differently, but of the basic vocal tone, which gives an impression of weary boredom with life in general and the immediate audience in particular. "This weary tone" he continues, "is due to faulty technique in voice production." Instead of relaxing the muscles of their throats properly, in the healthy way demanded by nature, these weary young men apparently keep them tense, with appalling consequences.

Connoisseurs of the pronunciation of English, and Oxford English at that, gave to The Morning Post varying welcomes to this drastic theory of university speech.

Lady Keeble (Miss Lillah McCarthy) said that she agreed thoroughly with the misuse of the mouth theory. "I am afraid they get it from their lecturers," she said. "It is at its worst among academic people, because they have to do so much speaking, and students and public school boys copy it from them, thinking it rather soft and pleasant when really it is vile."

"The element of adequate recreational facilities cannot be left out of the picture in any comprehensive program of crime prevention." —Harry Elmer Barnes.

"Everybody either has been to California or hopes to go there some time."—Almece S. McPherson.

"Historians look at the train of human affairs from the outside. For the passengers, the reality of progress is by no means so obvious."—Aldous Huxley.

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