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 President, Ian A. Burnett; Vice-President, Wm. E. Burnett; Secy.-Treas., G. M. Burnett; Editor and Managing Director, J. R. Burnett; Associate Editor, Frank Walker.
 "The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink."
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1947

Civic Affairs

The annual reports of the City Council are unusually extensive this year. Of chief interest, of course, is the financial statement which shows a surplus for 1946 of \$9,633 out of a total revenue of \$409,891, which was some \$22,674 in excess of the revenue collected in 1945. The 1946 surplus, however, would have been larger but for the fact that the deficits in the A. R. P. and emergency housing accounts up to Dec. 31, 1945, have been written off against the surplus account, and further deficits on these accounts during 1946 have been included in the revenue and expenditure statement for the current year. The showing seems, on the whole, to be a satisfactory one.

The statement of Coun. LePage, chairman of the Finance Committee, is borne out by the detailed report of the auditors, in which the collection of taxes is reported as being "very satisfactory" with the exception of poll taxes. The auditors recommend that the reserve for uncollectable taxes be increased this year by \$4,500, this being approximately 50 per cent of outstanding 1946 poll taxes and 5 per cent of 1946 personal taxes outstanding. Collection of old assessments for streets and sidewalks "continues to exceed expectations," and the reserve for estimated uncollectable items exceeded the actual assessments at Dec. 31.

During the year debentures matured to the amount of \$50,500, which with \$4,200 matured but not presented for payment in the previous year made a total of \$54,700. Of this amount \$51,100 was presented and paid in 1946, leaving a balance of \$3,600 carried as a liability on the sinking fund balance sheet. Refunding debentures to the amount of \$25,250 were issued and sold during the year.

The net debt less sinking funds at Dec. 31 last was \$1,913,010, but this does not include housing accounts which, according to the auditors "are supposed to be self liquidating." The sinking fund general account shows a balance of \$533,564.

Space does not permit comment on the other reports, but they will repay close reading and study. If they err it is on the side of over-amplification, which is a virtue these days when provincial budget deliveries, involving millions in expenditure, are crowded into cryptic speeches of less than ten minutes' duration.

Unbushed Ice

Complaints from several sources have been received this winter with regard to the neglect in bushing river ice, the result being that some people have experienced narrow escapes from drowning, and others are put in danger every time they use this natural and necessary means of winter communication. In some sections the ice has not been bushed for three or four years, notwithstanding many complaints to the Provincial Department of Public Works, which is primarily responsible.

The chief difficulty, it seems, is with the obsolete method employed in doing this work. The roadmasters send in names of men employable for ice bushing in each district, and this kind of work used to be welcomed by farmers and fishermen during the winter months. Today, however, the rate of pay is altogether inadequate compared with farm or fishing profits, or with wages for other jobs. Moreover, the rate is the same whether ice conditions are light or heavy. If this be the cause of so much unbushed ice this year, as has been suggested, then the wage scale should be readjusted without delay. Legislation, if necessary, should be brought in to bring the statute up-to-date. The Government has given no evidence of its desire for economy in other directions; why should it do so in this case, to the obvious endangering of human life and property?

"White Cane Week"

The above designation has been given to the week starting today (Feb. 1-8) by the Canadian Council of the Blind and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, for the purpose of acquainting Canadians with the problems of their blind fellow citizens. As the symbol of blindness, the White Cane signifies the desire of blind men and women for independence and social responsibility. A campaign of this kind is a most deserving one, focusing as it does attention on the little courtesies to which the blind are entitled, and which are more helpful to them than tactless demonstrations of pity.

The fact that all registered blind cases are not totally blind frequently confuses the public. In the legal definition used by the Government for purposes of pensions and by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind for registration and services, blindness means visual acuity of ten per cent or less after all corrective measures have been applied. This means that there are many people who have lost all useful vision but who retain light perception. Others who cannot see to read or to do any close work can sometimes distinguish large objects. Finally there are those with a restricted field of vision who can see fairly well in a small area of the eye but beyond that are blind.

However, though one person with 10 per cent vision plus normal health, self-confidence, and training, may need little assistance, another person with the same percentage of vision, but coupled with poor health, old age, a nervous temperament or another disability may

need a great deal of help. This applies in all degrees of disability. Because of this difference in health and training, some totally blind people are more capable than some with partial vision. These people need and appreciate assistance, but it must be offered intelligently. The desire of many blind people to take an active part in the social and political life of the community has culminated in the formation of the Canadian Council of the Blind. This body is composed of representatives of local clubs and associations of blind people in various parts of the country. The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, organized in 1918, is a national organization, recognized by the Dominion Government as the official agency administering service to the blind and the prevention of blindness. These organizations are doing magnificent work in a quiet way. The patrons of the C. N. I. B. include the Premiers of the three Maritime Provinces.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The City Council have plenty business on hand to keep them busy for sometime to come; but something essential and demanding immediate attention is the drainage and health of Spring Park and other districts.

The United States Senate have passed a bill making it a criminal offence for anyone to receive or solicit money for promising to use influence in behalf of an applicant for a government office.

The last religious census taken in the United States showed that that country was nearly "half religious", approximately 54,576,350 persons, or 44 per cent of the total population, being churchgoers. How would that compare with present conditions in Canada?

Evidently coalition in opposition is not very satisfactory. In Alberta with the Social Crediters in power, the Progressive Conservative leader said at the annual meeting of the Regina party association that consideration had been given to joining forces with Liberals to contest the next provincial election but the Liberals had "slammed the door on any such arrangement." In Nova Scotia the P. C.'s have not even an Opposition leader.

"Any port in a storm," similarly "any help in distress". A teacher at Ottawa Technical School drove his family to the Gatineau for skiing when his car became stuck in a snow bank. He hailed two skiers in the distance to come to his aid, which they did, and the car was righted, the two lending powerful aid heaving it back. In thanking his helpers, the teacher asked their names. "This is the Governor-General, and I am his Aide," was the reply.

Giovanni Pierluigi Da Palestrina, Italian composer, died this date 1594; was appointed director of sacred music at the Vatican in 1551, when he wrote an epoch-making set of Masses dedicated to Pope Julius III, whereupon he was appointed, in 1555, music director at the Lateran, and six years later at St. Maria Maggiore. The prevalent Church music being condemned by the Council of Trent, Palestrina was commissioned to reform it, and wrote his celebrated *Marcellus Mass*, which is still regarded as a classic in Church music.

Serious warning has been issued to officials by the Provincial Government to avoid involving themselves or the government in any propaganda which might result in demands upon the Provincial Treasury. This is felt necessary because it was becoming a not uncommon practice for officials in need of additional finances to carry on, or further develop their particular departments, to appeal to interested organizations to bring pressure on the government. In other words, the tail was being made to wag the dog to the serious detriment of general administration. The officials have been instructed to keep aloof from outside organizations, and to refrain from seeking to embarrass the Government by resorting to undue pressure.

The great appreciation shown by the public in the work of the Y. M. C. A. is manifest at every turn these days. Under Mr. MacConnell's able and diplomatic leadership the "Y" has come to fill a place in Charlottetown, second to none of any similar organization throughout Canada. Notwithstanding being cramped, cabined and confined in its present temporary quarters the "Y" is serving thousands of youngsters all over the City, and has developed a band of able, willing leaders devoting much of their time and talent to the benefit of the rising hopes of our community. The generous donations to the up-keep campaign being directed by Mr. Roy Cadmore, is an indication of what may be expected when the Special Names Committee make their rounds Monday, preparatory to the general canvas which begins on the 17th.

Seaweed, wood-ash, wood-wool, and plastics are being used to make synthetic boards for Australia's Housing Commission in its efforts to overcome the country's housing shortage. Sample boards composed of seaweed and cement have been submitted to the Building Materials Procurement Directorate by a Melbourne architect who claims that the boards could be used as interior sheathing. The same man has also submitted samples of a board made from wood-ash and cement. Another inventor has proposed a plastic board which, he claims, can be used for both interior and exterior work. Victorian Premier John Cain revealed recently that one firm has developed a method of concrete floor production which appeared to offer a partial solution to some of the present difficulties. It had been found practicable, under the new system, to construct a complete concrete floor as a separate unit. The Housing Commission had already agreed to have four of its homes fitted with the new type floor.

Notes By The Way

A schoolchild can understand that the old methods are not going to serve much longer even to restore the coal industry to the conditions of times gone by. And just as surely as effect follows cause, if coal is to be protected and continue as a great basic industry, the industry will have to be modernized — and recurrent work-stoppages in the industry will have to be avoided. Otherwise coal will continue to wage a losing battle against competitive fuels and sources of power. —Halifax Herald.

We are assured that only bluntness can cause a depression—and if that's all, it's practically in the bag. —Winnipeg Tribune.

The notes of trends and views with alarm will find ample fodder in the portrayal of the year's best dressed woman in male hairdress, sloppy shirt, belting trousers, jitterbug keychain, zoot suit belt and spay-toe sandals. Pending a sanity hearing for the board of style experts responsible, however, we'll generously assume it to be a subtle hint that living costs have made the two-part suit essential even in the top-bracket family. There had been hopes before that 1946 could go down in history as only mildly crestfallen all year. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

We want to say a word for the thousands of veterans who have returned to civilian life and are settling along very well. These men have not been vociferous about their achievements. They have gone about the job of rehabilitating themselves and they are coming right along. It is just as well to mention these thousands of veterans occasionally. There are so many people who pick up the case of an individual and blazon it forth as though it were typical of all the veterans. Anything for something to criticize is the theory and the accomplishments of the veterans who are making a go of it are overlooked deliberately. —Windsor Daily Star.

A British safety glass company with patents in use all over the world, brought out a type of glass during World War II which was successfully used for aircraft windows. The glass also does not become dim when exposed to sudden changes of temperature and it always ensures perfect visibility. The same glass, in a still more improved form, is being produced well refractoriously. This is the housewife can easily keep a check on the contents of the refrigerator without opening the door. —U. K. Information Office.

Winter strips the trees to their essentials. They stand now in bare bones, except the pines and spruces and you can see what stands behind their graceful summer shapes. That elm against the sky, which in midsummer is a great green feather duster—see how its sturdy trunk divides again and yet again. It reaches upward, widening like an inverted cone, and all its branches point toward the sky. Across the way is a scarlet oak. It has a trunk three feet through, and your eye can follow that trunk to the very tip of the tree. But its branches stand not 10 feet from the trunk, and they reach toward the horizon. Here's a tree broad as it is tall, and rounded, even in leafless winter, like a great dome. The ash, whether white or black or red, is essentially a taper without bare. The poplar or lesser limbs—a pole with slender branches now; a svelte and graceful tree in full leaf. Maples tend to branch like the oaks, but with less spread and more lift. —New York Times.

A super-camera which can take a picture; develop it and throw it on a screen in 15 seconds automatically, is reported from the U. S., according to the Financial Post. It takes photographs at 1-10,000-second speed on special 16 mm. film. A container squirts chemicals, pre-heated to 140 degrees F., on the film; and a vacuum process dries the rest of the job in nine seconds flat.

Pandit Nehru claims all the freedoms for the people of India, and few will deny his right to do so. But sovereign people need unity as well as freedom and of the first principles of unity the Indians seem to have not the foggiest notion. —Vancouver Province.

Britain has forged ahead in prison reform; Canada has lagged far behind. Yet, in such things as the Borstal system and "prisons without bars", Canada was the originator. It was in 1866 that the Federal Government began the building at Alexandria, Ontario, of what would today be called a Borstal Institute. But almost before the building was completed, Ontario changed its plans—and Canada still herds youthful and first offenders with hardened criminals, ensuring a life of crime for all. Britain studied the Canadian ideas of 80 years ago, and the great and effective Borstal system was developed and from it have grown other forms of real prison reform—in Britain, not in Canada. In this Dominion, we still are creating "repeaters" still adding to our prison population instead of reducing it. We are doing this in spite of the careful investigation of our whole penal system by the Archambault commission some 10 years ago and the sound recommendations it made in 1928. —Edmonton Journal.

One of the first things a stranger notices on entering Mexico City is the disconcerting way in which many buildings sag and tilt in every direction, says The Pan-

PUBLIC FORUM

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

THE HUDSON BAY ROUTE

Sir—Your editorial in this (Friday) morning's Guardian giving particulars of the Hudson Bay route will be read with more than usual interest by Islanders generally. Judging from press reports of the farmers' meetings, a widespread appreciation is being shown of the great advantage that will accrue to this Province in being able to bring all the Western grain by the short route from Churchill at much lower costs than from Port Arthur.

I had hoped by this time to have been able to give you full particulars of the comparative transportation costs by the two routes, and being unable to obtain same from the Montreal agent of the British shipping company that has in the past supplied the vessels to carry grain from Hudson Bay to Liverpool, I wrote direct to that company. Under date of January 8, the president of the company replied by air mail as follows:

"We have your letter of the 30th ult. and are interested in the information which you mention. Can you let us have details about the facilities at your port? According to our records here, a ship carrying 300,000 bushels, which would be about 450 feet long and 27 feet draft, could not get alongside to discharge at your port. You give us the maximum dimensions for a vessel to enter and be safely in your port?"

"The possibility of a movement such as you mention from 1948 onwards is one which interests us considerably. We do not know what would be effected at your port but we hardly think more than three trips per season could be made from Churchill. There is no reason, however, why more than one vessel should not be put on."

"What are your requirements for grains of all kind? Would you be prepared to make a contract for the transportation of them?"

"As to the principal involved? would be the writer is expecting to visit Canada in the month of March and it might be possible to meet. He is not intending to come down to the Maritime Provinces, but there any chance of your visiting Montreal for that time?"

"To the above I replied on January 16 as follows, and am still awaiting an answer:

"During the past summer, contractors working for the Federal Government have been improving our main dock in Charlottetown and when completed, possibly in May or June, it will accommodate ships of about 600 feet and 27 ft. draft at low tide. It will also have loading facilities for the unloading of vessels, that would depend entirely upon our success in inducing the Federal Government to build without delay a grain elevator of at least one million bushels, and a most rapid working marine leg."

"I note that you are coming to Canada in March and presume that you will land at Halifax, in which case you would be only two hours by train from Charlottetown, from which point you could go to Montreal also by train. Under these circumstances, I trust that you will be able to meet me at New York and that we shall not miss the pleasure and advantage of your sizing up the whole grain situation in Prince Edward Island."

"I enclose herewith copy of a letter from my signature, which appears in yesterday's local paper, the Guardian, which will no doubt interest you."

"Awaiting an immediate reply with your ocean freight rates and insurance rates, etc."

I am, Sir, etc.

H.K.S. HEMMING

Important Empire Changes Are Pending

(By James McCook, Canadian Press Staff Writer, London)

Important changes in the British Commonwealth and Empire are being hastened by the earth's peoples are being hastened by the Labor Government.

Policies of eventual self-government for native people had been enunciated by previous governments but the program has been speeded up partly because Labor thought has proposed the idea of empire involving subject peoples and also because Britain, like other imperial powers, faces new demands for independence.

Colonial office officials make clear no single pattern is being imposed in the various stages of their march towards self-government. The basic policy is to develop the colonies and their resources to enable the people to improve their social and economic conditions," and when

American Magazine. Even the magnificent white marble Palace containing about 90 percent water. Buildings are subject to earthquakes and subsol disturbances. The entire city is slowly settling because the lake was drained in 1900, and because water is being pumped from thousands of wells to supply the ever-increasing population. When water is removed, the volcanic globules slowly contract.



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practicable, attain responsible self-government."

The Poets Corner

ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD
The men that worked for England They have their graves at home; And bees and birds of England About the cross can roam.

But they that fought for England, Following a calling star, Alas, alas for England They have their graves afar.

And they that rule in England, In stately conclave met, Alas, alas for England They have no graves as yet.

—G. K. Chesterton.

Old Charlottetown (And P.E.I.)

FIRST ORNAMENTAL TREES
In the spring of 1860, five years after the C.R.'s incorporation, a number of ornamental trees were planted on the principal streets of Charlottetown in accordance with a bye-law passed for that purpose. Many of these trees were destroyed soon after they were planted but a few remain to this day. Among these we may mention one on Upper Queen Street in front of the property of Miss E. E. McKinnon and three on Prince Street one at the door of St. Paul's school room, one opposite in front of Dr. Roblin's dwelling, and one in front of the residence of Miss Alley. As these trees are now of historic value and were preserved in the early days with great care and trouble by private individuals, the corporation should in future bestow upon them special care.

—The late Mr. Henry Smith, in Guardian, Feb. 10, 1904.

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