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

FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 1939

At Ottawa

The Mackenzie King Government is gradually wiping out the Civil Service Commission by re-transferring job appointments, etc., to politicians.

The House for two hours Wednesday debated the recommendations of the report of the special committee on operations of the Civil Service Act. Chief of these is one to compulsorily retire all male civil servants at 65 years and females at 60 years, another to blanket into the permanent service a large number of long term temporaries, and a third is to transfer from the Commission to the Government the task of making appointments to jobs paying $700 a year or less.

Little enthusiasm is shown by House of Commons members, including Liberals, for the electoral reform measure, which would limit the electoral expenditure of individual candidates, and it is still considered possible that after some discussion of the resolution which precedes the bill the project may for the second consecutive session be withdrawn.

Prospects are now that the sessional business can be completed by the middle of next week unless there is an unusually protracted debate in the House on the report or reports from the Public Accounts Committee probing the Bren gun and other arms contracts.

Scout Movement The Answer

A striking book, America's Answer, has been produced by the Local Council of New York City, Boy Scouts of America, handsomely illustrated with large photographs, and accompanied with explanatory text, which presents the various phases of the Scout movement in attractive form. "Never before has it been so vital for each of us to invest in Americanism," it is asserted—and that, with the necessary change of name, applies with equal force to Canada. The first few pages have to do with conditions in dictatorship countries, the turmoil of Europe, the devastation of war-torn lands. There are photographs also of German, Italian and Russian boys, armed with rifles and bayonets, engaged in military manoeuvres and one impressive picture shows youthful members of the Bund camps in the United States, itself, with their hands raised in the Nazi salute, while another depicts a communist parade in New York city.

What, it is asked, can be done to counteract these activities? In Germany, Italy and Russia the Scouts are barred; but on this free continent everything ought to be done to strengthen this splendid movement and so promote the principles of true democracy. The fact that it was a great British general—Sir Robert Baden Powell—who conceived the plan and established it upon such sure foundations, strengthens its appeal to the youth of the Empire. But it is as a world-wide organization, for peace, leadership, physical fitness, loyalty and character-training that the Scout movement is to be regarded. It stands for liberty, for good fellowship, for high ideals—for everything that is the antithesis of prejudice and belligerency. The most effective answer to the challenge of narrow, selfish, racial ideologies is the dedication of young people to "the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and to the principles of tolerance and human brotherhood," in the language of "America's Answer."

Buckboard Days

During their brief Banff holiday from formal procedure associated with the journey across Canada, the King and Queen travelled a section of the mountain trails on what is described as a "somewhat rickety" buckboard. This was a rare experience for Their Majesties; in fact it would be a rare experience for most Canadians today; which leads the Globe and Mail to offer the following comment:

The real thrill of a buckboard ride comes while travelling over a corduroy road. It isn't likely there is any corduroy paving about Banff so that the Royal passengers got only a half acquaintance with this ancient vehicle.

The rarity of the buckboard is indicated by the fact that reporters found it necessary to tell the public what it is. It is (or was) a four-wheeled affair with boards or slats reaching from axle to axle. Whatever elasticity there was in these boards or slats provided for passengers the only "spring" there was to the vehicle; and that wasn't much; no match for a bumpy log pavement. But it was a handy thing to have about the farm.

In older Canada the buckboard was followed by the "democrat," a light wagon with several seats, but no top; and it had a little give-and-take in the way of springs. Progress was being made. Then came the "top buggy," evidence of social distinction and some affluence. Like all innovations catering to luxury, the top buggy brought to its owner a certain amount of "chaffing" from those who still lumbered along in the heavy old farm wagon or in the democrat; somewhat as when the "safety" bicycle challenged the fierce-looking high wheel. Only "sissy" riders, afraid of a fall, deserted the sky-scraper for the "safety"—so the scoffers contended.

Now the buckboard, the democrat—and the high wheel—are out of vogue. And the prairie schooner also is on the way out. This was a large, heavy wagon with a canvas cover, familiar on the Western prairies as the chief method of transportation for settler families and their effects. Many a prairie schooner journeyed slowly westward over the territory covered by the Royal train.

It was by prairie schooner, in 1876, that Hon. Frank Oliver transported his printing press from Winnipeg to Edmonton, where he founded the Bulletin newspaper. The coming of the railways, and later the motored vehicle, cut into the usefulness of this heavy and slow-moving wagon, and it has virtually disappeared from the prairies.

When aeroplanes cover in a day the distance separating the Canadian East from the West, it is interesting to recall the transportation devices that carried a pioneering generation on its travels. And it is worthy of note that Canada's Royal guests have ridden on a buckboard, the unstreamlined, unyielding precursor of lighter and more comfortable road carriers.

Editorial Notes

Thomas Hardy born 1840.

* * * *

Business is being rushed through the Federal Parliament at the rate of eighty million dollars per minute.

* * *

The Public Accounts Committee at Ottawa let themselves in for first class Conservative propaganda when they allowed Col. Drew to combat the evidence given by General La Fleche on the Bren gun affair. He told them the notorious deal was worse than a crime. It was abominable.

* * * *

Germany raises all of the potatoes, rye and sugar she needs and even exports some sugar. The rye is all used in the Reich, being mixed with wheat floor and potato flour to make bread. A steady campaign is carried on to persuade Germans to eat more potatoes. This campaign under the slogan "—And potatoes in the evening—" reaches to movie houses where slides are flashed on the screen between news reels and features, raising the virtues of the lowly potato.

* * *

The Duke of Connaught, great-uncle of the King and former Governor-General of Canada is offering for sale his Riviera home "Les Bruyeres," at Cap Ferrat where, until a few years ago, he spent most of his winters. The house, which has three acres of gardens, commands a view of Monte Carlo, Bordighera and the open sea. The Duke, who is 89, has been in indifferent health for the past few years, although he recovered satisfactorily from a muscular weakness that prevented his attending the Coronation two years ago.

* * * *

Their Majesties' gift to the Dominion has been not only a new virility but an invaluable world-wide advertisement. The eyes of all other countries, not necessarily excluding totalitarian states, have been turned upon Canada. There has been a new conception in other lands of this country's place in the British Empire, the strength of its attachment to that Empire, and a new appreciation of the Dominion's extent and resources. The effect of this upon trade, upon tourist travel and upon domestic business could not be otherwise than helpful and the benefits are indeed already visible.

* * * *

Premier Duplessis scored a victory when Chief Justice Greenshields gave judgment in favour of the constitutionality of the now famous Padlock Law. In the course of his judgment the Chief Justice said: "The statute is not in conflict with any legislative or exclusive powers given to the Federal Parliament under the B. N. A. Act. The statute does not entail confiscation of property. All it does is to say to the owner. 'you will be deprived of the use of your property as long as you use it for purposes declared by the law to be illegal.' The statute does not interfere with freedom of speech, but the statute books of every province of Canada abound with provisions putting some restraint on the nature and substance of its citizens' speeches. It does not prohibit free, public discussion of affairs. A citizen may examine any political views he finds prevailing in Canada, and he may disagree with the way in which parliamentary institutions are working. That is not prohibited under this statute. This is legislation purely and simply to determine the civil conseqences of a given act.

* * * *

This is how Toronto Saturday Night views the discussion in Parliament on the unemployment question: "We should have far more sympathy with the Government's demand for exact discussion in Parliament on the unemployment tragedy, if the Government had at any time shown the slightest desire to procure statistics. But the truth is that if the Government had deliberately decided not to know anything about the extent and incidence and consequences of unemployment in Canada, it could hardly have done anything different from what it actually has done. It has been left for the Canadian Welfare Council, for private members like Mr. Massey, for individuals and committees, and organizations like the National Youth Congress and the John Frank's House Group, to delve as best they could among the masses of chaotic and unrelated material which the Government should have been studying and setting in order; and the one important piece of study which has been done by an official body, the Purvis Commission has been studiously ignored ever since it was given to the public. Meanwhile everybody knows except in Parliament, that malnutrition has been taking its toll of young Canadian lives and is leaving its mark on those who survive it to be the workers—or the workless—of the ensuing decades."

NOTES BY THE WAY

"Manitoba School Children Only Two Percent. Anglo-Saxon", announced a two-column headline in the Toronto Star recently. Beneath it, a United Church minister was reported as telling his Toronto congregation "that in 1906 the Anglo-Saxon population in Manitoba schools was 98 percent. but today it is only two percent." It is true the reported percentage is correct for one exceptional Winnipeg school. But his reported statement about Manitobs as a whole is emphatically not correct. Actually about 47 percent, of the school children of Manitoba are of British origin, according to calculations from Dominion Bureau of Statistics figure which are the only data available to anyone. The percentage is declining steadily, but slowly. In five years it has declined only from around 48 percent. to the present figure. —Winnipeg Tribune.

A Hindu holy man in a village on the banks of the Gandak river in Bihar decided to meditate in austerity for fifteen days. He had an underground cell of bricks and cement built and entered it. There he remained for fifteen days without food or water, according to a Bihar report. Thousands of villagers collected around, and some stayed until the end of his meditation. At an hour appointed by him fifteen days later the cell was broken, and the holy man crept out, pale and emaciated but with a faint smile on his lips. Fifteen thousand villagers greeted him. He said that his name was formerly Gorak Nath but that now he had no name. — Indian Press Union.

Last week-end was the centenary of an odd political crisis that ended one of the minor customs of the Constitution. Lord Melbourne had resigned the Premiership, and Peel, when forming a new Government, announced that, among official changes, the Ladies of the Queen's Bedchamber must be replaced by dames of his own political party. It seems natural that the young Queen, then a girl of 20, who had just lost in Melbourne a wise guide through two inexperienced years, should feel scared at the idea of losing also the intimate friends around her in her household. She stubbornly refused to make any change. Even the old Duke of Wellington, who called in to explain sympathetically that a constitutional principle was at stake, had to retire defeated. "You would have been pleased to see my composure and great firmness at the interview," the Queen wrote to Melbourne, and she added prophetically, "Keep yourself in readiness: you may be wanted again soon." In his diary Greville thinks it rather scandalous that "a mere baby of a queen" should oppose the great Duke's experience; and the Tories accused the Whigs of "standing feebly at bay behind the petticoats of their wives and sisters." But in modern days in a change of Government no one feels any constitutional alarm because the Ladies of the Royal Household (except the Mistress of the Robes) retin their posts. — Manchester Guardian.

The members of the House of Commons who listened to Miss Agnes Macphail speaking on the defence estimates could hardly have believed their own ears when they heard her support an expenditure of $63,000,000. A year or two ago Miss Macphail would have almost grown choleric with indignation at such unprecedented peacetime expenditure, trusting to the time-worn reliability of Great Britain to undertake our defence. Today she takes a realistic view of the situation and frankly admitted that we could not expect the Mother Country to detach forces for our defence in event of war, and that we must rely on our own efforts, plus co-operation with the United States. Miss Macphail's conversion is a sign of the times. There must be many others like her compelled by force of circumstances to acknowledge that in a changed world there must be a change of policy. — Stratford Beacon-Herald.

The country has quite a lot of laws already but maybe something should be done toward curbing the actions of hitch-hikers and beggars of car rides on the highways. One need not be unsympathetic to the troubles of others to take the view that the hitch-hiker is something more than a nuisance, he is a menace to public safety. There is the point that the motorist never knows what type of individual he may be picking up if he gives a ride to the hitch-hiker but there is the further matter that in a stream of fast-moving traffic the slowing down or stopping of a car by reason of the action of a hitch-hiker is likely to cause serious accidents. In faot, such accidents have been caused in many parts of the country. There was something nice in the horse-and-buggy days about getting a lift on the road, but then it was usually a case of picking up a neighbor or a friend. But the hitch-hiker does not come in that class. In virtually every case he is a total stranger. — Regina Leader-Post.

The use of nicknames is peculiarly a British habit. Uerhaps it is a tradition maintained originally at our public schools by Smith Minor and his friends. But it projects itself even into grown-up life, and it is a very rare thing for a Brass Hat in either of the fighting services to escape being labelled by his subordinates. I am told that the nickname habit has now even invaded the solemn precincts of Whitehall, and that amongst the very junior workers in that hive of industry all our leading statesmen of the day are recognized by some more or less comic and sometimes distinctly irreverent cognomen. Thus the Prime Minister is "Suss" — not "Sarah," curiously enough — the Foreign Secretary is "Holy Willie," his Under Secretary is "Little Willie," the Home Secretary is "Aunt Prue," the Chancellor of the Exchequer is "Sour Sally," and the Minister for War is "Bertie the Bounder." Outside the Ministerial circle there is Mr. Anthony Eden, who is known as "The Lad", and Mr. Duff Cooper, who is naturally "Plumduff". Apparently Mr. Churchill has not been thus signalized, possibly because he is so conveniently "Winston." — Ottawa Journal.

Note to all nations: What's the good of being protected from foreign competitors if you are also protected from foreign customers? — Buffalo News.

The New York World's Fair

If there is the slightest chance of your going to the New York World's Fair, please let no rumor of exorbitant prices keep you away. Outside of the Amusement Area, where the shows probably differ only in degree from those seen at any country fair, everything with the exception of two or three exhibits, is absolutely free. And as for food, sandwiches and coffee and "hot dogs" are the standard price, and lunch rooms and cafeterias serve clean and wholesome dishes at ordinary cost; and if you so desire, you can bring your own lunch and picnic in the most beautiful surroundings imaginable. Of course you can also dine in luxury on the choicest foods of every nation. Nor has the cost of lodging gone up to any extent—there are rooms to suit every budget. If "doing without" this or that or many things can get you to the Fair, you will find it worth the sacrifice.

I had the great privilege of seeing the Fair, when the million (by actual count) tulip bulbs sent by the Dutch Government, were at their loveliest. Hundreds of symbolic figures of heroic size and posture, sculptured in bronze and marble and granite and ebony, rose from their pedestals against the cream and apricot and sheer white and crystal buildings (whose outline caressed the eye) and at their base, and everywhere spread this gorgeous carpet of perfect tulips; purple tulips smiling down on the tender yellow pansies at their feet; yellow tulips sheltering purple pansies, and ivory and crimson tulips in unending beds. And in their midst and bordering them, fountains and pools presided over by tens of charming and laugh-provoking water-sprites. When darkness fell, lights of fantastic number, carried by devices of unbelievable variety and exc[illegible]ness, shed radiance rather [illegible] brilliance over fountains and flowers and statues and buildings until the Fair Grounds became Gardens of Enchantment.

Viewed from the outside, this World's Fair would be worth coming far, but on closer study the entire project is so marvelously conceived and executed that pride in one's fellow men grows with each visit. Every community has its own building or pavilion erected with such an effect of solidity and care for the minutest detail that there is no hint of impermanence in the massive walls and doors, the intricate floors and ceilings, the elaborate windows and stairways, the astonishingly new and beautiful lighting arrangements or in the rich rugs and draperies. And within each pavilion is displayed the very life of a nation—its art and industries, its people and their habits and aspirations. The British Pavilion, superb in its size and pillared whiteness, dramatically presents the colorful past of England in an entire floor devoted to heraldry and priceless objects of historic value; elsewhere are displayed the choicest of its manufactures, while maps and models and moving pictures depict every phase of British life and ideals. Separate buildings represent the countries under its protection. The Canadian Building was still unfinished during my stay in New York, but I trust that in it our own little Island with all it has of beauty and value, will be represented.

MARVELS OF SCIENCE

Nor is there a single scientific invention or process that isn't fully demonstrated at the New York World's Fair. The wonders of electricity in its present use and even in various experimental stages; the latest in transportation by water and rail and air—nothing left to the imagination; automobile and airplane constructed before your eyes; nor need I enlarge upon the newest in communication—television, etc.

Perhaps you would like to see a fine glass goblet brought into being from the red jaws of the furnace? Or a yard of cloth grow from single threads of silk or wool or glass—the latter is the material for tomorrow's textiles. Or would you rather visit a diamond or coal or tin mine? Detailed models, pictures, moving pictures, charts, etc., explain every process where the actual labor cannot be shown.

And of course there are Pavilions devoted to man's progress in the fields of human welfare. What diseases has he conquered? What evils still beset him? How much does he know of the forces that mold him—his heredity, his environment?

Also, besides the art treasures exhibited by each nation, there are the collected works of contemporary art as well as of classical art. For the music lover, daily concerts are given in the Hall of Music as well as in many other sections of the Fair grounds.

It may be that jewels mean as much to you as a painting or a symphony. In the "House of Jewels" are exhibited precious gems of fabulous worth and diadems, rings and other ornaments wrought for monarchs.

Of more practical interest are the model homes, complete even to hedges and flower gardens. Or the farms equipped with an electric dish-washer in the kitchen as well as poultry yards and cattle stalls and vegetable gardens with thriving corn and potatoes, etc.

Remember also, that New York City itself is at its most glamorous to please the millions of visitors Rockefeller Center with its fountains and gardens; Fifth Avenue with every shop window a frame for loveliness; theaters and museums and concert halls and art galleries and libraries with their doors wide open; the colors and sights of a great city at its best, these too are worthy of many sacrifices.

Unnecessary to deplore the lack of opportunity to see the world, to study its inhabitants, to know what is going on in Art and Science and Industry. Not too far away, at this great Fair, you can travel over the four corners of the earth and can learn all your mind and soul thirst to know. And dull must be the brain and callous the heart of him who does not come away from this "World of Tomorrow" with respect and admiration for people everywhere whose struggles and achievements are so splendidly set forth. And perhaps not unfounded is the faith that will surely spring up that so much energy, so much spirit, will yet make the real World of Tomorrow a more glamorous place to live in, for all mankind.

—Ruhamah Scheinfeld Frank.

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.

MR. NICHOLSON AGAIN

Sir,—It is amusing to find the Guardian and the Premier in agreement over anything, and amazing to find that they agree over the value of an antiquated, aristocratic, inefficient course of study in our public schools. The Guardian commends the Premier for emphasizing "the wider and more abundant results to be obtained by a broad and well-founded general education." In support of his contention the Guardian quotes a "classics professor" who is naturally biased in favor of his own subjects. The classics professors are busy these days defending an educational system that is being attacked by practically all the outstanding leaders in the field of education. The research work of the last quarter century has demonstrated beyond question that such a curriculum as exists in our public schools imposes a terrible burden on the student who does not go forward to the university.

The four subjects, Latin, French, Geometry and Algebra, occupy about half the pupil's time in and out of school. They have no special value for mental discipline, as was once contended. They add practically nothing to one's store of useful information. They furnish no preparation for the future mental development of the youth who is not going on to the university.

Compared with the studies that may be gained through one's native tongue in literature, history, science, they are poor in cultural value. They crowd out the truly cultural subjects, and hamper, handicap, and hobble the great majority of our common school pupils. If the nine tenths of our Island citizens who never attend a university had a chance to spend on worth while studies the time now wasted on those four rather useless subjects it would be an incalculable benefit for themselves and for the province.

I am, Sir, etc.,
J. W. A. NICHOLSON.
North Bedeque.

(Mr. Nicholson's annoyance at our inability to share his prejudice against classical studies is, we are glad to note, offset to some extent by the amusement he derives from finding The Guardian and Premier Campbell in agreement. — Ed. G.)

YPRES ANNIVERSARY

Sir:—Another June 2nd is with us, marking as it does the twenty-third anniversary of the third battle of Ypres, that magnificent struggle on the Western Front, where thousands of our gallant Canadians surrendered up their lives.

We do not forget them, and we their living comrades, who still, in ever lessening numbers are suffered to remain, see each anniversary checking off as it were another milestone on the tortuous road, leading eventually to the great consummation, to which an All Wise Providence, justly ordered all things blessed with life. We remain to carry on, helped and encouraged by the unselfish example, reared as a living and eternal striving point by those who have passed on.

While we were all as yet united in life and engaged in the bloody conflict, many times were we assailed by doubts as to whether or not we were being used merely as cannon fodder by the capitalists or munition manufacturers. Doubts crept in, in spite of patriotic utterances and surroundings; sometimes casting a deeper gloom over our lives than that afforded by high explosive and shrapnel from the mammoth guns of the enemy.

However, the reckless and unprincipled actions of the present day Dictators, their heartless and savage thrusts, trampling to earth all those who oppose their would be unprecedented encroachments on peaceful neighbors establishes conclusively that our cause was just and that Democracy and civilization were being crushed by the iron heel of militarism, then, as it might even be at this moment, were it not that our grand and glorious Heritage—The British Commonwealth of Nations with the added strength of other world Democracies have unflinchingly and with tenacity of purpose created an alignment so powerful, that apparently it brooks no interference with the age old adage, that men should and must be given the opportunity to live unfettered and worship as they see fit and not as bombastic, ranting autocrats may dictate.

So therefore, comrades you have not died that your compatriots might amass riches, but rather for your homes, your families and those principles for which your forebears have been martyred during the long, centuries necessary to build up and perfect the civilization we enjoy today. You have not died in vain and while life remains, your memory will be revered by democracy, your comrades and their progeny.

If an all seeing Providence, in his infinite wisdom, deems it expedient that you should participate in our cares and concerns, from your present celestial abiding place, you must undoubtedly feel elation in witnessing the spirit of patriotic fervor prevading our Great Dominion as it bows in virile homage to Their Most Gracious Majesties as they pay their first visit to our shores.

Should any one have been so perfidious, to have entertained for a moment, a thought in the direction of disintegration of our British Commonwealth of Nations, let him hang his head in shame, as he listens to the plaudits of the multitude, the hale and hearty greeting of the war veterans and the unmistakeable signs that never in our history were we more united, more loyal to Their Majesties, the living symbol of Democratic principles and freedom and Worthy leaders of a great Empire. Should any one have thought thus let him exclaim "I am mistaken" "Our Empire is healthier today than ever before."

So comrades, Rest in Peace, beneath the poppies, knowing that what seemed at times to be a useless struggle and a needless sacrifice was indeed the Supreme Sacrifice for which democracy is forever appreciative. Your example lives, endures and will ever remain the embryo of patriotic co-operation, very needful then as it now is to guide us aright in maintaining that all service is sacrifice, and whether in war or peace, "The paths of glory lead but to the graves."

I am Sir, etc.,
CHARLES W. MacARTHUR,
Borden, P. E. I.

DECORATE COLORFULLY

LONDON—Enterprising decorators, tired of alarms and exoursions, are urging the public to become color-courageous and have decorations with plenty of rich color, instead more gloomy tints of the past few years.

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