

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

Morning Daily (Founded in 1887)
President, Lieut.-Col. W. Chester S. McLure
Vice-President, J. R. Burnett, F.J.I.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
\$5.00 per year (in advance) delivered to City
\$4.00 per year (in advance) mailed to P. E. Island

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

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1939.

In Praise Of "Agricola"

We naturally do not like to blow our own horn, at least very loudly, but think the following letter from Professor Clyde Auld, of Toronto University, to our "Agricola" (Mr. Blythe Hurst, Sr.) deserves the publicity we are now giving it:

"University of Toronto, Dec. 13th, 1939

"Dear Mr. Hurst: I have been reading Agricola's Notes for several years, and I found them so interesting that I have often wished for them a wider circle of readers than the local one that The Guardian reaches. I know nothing so good of its kind in any other Canadian newspaper. When I was a boy, the only natural history notes were those of Bain. How much better off the young Islanders of today are; and that is due to your efforts. Your historical and antiquarian notes, and your reminiscences, are always very much worth reading; and I often wish I had collected in a scrap-book those that have pleased me most. "Thank you for the writings of many years that have given me so much pleasure and profit; and thank you for The Naturalist's Calendar, recently arrived, which I shall keep by me, and take with me when I return to P.E.I. next summer. I hope I may come to Brackley Beach then, and repeat my thanks in person. "Yours sincerely, "G. C. AULD."

Another Nazi Canard

Unable to save the Admiral Graf Spee, the Nazis circulated the lie that the British cruisers, in fighting her, used mustard gas shells. But this propaganda has recoiled on their own heads. The world will accept at its face value the statement of Prime Minister Chamberlain that "no gas shells have ever been made for, or used by, any ships of the Royal Navy."

But perhaps it is just as well to have the evidence of neutral Uruguayan medical specialists that, after a thorough examination of the German wounded taken from the Graf Spee, they were unable to find any trace of gas. This effectively disposes of the canard started by the German Minister to Uruguay and the chief surgeon of the Graf Spee that "most of the pocket battleship's wounded were victims of a yellow gas." The Uruguayan doctors who examined and treated the wounded completely confounded propagandists in Berlin, who would fain recall the lies they were so eager to broadcast.

The Huns, recalls an exchange, were the first to resort to the use of poison gas in modern warfare. The gallant Canadians who "saved the situation" at the Second Battle of Ypres know about their revival of malpractices which had been condemned for centuries by civilized thinkers of Greece and Rome, by Christian teachers and international lawyers. What mattered it that Germany had solemnly agreed at The Hague to abstain from the use of projectiles diffusing asphyxiating or deleterious gases? The draftsmen of The Hague covenant had overlooked the possibility of poison gases being released from pipes or cylinders. So the Huns, determined to win by fair means or foul, prepared to flout the spirit of their solemn pledge and, gloating over their cleverness, ridiculed critics as sentimental and flabby emotionalists. Their iniquitous conduct they "justified" by the statement that "poison gas produces a rapid end and spares the torn bodies of the wounded the tortures and pains of death." They actually gloried in this fresh exhibition of German kultur, and dismissed talk about the unlawfulness of their new weapon of attack as "silly chatter."

People who are so inherently immoral that they refuse to recognize the conventions of civilized warfare find it difficult to believe that those who frustrate them are not equally wicked. Hence the Nazi accusation that the British furnished the Polish army with mines filled with mustard gas to combat the German invasion of Poland. This was as false as the invention of Propagandist Goebbels that Winston Churchill ordered the Athena sunk to enlist United States aid. And the lie that the gallant British seamen who licked the Graf Spee used mustard-gas shells is equally foul.

A Decimated Senate

When Parliament meets in January for what will in all likelihood be its valedictory session, the House of Commons will not be much under its full strength. But a serious indifference to the status and importance of the Upper House is revealed in the fact that the Senate membership has been reduced by more than 10 per cent and that the King Government has no apparent inclination to recruit this important parliamentary body until the eve of the election itself. This matter is largely if not solely in the Prime Minister's hands, and Mr. King has given plenty of lip service to the principle of parliamentary government. There is, says the Montreal Gazette, at least a partial repudiation of that principle in proceeding with a highly important parliamentary session while one of the branches of Parliament, constitutionally created for the purpose of reviewing and revising the acts of the Lower House, is decimated.

So far as the Conservative opposition is concerned, the Government is reasonably sure of the same whole-hearted co-operation as was afforded during the special session, and this notwithstanding the fact that the Opposition has been consistently ignored since the special session ended. It is not to be presumed, however, that Conservative members will abstain from all criticism when constructive criticism is called for. Such abstention would in fact be contrary to the duty of the principal unofficial body in the House of Commons, and the public would neither expect nor condone it.

It will, says the Gazette, be necessary for the Government in these circumstances to meet the House with a satisfactory presentation of its war policy and the means which have been adopted in giving effect to that policy. Where there is any appearance of inadequacy in regard to these measures, or of inefficiency in their application, very convincing explanations will have to be forthcoming. The Government itself will be facing a general election. The Opposition will be in precisely the same position, though with less to lose and more to gain. The Government has not only assumed full responsibility for its war record but has deliberately excluded other political parties from any share in that responsibility. It will be obliged, therefore, to go before Parliament, and, in a few months thereafter, to go before the country with sufficient material to satisfy Parliament and to satisfy public opinion as to the complete propriety of all its acts of commission and omission. A crucial session is in prospect.

EDITORIAL NOTES

U.S.S.R. established this date, 1922.

Will it be possible to get all that shopping done before Saturday? Oh, drat it!

The Fox People have a get-together round the social board this evening in the Charlottetown Hotel. It is good to take time off like this occasionally, even if the participants do talk a little "shop."

As usual when the Liberals are in power there is a plethora of new parties—we have lost count and the identity of them. But the latest in Saskatchewan—the United Reform Party—gets us. Whom does it unite and what does it intend to reform? Surely it could not be the party of the Valley of Humiliation?

Who can read without emotion the graphic account of the landing of the Canadian First Division in the Old Land? It stirs the heart and makes the pulse beat faster. Thank God, Britons of the new land are no different from Britons of the old when it comes to upholding and defending the principles for which our ancestors in their day fought and died—and live again in the present generation.

Eire taxes liquor instead of cosmetics because the Government could not raise enough on cosmetics "even if the ladies put them on their faces by the ton," Finance Minister Sean T. O'Kelly declares. Replying to criticism of the Government's new 12-per cent tax on beer and spirits at the convention of the Fianna Fail party, Mr. O'Kelly admitted that the tax burden is heavy but asked: "If we do not put the tax on beer, where can we get the money?" Where, indeed, except by introducing prohibition and Government vendors?

Here is the pastoral letter from the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland read in all Presbyterian Churches on the Sunday of the arrival of the Canadian contingent:

"In the turmoil and tragedy of war, we send this message to our people:—

"Be strong and of a good courage!"

"Let no one imagine that our country and our Empire entered into war wantonly or recklessly. Beyond all question they were averse from war."

"Up to the last moment our Government, with practically the whole of Christendom, strove to compose the differences amongst the nations by friendly negotiation rather than by resort to arms. Their efforts were in vain, and against our will we were drawn into war."

"Why are we at war? That is a searching question for Church and people who hate war and repudiate it as an un-Christian means for the settlement of international disputes. We are at war because our country had pledged its word to defend a brave people whose liberties were menaced; and yet it was not for this alone that we took up arms."

"We are fighting for the very foundations of civilization—for Truth and Freedom, Justice and Humanity, for the maintenance of Law and for the keeping of Covenants among the nations. Acquiescence in aggression and in broken faith is a course no self-respecting nation can follow. Today the fundamental moral ideals that make life worth living are imperilled in Europe, and we are fighting in defence of them."

"Nevertheless, we must guard against the sin of self-righteousness. It is humbling to reflect that the spiritual forces of Christian Europe have been powerless to prevent this war, and it should disturb the conscience of all Christian people that their religion has been so ineffective in accomplishing enduring peace."

"Have we ourselves always been loyal to the principles for which we are now contending? Have we indeed learned the lessons of the last Great War? God's judgments are abroad in the earth; and in facing whatever may be before us we must not forget the necessity of penitence for what, both as a nation and as individuals, we have done or left undone."

"Again, we must strive to maintain the Christian spirit throughout the conflict into which we have been driven. We are at one throughout our land and Empire, and we must make sure that our unity of mind and purpose is not broken."

"Let us hate the evils against which we are fighting—violence, oppression, the denial of liberty and truth; but let us neither hate nor seek revenge on those who, not knowing what they do, defend these things. And let us keep before us steadfastly the purpose of our solemn enterprise."

"We cannot justify the war unless we prepare our minds for the Peace, a lasting peace founded on righteousness, freedom, and truth. How else can we pray for victory?"

NOTES BY THE WAY

The important thing is that he (President Roosevelt) has given the Maritime Commission a chance to prevent the transfer of these ships. The implication is that if it does not take the hint, the Chief Executive will attend to it himself. Regardless of reasons, he wanted him to take. If the war lasts much longer Congress will have to do something about American shipping. The President, having discretion in the use of large funds, has in effect subsidized the seamen who were thrown out of jobs. If the spirit of the Neutrality Act is to be put into an expanded law, it will be necessary to compensate owners and operators of steamships for keeping them off the high seas. The President cannot do that; Congress can. The question is whether it wants to and whether the American people want to pay the bill. If they do not they might as well forget about the spirit of the Neutrality Act.—Indianapolis News.

The finance of the Allies must be planned to produce the highest potential of war effort. That is the primary object. But in it is involved maintenance of the normal economic activity of both countries at the maximum which is possible. "American supplies." M. Reynaud said in Paris last week, "must largely be paid for by French work for the good of both countries." Ships which come loaded from America must not be allowed to go back empty. That, as he remarked, was one of the errors of the hasty improvisations of the last war, and it proved very costly. Co-operation of the Allies in obtaining and shipping supplies from the United States and every other source is of far-reaching importance. Magnum vectigal est parsimonia—frugality is a great revenue—that proverb applies not only to finance but to every form of the activity of the State. Careful husbanding of Allied assets, whether financial or industrial power or shipping, will shorten the war and improve the peace.—Daily Telegraph and Morning Post (London).

Mention of Charles Dickens sends the mind, by a curious twist, to today's Times Magazine. There is described the enormous amount of labor and thought and expenditure that went into the making of a great new motion picture. Three thousand preparatory sketches, more than 4,000 uniforms and costumes, forty-four costumes for the heroine, thirty-six suits for the hero, a whole city with 7,000 miles of streets. We have no doubt that the result will correspond to the efforts expended on the picture. But what a piece of work is man! He produces his artistic effects by labors suggestive of the Pyramids or the Panama Canal. And he also produces his effects with a pen in his quiet study. Takes a pen and a sheet of paper and starts out: "Marley was dead, to begin with."—New York Times.

After three months of hesitations, it now appears that neither side in the conflict in Europe will have any serious difficulty in obtaining all the oil supplies needed for essential military activities. So far, the consumption of oil products for non-military purposes has been reduced sharply by government decree, and, in case of necessity, it could be reduced further or even eliminated. As a result, it is estimated now that it would be possible for the warring nations in Europe to carry on military operations efficiently on a gasoline consumption of probably one-half that in 1938. The spread of the war to include Rumania and the Near East, making it more a "war of movement," might alter the picture a bit in that more oil would have to be used by the military forces and its flow from Rumania, Russia and the Near East might be seriously disrupted. With a production of about 1,000,000 barrels daily, that area so far has been an important source of oil supply for both the Allies and Germany.—New York Times.

The war is now approaching the end of its first quarter and British commodity markets have slowly but steadily steadied themselves to the new conditions. As the majority of prices and markets have been controlled right up from the beginning of the war the change from peace to war conditions did not appear spectacular at the surface although substantial difficulties of organization were encountered. In the first eight weeks of the war complaints regarding slow and insufficient raw material allocations were frequent. Since the end of October, however, the position has improved and the flow of materials to consumers' works—especially to those working for export—has become more regular. There is still no general priority allocation for government orders. The raw material supply office defense work receives priority treatment only in cases of a genuine shortage of supplies and these are not worth mentioning so far. Also, in the majority of food-stuffs, supplies on the British markets are adequate. Rationing is not yet in force although it is due soon to be introduced for sugar, butter and bacon.

A headline in the morning paper makes one rub his eyes: Economics Called a Neglected Study. You look again to see whether it isn't really manhandled study or overdecorated study or uncontrolled study, but there it is, all right. The text bears out the headline. Professor Edward L. Thorndike of Teachers College urges more teaching of economics in the elementary schools and high schools. It is his contribution to a symposium on how to combat "economic illiteracy." Most people would say that modern education consists mostly of economics; that and the drama. If a young person in high school and college is not making a practical study of the art of the theatre, he or she is most likely studying

Our Own War

(Saturday Night)

It is perhaps too much to expect, but we are beginning to wish that Canada could learn to look after her own affairs even in war, just as she has for some time done in peace. In an Ottawa despatch to the Globe and Mail by the very sound and valuable Mr. R. A. Farquharson we read that "Added up, there are a lot of reasons why Ottawa this time is moving carefully and making every move in close co-ordination with the British War Office." And we are always slightly suspicious when Ottawa moves in close co-ordination with the British War Office. The last time Ottawa moved in close co-ordination with the British War Office, we got the Bren gun contract, concerning which it would be too much to say that the entire country is unanimously pleased, proud and grateful. This time the announcement of close co-ordination with the British War Office coincides with the announcement of the appointment of Mr. R. A. C. ("Beauharnois") Henry to the post of liaison officer between Canada's War Supply Board and the Minister of Transport. Last time we were told that Mr. Hahn had to get the Bren gun contract because we were working in close co-ordination with the British War Office, and the British War Office wanted him to get it. Something tells us that we are now going to be told that Mr. Henry had to have the post of liaison officer, because we are working in close co-ordination with the British War Office and the British War Office wants Mr. Henry as liaison officer. One trouble is that we always have to get our information as to what the British War Office wants, not from the British War Office, which preserves the most military silence on such matters, but from the Canadian Government, which whenever it is charged with doing something that it should not have done invariably finds reasons for believing that the British War Office wanted it done and wanted it done that way. We should immensely like to know how Canada would get along if it ever had a chance to win a war by itself, without the guidance of the British War Office.

The Poet's Corner

STARS
Now in the West the slender moon
Lies low.
And now Orion glimmers through
The trees.
Clearing the earth with even pace
And slow;
And now the lately-moving Pleiades,
In that soft infinite darkness overhead,
Hang jewel-wise upon a silver thread.
And all the lonelier stars that have
Their place
Calm lamps within the distant
Southern sky.
And planet-dust upon the edge of
Space
Look down upon the fretful world.
And I
Look up to outer vastness un-
Araid
And see the stars which sang when
Earth was made.
—Marjorie P. Keithall.

contemporary economic problems. Yet here is a group of educators seriously concerned with the spread of economic illiteracy.—New York Times.

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You will find the thing you are looking for... whether it be for a lady or a man.
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Before making your choice call and see our display of these items.
THE 2 MACS

AGED BRIDEGROOM
GEORGETOWN, S. C. Dec. 17
—Rev. Joseph P. King, 92, and Miss Lucile Garry, 28, were married here Saturday. It was the third marriage of the bridegroom.
ELY, England.—(CP)—The Bishop of Ely, Dr. E. O. F. Heywood, is willing to sacrifice the expensive pomp of his episcopal palace and live in a six-room dwelling. The 54-room palace is outdated, he protests.
I. Ins. Fully Says:
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"Any vacationist, who really wants to be carefree, ought to see the agent of the National Fire Insurance Company of Hartford about a Personal Effects All Risks Policy. Then, if something goes wrong with baggage or personal belongings, the National Fire steps in and makes it right."
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DRESSING GOWNS in fine flannels Royal or Wine shades ————— \$6.95 to \$10.00
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Satin Dressing Gowns, polka dot trim, in Navy or Maroon ————— \$8.95
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Course Date of Opening Length of Course
Agriculture January 15th 4 weeks
Agriculture II February 19th 4 weeks
Poultry course February 19th 4 weeks
Fisheries Course January 22nd 4 weeks
(St. Dunstan's University).
Fox Husbandry January 15th 2 weeks
Blacksmithing I January 8th 6 weeks
Blacksmithing II February 19th 6 weeks
Transportation and board and lodging expenses will be paid students who are eligible under the provisions of the Youth Training Agreement.
All applications should be sent to
W. R. SHAW,
Director of Youth Training,
Department of Agriculture,
Charlottetown, P. E. I.
L1597-12-20-22-25

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