THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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

FRIDAY, DEC. 24, 1943

Christmas 1943

This will be our fifth Christmas at war, and in this thought there is matter enough for sad reflection. But there is hope also, hope that grows brighter and more confident as the days pass.

A new chapter is being written in human history, a chapter that should bring us, after the victory we know will come in due time, nearer in spirit than ever before to the message heard by the shepherds on the first Christmas morning. As we re-read that message today, it should be a reminder of the tremendous issues at stake in this war, and the responsibilities that will fall upon us afterwards. It is conceivable that after this struggle we shall be able to fashion a world in which war will cease to be. That has been the hope of Christian peoples from time immemorial. It has been the dream of all the great philosophers and humanists. Whether or not we shall live to see it realized, none can say. But the plans the United Nations are making for the post-war years all hinge on the concept of a peace which will endure at least for some generations.

To maintain peace will not be enough, unless it brings goodwill among the nations. More than statecraft and diplomacy will be needed for that. The issue is essentially a moral and religious one—that of putting the Golden Rule into practice on an international scale. It is as simple as all that, but after two thousand years we are only beginning to realize the futility of seeking other solutions.

Gift-giving is hampered to some extent this Christmas by wartime restrictions, but there is no rationing of the spirit which should be the mainspring of our giving. We can all give something of ourselves, if only a smile and a cheery greeting. We have with us still the poor and needy, and they have first claim upon our sympathy and benefactions. The members of our service forces too, who are with us at this time—their homes and loved ones may be far away; they should be made to feel the warmth of our Christmas firesides. It is heartening to reflect that our own young men and women are being similarly entertained overseas, and that we are all truly one big happy family in celebrating this glorious festival of our common Christian faith.

Our church bells tomorrow will ring out jovously in token of the glad news of the Nativity. Speed the day when they will ring again throughout the world!

To all our readers, young and old, a Merry Christmas.

Drew Government Supported

Liberal members of the Ontario Legislature have agreed to co-operate with the Progressive Conservative Government of Premier Drew "in all matters which do not compromise Liberal principles"

This, comments the Ottawa Journal, is a sensible decision, and very practical. The Government group is a minority in the Legislature, and the Liberal and CCF groups, working together, could defeat it and force another election. The Liberals, having little hope of any improvement in their position from such a development, do not propose to assume the responsibility of forcing the province into the expense and effort of a campaign which certainly the people do not want.

The main concern of the people of Ontario is a stable and efficient administration, and Col. Drew's record since he took office has evidently convinced the electors that at least he should be given a fair trial. The position of the Liberals assures him the chance to show his ability for his task.

Libraries In Canada

There are 5,405,543 books in the public and other libraries of Canada and in 1941 they attained a circulation of 20,283,618 among 1,057,330 borrowers. Yet Canada is one of the most unevenly served of countries in the matter of library book circulation. These and other facts are revealed in a survey for 1940-42 called Libraries in Canada, recently issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

Well over half the population of Canada is still without public library service, as compared with one-fourth in the United States and less than 1 per cent in Britain. Expenditure for libraries here continues to be less than 20 cents per capita, while it approaches 30 cents in Britain and is more than 40 cents in the United States.

The general picture of library volumes and circulation is shown in the following table:

	Volumes	Circulation
P.E.I.	57,526	227,239
N. S.	121,522	174,167
N. B	102,797	233,036
Ontario	3,640,050	13,596,079
Manitoba	125,625	820,566
Saskatchewan	241,979	1,034,107
Alberta	278,501	1,448,791
British Columbia	364,249	2,033,877

In per capita circulation of books there is a wide difference between various centres. Sydney is lowest with 0.2, and St. Thomas highest with 9.7. There are scores of places with no libraries at all, however. In the principal cities, Toronto comes out on top with a circulation of 5.6 books per capita, and next come Windsor with 4.8, Hamilton with 4.5, Ottawa with 3.9, Winnipeg with 3.5 and Vancouver with 2.9.

These figures cover only public libraries. In Ottawa, many government officials use the Parliamentary library. The latter contains 426,000 volumes (compared with 178,000 in the Ottawa public library) which makes it the largest library in Canada with the single exception of Toronto public library, which contains 642,000 volumes.

— EDITORIAL NOTES —

The Post Office announces the two-ounce weight limit on air mail to the United Kingdom has been removed.

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Boxing Day, Monday, is being unofficially observed by many businesses as a holiday, giving employees and employers alike a little more time to recover from the Christmas season rush.

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The Social Credit Government won the seat in the Red Dear provincial by-election, their candidate Mr. David Ure trimming both the Independent and CCF candidates. The final vote gave Ure (SC) 3,539 and Edgar (Ind.) 2,354. Voting was under the single-transferable system and the CCF candidate, Alderman E. G. Johns, was eliminated on the first count

* * * *

"Should there be an election soon in Saskatchewan," writes L. L. L. Golden, in Toronto News, "the CCF will form its first administration in Canada. So Mr. King is in another of his spots. And spots, political crises, are his meat and drink. They make up for a lot of other fun he has missed in life. In no place does Mr. King show himself more adept than in a political crisis, and the tougher it is the more he thrives on it. It is the tonic of the best divide-and-rule tactician Canada has ever had. Meanwhile figuring and guessing really do not mean a great deal. For in election matters, no one can for long follow Mr. King's mind. His election decisions are his own. His tricks rarely are repeated".

* * * *

William Makepeace Thackeray, British novelist and humourist, died this date 1863; abandoned law for journalism; studied painting in Paris; with "Vanity Fair" he attained celebrity as a novelist, and its publication was followed by a long series of stories all of which commanded large circulations; as a novelist he combines humour and pathos, with a streak of cynicism; his style is cultured and his craftsmanship masterly: "Nothing like blood, sir, in horses, dawgs, and men"..."What money is better bestowed than that of a schoolboy's tip?..."The wicked are wicked, no doubt, and they go astray and they fall, and they come by their deserts; but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do?"

* * * *

Yes, we're pretty smart, remarks the Brooklyn Tribune. We can outfly the birds, outswim the fish. We can talk banalities across the world. We know how far the ice extended in the various glacial ages and we can read the history of past ages from a few half-decayed bones. Looking at what we have done and are doing we get to feeling pretty smug about our knowledge. Well, who of us can tell how a small Pomeranian dog was able to find his way from Norfolk, Va., to his old home in Patchogue, New York? He made it in 24 days, across rivers, bays, through cities and countryside. How did he find his way? How did he know where to come? And we can't answer by saying that he had the instinct that brings home the carrier pigeon, unless we're prepared to explain what instinct is. There is more to learn than we already know.

* * * *

L'Action Catholique, organ of the Quebec Archbishopric, referring to Prime Minister King's visit to Washington writes to this effect: "The creation of the first Canadian Embassy in Washington is a further sign after a good many others indicating a change in the orbit of the Anglo-Saxon world. Washington is replacing London as the centre of the commercial world Three other appointments as ambassadors were announced by a representative of the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs during Mr. King's stay in Washington the day after his meeting with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. On examining Mr. King's foreign policy in the past, we cannot fail to note a parallel between the two events. These embassy appointments are in reality only affirmations of independence at a psychological moment in our relations with Great Britain." In other words, deserting the British Commonwealth of Nations for a Pan-American Union.

* * * *

The London Times has been discoursing on the aggravating mistakes one, with the best intentions, makes, and the consequent suffering one undergoes, especially if one is blessed, or burdened, with a sensitive conscience. "Life would be dull without mistakes," said Dumby, but Dumby was a character in a comedy. Most people know from bitter experience that one inexplicable little mistake can blot out the sun and leave the culprit obsessed for days with a desolating conviction of futility. A kind of mental vertigo seizes upon him, and before he recovers his nerve he is practically bound to be brought ignominiously down at least once more. The imps of frustration which delight to trip a good man up haunt every province of human endeavour; and it is only natural that the good man should hedge his sanity by insisting upon a margin of permissible error. When he makes an excursion into an unfamiliar province he tends accordingly to adopt the attitude of an elderly uncle who has consented to play blind man's buff with the children. Whatever may befall, he will endure it light-heartedly. It is no less natural that those who are native to the province in which the stranger takes his carefree way should be a little exasperated by what they take to be an easy, impudent patronage. They are slow to recognize that the brave show of gay irresponsibility masks a morbid horror of the silly mistake. Silly mistakes, whether made in his own or other people's province, invariably threaten to ruin a man's happiness for good and all; and it is no consolation whatsoever to know that the mistake will come in time to be a cherished joke

This War's V. C.'s

(Kerwin Maegraith in The Legionary)

The Victoria Cross is the most signal honour that sailor, soldier or airmen, officer or man, of the British Empire can win. This bronze cross, bearing the Lion of England over the Crown, and the words "For Valour", takes precedence of all British decorations and orders.

Instituted in 1856 by Queen Victoria, 1,101 V.C.'s were awarded between that date and 1920 Here are the stories and the awards of the 71 V.C.'s for this war awarded up to September, 1943 The Royal Navy has won 17 (5 and one bar have gone to the submarine service; and the Fleet Air Arm has won 1). The British Army, 21; the youngest service — the R.A.F.—has won 10; the Indian Army, 6; New Zealand, 6 (one to an Air Force sergeant and one to a Maori, the latter the first in history to a soldier of that race). South Africa has won 2 (one in R.A.F.); Australia, 11; Canada, 1 at Dieppe.

CANADIAN OLDEST V. C.

The oldest winner in this war was Canadian-born Captain F.T. Peters, V.C., D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N.R., 51 and the youngest Sergeant Hanna, R.A.F., a Scot from Paisley, who was 18 when decorated.

The great majority of the V.C. winners were killed in action and their awards were posthumously granted.

The first V.C. of this war was awarded to Captain Warburton Lee, R.N., for his gallantry in the first battle of Narvik. On his own initiative, he took superior forces of the enemy by surprise and attacked warships and merchantmen in the harbour. A shell burst on the bridge of H.M.S. Hardy mortally wounded the captain, whose dying signal was "Continue to engage the enemy."

The second and third V.C.'s went to Flying Officer Garland and his observer, Sgt. Grey, R.A.F., for their coolness and courage in bombing the Albert Canal in May, 1940. They were killed in the action.

The fourth V.C., won in Belgium went to 2nd Lieut. Annand, of the Durham Light Infantry. Wounded, he carried on in command, holding a blown bridge on the River Dyle. Alone, Annand drove the enemy from the sunken river with hand grenades.

Next Belgium V.C. went to Company Sergeant-Major Gristock of the Royal Norfolk Regiment. He put a machine gun out of action and killed the crew. Gristock died from wounds.

The war's sixth V.C. also won in Belgium, was awarded L-Cpl. Nicholls, of H.M. Grenadier Guards. Nicholls seized a Bren gun and dashed forward firing from his hip. Wounded, he succeeded in putting three machine guns out of action, and his heroism enabled his company to reach their objective.

DUNKIRK V. C.

Then came the Dunkirk V.C., Captain Ervine Andrews, of the East Lancashires, who, with his volunteers, climbed on to a barn rooftop, and, under heavy fire from mortars and armour-piercing bullets, accounted for 17 of the enemy with his rifle and many more with his machine gun.

Leading Seaman Jack Mantle, of H.M.S. Foyleoank, was the Navy's second V.C. When his ship was attacked, Mantle was severely wounded, his leg being shattered. He continued to mount his gun till he fell back, dead.

Capt. Wilson of the East Surrey Regiment, won the next V.C.—in Somaliland. Wounded in his right shoulder, one eye almost blind, and suffering from malaria, Wilson kept his post in action, carrying on till relieved.

Then came the epic of Flight-Lieut. Learoyd's bombing of the Dortmund-Ems Canala. For pressing home his attack he gained the V.C.

Lieut.-Com. Stannard, V.C., D.S.O., rammed the bows of his ship H.M.S. Arab, into Namsos wharf in Norway when the Germans mercilessly bombing it. In great danger, Stannard fought the blaze for two hours.

The first fighter pilot to win the V.C. was Flight-Lieut. Nicholson, R.A.F. In his burning Hurricane, with the skin being burnt off his hands, and suffering intense pain through wounds to his heel and an eye, Nicholson attacked a Messerschmitt. When he bailed out, it took him 20 minutes to reach the ground. After Nicholson came Hanna's courage in putting out a blaze on an aircraft and enabling his pilot to bring the 'plane safely home. This took place over Antwerp, and so Hanna became a V.C. at 18. He has been invalided out since.

"JERVIS BAY" V. C.

No story in the annals of our Merchant Navy history will ever eclipse that of the bravery of Fogarty Fegan, V.C., the Irish skipper from Tipperary, turning his gallant Jervis Bay to fight a German pocket battleship, thus bringing his own ship between the raider and its prey. With his arm blown off, they last saw him, still giving his orders—going down.

2nd Lieut. Bagat Singh won the war's fifteenth V.C., and India's first for this war, at Metemma. He was the hero of the mine-clearing operations, and risked his life numerous times. His countryman, Subadar Richpal Ram, was the next man to win the V.C. Ram, with his right foot blown off, and with other terrible wounds, fought till he died.

The next winner of the honour was Flying Officer Campbell. He flew almost at sea level, passing the very mouths of the ack-ack guns, to bomb Scharnhost at Brest. He successfully launched his torpedo, but did not return.

At Tobruk, between April 13-14, the first of Australia's V.C.'s was won. One officer, with Cpl. Edmondson and five privates, made an attack with the bayonet on a party of German infantry, who were armed with at least six machine guns, as well as with mortars and small field pieces. In a counter-attack Edmondson was wounded in the neck and stomach, but he killed one of the enemy. Later, Edmondson's officer, with his bayonet in one of the enemy, was grasped by the legs by the man, while a second attacked him from behind. The officer called for help, and Edmondson, in spite of his wounds, sprang to his asistance killing both of the enemy and undoubtedly saving the officer's life at the risk of his own.

At Greece, a fortnight later, New Zealand won its first V.C. of this war. With amazing bravery, Sgt. Hinton ran at the nearest gun of an enemy armoured column, wiped out its crew with hand grenades, and went on with his bayonet. He was taken prisoner.

Three V.C.'s were won at Crete. These went to Petty-Officer Sephton, who continued to direct fire on German 'planes, which he drove off with skill and accuracy. He died the next day, but saved his ship, H.M.S. Coventry and the hospital ship, Ava. The other winners were Lieut. Upham, who carried a wounded man, under fire, and Sgt. Hulme, who stalked and killed many German snipers on the island. Both of them New Zealanders.

The 23rd winner was that conspicuously valiant submarine commander, Lieut.-Com. Wanklyn, who won the V.C. for valour in the Mediterranean of May 24, 1941. Commander of H.M. Submarine Upholder, he was later awarded a Bar to the V.C. (the third occasion in history). This gallant officer also won the D.S.O. (with two Bars), and went down with his submarine.

(To Be Continued)

The Poet's Corner

HOW FAR IS IT TO BETHELEHEM

How far is it to Bethlehem?
Not very far.
Shall we find the stable-room
Lit by a star?

Can we see the little Child,
Is He within?
If we lift the wooden latch
May we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there,
Ox, ass, or sheep?
May we peep like them and see
Jesus asleep?

If we touch His tiny hand
Will He awake?
Will He know we've come so far
Just for His sake?

Great Kings have priceless gifts,
And we have naught;
Little smiles and little tears
Are all we brought.

For all weary children
Mary must weep,
Here, on His bed of straw,
Sleep, children, sleep.

God, in His Mother's arms
Babes in the byre,
Sleep, as they sleep who find
Their heart's desire.

—Frances Chesterton.

There Will Always Be A Christmas

(Halifax Chronicle)

It is not going to be easy to say or to keep "Merry Christmas" this year. The shadows that lie over the world and darken so many homes do not permit all the unrestrained joy of the old-fashioned Christmas. Feasting on the old scale is out for the duration. The giving of gifts is limited, for there are so few to buy. Family reunions will, in many cases, be impossible because of travel restrictions and the necessity to keep the production score high and the absentee score low. Much will be absent which makes Christmas, Christmas, but with all the limitations there is no danger that the celebration will be omitted. For as certain as sunrise, "There will always be a Christmas."

During the early days of the Communist regime in Russia and of the Nazi regime in Germany attempts were made to abolish Christmas or to substitute a festival with another meaning, but they did not succeed. Nor will they ever succeed. For Christmas is more than the giving of gifts and feasting. Deep down it is a rejoicing over the happiest thing which ever came to pass in the world. It was the birth of a little child in a stable and joy of heaven, for the child was the Christ-child whom the aged Simeon received in the Temple at Jerusalem as the fulfilment of human hope. "And (Simeon) said, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy Servant depart in peace according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

And that is why Christmas has survived the ages and the years of strife and laughter and will continue till the thunder of the guns is silenced and the song of peace and goodwill becomes fulfilled in a golden era of world-wide peace.

This would be an empty and dreary world if there were no Christmas to lighten it and bring to it a touch of heavenly glory. One has only to think of what a difference there would have been if Jesus had not come. The world would have missed its vision of God the Father, "The All-Powerful and the All-Loving too." It would have missed the Lord's Prayer, which Carlyle called the voice of humanity at its highest and best. The Sermon on the Mount would never have been spoken and the New Testament would not have been written, the Christian Church would not have been founded and the world would never have known its richest spiritual heritage.

The greatest loss of all would have been Jesus Himself, the most precious remembrance which humanity cherishes, a Being utterly godlike in His perfection and utterly human in His humility. In His timelessness He belongs to all ages. In His universality He belongs to all races. He could say to men searching for a God who knew and cared for the world He had made, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father". And none that knew Him intimately could detect one note of extravagance in that stupendous claim. A God like Jesus is a God men can love and trust with all their hearts.

Jesus came into a world gone stale and His creative spirit so quickened it into new life that men began to date their calendars from His advent. Wherever men have given entrance to His spirit they have found that indeed He is the Light of the World, The Water of Life, the Good Shepherd For to those that have received Him He was thrown such light and meaning upon the mystery of life that He has become to them the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

All these hopes and values are the realities of Christmas. No austerity can dim their light or lessen their value. They, and not the feasting and gifting, are what make Christmas the day of gladness and of hope. They are all summed up in the Christ-child, the Gift of God. And that Gift was sent to the humble and the lowly that all men might claim Him as their own. In spirit, then, even though the world is torn with strife, millions will gather about the manger of Bethlehem on Christmas Day praising God and giving thanks for his unspeakable Gift."

BANGOR SCHOOL

Honor roll for Nov. for Bangor School:

Grade IX—1. Beth MacDougall.
Grade VIII—1. Jean Compton; 2. Earl Cobb.
Grade VI—No tests.
Grade V—1. Roy Compton; 2. Sophie Compton.
Grade III—1. Herby MacDougall; 2 Henry Compton
Grade II—1. Patricia Compton; 2. Kenneth MacDougall.
Grade I—No tests.
Teacher, Adelina A. Boutn.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

TO ALL OUR

CUSTOMERS and FRIENDS

In the friendly spirit of the Holiday Season these greetings are sent to you, with sincere thanks for your loyal support and co-operation. May happiness and good fortune be with you during the Christmas season and throughout the New YEAR.

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On Christmas Day

The Gifts of love and fond remembrance are exchanged. Kindliness reaches out to those in need, as we catch a glimpse of their burden and endeavor to ease the load.

The lessons of the past should make us strong to protect our loved ones against the possibility of want. Life and Accident Insurance provides the way.

To all our Policy-holders we extend the Season's Greetings.

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