

Covers Prince Edward Island Like The Dew
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Scientists at the Phoenix water conservation laboratory in Arizona have come up with a special silicon spray which they claim makes arid land water-repellant. Tests show that this will cause about 90 per cent of the rainwater to run off the soil so it can be collected in reservoirs. Other new products on the research threshold include artificial caviar and a new breed of corn unusually rich in high quality protein.

A number of companies, too, are busily engaged in developing synthetic materials that simulate the appearance of grass but lack its flaws. One material has tufts of thin green plastic strips attached to a plastic base. Similar tough, low-maintenance materials already have been installed at a number of horse racing tracks, athletic running tracks and play grounds. As labor costs rise, it is figured that the same thing may happen eventually to the country's 8,000 golf courses, baseball diamonds, football fields—and even to suburban lawns.

The marvel of plastic lawns, like that of artificial Christmas trees, plastic plants and flowers, cunningly made and remarkably realistic, is that they require little or no maintenance—no fertilizers, sprinkling, spading, insecticides, humus, no weekly work-outs with the lawnmower, no borders to trim, nothing to rake up. As the Milwaukee Journal remarks, after pausing to admire this striking demonstration of man's capacity to improve on nature:

"All he loses are the evocative perfumes of natural flowers, the drowsy summer hum of bees, the piney aroma of a living evergreen in the livingroom, the sweet scents of clipped lawn and pungent wet earth and the annual miracle of green growing things in their cycle from birth to oblivion. All he misses, indeed, is life itself."

Fewer Polar Bears

Seen any polar bears lately? Concern is mounting that they are getting fewer and will become extinct unless excessive hunting is curbed. Norwegian, Danish, Soviet, United States and Canadian scientists plan to investigate the problem. According to an official of the Norwegian Polar Institute, hunting these animals may shortly be forbidden. But how enforce such regulations? Under international law, polar bears belong to no nation because they live in international waters.

The Russians are one up on us in meeting this problem. They have already stopped this form of "sport" in their territories, but shooting in other arctic regions is so excessive that there are believed to be only about 8,000 polar bears left. Soviet natural scientists put the figure as low as 5,000. Canadian estimates put it at about 10,000, while Americans maintain that there are still some 19,000 of them. But that may be wishful thinking.

Actually little is known about these arctic denizens, who lorded it over their habitat long before man made his appearance on the scene. There is no available data on their family lives—on how many cubs they have at each birth, how long they live, or how often they have litters. This is partly due to the difficulties in finding them, and partly to high expedition costs.

But civilization appears to have facilitated their massacre on an increasing scale, and it is time something was being done. Norwegian teams shot 400 polar bears last year, the Danes 500, and Icelandic teams "many, many more," according to the official above quoted. Whether the bears succeeded in bagging any of their aggressors is not stated; but after all it would have been in self-defense, wouldn't it?

Despite their reputation for ferocity, they haven't done the human race much harm. They feed on seals, walrus, fish and dead animals, and otherwise keep to themselves, minding their own business and perfectly willing, by all accounts, to let others do the same. Their magnificent coats make fine trophies, of course; but that's an old excuse for blasting others of God's creatures out of existence. We hope the bears win a breathing spell in this case, by some international arrangement that will save them from the fate of the dodo.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The horse still reigns supreme in at least one part of the automobile capital of the world. Michigan's Mackinac Island bans private cars from its roads. To preserve a 19th-century atmosphere, residents ride horse-drawn buggies, pedicabs, and bicycles. Even the police chase criminals on horseback.



WASHINGTON DOVECOTE

OTTAWA REPORT By Patrick Nicholson

High Cost Of Credit Causes Concern

My favourite story of the week concerns the art lover who paid \$1,000 for an "abstract", finger-painted by a gorilla in the zoo at Albuquerque, USA. Of course, many abstracts look to the traditionalists as if they were painted by gorillas, but... Here in Canada we have not that kind of money to toss around on whims. Thus, average wages made an impressive gain of better than 4 per cent during 1965. But there is no trick to fattening wage packets if prices rise proportionately, and the worker's gain in 1965 was cancelled out by a corresponding 4 per cent jump in prices which his wife had to pay for food, clothes and other living costs across the board.

Last year was our most inflationary year since the Korean War fifteen years ago. It created the impression of a boom thanks to prodigal government policies, but those rising prices levy a savage toll on pensioners and others whose wages or fixed incomes cannot be negotiated upwards in proportion. MPs drifting through Ottawa are uneasy at our cost of living curve, which is rising steeply at year's end. Those in the Opposition will be openly critical of government policies which saw nearly half of our increase in gross national product attributable to higher prices, which damage our export trade and foster imports.

CREDIT LIVING COSTLY An economic abuse which several MPs plan to criticize in the new Parliament is the high cost of credit. From Quebec, influential voices call this the most damaging scourge of our society. The blame is laid by practical business men such as Senator McCutcheon squarely on the government, for continuing to "restrict the banks to a 6 per cent interest, and hence driving the public to the other money-lenders such as the "near banks and the second mortgage vendors who are not restricted by law in the interest they may charge, and levy usurious rates sometimes as high as 30 per cent and commonly add about 18 percent interest to the cost of credit-buying. Those MPs who are closely interested in this subject are now

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions of correspondents. All letters published are subject to editing and condensation where necessary. The Guardian is unable to enter into any correspondence regarding letters submitted.

MARITIME UNION

Sir,—Maritime union should be getting a lot more consideration than it's getting. There is a lot to be gained and very little to lose, except perhaps a little pride. Now that we are getting the causeway lends itself to union. We are too small to ever expect to be an economic province by ourselves. Our cost of living is high and income lower than the other provinces (except perhaps Newfoundland). Our administrative cost per capital (in spite of lower salaries) is too high. Greater Halifax, with a population nearly as much as the Island, only has two representatives in the local House. We would be much more favorably looked upon in the rest of Canada if we were all one source of income. We can't expect to gain much in population. We have tried nearly everything. We get less of the consumers' dollars because we are too small to get properly organized. I don't think we should miss any opportunity to discuss this union and hope it will be seriously considered at the coming session of the House. I am, Sir, etc. ELDON DRUMMOND FreeTown, P.E.I.

TEN YEARS AGO

(January 14, 1956) Princess Margaret, whose clothes had often been subject of debate, was rated among the best-dressed 10. She shared second place with the Duchess of Windsor. It was reported that over 1,000 ducks and six Canada geese were wintering at the Harvey Moore Sanctuary at Commercial Cross.

Bacillary Dysentery

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen Most adults recognize bacillary dysentery as a serious bowel disorder. It was a ravager of armies for centuries and continues to be a problem in this country and abroad. The name of the causative organism was changed to Shigella (Sh.); the four types are called after their discoverers. The Sh. flexneri type, for example, is named in honor of the late Dr. Simon Flexner, a famous bacteriologist at the turn of the century.

The Sh. sonnei type is one of the most prevalent infectious diseases in England and Wales. They rest to the condition as Shigella dysentery, and an average of 30,000 cases are reported annually. Authorities believe that this is only a fraction of those involved because most cases are not recognized. Bacillary dysentery usually is transmitted via contaminated food and water, but food-borne outbreaks are now rare in that country.

The disease is spread mainly by contact with those suffering acute diarrheal attack. Youngsters are favored and probably are the main spreaders of the malady. This is why Shigella dysentery is a common problem in nurseries and schools. When introduced into the home it spreads rapidly to other family members.

Outbreaks of dysentery are not easily controlled. We lack an efficient vaccine even though good remedies are available. The best prophylaxis is keeping the hands clean and paying strict attention to good hygiene in the lavatory. The main problem is that many are not sick enough to be concerned about spreading the disease. In addition, the causative Shigella bacilli are expelled in the stool for weeks after diarrhea subsides. Some persons become carriers. The problem is 10 times as great when the individual is a food handler.

Bacillary dysentery is best treated with certain sulfonamides and streptomycin. Rest is important along with fluids to combat dehydration and acidosis. Barley or rice water, gruels, poached eggs, custard, weak fruit juices, and toast should be eaten until diarrhea subsides.

JITTERY LEGS J. R. writes: During his sleep my husband's arms and legs jerk violently at times, which wakes him up. What causes this?

REPLY These movements may stem from the release of emotional tension, in which the individual acts out a dream. Another factor is myoclonic jerking a spontaneous stimulation of muscles that occurs during relaxation.

WELL ROUNDED MEALS Mrs. T.W. writes: When a doctor suggests a balanced diet does he mean an equal amount of protein, roughage, and starch, etc. foods?

REPLY No. He means a diet that will supply all the needs of the body. Menus of this kind contain the right combination of the different food elements: carbohydrates, fats, proteins, minerals, and vitamins.

NOT ALWAYS Mrs. A. writes: Is it necessary to take hormones after a hysterectomy?

REPLY No. Hormones may be needed when the ovaries are removed as well as the uterus, or when the woman is in the change of life, at the time of surgery.

ONE PLUS WHAT? K. L. writes: What does one plus in a urinalysis mean?

REPLY It means "a little." You neglected to state whether the finding referred to sugar, albumin, or what.

TODAY'S HEALTH HINT—Walking is perfect exercise.

NOTES BY THE WAY

A scientist says worms can think. It would be interesting to know what they think about early birds.—Guelph Mercury. The other day a young Chilton girl, interested in making money as a baby sitter, presented this list of prices for us to print in her advertisement: "Sleeping babies, 25c. Crying babies, 35c. Wet babies, 40c. Worse than wet babies, 50c.—Chilton Times, Journal. It would be interesting to be the first man on the moon but I'd rather be the first one back.—Door County Advocate. Prime Minister Pearson has suggested that the words of O Canada should be rewritten because "We stand on guard five times in two lines in that anthem." Maybe we have a lot to be on guard against.—Port Arthur News Chronicle.

Time's Changes Noted

Financial Post Times obviously have changed. The first president of the Dominion of Canada General Insurance Co. in 1887 was Sir John A. Macdonald, who also happened to be Prime Minister. At the same time, Macdonald was also president of Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. Sir Wilfred Laurier was a director of Mutual Life Assurance Co. of Canada while Prime Minister. And Sir George Ross doubled as both president of Manufacturers Life and Premier of Ontario. There is no record of how many policies these gentlemen sold to their parliamentary colleagues.

Scotland's Winter Sports

Regina Leader-Post Commercialism has come to the Scottish Highlands—and it may not be a bad thing since it will attract thousands of tourists from all over the world. There has been built near Aviemore, in the heart of scenic mountain country, a \$2,100,000 Rocky Mountain-style hotel and winter sports centre. As a matter of fact, this kind of winter sports community has found increasing popularity all over Europe, thanks to the initiative in Alpine regions many decades ago. Those who think Banff is spoiled by its commercialism should pay a visit to Garmisch in the West German Alps. Now the Scots are getting into the picture. The initial venture near Aviemore is only the first portion of a program for the development of winter sports facilities which is expected to cost more than \$12,000,000 before it is finished. The new project, opened by the Duke of Edinburgh, covers 60 acres and consists of a luxury hotel and mountain chalet. Next year there will be added a heated swimming pool and a seven-sheet curling rink. This latter is certainly needed in the country that developed the game. The Colymburidge project, as it is called, is intended to attract the novice skier, for whom expert tuition is available from famous European coaches. There is to be an appeal, too, to the skiing family. A nursery has been built at the hotel where a trained staff will look after the interests of those too young to take to the slopes. Both the hotel and the lodge are within shouting distance of the Cairngorm ski lift which takes both beginners and seasoned skiers to their appropriate slopes. Skating, curling, fishing and pony trekking are also arranged for. Another link with the Banff facilities in the Rockies is the fact that the new hotel is also planned as a conference centre.

Crop Insurance

Montreal Star In theory, at least, all risks are insurable. However, actuarial scientists over the years have been loath to put a price tag on the insuring of farm crops against natural disasters. Hail is the only risk for which standard insurance policies have been developed; farmers carried their own risks against drought, floods, plant diseases and pests. When such disasters have struck on a grand scale it has been the fashion for governments then to consider whether or not farmers' losses warranted some compensation from the public treasury. One of the real benefits of the gradual spread of government-supported crop insurance in Canada is that the compensation paid will no longer be a discretionary decision—or a political one. The progress in establishing crop insurance schemes has not been easy. Even in the cash crop areas of western Canada where precise statistics exist on long-term yield averages and where the crop losses in any given area are relatively easy to estimate on a dollar per acre basis, there has been difficulty in establishing workable insurance programs. Manitoba, the first province to take advantage of supporting federal legislation, had only one year of trial experience before her farmers were struck by the disastrous drought of 1961. It is encouraging to note now, however, that after four consecutive heavy crops, the Manitoba plan appears able to stand on its own feet. The problem of insuring farmers' yields in eastern Canada is much more complex, particularly where the income is derived entirely from the sale of livestock products. It is not easy to measure in actuarial terms, the loss of milk or meat production suffered, as a result of drought or to determine the value of forage from damage by wet weather. Yet experience in both Ontario and Quebec in the past two seasons has most certainly indicated that heavy losses are suffered in milk and meat production.

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Only In Britain

London Free Press

It could happen only in England, Diehard Tories, motoring associations, and auto makers are indignant because the Labour Government has had the colossal cheek to impose a speed limit on British roads. It would like drivers to stay below 70 m. p. h. To a North American it is almost beyond comprehension that a law that we've had most of our lives—obeyed or not—should stir up such a ruckus in the Motherland. But the average Briton views speed limits, and parking meters, as invasion of his personal privacy. To a Canadian driving in England for the first time it comes as a shock to see that his British counterpart thinks nothing of parking his car on a highway while he strolls off to watch the antics of a tufted titmouse, or whatever strikes his fancy. England has been reluctant to come to terms with the Automotive Age. Most of its better roads were built by the Romans and the "dual carriage-way," as Britons call their super-highway are still a novelty. And England yields to no nation for claiming the world's worst weekend traffic jam. However, there is a strange ambivalence about the British character; once laws are passed they are more likely to be obeyed there than in most countries, and penalties are made to stick. Protests will be written to The Times, but it's a fair bet that motorists will eventually agree that 70 is fast enough on roads where even 50 is suicidal.

SPECIALIST ELECTED

PARIS (AP)—Prof. Louis Leprince-Ringuet, a specialist on cosmic rays and mesons, was elected to the French Academy Thursday to succeed the late Gen. Maxime Weygand.

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