

THE GUARDIAN

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CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew"

"The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN, SATURDAY, FEB. 13, 1954

A Centuries Old Custom

Nobody knows for certain when or where the custom of giving valentines began. Students digging into ancient legends find that the early Christian calendar lists a number of saints named Valentine or Valentinus.

One theory relates the origin of Valentine's celebrations to pre-Christian Rome's festival of Lupercalia. Held around the middle of February, this festival was an occasion of feasting, dancing and revelry to welcome the spring.

Another explanation of the boy-meets-girl theme of February 14 is found in the medieval belief that this was the date when all birds wooed and mated. Chaucer, in his "Parlement of Foules," used this idea in the 14th century when he wrote, "For this was on Seynt Valentyne's day, when every foul cometh ther to choose his mate."

Whatever its beginning, Valentine's Day has been enthusiastically celebrated throughout the centuries. Local customs and degrees of sophistication dictated the details; but the general forms of observance—the presentation of such gifts as flowers, gloves, sweets, and jewelry, and the professions of undying love—have remained remarkably constant.

Main Task

Every patriotic Canadian will sympathize with those individuals and groups who are pleading with the Government to enact legislation that would outlaw Communism. It is doubtful, however, that any such legislation would serve any very useful purpose; where it has been tried—the United States and South Africa are two notable instances—it has failed; indeed, some competent observers claim it has made matters worse instead of better.

The first effect of Communist-outlawing legislation would be to drive Communism further and further underground and so render it even more dangerous. Then, too, it would savour too much of the Communists' own method of suppression of minority opinion; is not that the very thing the Free World is pledged to combat?

The main objection to Communism—or Fascism or any other form of political authoritarianism—is that it is tyrannical and callously deprives the individual of his rights and liberties under the law. The main task of the Free World is to show people everywhere, and especially the hundreds of millions who at this moment are in the border lands between Democracy and Communism, that it has, in fact, a philosophy and way of life infinitely better and more practicable than the throttling tenets of any totalitarian system.

Canadian Economy

Canadian businessmen and others in this country have the reputation of being conservative in the financial sense whatever their politics may happen to be. The brief of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce submitted to the Ministers of Finance and National Revenue confirms this reputation.

The executive council of the Chamber, representing some 700 Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in all the Provinces, reiterates earlier recommendations for the more just and equitable application of various forms of taxation. In addition

it makes comprehensive recommendations on this country's general fiscal policy.

Economy is the keynote of the brief. It is recommended that a Royal Commission be set up to make a careful and detailed analysis of the administrative efficiency of Government departments, the nature and scope of Government activities having changed materially over the years. The Government is commended for its efforts to improve competency of performance but it is noted that duplication of function may be inherent in the departmental character of our form of government and that there has been a continuance of the overlapping services which received considerable impetus in the Second World War.

The pressing need for economy is the necessity of achieving and maintaining a competitive cost structure and of avoiding rigidities in our fiscal system. Further social welfare measures, it is advised, should only be undertaken as national productivity rises and then to a lesser extent than total revenue increase would permit in order to leave a margin for reduction of taxes.

Particular exception is taken in the brief to the suggestion that only minor savings can be made in controllable expenditures of a non-defence character because these represent just a small segment of total budgetary expenditures. "If there are enough of them," it is very properly pointed out, "they could have a cumulative effect which would be substantial. Indeed, the very size of the tax load borne by Canadians carries with it a direct responsibility on the part of Government to increase efficiency in all departments and to reduce expenditures wherever it is in the public interest to do so."

EDITORIAL NOTES

Tomorrow, Septuagesima.

Tomorrow, St. Valentine's Day.

Some of our snow might be welcome in Sweden where the international ski championships begin today. The world ruling body for the sport is the Federation International de Ski. Competition will be from both sides of the Iron Curtain, some jumping evidently being involved.

In estimating distances, the Chinese once used a double scale of mileage, says the National Geographic Society. One was for long "uphill miles," the other for the shorter "downhill miles." They seem to have missed out on the short miles of the local inhabitant and the long miles of the stranger receiving directions.

Gaining knowledge at first hand is the aim of a group of Montreal students who recently took in a court session to learn how criminal courts are administered. This might be termed getting the practical with the theoretical.

Trade and Production Minister Howe disagreed with an automobile and steel workers' brief which largely blamed a decline in farm purchasing power for the troubles of the farm implement workers. It seems likely, however, that farmers would agree with the farm implement makers that sales would boom provided the farmer was making money.

John Hunter, Scottish surgeon and anatomist, was born this date 1728. After considerable surgical experience he took part in an expedition to Belleisle under Admiral Hawke in 1761 during which he studied the conditions of the coagulation of the blood. The following year he served with the British army in Portugal, acquiring a knowledge of gunshot wounds and inflammation. He was a poor lecturer and never had many pupils but has been called by some the founder of scientific surgery.

The London Times recently carried a picture of a coin bearing close resemblance to the familiar Britannia penny. Above was the inscription, "Britannia"; but the coin was in fact minted by Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-161), who succeeded Hadrian as Emperor and like him, built a wall across the island (from the Forth to the Clyde). The coin was of brass and intended, according to the experts, to celebrate one of the frequent Roman pacifications of Britain. For many centuries, it would seem, such a figure had no appeal for the people of the Island Kingdom. Available accounts of British coinage make no mention of it in the Saxon or Norman periods. Edward III issued a "noble" bearing on the reverse the figure of the king in a ship, apparently with reference to the naval victory at Sluys. But angels, roses, crosses, St. George and the Dragon, appear to have been the preferred symbols through many succeeding reigns. According to The Times article, it was not until the reign of Charles II that Britannia was "borrowed" from the ancient Roman coin.

Season's Greetings



PUBLIC FORUM

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

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

Sir,—It has been my good fortune to have read Dr. Hilda Neatby's "So Little for the Mind" with interest in the past month or two. Those who have read the book will realize what in it has prompted me to comment on some of the stimulating thoughts she has presented there.

I dare say it has always been possible to write a scathing criticism of the prevailing educational system—any given era. If the little red school house had fire enough to heat the whole room, there were some who had to sit too close to the stove. If the town school had central heating, bright varnished desks and sufficient light, there were always poorer children who had great difficulty in seeing the blackboard in the space remaining in such lavish surroundings. If school authorities insisted that an educated person meet certain intellectual standards, there were always those who could not reach those standards. If the prevailing opinion was that the teacher should discipline the pupils, there were always those who were more disciplined than others. It was always possible to find fault with the schools. It is possible to find fault with the schools today. But the faults of progressive education are horses of different colors than the faults already hinted at. They are different horses even.

In the space remaining to me, I shall draw upon Dr. Neatby's book, common sense and on any other idea I may have come upon anywhere. I have no stakes on originality. I expect that you will not demand sources for statements when I admit a universal plagiarism. While I endorse Dr. Neatby's book in many general and particular ways, the book will gain nothing from such endorsement. Gain will come from pursuing the matter further. And I suppose, the most obvious criticism of her book would be that she is too "pervasive aristocratic" in her argument. One is tempted to conclude that for her, education is thought of as existing for the cultured few as opposed to the vulgar many. Speaking of the many she says, "The many—granting their 'unique value' and 'infinite worth'—will still live on by the efforts of the few—" and everyone admits some truth in what she says. The truth here is like the poignant odour of a fine cheese. It is all the more poignant because the cheese is rotten.

An adequate treatment of the above question might well take a book to consider properly. But the book would have to find adequate answers to at least these questions: Of what value is the work of those who have purposely limited their experiences and interests? Were Strauss waltzes and Shakespearean plays and universal suffrage the products of single men's genius only? But we have not begun at the beginning. Progressivist education as it developed from John Dewey and his predecessors has been attacked before. Robert M. Hutchins, former Chancellor of the University of Chicago, was one of the more brilliant attackers. He has done a huge service to common sense, but not everyone of his followers has been pleased to accept "to carry on the great conversation about the nature and destiny of man" as the supreme goal of academic education. The statement, however, assumes several things which are useful as points de repères in a worthwhile discussion of education. It assumes first that the "great conversation" has been going on for at least hundreds of centuries. John Dewey was not the first to have ideas on the nature and destiny of man, even if his ideas were not the very worst.

A second assumption underlying Dr. Hutchins' statement is that consideration of what education should be, ought to consider the

Notes By The Way

Tradition is an important help to history, but its statements should be carefully scrutinized before we rely on them. — Addison (From Sydney Post-Record.)

A Russian newspaper says that work is so much fun over there that many workers just hate to think of becoming too old to keep their jobs. Or too tactless to keep their heads. — Hamilton Spectator.

Figures (from a New Jersey survey) indicated pretty plainly that a bachelor, who has no one in the back seat reminding him constantly which turn to take and to keep his eyes on the road, can't drive so efficiently as a married man who has all these advantages. — Saint John Telegraph-Journal.

It can be said without effrontery that the infinite variety of natural beauty contained in the central section of Canada offers unsurpassed subject matter for artists. The giant blend takes in mountains, hill ranges, rolling fields, majestic forests, tree-lined streams, islands standing aloof along broad lake shores, grassy lanes, ten thousand inland lakes, placid bays, great dams, flowers of brilliant hues, wide rivers, and an extraordinary diversity of hu-

The Age Old Story

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, I am not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

destiny of man. Should the perpetuation of the human race be the great destiny of man, then education need not concern itself with those who are unwilling or unable to perpetuate the human race. Should the destiny of man be in an after life, then education need not concern itself with anything but preparing people for death. Should the destiny of man be the good life on earth, then education should find the answers to war, disease, bad luck, crime, etc., etc.

When we have finished Dr. Neatby's book, the temptation is to conclude that there is nothing good in progressivist education at all. Yet, we ought to be careful. Whatever new methods and ideas have been developed should be examined closely. One sort of examiner will not do however, and that one is the educational expert. Even if you are able to understand what the expert says, he will not be able to understand you. Reality is not his realm. I hope I have suggested some of the questions which have not yet been adequately solved. The financial burden which new buildings will impose on the community will effect, surely, pause sufficient to rejoice not only in the fine new buildings but in the machinery that operates within too. In the great conversation many other questions will arise: What are the reasonable results one can expect from eight, twelve or sixteen years of school? How far, and for whom should the purely technical aspect of our life be represented in University? Is secondary schools? Is an inferiority complex a desirable or an undesirable thing? What are the practical proposals and demands which should be made on Departments of Education in view of present trends?

I am, Sir, etc., FRANK V. MCKINNON, Ottawa.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

GREEN'S SHORE

"Among the early English speaking pioneers that made homes in the wilderness was a Mr. Joseph Green, who settled on the northern banks of Bedeque Harbour, and who by his diligence and perseverance became surrounded by every comfort that a well cultivated farm could afford. The wilderness at that time consisted of large forest trees, suitable to the then leading industry of the island, that of ship-building, in which the sons of Mr. Green resolved to try their fortune, and in 1818 the keel of a vessel was laid down at the foot of the homestead farm, near the harbor's bank.

"As year followed year, the sound of the builder's axe and the scraping noise of the whipsaw were almost constantly heard, attracting in the course of time considerable traffic to that part of the settlement, then known as 'Green's Shore.' The year 1833 witnessed the opening of a store there for the sale of such goods as the country required. As time rolled on business increased so as to necessitate a landing and shipping place for the settlement and its vicinity, which requirement was granted in 1840 by the Government erecting a public wharf. Some six years following this event a line of sailing packets as traders to the mainland was established, giving it a fresh start on its march to prosperity, so that Green's Shore became the chief emporium of the County.

"The steady increase of a small but energetic population rendered necessary the enlargement of the bounds of what might then be termed a village; by mutual consent therefore some adjacent land was taken up, streets and building lots were laid off, and the foundation of that which subsequently became the second town of the colony, both in population and commercial importance, was happily laid, and now hails as Summerside. Such were the elements that marked the rise and progress at the outset; its prosperity, interest and harmony seemed forever assured."

—Pollard's "Prince Edward Island," 1898.

The Poet's Corner

THE ANT  
The ant, a prodigy of strength,  
Lifts objects twice his weight and length  
And never stops or even glowers  
Because it's after working hours.  
He toils, as he has done for ages,  
Without request for higher wages,  
And never frowns or looks askance  
At other, lighter-burdened ants.  
Not one to bluster, blame or sob,  
Not angling for a better job,  
The ant has but one flaw I see,  
To wit, he doesn't work for me.

—Richard Armour, in New York Herald Tribune.

The Passing Scene

By Observer  
CONCERNING A CZECH CONGRESS

It will be remembered that some months ago a bit of a furore was caused in American church circles when one of the investigators of Communist infiltration into American life made the amazing statement that there are upwards of 8000 ministers of various denominations in the United States who are either downright Communists or sympathizers. It was "stuff and nonsense of course and even Senator McCarthy who is well skilled in the art of exaggeration dissociated himself from the fantastic opinion. The man responsible for the allegation withdrew it in the face of rising anger in congress and subsequently resigned his post. Foolish exaggerations and unsustained blanket charges notwithstanding, it is a fact, and a mysterious one, that quite a few ministers in the United States and some in Canada have accepted, tacitly at least, the Communist creed; moreover, they have gone out of their way to publish their sympathy for the most cruel heresy with which, thus far, Christianity has had to contend.

This would be understandable, though not excusable, if Communist leaders were in the habit of issuing pious propaganda aimed at the defection of professing Christians. The fact is they don't do anything of the sort; on the contrary, in countries where they have succeeded in usurping the functions of government, they have openly and deliberately done everything possible to make it clear that they are at war with all religious institutions. One evidence of this, added to many other evidences, is a story that has come from Czechoslovakia. The report first appeared in the newspaper Rude Pravo, the official organ of the Czech Communist Party and, therefore, may be considered authentic.

The story has to do with an address delivered by a high government official at a congress for spreading "political and scientific knowledge". As usual, and quite naturally, the only political knowledge disclosed to the meeting was that concerning Communist plans for Czechoslovakia; the scientific knowledge was a summing up of all the allegedly great things which have been achieved by the forces of dialectical materialism in Russia and her satellite neighbours. This, too, was to be expected, since, in the Communist view, nothing of real scientific value is accomplished in the Western world.

During the course of his address the official referred to Church officials generally as "traitors" to their homeland. "We shall not hesitate," he said, "to punish these traitors and to trample on the so-

called sacred ground of churches and monasteries, to smoke them out of their dark holes." These are hard words; just why anyone should infer they were meant only for politically difficult church officials in Czechoslovakia is not easy to understand. The same policy has been applied to every State where Communists are in control. It is hard to see how it could be any other way for, in the Communist view, every Christian individual is an enemy of the State, for the very simple reason that, theoretically at any rate, he is committed to any doctrine which the State was made for man, not man for the State. This is not something that applies to some and not to others; it is the very essence of Communist thought.

It seems that despite everything the Communist leaders in the various countries have been able to think up by way of propaganda and actual physical violence crowds of people persist in attending their places of worship. This, of course, is well known to government officials who neither like it nor understand it. How far the report may be relied upon no one seems to be in a position to say, but underground sources in Poland claim that there is just as much real interest in Church affairs now as there was before the Communist took over government control.

This, if true, would not be especially surprising. Any student of history knows that Christianity has never been stronger than it was in its early days when it was struggling for survival against the Imperial power. Indeed, there is nothing in history to show that persecution ever has had much adverse effect on religion. Christianity or any other. This simple fact of history is well known to the masters of Communism; it must irritate and annoy them considerably.

Some brave or reckless soul at the congress in Czechoslovakia wanted to know why it is that the churches are still very well attended. The speaker had this explanation: "They are attended only by reactionaries on behalf of American fascists whose only aim is to demonstrate their hatred for the people's democracy and to pray for a new bloody war". None, of course, is utter asinine; nonetheless it represents the formal Communist attitude towards the churches in Czechoslovakia and in all other countries where they hold the upper hand. How any priest or minister, or anybody else of at least average intelligence, could possibly misinterpret it, is something for which there is no obvious explanation.

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

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