

The Guardian

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"The strongest memory is weaker than
the weakest ink."
MONDAY, FEB. 6, 1956

Respect For Traditions

One statement made by Queen Elizabeth in Nigeria is of special significance at this time when millions of people in that vast colonial region are looking forward to independent status within the Commonwealth, once the necessary adjustments between conflicting interests have been made. In praising the devotion which Nigerians retain for their ancient traditions, Her Majesty said: "I, too, respect these traditions and hope that in a rapidly changing world you will maintain all that is good in them."

Perhaps no formal statement of intention from the Colonial Office, with respect to Nigeria's political future, could do as much to encourage colonial peoples—not only Nigeria—to continue their associations with the crown as free and independent members of the Commonwealth. In the old days of the white man's burden emphasis was on the assimilation of native traditions into the culture of the greater and more powerful society. Little attention was paid to native ways of life, except to adapt them to "white" civilization. Only rarely did it occur to anyone in an administrative position that some of these traditions and customs were quite all right as they were and, indeed, capable of contributing something valuable to the sum of civilization.

There is, of course, a wide gap between the frenzied ceremonial rites of Jani tribal warriors and the staid formalities of colonial officials. Physically, it is perhaps as wide now as it was in the Mid-Victorian age; but, spiritually and from the standpoint of evolutionary political understanding, there is evidence that it has narrowed considerably, for the better. And, stripped of its legal terminology, what there is of it, isn't that what the Commonwealth idea is, essentially—the honouring by all of the hopes and aspirations and fulfillments of each, and the purposeful incorporation into one ideal—not as yet reached, perhaps—of the various and diverse traditions of many peoples?

Government By Aides

Pleading ignorance when subjected to criticism appears to be taking on the aura of a fashion in governmental circles. For instance, Canadian officials professed ignorance about any arms shipment to the Middle East until Opposition questioning revealed that the arms had, in fact, been sent, whether the Government knew anything about the matter or not.

Now, from Washington comes word that Secretary of Agriculture Benson claims to be entirely ignorant about a letter bearing his signature which appears in the current issue of a national magazine. This, briefly, is the story: In the December issue there appeared an article entitled "The Country Slickers Take Us Again." In the writer's view all the current talk about farm problems is so much twaddle, and in general farmers are doing well and even getting rich on the hard earned money of city dwellers.

Naturally, this aroused a lot of anger among farmers, who became angrier still when they saw in this month's issue of the magazine the following letter to the editor: "I have read the article (about the country slickers) with a great deal of interest. It is excellent. Ezra T. Benson, Secretary of Agriculture." Not only farmers but a goodly number of Congressmen who hope to capture the farmers' vote come November are all stirred up over Mr. Benson's commendation, so much so that they are clamouring for his immediate resignation. Said Senator Humphrey of Minnesota: "This man should be fired now, this very afternoon." And Senator George of Georgia: "Benson can no longer serve the welfare of the farmers of the country."

When asked to comment, Mr. Benson admitted that the letter was a "boner". He maintains, however,

that he knew nothing about the letter which he called "completely out of keeping with my own views." It seems, according to the Secretary, that an "inexperienced aide" wrote the letter and signed it—just like that! Well, it is clear that if this sort of thing keeps up, government by aides will soon be taking hold everywhere.

Juvenile Reading Problem

The Province is indebted to Mr. K. A. Parker, superintendent of city schools, for the admirable address he gave last week on the means of combating indecent literature, and on the emphasis he placed on the reading habits and interests of children in the home as of cardinal importance in this respect. The laws with regard to the sale of such literature should, of course, be strictly enforced; that is what they are on the statutes for and there should be no hesitancy in invoking them. But prohibitions can only go so far. The root of the problem, as Mr. Parker pointed out, goes much deeper. It lies in the home, where moral standards must be fostered and maintained if they are to have any permanent influence on the younger generation, and where sound reading habits should be cultivated.

Language as spoken, written and heard is the foundation of all mental growth. Picture language has its place, but only as a means to an end. Overemphasized, it creates lazy and bad reading habits, almost impossible to overcome by the classroom teacher whose chief object should be to create interest in words.

It is encouraging to note that modern educationists are beginning to emphasize this important truth. It applies not only to the spate of picture material in popular magazines, books and newspapers, but to educational material as well. Is it not true that school textbooks have been "streamlined" these days, with more pictures and less solid reading matter than in the days when academic training was held in more esteem? Even language textbooks have been changed to meet this requirement—the older ones being deemed "too difficult" without the visual aids which present day students are accustomed to. With the advent of television, and more and more emphasis on visual entertainment, it will be difficult to maintain reading standards of any kind. And yet, as Mr. Parker states, reading ability or lack of it is the determining factor in the child's progress in school. The problem is one which must be attacked on a coordinated front. In the schools, as well as in the homes, there is need for some serious stocktaking on the subject.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Hon. Dougald MacKinnon, Minister of Industry and Resources, is to be commended on his successful efforts in obtaining reduced railway rates on herring between West Prince and the fishmeal processing plant at Souris. It is understood that the necessary improvements and expansion at the Souris plant will be commenced promptly in order that our fishermen may take full advantage of this opportunity in the early spring. This product commands a ready market which can be greatly expanded with the encouragement now to be given.

There has been another "summit" meeting. This time it was attended not by heads of governments but by hockey players meeting in Cortina, Italy. Present were two from Russia and two from the United States, making up the "big four". Naturally, they discussed the contests, with special emphasis on the speedskating tournament from which the Russians had just emerged in triumph. But there were exchanges of political good wishes, too. The Russian manager, the report says, spoke glowingly of "the lot of things which unite us" and sadly of "the little things which lie between us." He then went on to explain Russia's love of peace and almost wept with emotion when he blurted out: "Our relations with America are getting friendlier and friendlier every day." Not to be outdone in cordiality, the American coach praised the skating skill of the Russians and expressed the hope that they would finally succeed in bringing about a settlement of all outstanding disputes. It is to be hoped that this "Cortina Spirit" will last a bit longer than did the Geneva one; at least, it cannot bring about less noticeable results.



SOME CHANGES ANTICIPATED

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion of public affairs. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

LABOR WAGES

Sir,—Three years ago I came back to P.E.I. from the province of Ontario, where I had been employed for three years. I am a married man now, and have two small children. The wages they expect a married man, with a family, to live on in this town, are really getting me down. I have worked at the new Federal Building in this city, where the Government set wage rate is 75 cents per hour. This also is the usual wage paid by most all the other places of employment. (That is for labourers). Working a full 44 hour week you receive approximately \$33. less taxes. I would like to see some of the so called "big shots" trying to juggle their budget down to \$33. per week. By the time they bought gasoline for their company or government owned car, and create a good impression, they wouldn't have enough left to buy matches to light them. While in the province of Ontario, I have made 75 cents per hour and 3 husky meals a day driving a tractor for the farmers in my spare time. I also have made \$1.00 an hour picking apples. Why don't I go back? After all, "there is nothing wrong with the world, it is just the people that are in it." I like my home Province very much, but not the wages. If I could obtain enough money here to pay my bills, and save enough to cover travelling expenses, I would go back. I would like to see some of the Government officials look into the situation, and give the guys a break. I also have made \$1.00 who went overseas and fought for their country. I am, Sir, etc. I.O.U. Charlottetown.

AGAINST FLUORIDATION

Sir,—In a late January issue of the "Globe and Mail" there appeared two timely and illuminating letters against fluoridation of water supplies. It is a wholesome opinion when there can be a public discussion of such a radical venture as this mass-medication project. Without that prerogative of exchanging views through the standard agencies of information, we would be dangerously close to the twilight of liberty. It strikes me that fluoridators are not totally disinterested in the advocacy of the plan. They conform to it, obviously to a uniform pattern, they over-emphasize the limited benefits of fluoridation and stubbornly deny the possibility of its producing evil effects. They argue as if the majority of medical men and dentists in Canada. That is an unfounded assumption. A poll of medical men in Toronto showed that the vast majority did not favour fluoridation. If all medical men and dentists in North America could voice a free opinion on the question it is highly probable that a substantial majority would repudiate fluoridation. Those who oppose the project enjoy sufficient prestige to make it safe for them to function as free agents. One of these is Dr. Charles A. Brusch, B.S. M.D. of the Brusch Medical Centre, Cambridge, Mass. In a scholarly document titled: "The Action of Fluoridation on the Body", he demolished the fluoridators' contention that the long range effects of fluorine in the water would be seriously harmful to the human body. Says Dr. Brusch: "This forced experiment with a protoplasmic poison...can cause symptoms of disease such as allergy, internal and gastric upsets, such as colitis, blood conditions, gland and nervous trouble, diabetes, arthritis, muscular weakness...and a long list of other serious diseases." Dr. E.H. Bronner of Los Angeles brings up another phase of the question when he asks: "Are our civil defence directors awake to the perils of water poisoning by fluoridation?" The greatest author

ity on fluorine in the world, Dr. Leo Spira, makes a thoughtful, convincing declaration on page 127 of his book, "The Drama of Fluorine." He writes: "In place of having its health improved by the cutting off of every source of fluorine intake, this nation (the U.S.) is invited to submit to gradual self-destruction by ingesting more of the rat poison." Those whose responsibility it is to give the green light to the fluoridation project should investigate every angle of the question. Their decision will affect, either favourably or adversely, many people for generations to come. I am, Sir, etc. (REV.) W.J. ENRIGHT Windsor, Ontario.

THE RURAL MAILMAN

Sir,—If "Waiting For His Mail" drove the mail for a few years he would know how much the mailman makes, and also the tough job he has. Instead of criticising them in the local papers, he would be praising them. I suppose his mailbox is lost about 25 percent of the boxes, either all broken, fallen down, or ready to fall when you touch it. As for the heated car and the radio, I'm driving the mail for a good many years and I never could afford a radio in my car. I scarcely ever drove my car at all—used either a sleigh or wagon, and there's no heater or radio in either of them. The only jazz I hear is (the day after a snowstorm) when I take a horse out. "Will bet you that 'Waiting For His Mail' had his feet in the oven that day. I drive my car on the mail as often as possible so that I can do something around home, (most of us mailmen are part-time farmers). If the Government would recognize a mail route of 25 miles or more as a full time job and pay them as they pay other Government employees plus their expenses, (and believe you me they are heavy there would be better mailmen on the island. Take for instance two weeks before Christmas we were driving horses and sleighs then. The mail truck was late every day with ten bags or more for each Post Office. We had to wait while they sorted it, and then had to pack it, and get going fast so as to deliver most of the mail before dark. I'd like to see "Waiting For His Mail" driving the mail after dark in a snowstorm, then come home and do all the chores around the barn. In the winter the mailmen shouldn't have to wait for the mail truck, especially at Christmas time, when they have to take horses. We should be allowed to do it in the daylight hours. All the Christmas mail wasn't delivered before Christmas anyway. Rush! Rush! all the time when it could be delivered in the morning just as well. They will soon have us mailmen on the night shift. Oh! for the good old days when the old train was taking all the mail. But the mail must go through, so it's up to the Government to see the roads are kept open. Nowadays no one breaks a road for a horse, they just wait for a snow plow. They should either open all the roads or leave all the roads closed. If the Government hasn't enough equipment, let them get it. In this day and age everyone wants to get out with his car or truck. If the roads aren't wide enough let them widen them. These winters when the snow is too heavy one man can handle the plow in the day, and the other man on it in the night. Instead of two men on it in the day and the plow laying idle at night. About these mail boxes I referred to a spell ago. They should all be four feet from the ground, (not from one to four feet) they should be shovelled out after every storm, because a mailman is not supposed to leave his rig, and wade through the deep snow to the box-

OUR YESTERDAYS

From The Guardian Files FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AGO
Owing to heavy drift ice in the Straits, the second trip of the car ferry due last Monday night, was not made until Tuesday morning, the boat docking at four a.m. She did not leave Tormentine until between one and two o'clock.

The Public Library was open last evening for the first time and there was a large number of visitors on hand. It is evident that this feature will prove of great convenience to the citizens. It is hoped the trustees will be able to continue this service every Thursday evening.

TEN YEAR AGO

Mr. K. Poulton, president of Wartime Housing Limited, yesterday expressed surprise when told

Another thing that fairly burns me up is this unemployment insurance. Some of the people work just long enough to get it and then they lay back and take in more money than most mailmen, and it's clear profit, whereas the mailman's expenses are very heavy. I see where they are trying to work it out for the fishermen. Why don't they arrange for the mailman to get it, when they figure they aren't getting enough (as any sane mailman does figure) and quit it, or when they lose the job, (as often happens). As it is now when we quit the job, we have nothing. That's why most of the mailmen are hanging on, hoping for a break. In closing, let me remind you that Her Majesty's Mail is very important and the plows should open their routes, after they open the roads for the clergymen and doctors. So Government officials, I'm lined and bright. Take up the muted melody of night. I am, Sir, etc. A POOR MAILMAN

Medically Speaking

By Herman N. Sundesen, M.D.

YOU CAN HELP CHILD OVERCOME HIS FEARS

It's perfectly natural for your baby to appear "nervous." So don't be alarmed if he is easily startled, sometimes sleeps fitfully, or begins crying for no apparent reason. The tot may not be nervous, but just following natural instincts. You, too, would jump if someone entered the room unexpectedly and you did not know it until they looked up. Think how a tiny baby feels about a sudden intrusion like this.

PRETTY TRYING

A baby's nervous system, after all, is immature, and it is pretty trying for him to encounter new experiences, sights and sounds almost daily. You can help calm your youngster and get him accustomed to strange things by following a few relatively simple procedures. You've got to try to anticipate his fears.

Loud noises, for example, will probably set a young tot walling, especially at night. If you can explain that sudden "woosh" of a jet plane overhead, and let him understand it won't harm him, he won't be afraid. Perhaps you can imitate the sound and make sort of a game out of it.

Profesomes animals—dogs especially—will probably frighten him with their wild leaps.

If you know a friend has such an animal—unfortunately many of them do—explain to your tot before visiting this friend that the dog is going to be rough because that is his way of playing and showing affection. Then the meeting will hold less fear for the youngster since he will know that the dog is merely being friendly.

Do not let your child become overtimed with play, and do not frighten him with threats of calling

that a housing shortage existed in Charlottetown. "We have had," he said, "a constant stream of requests to build houses for veterans in scores of cities, and towns throughout the country, but have no record of any such request from Prince Edward Island."

Residents of St. John's today slowly shelled the Newfoundland capital back to normal, after the worst twenty-four hour blizzard of the winter. All business establishments were closed by noon yesterday and traffic was paralyzed with snow drifted to a depth of eight to ten feet in many sections.



THE POET'S CORNER

EVENING LIGHTS

When darkness gently seeks a haven here
And changing scenes caress the weary eye,
Those radiant sentries of the earth
And flashing stars, and towns
The loved familiar lights, again appear,
Gold window-gleam, that lends the city cheer,
Joins rows of street lamps, bidding day good-bye,
And flashing crowns a rainbow might defy
As jostling crowds of people homeward veer

Far up the mountain side, the cross is gowned
In light, and magic on the river glow,
Where now the mirrored moon, all silver crowned,
Offers its boon of beauty for our woes,
While choirs of stars, with candles trimmed and bright,
Take up the muted melody of night.

—Amy Bissett England.

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Notes By The Way

The two principal reasons a person should eat a hearty breakfast are that it gives him a needed strong incentive for getting up, and it prevents his having to take work on an empty stomach.—Kitchener-Waterloo, Record

In New Brunswick, power lines overloaded with ice from freezing rain have been given the heat treatment. This is accomplished by sending currents over affected circuits, heavy enough to raise the temperatures of the threatened lines and to melt the accumulated ice.—Saint John Telegraph-Journal

Another Toronto lad has been seriously injured by a body-piercing ornament on the front of a motor car. Those death-dealing decorations were roundly condemned by Hon. W. M. Nickle, chairman, and other members of the legislature's highway safety committee last session. Expert witnesses before the committee described them as "murderous instruments" and "bayonets". These are scarcely too harsh descriptions of some of the sharp projections even on many recent models.—Toronto Star

The only advantage in last summer's drought was that the forestry men learned something about helping young trees get established in the face of very adverse conditions. By planting shallow furrows east and west, there was a noticeable improvement, because the seedlings got a little shade from the blazing sun. On such small bits of practical knowledge, new forests are gradually built. It is not all plain sailing, even though there has been a vast improvement in the last few years.—Cornwall Standard-Freeholder

ing a "boogy-man." If he does become frightened, give him the comfort and love he needs when he turns to you for protection. And he will turn to you, you can be sure of that.

QUESTION AND ANSWER
Mrs. A. E. F. My nine-year-old daughter is round-shouldered and she tries so hard to walk correctly. What would you advise?
Answer: It might be advisable for you to take your daughter to an orthopedic specialist who would advise the best treatment for round shoulders. This might involve a course of exercises, or perhaps the wearing of a supporting brace.

Whatever the records say, it would be difficult to convince Cape Bretoners that there ever was a winter January than this, unless it is the year that Noah built the Ark. No one lingers here who remembers that.—Sydney Post-Record

With a population exceeding 25,000 this suburban area recorded only three births last year because the year that Noah built the Ark. No one lingers here who remembers that.—Sydney Post-Record

Largely in consequence of newspaper criticism, Premier Duplessis has substantially modified his bill to control Quebec's newspaper industry. That criticism should have been led by the newspaper of Quebec. But in fact, only three of them had even the mildest objections to offer the rest openly or tacitly endorsed the original bill. In so far as the press compelled Mr. Duplessis to retreat, it was the press of other Provinces. Which makes the accomplishment all the more noteworthy.—Globe and Mail

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