

THE GUARDIAN

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CHARLOTTETOWN THURSDAY, OCT. 1, 1953

Speed And Speed

This is a speed-conscious age. A considerable number of people are ceaselessly engaged in producing means of travelling faster by air and land and sea. Even more are engaged in trying to get the last mile-per-hour out of the equipment that is available. It makes quite an impression when airmen succeed in exceeding the speed of sound and "break through the sound barrier". That speed, however, is considerably less than eight hundred miles per hour. The highest known velocity of a star is in the movements of a double star discovered in 1952 in the constellation of Cygnus. The two stars in this system which are about eleven million miles apart, revolve about their combined centre of gravity at a speed of one and one-half million miles per hour.

That speed on earth would mean circling the equator in exactly one minute.

There is, of course, no practical comparison between the speeds of heavenly bodies moving in space and terrestrial bodies being propelled through the earth's atmosphere, but it becomes obvious that when man begins to navigate space he will have to think and operate in terms which bear little relation to the problems heretofore encountered.

It is curious that present methods of attaining high speeds were first conceived, not by scientists but by poets. The vessel of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, for instance, was propelled by the air opening up in front and closing in behind, not a bad forecast of the principle of jet propulsion.

Now It's Lobster

When is a crayfish not a crayfish? When it is a rock lobster, according to the South African Parliament which recently approved legislation allowing for the change in name. These small crustacea, notes an exchange, apparently had been erroneously dubbed crayfish by early South African settlers, but because the crayfish is not held in as high regard as the lobster, the name was changed in the hopes of commanding a wider market.

The rock lobster is a gourmet's dish and for the past 50 years or so has been exported to England and France. Lately, a market for it has been developed in the United States, which earns for the Cape Peninsula some \$5,600,000 annually.

But in the United States the crayfish and fresh-water crab are considered one and the same, while France looks on the crayfish as a shrimp-sized fresh-water crustacean. Now, under the more dignified name of rock lobster, it is expected to earn many more dollars for South Africa. It is unlikely, however, that it will offer any serious competition to the genuine product, such as our Island lobster fishermen have to offer.

It is noted as a matter of interest that one of the earliest crayfish canneries was established in the wrecked hull of the schooner Robert Morrow, a Nova Scotian sailing vessel which was driven onto the rocks near Capetown during a gale in 1900.

A Scientist's Warning

Far-seeing educators have been warning for some time against the inroads of utilitarianism in higher education. The swing of the pendulum away from academic training has, they believe, gone too far. It is interesting to note that this danger is becoming evident even in such practical fields as that of scientific research. The latest comment on the subject comes from Dr. E. W. R. Steachie, President of the National Research Council. Addressing the Scientific and Industrial Research Conference at Toronto a few weeks ago, Dr. Steachie distinguished between two functions of pure research, the first being the fundamental basis of the applied research which follows. Of prime importance, he emphasized, was the getting of knowledge for its own sake.

"We have, I think, reached a stage of materialism now where no one ever suggests that learning anything for its own sake is of any possible interest to anyone," said Dr. Steachie. "In fact, the universities are under pressure to do more practical things. I think there is nothing that can be worse for industry than trying to persuade the university to do something that is useful." All you are really doing is trying to get the university not to do the things for which it is best suited.

The Research Council president went

on to point out that "valuable discoveries are always the things that are of no immediate interest." He recalled that as late as 1937, some very distinguished nuclear physicists were maintaining atomic energy to be an impossibility. Pure research in this field received little encouragement from scientific planners. "The result of this is that I think we have to watch this planning tendency," Dr. Steachie added. "We have to realize that when we get to long-term research, the more you organize, the worse it will be; that nobody is intelligent enough to guess what is going to be needed forty or fifty years from now. The one hope is the university, where one can expect that research will be done for its own sake, that neglected areas will be covered and that short-sighted planning won't restrict things."

If this applies to scientific research, how much more does it apply to the broader field of the humanities?

This thought may have been in the mind of Dr. Sidney Smith, President of Toronto University, in warning university students recently against the danger of developing a "frontier mentality", and measuring the growing wealth and strength of Canada in bushels, gallons and tons, in shares traded and dividends declared. "I have asked Toronto audiences," he said, "which they regarded as of more enduring worth—the T.S.E. (Toronto Stock Exchange) or the T.S.O. (Toronto Symphony Orchestra). Which do you think the more important—the first Canadian subway or the first Stratford Festival? Who is the better citizen—Canada's greatest football player, or Canada's greatest composer. If universities do not give thought to these questions—if university men and women accept with complacency those praises of material development, one must ask very reverently, in national as well as individual terms, the haunting question: 'What profiteth it a nation, if it shall gain the whole world and lose its own soul?'"

EDITORIAL NOTES

Cold water or any water takes away some of the chicken flavour from chicken, the American Chemical Society was told recently. We may expect a bitter controversy in the kitchens of the land between ablutonists and gourmets.

The 27th Canadian Brigade in Germany has been receiving a number of bouquets recently after some earlier brickbats. The latest comes from German General Ernst Hensinger who has recently been called back into service. The general rates the 27th Brigade as first class.

Britain's Labour Party seems to be, not a two-headed hydra, but a double body with a single head. At Margate party branch delegates put leftist officers on the executive but middle-of-the-road trade union representatives swamped them with their much larger number of union men on the executive.

A glance at the map of Canada shows the tremendous extent of Atlantic, Arctic and Pacific coastline which is involved in any system of air raid warning. For this reason the "McGill Fence", which is reported to provide a warning at comparatively low cost, is a most important development indeed.

Long and faithful service in the interest of those children who particularly stand in need of society's interest was recognized on the occasion of the retirement of Mr. W. J. Brawders as Director of Child Welfare. The really worthwhile reward for such service as his, however, is in having helped those youngsters who might otherwise have started off on the wrong foot.

Benjamin Jowett, English scholar and theologian, died this date 1893. He was one of the greatest moral teachers of his day. His personal influence at Oxford University was very great, although his views met with no little hostility. His own father had been a failure and Jowett made a fetish of turning out successful students. He was incomparably the greatest educator of able young men his country had ever known.

Trees that grow ten feet in one year have been produced by the Research Division of the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests at its Southern Research Station at Maple, near Toronto. The trees, crosses of aspen with silver poplar, are expected to be available some day for reforestation purposes in the province. The Reforestation Division is seeking to develop an aspen-poplar hybrid of good form and wood color, rapid growth and disease resistant, suitable for planting in Southern Ontario, where the climate is unsuited to aspen. A number of natural hybrids have been found. "This cross is being requested scientifically on a rather large scale", the Research men say, "to find still better hybrids among the seedlings."

Schoolbag In The Window



The Poet's Corner

TWO SPARROWS Two sparrows, feeding heard a thrush sing to the dawn. The first said, 'Tush! In all my life I never heard a more affected singing-bird. The second said, 'It's you and me, who slave to keep the lives of he.' 'And if we cared' both sparrows said, 'we'd do that singing on our head.' The thrush pecked sideways, and was dumb. 'And now,' they screamed, 'he's pinched our crumb.' —Humbert Wolfe

Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.)

THE ANDERSON ROAD "In the year 1833-34 the new Beque Road, or as it was afterwards called for many years, the Anderson Road—named after Hon. Alexander Anderson, of Beque, who surveyed the line—was opened. From McNeil's, North River, towards North Wiltshire, which was then an unbroken forest, thence to South Settlement (Strathalbyn), thence through to what is now called Southwest, to Beque. "The opening of the new road was a great boon to the settlers, as it not only gave them means of communication with the outer world, but also afforded them an opportunity of replenishing their exhausted exchequers, by earning money at road-building. About this time, some of them had so far advanced in material prosperity as to have a horse or a yoke of oxen with which to haul their grist to the nearest mills. Previous to this time, querns or hand-mills, taken from the Old Country, were used by some to convert their grain into meal. In a very short time some of them had become expert shingle makers, and others became adept at sawing boards with a whip saw. "The lucky owner of a horse, a cart or a wood-sleigh, became a freighter and charged five shillings, or eighty cents for bringing a load of shingles, boards or any other commodity to Charlottetown. In addition to the eighty cents he was to have three treats of rum or whiskey on arriving in the town, the second on leaving, and the third on the way home—but very often these terms were not strictly adhered to by some of the more generous carriers, as they would draw on the five shillings so much that they returned home as empty handed as they had left. "Their farming implements were chiefly made up of the following articles: a good Rogers' or Weatherbe's narrow axe, a hoe, a reaping-hook, a grubbing hoe, a flail, a frow, and a spoke-shave. After a few years a yoke for the ox, a straw collar and wooden harness for the horse, a pair of cart wheels, wood sleigh and slide car, a V-shaped harrow with wooden teeth, a hand rake and a big pot for the double purpose of making soap and boiling maple, were added. "—From an address by Hon. A. B. MacKenzie at the Strathalbyn Jubilee celebration, July 3, 1895.

Notes By The Ways

Cranks are for starting cars — not driving them. — Sault Ste. Marie Star. An old street car in Calgary is being used as a church. Give the conductor a baton and he can direct the choir. — St. Thomas Times-Journal. Prince Edward Island is one of the safest places in the world today. It is one of the last areas on earth that would ever be the target for either an atomic or hydrogen bomb. There would be little strategic value in blowing up the island, because there are no industrial or power plants there that figure in the national-war production. It's a nice place to live, too. The only catch is everyone cannot live there, because there is work to do in other places. — (W. L. Clark in Windsor Star). Highbrows who pride themselves on their exclusive and cultured reading tastes should take note of the fact that the cheap Penguin edition of The Odyssey has sold 410,000 copies at last report—and is still going strong. The figure suggests either that there are many more highbrows in the world than is generally believed, or that a good book — any good book — will find a big wide market if the price is right. The Iliad, in the same edition, has sold 160,000 copies and is moving off the counters steadily. A survey of reprint libraries published in the London Times proves the wide good reading habits have become. Four famous series of popular classics have, in 50 years, sold 130 million copies. Dickens, Jane Austen and the Brontës sell steadily. Jane Eyre was published as No. 1 in the World's Classics in 1901, and sold fourth-best in Collins in 1952. David Copperfield stood first in Collins' sales from 1908 to 1929. In 1952 it stood second to Pride and Prejudice. But Carlyle and Ruskin, which sold well half a century ago, now command only a very small public. — Montreal Star. We shall hear much more, in the next few days about those pure-blooded Canadians known as Eskimos. The primary reason is the low price of furs which means that other means of livelihood must be found. It so happens that these people are dependable, quick to learn, natural mechanics, and really take to diesels. The armed services have been employing Eskimos at various bases as far south as Churchill. One young Eskimo is taking a radio operator's course, and when trained the Transport Department will place him at a northern station. Understandably, it has difficulty in maintaining personnel at northern posts. Major-General H. A. Young, commissioner of the Northwest Territories previous to his recent transfer to the Public Works Department, predicted that the northern expansion of mineral development will create many openings for mechanics, carpenters and clerical workers. There seems a likelihood of employing Eskimos as nurses, teachers and in other occupations available in Northern Canada. Their education is necessarily a long-term program, but a large school is being built at Aklavik, with facilities for manual training and general education up to Grade 10 or 11. Specialist training will be at Edmonton or elsewhere outside the territory. — Toronto Telegram.

The Passing Scene

By Observer COAT OF MANY COLOURS The poet who wrote of "brown October in sober russet clad" was, I would say, unduly conservative in his language. There are many hues besides russet in this month's apparel. Indeed, it is a coat of many colours that adorns the interim of splendour between the softness of Summer and the cold whiteness of Winter. Give the busy agents of Nature another week or so and the wooded hillsides and the tree-lined country roads will be brilliant beyond description. It is a little early yet but even now, especially on sunny afternoons, I can see from my study window a mile-square picture of such loveliness that no artist, however sensitive and however skillful, could ever put on canvas. And each day there is something new. It is a miracle just as wonderful as the Spring resurrection itself how the many colours—the purples and greens, the scarlets and blues, the yellows and blacks, sprays of silver and scales of gold—blend together at the call of the autumn sun and winds. One hesitates to argue with a poet of nature, but there does not appear to be much that is particularly sober about October's ways. The mountains are skipping like sheep. The trees of the field clasp their hands and even the streams and pools dance merrily amid the fairy-like scene that will be on the stage for such a little time. Unlike Spring, which has plenty of time on its hands, Autumn must do things hurriedly, for tomorrow or next day or next week it will have to surrender its position at the command of Winter's heralds which do not wait overmuch on ceremony. The "rigid Scorpion" on which October rides is at best unpredictable; at times it is downright boorish in manner and cavalier in action. Today the "dreamy air may be full of tender memories of the summertime"; tomorrow, it may be, "the North wind will blow and we shall have snow". But, within the limits imposed upon it by other influences, October is merry, confident, and glad. It shows its own pictures. It whispers its own confidences. It sings its own songs. Concerning October Mr. Longfellow wrote: "My ornaments are fruits; my garments leaves. Woven like cloth of gold and crimson dyed; I do not boast the harvesting of sheaves. O'er orchards and o'er vineyards I preside". Yes, October writes the epilogue to the story written jointly by all the months from May to September. It supplies the addenda to a tale that has been told. It sums up the things that have been and it gives some inkling of the things that shall come to pass. While it has its own distinctive glory it shares also in the glory of other

times and seasons. It looks back ward with a good memory and forward with a good resolution. Unafraid, it sets its face towards whatever may be in store "of barrenness or mirth". An orchard in October is an excellent place for meditation. There and then the philosopher and the poet, yes, and any sensitive man or woman can realize the truth of Emerson's observation that "one of the best moments of life is when we witness the reverential withdrawing of Nature before its God". It is an orderly withdrawal. And, even when the harsh winds blow, it is done with certain dignity. There we may see some of the sacred emblems. Even a fallen apple has its significance and its influence. Incidentally, this has been a hard year for the apple trees. Much of their fruit has been shed untimely. The winds have been unkind. But one cannot survey the apparent confusion without feeling that beyond it there is purpose and there is meaning.

October is the month of farewells. The few hardy flowers that still hold their heads high are preparing to go their silent, mysterious ways. Before the month is out hardly a trace of summer adornment will remain. It is sad to see them go. The good they have done and the cheer they have distributed are things which cannot be gauged. They are numbered among the imperishables of the mystery we call life. There is consolation, however, in the thought that nothing is lost, not even the faint scent of a wild road-side weed. The birds have made their plans and charted their courses. Some have already gone; others are saying last farewells to the places and things they love.

The Age Old Story

And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

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