THE GUARDIAN

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President and Associate Editor, Ian A. Burnett, Associate Editor, Frank Walker.

CIRCULATION
"Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew"

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

CHARLOTTETOWN, FRIDAY, DEC. 5, 1952

Distribution Of Powers

Cities and other municipalities derive their powers of government from the Province and consequently the powers and responsibilities which Canada's constitution assigns to the Province is reflected in the municipalities. As these things become more important and expensive in modern conditions the Provinces and their creatures the municipalities are faced with the necessity of finding more and more revenue. Unfortunately the sources of revenue are very strictly limited, being confined to direct taxation within the Province.

At the meeting in Montreal of the executive of the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities this problem looms large. The president, Mayor A. J. Mason of Springhill, N. S., pointed out, for instance, that education is a headache for municipal leaders today. "Constitutionally", he said, "it is a Provincial responsibillty, but the fact remains that we are educating our people not to be citizens of Nova Scotia or Quebec alone, but citizens of Canada which definitely places a moral obligation upon the Federal Government to pay towards this education."

His answer, however, is not the redistribution of powers giving such things as education and hospitals to federal control, nor yet living on grants "from some government over which we have not enough authority". Rather it is "a greater distribution of the financial returns of this country".

This is the same problem that the Provinces have faced for a number of years and which Premier Angus L. Macdonald of Nova Scotia emphasized by telling Canadians that we must decide whether or not we are to have a unitary form of government. The Provinces require to have revenues suitable for their responsibilities or else those responsibilities must be shifted to the shoulders of the central government.

All-Canada Car Driver Test

One of the recommendations made by a coroner's jury at a recent inquest in Charlottetown was that the Provincial Government legislate for, and enforce, semi-annual vehicle inspection by specially equipped inspection service centres, and that consideration be given to the advisability of periodic driving tests.

In connection with the latter recommendation it is interesting to note that standardization of driver training and licensing throughout Canada is being urged by the Chief Constables Association. Commenting on this proposal, the Edmonton Journal remarks: "National standards would be reasonable for an activity like motoring which is everywhere substantially the same and which takes little or no account of provincial boundaries. They could be developed on a broad basis, taking advantage of the national fund of ideas and experience. The adoption of even comparably strict requirements for driver licensing across the country would discourage any tendency to be less careful away from home, simplify the job of law enforcement and make the licenses transferable on change of residence from one Province to another."

This is a case where provincial coordination would pay big dividends, for there can scarcely be any question as to the value of such a system, if uniformly applied, in cutting down death and accident tolls on our public highways. In the meantime, however, each Province is faced with its own responsibility in the matter and it is of prime importance, here as elsewhere, that action be taken. The coroner's jury report above referred to links semi-annual vehicle inspection with periodic driving tests, and this would seem to be a logical approach to the problem, as the condition of a car and the aptitude of the driver are equally important factors in reducing traffic accidents.

Sweden's Example

An exchange suggests that the Canadian Government might take a few lessons from Sweden on how to control forest fires. Canada's 1951 record shows that there were 4,529 forest fires, averaging in extent 198 acres. About 80 per cent of such fires were due to human recklessness. The total fire-swept area in 1951 was 896,428 acres. Damage and fire-fighting costs for the 1951 period total $8,643,000. In the latter figure, damage to soil, stream flow, wild life, recreational and other values is not included.

An increased public awareness of the waste caused by forest fires and an ingenious system of roads into forest lands have resulted in a tremendous reduction in forest fire losses in Sweden. The forests in that nation comprise 56,000,000 acres and are distributed over nearly the entire area of 1,000 miles from north to south. Heavy woodlands edge close to the largest cities, and the industrial conversion of the timber assets is a chief factor in maintaining employment and foreign trade.

Sweden, in 1951, had 671 forest fire outbreaks, compared to 4,529 in Canada. In Sweden's case, 373 of these fires were confined to less than a quarter of an acre. This was made possible through the existence of the country's system of roads, which penetrate all wooded areas giving quick access to fire outbreaks. It reflects equally the public zeal in blocking fires before serious damage occurs.

The total Swedish area burned was only 1,701 acres, with an estimated value of $60,000 for the entire nation. This compares to Canada's figures for the same period of 896,428 acres and $8,643,000 in damages. The areas in Sweden burned over during the last six years varied between .02 per cent and .15 per cent of the nation's total forest domain.

A system of roads similar to that used in Sweden for the huge forest area of Canada might not be practical, but at least it could be tried in sectors where fires are frequent. In any event, something must be done to greatly reduce the damage caused by forest fires.

EDITORIAL NOTES

It was the Carnegie Foundation, not the Rockefeller Foundation as stated yesterday, which aided in establishing the public library system in this Province. Both these great organizations have distributed grants on a world-wide scale, and Canada has benefited on many occasions from their bounty.

* * *

The fact that Communist countries tend to resemble nothing so much as a gigantic prison does not prevent them from being very concerned about human liberty outside the Iron Curtain. The Communist symbol has changed with no change in cynicism, however, from the dove of Peace to Magna Carta.

* * *

Interest in royalty, and particularly the British Royal Family is keen in the United States. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother has given permission for the robes worn by Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret at the coronation of their father, King George VI, to be shown in the United States. They will be included in a collection of representative coronation robes and regalia.

* * *

There are approximately fifty per cent more Canadian students registered in engineering courses than two years ago according to a survey by the Engineering Institute of Canada. The relative proportion of total registration in different courses continues to show little change so that it is clear that the emphasis on engineering is a general trend rather than a one year or two year spurt.

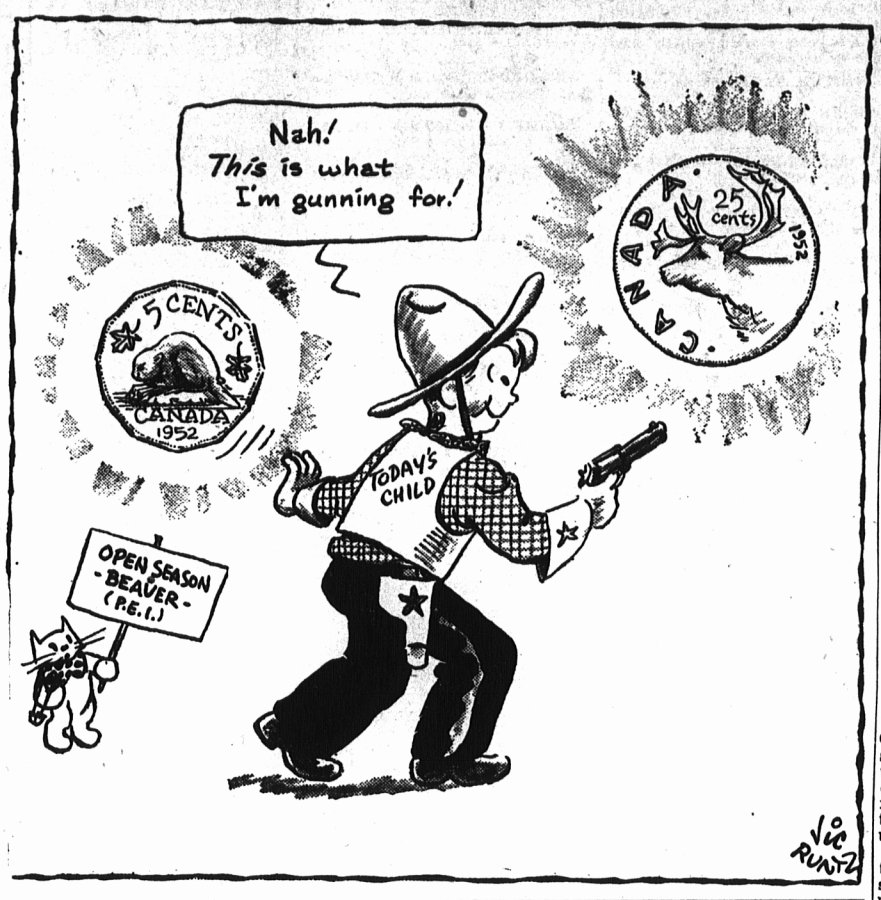
* * *

British nurses are keeping Canadian missions open in Labrador and Newfoundland. Tribute to British nurses, many of them from Scotland, now with the Grenfell Medical Mission, has lately come from the American superintendent, Dr. Charles S. Curtis, C.B.E. Without these nurses, he writes, the mission stations scattered along Labrador and Northern Newfoundland would be closed, "as we have tried in vain to secure nurses from this province, the mainland and the United States."

* * *

An Ottawa rumor that the garnisheeing of wages of Federal Government employees would be permitted under legislation to be introduced at the current session of Parliament has been contradicted by Justice Minister Garson. It was based on a statement in the Speech from the Throne intimating that a measure was to be submitted "designed to place the Crown in substantially the same position as a private person" with respect to liability for acts committed by its servants for breach of duty arising out of the ownership or occupation of property; and for salvage of claims. "Exposing the Crown to suit for the acts of its servants in connection with breach of duty arising out of the ownership or occupation of property has nothing to do with the garnishee process at all," Mr. Garson explained; "and it is not the intention of the Government to introduce legislation permitting the garnisheeing of civil service wages."

The BIG GAME Hunter



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.

MARKETING BOARD FINANCING

Sir,—In your interesting editorial, "Federation of Agriculture", I noted especially this point: "In the matter of potato growers' licences, a largely representative meeting of farmers has already endorsed the Federation's stand on the matter of financing the Potato Marketing Board by a system of licences, including licences for the primary producer. It would seem that under the Federal constitution of this country no other practical method of finance is open to the Board."

While I well realize that there are fundamental differences in the marketing mechanics, as between the Potato Marketing Board in your Province and the operating technique of the Canadian Wheat Board, I am one of your readers who thoroughly endorses the increasing efforts of primary producers to link themselves into marketing organizations—preferably on a cooperative and/or commodity basis—and do for themselves what off-the-farm Canadians are only too willing to do for them in the market-place and, of course, on a cost-plus operation level?

So, therefore, it occurs to me to suggest that once the decision to "act like businessmen in this business world" has been arrived at by primary producers—not only in your famed Island,but everywhere—away can be devised by which the inescapable financial burden can be carried; i. e., on the collective shoulders of the growers plus the intrinsic credit strength of the commodity to be marketed.

I take the opportunity of quoting the following data from the Wheat Board's annual report (1950-51) dealing with Administrative & General Expenses: "These amounted to $1,406,169, or .38 of a cent per bushel, on deliveries of 366,723,229 bushels."

I am, Sir, etc.
STUDENT

Toronto, Ont.

The Poet's Corner

SONG

. . . And when white moths were
on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire aflame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And some one called me by my name;
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

—W. B. Yeats.

BIRMINGHAM, England —(CP) —A big hit at a local ball were shoes with gem-studded heels designed by Edward Rayne, shoemaker to the Queen. Fashion experts said eyes were irresistibly drawn to the feet.

Notes By The Way

Through September in the United States an average of 99 persons were killed each day in traffic accidents. Just a little more carelessness and the round hundred would have been reached! —Ottawa Journal.

As the local bank was about to close at 11 a. m. last Saturday there sounded an alarming report. just like a gun—it was a gun. A small boy sitting on the seat provided for customers inside the bank, fired a toy gun. and he appeared the least concerned of all present. — Rapid City, Manitoba. Reporter.

A woman who could not swim jumped into the ice-cold water of the Rideau River at Ottawa and rescued her two-year-old daughter who had falen in. Where the mother jumped in. the water was only four feet deep. But she did not know that. Mother-love has no time to stop for calculations.— — Fort William Telegraph Journal.

Ottawa has a lot of nerve asking for free parking privileges when it is annually side-stepping tax payment on its vast properties here. The value of Federal holdings here exceeds $40,000,000. and if Ottawa paid taxes like anyone else it would contribute around $1,800,000 a year to the city treasurer. And yet the Government won't put a nickel in its parking meter. — Vancouver Province.

A Salt Lake City business man, tired of paying $1.25 a day for garage space for his car, met the problem by taking advantage of a downtown department store's offer of free parking with any $2 purchase. Now he parks in the store's parking lot, buys a $2 necktie or some other haberdashery he needs and goes to work. That way, he figures he's getting a $2 necktie for only seventy-five cents. — Wall Street Journal.

Brother Bill and father had done a good job in the fields. The vegetable pit was well filled. Two sides of beef and plenty of pork hung in the shed. Sister Mary's hens were laying well. Yet if Johnny did not bring in any wood for the cook-stove, mother couldn't cook and everybody had a poor meal including Johnny. When coal miners, or members of any other group of a national family refuse to do their job, no matter how righteous they may feel their course of action is, everybody suffers—including the quitters.—Fort William Times-Journal.

Mr. Justice Manson thinks there should be some penalty for people who take the marriage vow too lightly. The principals in the divorce suit which roused his anger were both 20. She was getting her second divorce. The man appeared to have shown not the slightest regard for the responsibilities of a husband. Most people are likely to agree with the judge that something should be done. But what? To be a penalty there must be a crime. Is it a crime to be thoughtless and selfish And if young people are thoughtless and selfish, who made them that way? —Vancouver Sun.

It is no offence under the Criminal Code to give a fictitious name to a police officer or anyone else unless done for purposes of fraud. This, roughly, is what O. M. M. Kay, deputy attorney-general for Manitoba, has told both criminals and law-abiding people of this province. According to the attorney-general's department there are two exceptions about the use of false names. It is illegal in perpetrating a fraud and, under a city bylaw, in registering for a room in a hotel or rooming house. But if a person is arrested for being drunk and disorderly, or for creating a disturbance, or being found in a gambling house, it is not illegal to give a false name.— Winnipeg Tribune.

A newly wed Italian pair attested their undying affection for one another by arriving at their honeymoon destination linked by a small golden chain. The couple said this was a permanent arrangement, to ensure they stay close for life. Quite apart from the practibility of going through life chained to one another, we doubt whether this is a good idea. Chains have an unfortunate connotation. When one thinks of being chained, one immediately also thinks of how one might get rid of them. We believe the invisible chains of matrimony are much more lasting than material ones of steel, or even of gold. Also, there might be a temptation of one or the other to filch the chain and hock it! —Windsor Star.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE

"About 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning, the alarm of fire resounded through the Town, and a few moments served to inform the inhabitants that the beautiful building owned and occupied by Mrs. Weymouth, in Kent Street, had become a prey to the devouring element. With extraordinary rapidity, the flames forced a passage through the roof and back parts of the building, and immediately extended to the adjoining premises, in the right and occupancy of Mr. John Scott, coach maker. Engines, firemen, soldiers, and other inhabitants made every exertion in their power to arrest the progress of the fire, but it gained such an ascendency in the interior of the buildings that every effort to extinguish it proved fruitless.

"In about one hour after the fire had communicated with it, the house owned by Mr. Scott was a heap of ruins, Mrs. Weymouth's property burned with less speed, but with equal certainty of its entire destruction. It manifested a sort of reluctant obedience to the power of the resistless element; and more than two hours expired before one of the handsomest edifices in Kent Street presented no trace of its beauty and magnificence. It was an elegantly finished house—built in the best style of architecture, and the industry which accumulated the means to erect it, and the taste that prompted its adornment, reflected the highest credit on the owner. . . . Mrs. Weymouth's property was insured for half its value in the Alliance Office—the house for £350, and the furniture, which was nearly all saved, for £150, Halifax currency.

"We regret to have to add that Mr. Thomas Dodd, butcher, had one of his legs severely fractured, and was otherwise much injured, by the falling of a chimney of one of the burned houses." —The Palladium, March 10, 1845.

The Age-Old Story

For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

POETS AS PERSONS

When one enters that part of the Universe which belongs primarily to poets one must tread carefully for to most of us it is unfamiliar ground. The cities, woods, and gardens which are the natural preserves of the poet are not quite like the cities, woods, and gardens the rest of us know about. They were built by a special class of architects and builders out of the gleams of visions and the glories of dreams.

Perhaps there is no one among us who at some time or other has not lamented the fact that life as we see it is very far from what, ideally, it was intended to be. For most of us the lament is as far as we can go, perhaps as far as we are willing to go. The poet goes beyond it to imaginative fulfillment and in the process produces the poem, — the lyric, the ballad, the love song, the phantasy.

Most of it, often all of it, is allegory, pure and simple. No matter. If it is good poetry and not mere rhyming of words, it somehow convinces the reader that myth is akin to history and fable to truth.

* * *

Emerson, who was distinguished for his poetry as well as for his essays, once remarked that all English literature of note has been influenced by what Plato, the Greek philosopher, thought and said. By which he probably meant that the best literature has been concerned with things that do not change, for Plato's chief interest was with the changeless and unchangeable patterns of life.

The most obvious illustration of this is found, of course, in Shakespeare. The characters in his plays are real living people who, in the main, are very much at home in their world. They eat and drink, fight, do things that are sometimes noble and sometimes ignoble. They speak truth and they speak falsehood. They play and work, make good plans and bad ones, and finally die In substance, just like ourselves. And yet, in each there is some trace of that eternal combination which makes life what it is, a mixture of the attainable and the unattainable, the practical and the ideal, the uncertainties of the here and now and the hope of the there and then.

Neither the best nor the worst, nor yet anythig in between "on the misty flats", in the characters of any great poet or dramatist, is altogether missing from the common patterns of man's living. Neither the one nor the other is always obvious, but a skilled researcher into hidden motives and psychic desires would probably have ltle difficulty in finding a measure of good, bad, and indifferent.

* * *

We cannot tell what a poet is like from his poetry any more than we can tell the ethical status of a carpenter from the kind of work he is able to do. All we ask of a carpenter or a mason or a bricklayer is that he do a good job and earn his wage.

When it comes to poets, however, almost everybody feels competent and called upon to sit in judgement on their virtues and failings. This would seem to be a bit unfair. If we are to accept and profit by the products of their genius, the least we can do is to throw a kindly veil over whatever appears to be inconsistent with that genius. Coleridge, for instance, has a right to be re-called for the leadership he gave to a great literary revival, not for the fact that in his dotage he became addicted to an alien mysticism, and other things even worse , which befogged his mind. Again, Poe was no less a poet of worth because more often than was good for him he imbided to much. The flesh of poets, like that of all other mortals, is sometimes much weaker than their spirits. Even the Ivory Tower can be invaded by distracting forces from without.

* * *

Nor are all poets alike in their attitudes to the world outside their own. Some of the great ones of the past (Pope is often quoted as an example) injected their own personalities into their works. Others strove hard to retain the purely objective view. It has been said that Thomas Gray feared fame and, in fact, fame did not catch up with him until some years after he made rendezvous with the Dark Angel.

Shakespeare himself was no lion in the streets of his home town. He was apparently respected as a man of parts and some worldly substance, but it was some time after he laid down his quill that men began to warm themselves at the unquenchable fire of his genius. Wrote Matthew Arnold:

"And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Didst walk on earth unguessed at,
Better so!"

* * *

It is supposed by some that poets, especially the major ones, have always been loth to admit any discord in their ranks. The record does not say so, however. They have had their internal squabbles just like all other unions and guilds. Byron once said that he wished Coleridge would stay sane long enough "to explain his explanation" in matters of mysticism. The pugnacious Ben Johnson, in discussing a contemporary, said that he should have been hanged long ago. He himself was by all accounts the most bombastic dramatist of all time, but that did not keep him from charging Shakespeare with conceit.

* * *

A popular opinion regarding poets of acknowledged worth is that they are incurably eccentric in their personal mannerisms. It was my privilege a few years ago to attend a lecture given by one of the really distinguished poets of present day America, and I must say his manners and appearance were anything but what is usually described as eccentric. Except for his pronounced shyness he might have been taken for a well dressed Rotarian or a prosperous farmer on holiday. As a matter of fact he was at the time the operator of quite a spacious farm in Connecticut, and that was about the only thing he said about himself.

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