

THE GUARDIAN

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CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew"

"The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN, TUESDAY, FEB. 24, 1953

National Scholarships

Questions In the House of Commons by Mr. R. R. Knight of the CCF and Mr. George Drew, the Progressive Conservative leader, have elicited the information that the Government is studying the proposals for a national scholarship system.

As recommended by the Massey Commission, the machinery might consist of (1) the National Research Council, with an expanded program of grants for scholarships in the sciences and related fields;

Mr. St. Laurent has not explained the difficulties standing in the way of a provincial scholarship scheme, though he did mention the problem of establishing an organization "quite divorced from any suggestion of political patronage."

They would have precedents in research grants, health and welfare training grants, grants to veterans, and student aid under the Vocational Training Plan.

As to the composition of the Canada Council, the Massey Commission disagreed with professional organizations that wanted representation. It favored government appointment of 15 citizens distinguished in the arts and humanities, and representative of Canada's cultures and regions.

Those Tax Agreements

An interesting statement on the Dominion Government's attitude toward tax rental agreements was embodied in the budget speech of Finance Minister Abbott. It is the Minister's contention that if federal financing today consisted only of the sort of expenditure which, but a few years ago, was regarded as necessary or proper for the Federal Government to undertake, he could come very close to a balanced budget with only the traditional nineteenth century federal sources of revenue—liquor, tobacco and customs duties—at his disposal.

He did not believe, however, that the majority of the people in any Province would favor discontinuing the present billion dollar nation-wide program of welfare expenditure, or the huge expenditures required for national defense. These items necessarily involve centralization, "but no one in Ottawa has any liking for centralization as a principle or objective".

After the war the problem was still there and the Federal Government put forward on its own account a comprehensive plan to take up where the wartime tax

agreements left off. This plan was also unacceptable to the Provinces. Again Mr. Isley had to devise some temporary arrangement for the postwar era. This took the form of optional agreements relating solely to taxes, the virtue of the approach being that it was not dependent for success on the unanimous acceptance by all provinces. A cardinal principle in the offer was that no pressure, direct or indirect, should be placed on any province to accept an agreement. This, Mr. Abbott maintains, has been a fundamental position in the Federal Government's attitude ever since.

One proposal which it is hoped will be discussed more fully by succeeding speakers was mentioned somewhat disparagingly by Mr. Abbott. That is the idea of straight fiscal need subsidies. The Minister contends that this "double-barrelled system" would imply the unanimous acceptance by all Provinces before it could be adopted. "This might never be possible," he added. "As a matter of fact, I am by no means sure if I were a provincial Minister of Finance that I would agree to such an arrangement. I am afraid I would find something repugnant in the idea that an outside body—a Board, Council or Commission—would be investigating provincial affairs and determining the size of the fiscal needs for a particular period which amount in turn would be the measure of the federal grant."

Mr. Abbott did not say what he would do in such a position, if he found his revenue was inadequate without fiscal need subsidies and the Federal tax rental agreements left no other means available of carrying on without incurring large annual debt increases. Surely his attitude then would be, that it is incumbent upon the Federal Government to find another solution to the problem. The provisions of the present agreements, he says, "have been hammered out on the anvil of hard experience." But perhaps a little more hammering would do them no harm. What Mr. Abbott calls the less well-off Provinces have still a long way to go before reaching a status of parity with their neighbors in the distribution of national wealth.

U.K. Farm Flood Losses

A preliminary survey of the agricultural losses suffered in the recent disastrous floods in England has just been issued by the U. K. Minister of Agriculture. It shows that coastal areas were affected in the counties of Essex, Kent, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, East Suffolk and East Yorkshire. The acreage flooded is about 150,000, of which Kent has 40,000 acres, Essex 35,000, and Norfolk 27,000. Livestock losses totalled: Cattle, 1,000 (Kent 550 and Essex 200); Sheep, 8,000 (Kent 6,000); Pigs, 1,500 (Lincolnshire 700); Poultry, 20,000 (Lincolnshire and Norfolk combined 10,000).

The number of farms affected is not yet known to any degree of accuracy. Few buildings are beyond repair but much reconditioning is required. Main damage is to roads, fences and ditches. There are some losses of harvested crops and some machinery has been damaged.

The cost of the floods to the agricultural community is estimated very roughly at about 10 million pounds.

EDITORIAL NOTES

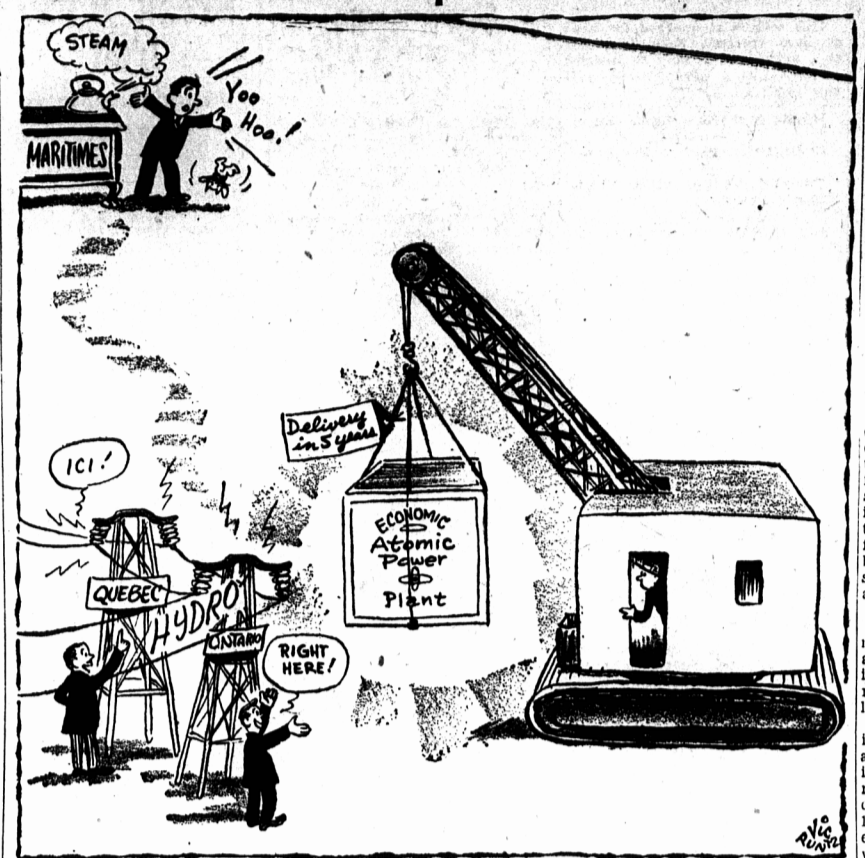
Festival of St. Matthias.

The U. S. census of 1950 revealed that Iowa farmers have the highest level of farm living, followed by Connecticut, New Jersey and California. Mississippi, on the other hand, has the lowest index of farm level of living, Alabama, Arkansas and South Carolina being next lowest, respectively.

The late Rev. Francis McQuaid was widely known and esteemed throughout the Province, particularly in connection with his former services as bursar at St. Dunstan's University, and latterly as parish priest at Kinkora. He was devoted to his high calling, and set a fine example to the younger generation as well as to all who were privileged to come in contact with him.

Chester William Nimitz, American Admiral, was born this date 1885. A Texan, he graduated from Annapolis in 1905 and served in submarines in the First World War, rising to be chief of staff in the Atlantic fleet's submarine force. Following Pearl Harbour he became commander-in-chief of the Pacific fleet and reorganized fighting groups and strategy. He retook the Solomons in 1942-3, the Gilberts in 1943 and the Marianas and Marshalls in 1944. He directed the initial stages of the invasion of Okinawa in 1945. He was appointed by the United Nations to administer the plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir.

End-Of-Line Man Hopes To Be Heard Too



The Poet's Corner

WITH THE SPEED OF TIME Swift across the night we race Feet on earth and firmly down, Perpendicular in space. So it is with lighted town, Ship at sea, and mountain face. Feet on earth and firmly down. Yet we feel no slightest jar, Twenty-thousand-miles the pace, Standing perpendicular. And by morning light shall see Dust still on the daisy's face, Birds unruffled on the tree. —Charles Malam in the New York Times.

Old Charlottetown

ROADS AND HORSES "The roads on the Island are good,—not from the care of the Legislature and the liberal expenditure of public money, but from the kindly soil, which renders road making there mere play compared with Nova Scotia. There £40 a mile will make a beautiful road out of green woods, while in this Province £200 is scarcely sufficient. We once galloped over 60 miles on one of the Island roads without meeting a hill, or any other obstacle sufficient to interrupt a gallop. "And this reminds us of the horse flesh of the Island. The Island breed is something like our own; but during the administration of the late Governor Ready prodigious advances were made in the improvement of horses. His Excellency imported the famous horse, Roncesvalles, and his progeny is now very abundant, and much admired by connoisseurs. A gentleman in Charlottetown rides a five-year-old gelding, for which he has been repeatedly offered £80. —The Pictou Patriot, Aug. 11, 1832.

The Age-Old Story

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Notes By The Way

North American educators profess to be worried because fewer women appear to be entering the universities. And we are just cussed enough to applaud this clearing of the decks of the group which, upon the whole, does least work and causes most trouble in the halls of learning. —Peterborough Examiner.

When you see a stop sign, do you come to a full stop, as the law says you should? Or do you slow down, look to see if anyone's coming, and then go ahead? Well, most people just don't come to a full stop unless traffic forces them to. That's why the Tulsa, Oklahoma, police have adopted a new sign for street intersections — a sign which works wonders and gives the driver a break too. The sign does not say "Stop." It says "Slow Yield Right of Way." Used in residential areas, it has almost eliminated intersection collisions. —Changing Times Magazine

We thought when Ottawa's Mayor Whitton and Toronto's Mayor Lamport had that ploughing contest last year that it was just a flash in the pan; but now we see that Edmonton's Mayor Veiner is in the competitive business too, specializing in racing above all else and on horseback, on the ice. Perhaps this is the beginning of a trend to athleticism in Canadian mayors. If so, we can expect Hamilton's Mayor Jackson to be dusting off his skates and his helmet (he was a double-threat man at university — hockey and football). And we have the highest confidence that he will uphold the civic honour — it wasn't for nothing that they nicknamed him Slugger in his college days. —Hamilton Spectator.

Even for the irreligious, the agnostic and the backslider, the setting aside of one day in seven when routine jobs are abandoned has undeniable merit. We think that the world's workers are entitled to a day of rest, and we should not like to see Sunday become like any other day. But we have never been able to infer from the principles of Christianity that Sunday ought to be a day when impenetrable gloom should descend by statute upon the entire human race. —Calgary Herald.

This has been an unusually grim winter on lawns. Deprived of their usual wintertime armor, the lawns throughout our city haven't fared too well under the criss-crossing tracks of people who have no respect for them. Fly the poor lawns; without the protection of frost, they get ground to bits and are defenceless to fight back. We didn't know there were so many heels in Niagara Falls, but the proof is in the battered lawns. Keeping people on the straight and narrow, off the edges of grassy plots, is like politely asking Jun-jun to wipe his feet before coming into the house. At the rate we are going now, there will be a lot of lawn sodding and rolling to do come springtime. —Niagara Falls Review.

The newspapermen accompanying Harry Truman home to Independence were so baffled by an expression of his that they had to send in a note requesting clarification. What he said was that perhaps the home folks at his return would "put the big pot in the little one and break them both." We are amazed that the correspondents did not know what he meant. This is ancient and well-recognized Mid-western idiom for outdoing yourself. —St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

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TIME FLIES

March the 1st is the deadline for all entries to be in for the Provincial Debating Competition and for the Crokinole Competition. These are open to any Rural Organization. Team members to be under 31 years of age. Send entry to—Secretary, Junior Farmers, Federation, Box 9 Charlottetown.

The Passing Scene

There appears to be considerable support in this Province for the suggestion that the minimum age for voters should be lowered from 21 to 18. The question is being debated in all parts of the democratic world and, according to reports, the number of those who are in favour of giving the franchise to the 18 year olds is increasing noticeably. Some of the American States have already amended the law on that basis. The chief argument for the recommendation appears to be sound. If 18 year old boys—or men—are intelligent enough and mature enough to fight our wars, they are intelligent enough and mature enough to share in the election of our governments. That is the way the argument runs and it is hard for its opponents to find much to say against it. What they do say in effect is that soldiering is something different from voting. The fact that a young man happens to be good at the one does not necessarily mean that he would be good at the other.

A soldier obeys orders; a voter must make his own decisions. This approach to the question may have its merits, but to an increasing number of people it isn't particularly convincing. Predicting the course of events in any field of social relations is a ticklish business and usually it is a waste of time. But there is no doubt in my mind that in another ten years or so the vote at 18 will be standard practice almost everywhere in the democratic world. No one seems to know exactly when or why the arbitrary figure 21, as indicating "full-age", became fixed in Anglo-Saxon usage and law. It is probably one of those social customs that "just grew". Because it seemed to work fairly well it gradually took on the aura of legal status. It is a curious thing, however, that whereas 21 indicates "full-age", the "age of discretion" (in England, at any rate) is fixed at 14.

Just where the difference comes in is something to ponder about, and the more one ponders about it the more bewildering it seems to be. No doubt there are some 14 year old youngsters who know the meaning of discretion and are able to use it. On the other hand, indiscretion has been known to plague some people long after they have passed the 21 year milestone. One thing at least may be put down as true. In general, 18 year old boys of today (girls, too, of course) are better fitted intellectually and emotionally to assume responsibility than 21 year old men were, say, a hundred years ago. And they certainly should be if improved techniques in education have any meaning at all. In fact, some of them, by their own testimony, know a great deal more than their fathers and are infinitely wiser than their teachers. But then, 'twas always so.

Mark Twain once said: "When I was 14 my father was so ignorant that I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21 I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years!"

To return to the matter of the franchise, my personal opinion, so what it is worth (it may not be worth anything to anyone else, but it means a lot to me), is that the difference in essential eligibility between an 18 year old voter and a 21 year old one is exactly nil. A change in the law would not affect the constitution or usefulness of governments one way or the other. At the same time I am all for closing the gap between military age and voting age. Perhaps the most pressing need is for more systematic and practical training in the responsibility of the franchise and in the mechanics of practical politics for voters of all ages. Indeed, I would imagine that such training should be required in schools of all academic levels. Certain research organizations that make it their business to inquire into such matters have stated that there are any number of people in this country who do not know the name of the present Prime Minister. I have even heard it said that there are adult P. E. Islanders who do not know the name of our Provincial Premier. What such instances are symptomatic of I'm sure I don't know, but whatever it is it isn't very creditable to anybody concerned and it doesn't add to our democratic strength. Apparently, it is spread over quite a large area. During the long regime of the late President Roosevelt thousands of Americans were polled on the seemingly simple question: "Who is the present President of the United States?" A surprising number of people, who presumably had been marking "X" on ballot papers for years and years gave wrong answers. Some mentioned Mr. Churchill who at that time was not in office anywhere. A few thought it might be Mrs. Roosevelt (whereupon some Republican wag commented: "Technically, wrong; for all practical purposes, correct!").

School-boy howlers make interesting reading, but when they are carried over into the sphere of responsible government they become alarming symptoms of something not exactly reassuring. So far as the electoral districts in this Province go I do not think it matters a great deal whether they have one-man or two-man representation in the legislature, although I could not agree with a friend who recently expressed the view that they shouldn't have any. But I do think it is terribly important that every voter, including the 18 year old ones if and when they are declared eligible, should be aware of the deep responsibility that goes with the right of franchise. If this awareness is not general, as some competent observers maintain, there is obviously a big task to be done. The sooner we get at it, the better.

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