

Reporting Parliament

Canadians are accustomed to getting reports of speeches and proceedings in Parliament, both Federal and Provincial, but it is a right which cannot be taken for granted. It is directly opposed to the ancient privilege of Parliament and many a journalist in England suffered the penalties of contempt for daring to report what took place in the House.

The question has not come up directly in this country in recent years but from Newfoundland comes a suggestion that the freedom of the press to report the Legislature cannot be altogether taken for granted. The St. John's Evening Telegram has been carrying on something of a feud with the Government and the House and reports that Dr. Herbert L. Pottle, Minister of Public Welfare, commented in the House that the Telegram should be excluded from the Legislature.

The rights of the dispute are, perhaps, not material but the suggestion attributed to Dr. Pottle is most improper and dangerous to the continued freedom of the press and of the electorate. Unless the voters can learn what is being said and done by their elected representatives, democracy is non-existent.

It is to be hoped that Dr. Pottle did not mean what he seems to have said, or at any rate that it was exclaimed in a moment of irritation and does not represent his considered views on a subject of the first importance. Freedom of the press is not the freedom of a friendly press to publish friendly reports. It is freedom of newspapermen of every persuasion to report the news as they understand it.

Deserters From Communism

There is some belief in Free World circles that more scientists and diplomats in Communist countries would be likely to seek asylum in the West if they could be assured beforehand that they would be entirely safe from the wrath of their former employers and fully aware of the treatment they would receive from their new hosts. The few who already have deserted have found sympathy and protection; but there has been no agreement among Western Powers as to the steps to be followed in each case of defection. For the most part they have been subjected to a great deal of publicity which scientists, especially, do not relish.

The British view is that secrecy is better than publicity. This would please the deserters themselves and, at the same time, would keep the Russians in the dark concerning the whereabouts of any particular individual, especially if he happened to be a scientist. It would be a little different with diplomats since, of course, they are usually posted in well known places; but these, too, would feel safer if they could be sure of having their names kept out of the news.

There is a report that intelligence experts from Britain, other Commonwealth countries, and the United States, will meet soon in London to discuss this matter. Whether or not the British view be accepted by all, it is to be hoped that some agreement will be reached. Deserters from Communism, if they are sincere in their motives—no doubt most of them are—can be of great help to the Free World; but it is too much to expect them to come in appreciable numbers until a settled and danger-proof course is adopted for their recognition.

An Irreplaceable Symbol

This is the time of year when almost every man wishes he were a farmer, if only for a week or two. The tilling of the soft earth, the sowing of the infant seed, and the great expectations which accompany both operations, somehow call forth a response from the hearts of urban and rural dwellers alike. The reason for this perennial emotion may arise from the fact that something of the soil is in each man's blood; it has close affinity with the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, of life. Or, it may go back through uncounted ages before towns and cities were born and all men lived in the free and clean air of the woods and the meadow.

Then, too, there is the conviction, almost universally held, that the farmer who loves his work and takes pride in it is freer than others to reach towards the ultimate in living. He may not accumulate great riches—though some have been known to

do that—but he is almost certain to accumulate a goodly supply of the intangible treasures which enrich the soul. While others must take their knowledge of Nature's world from books and hearsay, the farmer is in the midst of it, seeing with his own eyes the unfolding of glory and hearing with his own ears the music and melody in which "earth, with her thousand voices, praises God."

All farmers will testify that, although mechanization has made many changes in their way of life, farming remains hard and exacting work; when prices for their products are low and operational expenses high, they have to endure much anxiety and, at times, they find it difficult to carry on. Fortunately, however, it takes more than a series of setbacks to remove faith from the farmer's heart; each season brings a renewal of confidence in the unseen forces which govern his goings and comings across his fields, as morning after morning "he goes forth to his work and to his labour until the evening." Science has brought many new things into the continuing process of civilization; but the picture of the man with the plough or harrow remains an expressive and irreplaceable symbol of the dignity of service.

Historical Perspective

Twentieth century man, confronted by such unpleasant features of contemporary life as hydrogen bombs and airplane collisions, depressions and recessions, Malenkovs and McCarthys, wars and the rumors of them, may often wish he had been born in some other age.

His thirtieth century descendant, on the contrary, quite possibly, in the opinion of the Frederickton Gleaner, may wish as devoutly that he had been born in this one.

Given the proper historical perspective and with the mellowing effect that time always has on that seamier side of things that even now we would like to forget, it is as likely as not that this present age may rank with the Athens of Pericles, the England of the First Elizabeth, as one of the great golden ages of human history, when great men did great deeds, in a second and mightier Renaissance of the human mind and spirit.

Future men well may sigh for the days of Churchill and Einstein, of the breaking of the atom and the sonic barrier, of great victories in war and greater ones in peace.

Given then the thought that future generations may envy us, and knowing that no miracle is going to transport us to another century, the logical thing seems to be for us to get out and give those future generations plenty more to envy!

EDITORIAL NOTES

New Brunswick is living up to the reputation the Province has gained for literary activity by having the winner of the Governor-General's award for fiction two years in succession as well as making a showing in the juvenile field.

The Irish election has attracted little attention, a remarkable change from earlier days. Prime Minister Eamon de Valera is faced by a coalition headed by John A. Costello but it seems unlikely that any heads will be broken today.

A German U-boat, the U-505 will shortly be passing the Island, at the end of a tow line. The undersea craft, the first to be captured by the U. S. Navy, is on her way from Portsmouth, N. H. to Chicago where she will be set up as a war memorial in the Museum of Science and Industry.

Many safety devices have been built into modern cars, including the elimination of sharply projecting door handles. The danger of having a sharp ornament on the hood, however, was demonstrated in suburban Toronto when a child's head was fractured by such an ornament.

The Canadian Government, as the largest single property holder in Canada has a special responsibility in fire protection acknowledges Finance Minister Abbott. It is a long delayed acknowledgement. Until comparatively recently Government property did not even contribute towards the cost of fire services and municipalities had to pay Federal taxes for the privilege of providing the protection.

George Meredith, English novelist and poet, died this date 1909. He alternated between poetry and prose but even "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" (1859) was not a financial success and he had to turn to journalism for a living. The amusing "Evan Harrington" was more successful. "The Egoist" and "Diana of the Crossways" are amongst his best books. He regarded life as a tragic-comedy, and his humour is reflective, even mournful, but never cynical. Stevenson said of the author of "The Egoist", "God had first to create a gentleman and then give him genius."



Backyard Ballet

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.

POTATO MARKETING

In the Guardian of May 15th, Mr. J. L. Dewar in a reply to Mr. J. B. Thomas states in the second paragraph of his letter had Mr. Thomas been successful in putting his proposed plan of last summer into effect the net cost would have been in the vicinity of \$50.00 per acre for all potatoes grown in the Province.

Just how Mr. Dewar arrives at this conclusion is hard to understand. Possibly he knows exactly the price potatoes would have been had there been no Board. Just what the price might have been is guesswork only, no man can say even such an oracle of wisdom as Mr. Dewar. Moreover the petition referred to was put to the farmers to read. Some signed, some did not. How then was it a secret or how could it have circulated in secret?

I am, Sir, etc.
ARCHIE ROBINSON.
Albany.

WEST RIVER PROBLEM

Sir.—In your issue of May 8th, a letter appeared in the Forum dealing with the vexed Rocky Point ferry problem. The letter was written by Mr. Dan Taylor of Nine Mile Creek, a man who certainly should know what he is talking about when he deals with the Rocky Point ferry service. Mr. Taylor points out that the ferryboat S.S. Fairview has recently gone again on one of her customary trips to Pictou, and heavy-laden trucks are once again making their fifty mile round trips to and from Charlottetown by way of the old West River bridge. He says aptly, that this time the fairview has gone to Pictou for X-ray treatment, and he loses no time in going to the desired point, and asking, in effect, why our Island Government should allow this costly and humbugging ferry to go on year after year, when a most reasonable and splendid remedy is available, namely, the proposed Westville bridge.

Let me say here that I, like a good many more residents of the West River electoral district, was certainly disappointed to note that no mention of the proposed West River bridge was to be found in the speech from the throne on the opening day of the last session of our Provincial Legislature—a fact that was duly pointed out by the leader of the Opposition.

The evasive attitude of the Government on this important West River question throughout the whole session was in fact decidedly inconsistent with its attitude on another similar matter, namely, the recently constructed bridge at Montague. Speaking in defence of the Government's policy in constructing this Montague bridge, Premier Matheson declared that the Government had already saved the cost of this new bridge by freeing the Provincial treasury of the cost of the ferry at Montague that amounted to \$12,000 annually. If that is correct, then here at least is one example of good statesmanship in Prince Edward Island, and ultimately of good politics too, for an enlightened electorate throughout our Province is not slow to recognize an example of good statesmanship, be it north, south, east or west in our Island.

But if the building of a bridge to save \$12,000 annually for our Province was good statesmanship and good politics too, would it not now be pre-eminently good statesmanship and good politics too, for our Provincial Government to build a bridge that will free the taxpayers of Prince Edward Island of from 70,000 to 100,000 dollars a year—for that is all too clearly what a perpetual ferry at Rocky Point will cost? Any bright school-boy in Grade 6 can now inform our Island Government that this annual cost will in his own lifetime amount to four or five million dollars—or ten to twelve times what a splendid and most

NOTES BY THE WAY

The pedestrian of the future will be identified by his furtive look and because he can do 100 yards in eight seconds.—Moose Jaw Times-Herald.

At one point, (Senator) McCarthy passed a scribbled note to the TV men: "Could I have time off from cameras for 10 seconds to use handkerchiefs?" It was granted, and McCarthy blew his nose in private.—Time Magazine.

Radar experts think the United States might have a six-hour warning in case of an attack which would at least give the Pentagon time, Senator Soaper points out, to get all its generals out of Congressional hearings.—Hamilton Spectator.

Again we have evidence of Canadian "fish hogs" as the fishing season gets underway. Giving way to their greed, these so-called sportsmen have jumped the gun on the opening of fishing season.

Old Charlottetown and P. E. I. A ROWDY ELECTION

"The election of a member to represent Queen's County in the General Assembly, in the room of the late Dr. McAulay, came on at the Court House in Charlottetown on Tuesday last, and after continuing three days, was, on motion of Mr. Fairbairn, one of the candidates, adjourned to Chinese Point, where the contest is at this moment going on, this being the day fixed for its renewal. Mr. Nelson was proposed by Mr. C. Longworth, seconded by Mr. Farquharson; Mr. Fairbairn by William Hyde, Esq., seconded by Mr. John Hyde; Mr. MacGregor by Mr. Nicholas Jenkins of Lot 49, seconded by Mr. Allan Cameron. The numbers at the close of the third day's poll stood as follows: Mr. Nelson 359, Mr. Fairbairn 194, Mr. MacGregor 67. On Thursday morning Mr. McGregor signified his resolution of withdrawing from the contest.

"It must be obvious to every one, that the Court House is too confined an arena for such exhibitions. During the whole time of the election it was crowded to excess, and it was not without hard struggling that the electors made their way to the hustings. The building has sustained considerable damage from the excesses of the mob, for during the three days the poll was kept open, the Court House was in the occupation of a promiscuous rabble, amidst whose hootings and howls the election proceeded; and such was the noise that prevailed, that the Returning Officer, especially throughout the first day, had frequently much difficulty in ascertaining the votes. There was some show made of preserving order by means of constables, etc., during the second and third days, but altogether, such a

useful bridge at Westville would cost. Clearly, the question is not now, can our Province afford the cost of this bridge, but rather, can it afford to wait a single year for it?

I am, Sir, etc.
AN OLD WEST RIVER

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have exceeded their limits, and otherwise conducted themselves in a manner which will bring them rightful condemnation by true outdoorsmen. The worst enemy of the forest and stream and the game and fish is the man who preaches conservation and then goes out and breaks the rules.—North Bay Nugget.

The world's oldest chamber of commerce is in Marseilles and its archives include records of freight rates local shippers charged kings Philippe-Auguste, Richard the Lion-Hearted, Saint Louis and their fellow Crusaders for carrying supplies to the Holy Land.—La Voz de Espana, San Sebastian.

A pose of wisdom is the most dangerous pose of all. It is fundamentally dishonest, and it fools the actor more than it does the audience. The most extreme form of trying to "sell" this pose is the suggestion that short-cut, pill-form book and information digests will make any one a good conversationalist. Nothing is more likely to make him a bad one. To think, to wonder, to question oneself—occasionally to accept the dignity of doubt—these are the attributes of a wise man who makes selective reading a sort of partnership in his development. This in the end encourages a humility without which there is no wisdom.—Hamilton Spectator.

disgraceful scene of confusion and uproar we never before witnessed. "Nor was the discordant yelling and violence of the worst features in the scene. We lament to state that many persons whom we have hitherto been in the habit of considering very reputable members of the community, so far from showing an example of order and decorum, were conspicuous for their turbulent behaviour, and for the virulence with which they assailed their political opponents in all the vulgar fury of heated partizanship, and in language which would have disgraced the pulpit of Billingsgate. Much time and breath were spent in addressing this august assemblage, and in soliciting their 'most sweet voices', but we lament, for the sake of coming generations, that we have it not in our power to report the speeches." —P.E.I. Register, March 11, 1828

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

THREE SCHOOL SUBJECTS

I have been looking over a directive manual which is being sent out by the Department of Education in one of the Eastern United States. Either because of its so-called "progressive" character or in provocative and stimulating material. For the purpose of this article I will pass over all the recommendations concerning emotional adjustment, social development, and things of like character, and deal briefly with the suggestions that are made for instruction in the understanding practice of democracy, for, of course, these are of as much concern to us as to Americans.

I read somewhere that in the schools of Russia and China (and a child is instructed in the principles and techniques of Communism from his first day at school until his last. Reading, writing, arithmetic, history, and all other subjects in the curriculum, are somehow linked with Communist ideology. Even games are given a political bias.

That sort of thing would be, in my opinion, a most unfortunate and regrettable thing which in the end would produce nothing but human machines with no capacity for independent thought or inquiry. Nevertheless, it seems a pity that our abhorrence of regimentation generation pick up their democratic impressions at random, without any help from the school where they spend so much of their time. The fact that very little coaching in democratic values and practices was given in the schools in the past may be at least partially responsible for the political lethargy which is far too common among us. After all, democracy means much more than the right to cast a vote at election time, and in these days, when it is on the defensive almost everywhere, it needs all the intelligent and orderly support it can get. Democracy, as we in the West have received it, undoubtedly is the strongest political belief ever evolved in the long story of man's search for political justice; but it will not work by itself and, in fact, it cannot work at all without the backing of an informed society. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to make use of the schools in this way, without, of course making a fetish of it.

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