

Better Air Services

The recently inaugurated air service of Maritime Central Airways linking Goose Bay, Labrador, with Gander and St. John's, Newfoundland, is another long step towards linking up the various regions included in the Atlantic Provinces. We have many natural advantages which have not been exploited, chiefly because of inadequate transportation facilities.

The early prosperity of the Maritimes and Newfoundland was bound up with our advantageous location in relation to Europe, the New England States and the West Indies and to innumerable harbours which placed almost every community in easy reach of one another and all the world.

Those tiny harbours are no longer particularly significant economically but our strategic location remains and with the development of air transport it can be turned to good advantage. At the same time the highly diversified character of this relatively small area holds almost unlimited opportunities for short-haul trade and traffic.

It has been shown that labour itself is highly mobile within the Atlantic Provinces and it will undoubtedly prove that we can help one another even more by the interchange of raw materials and products of primary and secondary industry. The objective of government, business, agriculture and labour should be to further improve transportation facilities in every possible way, to add to efficiency and to keep down costs. With success in that key objective the general economy of this part of the world can hardly be anything but buoyant.

Fish Inspection

There is probably no other product except precious stones in which quality is a more vital factor than seafood, so that it is surprising that other food industries have gone further in the matter of inspection. That condition may be remedied before too long, according to proposals heard at the annual meeting of the Fisheries Council of Canada.

A survey of conditions in processing plants has already been made and the next step, according to Dr. Stewart Bates, Federal Deputy Minister of Fisheries, is to seek the co-operation of Provincial Governments. That the co-operation of this Province will be forthcoming is practically guaranteed by the presence of Premier Matheson at the Fisheries Council meeting.

The complexity of the fishing industry is such that regulations alone have absolutely no chance of improving the quality of fish on the consumer's table. Education, regulations and co-operation right from the fisherman who catches the fish, through the many steps of handling, packing, shipping, selling and cooking are all essential links in the chain of seafood production.

A weak link anywhere along the way can make all the care of others in the industry go for nothing. The programme of improved quality proposed by the Council, therefore, is no small matter. It requires the earnest efforts of everyone to achieve success. The prize, however, is glittering. Good quality fish available to the dinner tables of the nation would mean wealth to this country comparable to the discovery of many oil fields.

Studying Mars

In June, earth's near neighbor, Mars, will come within 40,000,000 miles, its closest approach since 1941. A "Mars Expedition" to Bloemfontein, South Africa, sponsored by the National Geographic Society and Lowell Observatory of Flagstaff, Arizona, will play a leading part in world-wide observations of the Red Planet. Dr. E. C. Sipher, famed for his studies of Mars, will direct operations at Bloemfontein. He will use the 27-inch refracting telescope of the Lamont-Hussey Observatory, most powerful in the southern hemisphere for detailed photography of the planets. Throughout the summer, 17 other observatories in Australia, Argentina, Egypt, France, India, New Zealand, Japan, Java, and the United States will study and photograph Mars. Both the 100-inch telescope at Mt. Wilson, California, and the 200-inch instrument on Palomar Mountain will be turned on the planet. At its near approach, Mars will be high in the southern sky. At Bloemfontein, Mars will pass almost directly overhead each night. Orange Free State skies are usually clear and steady in late spring and summer. For these reasons, the South

African station is expected to contribute the major observations of the atmosphere and surface phenomena of the planet.

The international Mars Committee, formed last year, has a triple objective: greater knowledge of Mars' atmosphere, its exact size, and its changing surface features—indicating perhaps some form of life. The committee hopes the forthcoming round-the-world study of Mars will enable science to gain its most searching look at Martian "areography"—astronomers' term for what on earth is called geography.

An exact measurement of Mars' diameter might change the accepted idea of the genesis of the solar system. If its diameter were known, scientists could figure out whether Mars has an iron core as does earth. If it is proved there is no core—and indications are there is none—then Mars could never have been liquid. The theory that all planets might have been torn out of the sun, or thrown out of it, would be open to serious doubts.

Markings on Mars are a dark greenish blue in the Martian summer, turning to a browner shade as fall and winter approach. This has led to conjecture that they are caused by vegetation. If the Mars study group can substantiate the presence of plant life—by finding evidence of chlorophyll, for instance—it would prove that life exists on both planets in our solar system capable of supporting it. Thus life ceases to be unique to earth and may be present in other solar systems as well.

Astronomers are also anxious to nail down whether there are "canals" on Mars and, if so, what they are. A network of thin, straight lines frequently has been observed over vast areas of the planet, but the pattern never has been photographed satisfactorily. The "canals" behave like vegetation, but they may simply be natural features. The Mars group hopes to learn what produces them.

Confessions

Long before the Communists reduced confessions to absurdity, lawyers had looked upon them with considerable suspicion. The reports record many confessions which were subsequently proved to have been false and every police force has had many more which never got into court.

It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that a group of Toronto lawyers should have decided, on a majority vote, in favor of confessions being considered inadmissible as evidence unless they have been acknowledged as correct by a justice of the peace or some other judicial officer. An objection, in fact, is that even such a procedure would not make it certain that every confession was true.

There is much to be said for the present system of safeguarding against confessions being obtained by force or trickery and at the same time considering them to be merely evidence and not necessarily the best evidence of guilt. If the evidence, including the confession, carries conviction in the minds of a jury then it would seem to be an unnecessary obstruction of justice to arbitrarily rule that the confessor must be disregarded.

The quirks of human nature require to be constantly guarded against. That can best be done, however, by keeping arbitrary rules of evidence and procedure at a minimum and applying at all times a measure of common sense.

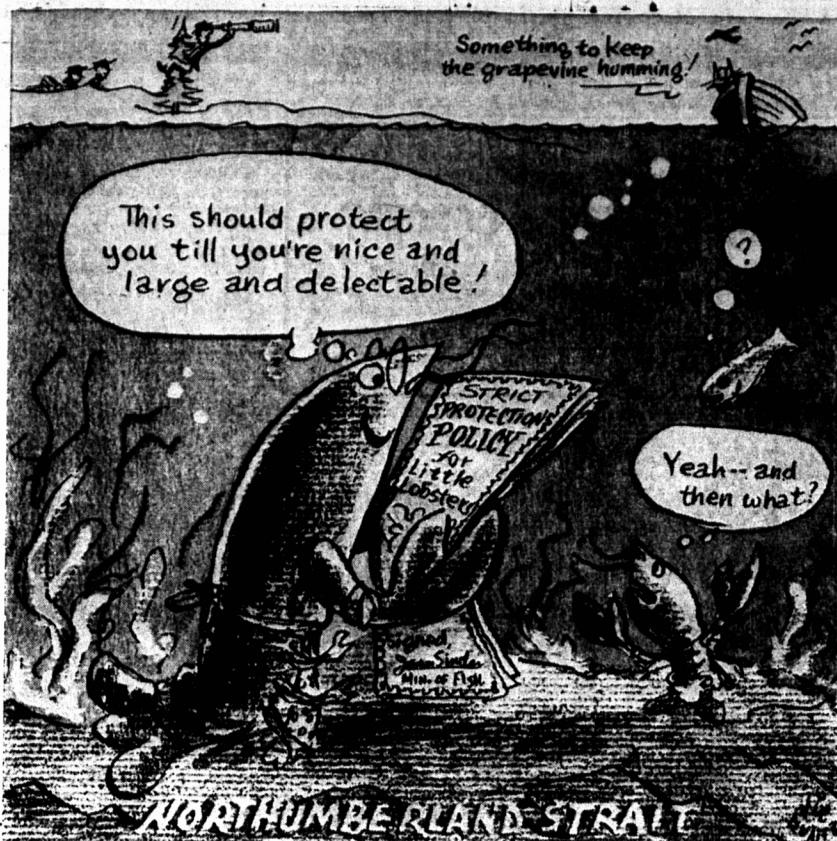
EDITORIAL NOTES

Reports of surface oil are to be expected from Kings County any time now. It will prove to be high test aviation fuel, however, from American army transports practicing re-fuelling in the air between Sydney and Moncton.

The double standard in this Province does not refer to inequality of the sexes but to swine production. Breeders have been fighting a long battle against showing standards for Yorkshires that differ materially from the qualities aimed at for commercial purposes.

It may not be practical to adopt the suggestion of S. R. Balcom, M.P. (L-Hall-fax) that part of the Northwest Territories be treated as the hinterland of Nova Scotia until ready for provincial status. The proposal, nevertheless, draws attention to the fact that the Maritime Provinces should receive a credit with the Federal Government corresponding to the value of Crown lands granted to other Provinces.

James Montgomery, Scottish poet and hymn-writer, died this date 1854. He edited the "Sheffield Iris" but found time to produce volumes of poetry such as his "Wanderer in Switzerland", on the French conquest of that country; "The West Indies", an appeal for the abolition of the slave trade; and others including "The Pelican Island", generally regarded as his best. Among his many hymns are "Songs of Praise the Angels Sang" and "For ever with the Lord."



Improving Prospects

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.

MAILMAN'S COMPLAINT

Sir,—Here it is a whole year since our honorable members at Ottawa felt sorry for us mailmen and decided to give us a raise. And did we get this raise we were promised before the election? About 10% of us did, and all it amounted to was a bottle of rum a month.

Now I think our honorable members should put their heads together and give us a good salary boost. They lost no time in raising their own.

Taking it all in all, the mailman has a pretty tough existence, out in all kinds of bad weather, and bad roads, and we have to have another part time job to exist.

Most of us are farmers but we can't farm much with the new mail system unless they change it some. If the truck would leave Town at 6 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. we could deliver the mail and get home to do something a lot earlier than we are doing now. Then again if the mail truck is late we have to wait until 10.30 a.m. and if it doesn't come we have to go with a few mailing pieces that came on the evening train.

If you complain about waiting until 8.30 the authorities say "Why don't you quit the job?" How can we quit when most of us are paying for our car or truck every month? You can't jump from one job to another like that, it takes years to get going on a farm.

It seems foolish for a crowd of mailmen to sit around a Post Office until 10.30 a.m. and then start out on our routes of 20 or 30 miles. On a bad road in the winter time we wouldn't get home until after dark. I don't see why we shouldn't be allowed to leave earlier in the morning for the first 3 months of the year; either that or have the mail trucks arrive at most of the Post Offices not later than 8 a.m. That would give us a chance to do some chores around the barn in the evening. You have to have some stock to farm.

Another important thing is our roads in the winter. We are not getting snow-plow service at all. They will even open cow-paths in the woods for somebody to get out a load of pulp and leave our mail routes closed all of us have some paved, gravelled or wide roads on our routes, and these are opened first. The other half of our routes is left. When the ploughed roads get bare we have to take a wagon, but we can't serve the box-holders on the sleigh roads. As the old saying goes "we can't change horses in the middle of the stream." Then the box-holders who do not get their mail blame it all on the poor mailman when it really is the fault of the members.

The way I see it is this. If they open some of our mail routes, its up to them to open all, and there will be no peace until that is done.

In conclusion I hope our honorable members at Ottawa and Charlottetown will (1) Take care of our salary increases. (2) Have the mail-trucks arrive at the Post Offices not later than 8 a.m. and (3) have either a wagon or sleigh road open all year through.

I am, Sir, etc.,
DISAPPOINTED MAILMAN

Old Charlottetown and P. E. I.

ROAD COMPENSATION

From an advertisement inserted by Joseph Pope, Sheriff of Prince County, in the Royal Gazette, Nov. 21, 1837:

"Whereas a writ has been issued, directed to me, under and by virtue of an Act passed in the 10th Year of the reign of the late King, George the Fourth, intitled 'An Act to regulate the laying out and altering of Highways, and to provide a mode of obtaining Compensation for those who may thereby be injured, and to cause those who are benefited thereby to contribute towards their formation,' and of the Acts in amendment thereof, whereby I am commanded to summon a Jury, to inquire what damage or advantage will accrue to those persons who are interested in the lands through which a certain new road is intended to be made, commencing at the Bedeque Settlement Road, and terminating at Hurd's Point, and which road will run through or over Township Number Twenty-six,—Now I do hereby give public notice to all parties that I will commence the execution of said Writ, by attending with the Jury at the house of Jonathan Wetherbe, at Bedeque, on Tuesday the 19th day of December next, at the hour of 10 o'clock in the forenoon of the same day, and from thence I will proceed with the Jury along the said new line of road, and complete the Inquest according to law."

The Age Old Story

Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: that which I see I do not teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

EPIDEMIC ENDS

PERTH, Australia (Reuters)—A polio epidemic in Western Australia was officially declared ended Monday when state minister of health Emil Nulsen announced removal of all restrictions caused by the outbreak.

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

CONFERENCE OF DECISION

It is not long ago when high level international conferences received hardly a thought from anyone but the officials attending them and the governments concerned. Usually they were called to deal with formal matters such as treaty rights, trade agreements, and perhaps now and then a boundary dispute, which could be settled amicably, or at any rate with a minimum amount of friction, in a few days. Even when serious matters were on the agenda, formal diplomatic language could be expected to cover up most of the unpleasant details until passions had cooled and decisions, often involving compromise, had been reached.

In short, conferences were pretty much the playthings of the politicians; other people had more personal and immediate problems to take up their attention. Anyway, "foreign" places were a long way off; they were names on the maps or in the geography text-books, nothing more. A civil war in China or Malaya, or Guatemala, or some other "outlandish" place, was of no interest to anyone in this part of the world. In fact, thirty or forty years ago a letter mailed in New Brunswick came to P. E. I. as "foreign" mail. (Actually, that wasn't as foolish as it might seem, since the root meaning of the word "foreign" is "outside.")

For better or worse—more likely a little of each—all that has been changed. There are no "foreign" places anymore. 20th century technology and widespread liberal philosophies, with a touch of humanitarianism here and there, have combined in a large-scale program to bring once distant horizons within clear and close vision. Dien Bien Phu, an outlandish name if there ever was one, is now as close and as meaningful as the next village or, shall we say, the next crisis. The foreign policy of the United States, Britain, France, or Canada, has become in our abbreviated times and conditions simply another local interest. The Colombo Plan and others like it are mere addenda to national budgets and fiscal policies.

Diplomacy, along with about everything else, has taken on a new look; it speaks a new language and it employs new techniques; the language is more realistic than it used to be, but whether or not it is more effective will not be known for some time to come. Certainly, much of its former charm has gone away and it isn't likely to return. Gentle accents somehow seem out of place in discussions dominated by the hydrogen bomb.

One singular thing about present day big conferences is the fact that almost as much time is taken up in "getting under way" as in actual debate on issues. It looked for a time as if the current Geneva Conference would be occupied so intensely over the status of Red China that by the time that detail was settled the delegates would have forgotten what it was they had come to discuss. Fortunately, that particular argument did not last as long as expected; there are other procedural difficulties, however, which must be tackled and argued about before East and West can get around to asking questions one of the other.

History has many records of unsuccessful political conferences, but there must be very few in the historical calendar which started out so gloomily as the one now being held. Judging by the advance reports it seems that no one, at least in Western circles (there is no way of knowing just what the feeling was in the East), had a good word for it. The foreign ministers of the United States, Britain, and France, expect very little good to come out of it. Mr. Dulles has his "walking-out" plans all ready in case they should be needed; our own Mr. Pearson seems to have made the journey more as a matter of courtesy than anything else.

Pessimism is the order of the day at Geneva and, since the diplomats themselves expect little of any value to emerge it is no wonder that public opinion generally is indifferent to the whole matter. "If gold rust, what will iron do?"

Yet, it must be apparent to anyone who thinks at all that this Geneva Conference is as important as any in the long and turbulent history of the nations. True, it is an offshoot of the Berlin meeting which failed; it is also true that, in the interim, hydrogen bomb tests provided plain evidence that the only alternative, or at any rate the only likely alternative, to some sort of understanding between East and West, is a war which would put civilization back into a dark age, or even obliterate it altogether.

This is no mere theory; it has been demonstrated in such a way that no iron curtain or any other kind of curtain can keep it hidden from the conscience of the world. There has been a sense of crisis and urgency about all the post-war conferences; this one, in a way which has not been apparent hitherto, is meeting in an atmosphere of desperation. If it fails, there might be no opportunity for another; the "seventy-times-seven" impasse has been reached.

This fact, unless judgement has fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason", will have some influence at Geneva and, despite the gloomy forecasts, it seems incredible that the conference will come to naught.

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