

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1951

Re-Spanning The Hillsboro

Premier Jones is to be congratulated on his initiative in acquiring from the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation, at less than one-half the original cost, new steel spans sufficient to rebuild the Hillsboro Bridge and the North River Bridge as well. These projects are part of the Trans-Canada Highway scheme and as such will be partly financed by the Dominion Government.

With defense work now being undertaken on a huge scale throughout the country, this purchase may mean all the difference between being able to rebuild the Hillsboro Bridge within the next few years, or of having the project hung up indefinitely. It is essential, of course, that the new spans can be utilized here to advantage.

Farm Loans

The Government's decision to have Parliament extend the Farm Improvement Loans Act for another three years is decidedly welcome. The total to which the Government will guarantee repayment to banks is being increased.

More and more credit is becoming centralized. It is a much easier to arrange the financing of a multi-million dollar project today than one involving a few thousand dollars or less.

Under the Act bank loans can be made to farmers on livestock, implements, land and other security. The provision for permitting land to be used as collateral is itself valuable in improving the farmer's credit position, quite apart from the Government guarantee.

Farming is a new business, quite unlike what went by that name even a few years ago. It requires a heavy investment of capital and the young farmer, in particular, is rarely in the happy position of having accumulated enough to operate on his own resources.

Dr. Croteau's Experiences

Prince Edward Island's achievement in co-operative enterprise is told most interestingly in a book which has just been published by the Ryerson Press, Toronto. The author, John T. Croteau, Ph.D., is now associate professor of economics at the Catholic University of America but is better known here for his work in promoting Island credit unions and co-operatives.

Dr. Croteau came here in 1933 to occupy the chair of economics and sociology, endowed by the Carnegie Corporation, and for the next thirteen years he taught at Prince of Wales College and St. Dunstan's University. He began to take an interest in adult education and from organized study groups was led on to assisting in the building up of credit unions and the Credit Union League.

Co-operatives almost forced their existence upon him and between 1936 and 1945 he had helped to organize: the Adult Education League, the P. E. I. Credit Union League, the Co-operative Council of P. E. I. (which quickly folded), the P. E. I. Federation of Agriculture, the Co-operative Union of P. E. I. and the Fishermen's Central Co-operative Association, Ltd., as well as the numerous member credit unions and co-operatives and study groups, finally seeing his painfully nurtured organizations join in national and international associations.

"One of the most significant developments during the time that I was on the Island," Dr. Croteau says, "was the constant increase in governmental function and

the assumption by the government of new responsibilities for the common welfare. The Island telescoped the social evolution of fifty years into little more than a decade." He notes that when he arrived here in 1933 there were only two or three miles of paved road outside of the main towns. Then suddenly, almost violently, in the course of a few years the winding, hilly, slippery clay roads disappeared and the country was cut by straightened, widened and paved highways. With the paved highways came a new way of life. Trucks appeared in large numbers. The trading area was widened from a circle of from five to seven miles in radius to one of twenty or twenty-five miles.

These changes are an important part of Dr. Croteau's story, for they involved fundamental social changes as well. One does not require to be a convinced co-operator to read with interest his experiences with Island roads, educators, farmers, fishermen, politicians and clergymen during this period. His observation of human behaviour is keen, and while only one aspect is viewed, whether of the automobile or the Legislature, that aspect is reproduced with photographic accuracy.

His book, which is entitled "Cradled On The Waves" and is priced at \$3.25, will undoubtedly rank high in the study of world co-operatives, and mainland readers will enjoy learning as much about the Garden of the Gulf, and the author's impressions of its people, as about Rochdale principles. Among other things they will be reminded that the first fishermen's union in Canada was formed at Tignish in 1924, and that the Farmers Bank of Rustico, established in 1862, was probably the first "people's bank" in North America and served as an example to Alphonse Desjardins in forming his first Caisse Populaire in the Province of Quebec.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The liveliest subject among our farmers at present is potato marketing, which doubtless will be fully aired at today's annual meetings of the Potato Growers Association.

On the principle that there are no bad boys but only bad parents, Summerside citizens should give anxious thought to possible shortcomings in teaching the young idea.

King's County seems too often to be left a bit behind in whatever advances are being made in the other counties. It is most satisfactory, therefore, to note that in the value of fish landed in 1950, King's has led the three counties.

The Provincial Red Cross campaign gets under way today. Like the proverbial good wine which needs no bush, it needs no bolstering by argument but only the whole-hearted effort of volunteer workers to put it across.

It is reassuring to note from the reports submitted at yesterday's annual meeting of the Dairymen's Association that while production figures showed a decline last year, quality was well maintained. This is the one sure way of retaining the consumer market.

Perhaps the Island need not be ashamed of its rural electrification efforts after all. Oil-rich Alberta is accused of only nibbling at the problem so that with only agriculture and fisheries to provide the wherewithal we are probably advancing at a creditable rate.

The report that more than ten per cent of the rapidly enlisted Special Service Force have been discharged is not a serious criticism of the whirlwind campaign by which it was raised. It is, however, a very strong argument indeed for a policy of continuous enlistment which would make a repetition of that emergency campaign unnecessary.

Sir Samuel Romilly was born this date 1757. The English lawyer and reformer was solicitor-general in the short-lived Grenville administration. He effected many reforms, helping to mitigate the severity of the criminal law, secured the abolition of the death penalty for many crimes, joined the anti-slavery agitation and opposed the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

"The undisguised purpose of Russia," says the London Spectator, "is to drive a wedge between Britain and the United States, and it may be accepted that China is doing everything possible to assist in that endeavor. At almost any cost it must be frustrated. If the two Anglo-Saxon countries get at cross-purposes everything is lost, for without identity of purpose between them neither military nor diplomatic success is possible."

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.

GOOD NEWS OUT OF SASKATCHEWAN

Sir, — Saskatchewan is a province within the Federation called Canada and we should rejoice at any good news coming from that part of our country. For a terrible seven years, from 1943 to 1950, drought hit Western Canada with one devastating blow after another. I will remember going about a part of New Brunswick asking for bags of potatoes, turnips and clothing for the dried-out areas of Western Canada, and how generously and gladly the people gave. It was a joy to ask people. Now Saskatchewan has come into an era of prosperity. Their great resource is the land, and they are always reclaiming thousands of acres of new land. They have also their forests, fisheries, oil and metals, all of which belong to the people.

The Government has socialized the bus lines, light and power plants, life and car insurance, health services. They are building new hospitals in outlying and needy districts in that wide land. Disease control, T.B. and cancer are getting more money and new attention. In 1950 \$15,000,000 was spent on health services, an increase of 375 per cent over what it was six years ago.

My letters from friends who live in Saskatchewan are enthusiastic about what the Government is doing for the people there, the care and education of the children and providing security for the aged and the sick. They say also that the taxes have not appreciably increased.

Of course, we cannot compare Saskatchewan with P. E. Island, for they have their natural resources which we haven't got. We did think we might strike oil, but in Saskatchewan they have struck it rich. The point is that all those natural resources belong to the people, and are developed in their interest, and this gives them a new and personal regard for their province. It will be argued that those people are not rugged Canadians, but spoon-fed people, but in sickness and old age and when children have to be educated, it is gratifying to feel some sense of security.

I am, Sir, etc., W. I. GREEN, Stanley Bridge.

FARMERS' PROBLEMS

Sir,—As I read the weekly market reports given by Mr. W. R. Shaw, which a great many farmers follow, I find them incomplete without a remedy to solve the problems which the practical farmer is confronted with daily.

One is, why I am growing a certain kind of potato which I thought was good, on my farm, and yet the variety is classed as "pig feed" when shipped to market. Also why farm produce at the different stations varies in price per bag from two to three cents, leading the farmer to believe that in some cases he is not getting the market price for his product. There must be a remedy to overcome this problem, or an explanation as to why it cannot be solved.

We have heard recently about a variety of potato known as Sebago, which according to a press report was classed as "pig feed" when shipped to market. To my mind this potato is a good one, a heavy yielder, and very much adapted to heavy soils, but it takes a long time to grow to maturity and must be planted no later than the first week in June. By the middle of October they could be harvested and will be a pretty fair potato to place on any market. On the other hand, if they are not planted till late in June they do not prove satisfactory and are easily blighted in digging, and the tubers very often break down in storage.

When I was in Quebec last fall I was shown a bag of potatoes of this variety put up by a reliable firm with the words "From P. E. Island" stamped on the bags. The grade was good but to my surprise the quality looked bad, as they showed that they had been injured a great deal in digging operations. To make matters worse they were concealed in paper bags which were closed so tightly that there was no ventilation, and no moisture could escape, causing them to show decay and mould, particularly in the injured parts. This indicates that those potatoes were planted late and were not matured as time of digging.

This is one remedy that I have used to overcome storage rot in Sebagoes. I found that it improved the eating quality so much that I would prefer to grow this potato to any other varieties which we have ever planted.

We farmers who read our daily newspapers know that during the past season a lot of publicity has been given to the Federation of Agriculture, to the turnip maggot. This was first discovered, as far as I know, during the season of 1948 when hundreds of bushels of turnips were bought by firms from Ontario and shipped as their product into U. S. markets. They had a very poor crop that year and figured that they could get away with this deception. In my opinion this practice should have been stopped immediately by the P. E. I. Government.

All this publicity about the turnip maggot does not find us a remedy to control it, and only injures the sale of Island turnips abroad. The crop each year brings in a large amount of cash and is also very valuable for feed purposes. There is no truth about any "million dollar loss" in turnips any year, as appeared in the Farm Forum news. I only hope a solution will be found to destroy this pest, as I believe we can grow a better quality of turnip here than

His Was A Natural Rampart



any of our neighboring Provinces, and it is up to our farmers to keep up the grade.

About price quotations, many farmers cannot understand why the prices should vary, even sometimes, at the same shipping points. This difference is caused nearly always by competition of loaders. Some own trucks and the others have to hire them. If a man owned a truck he could load all he wished and pay the farmer all he got for his potatoes or turnips from the dealer, without any commission. This is unfair competition, and puzzles the farmer very much, who thinks he has not got as much for his product as his neighbor.

This could not happen while roads are closed, for most of the hauling is then done by the farmers themselves, and the loader would not get any money except his commission, and I don't see why any person would work for nothing. There should be an agreement among shippers so that when a man is caught paying under or over the market price for produce of any kind he would get his walking ticket immediately. This would remove the price trouble which so many of our farmers complain of.

In conclusion I would say to our hardworking farmers: When any white collared farmer approaches you to make you believe that he is going to make you rich, after you have already proved that you have made a success of farming, tell him to take his coat off and go to work; and if he does that, then he can be classed as a farmer and can learn a lot from some of the experienced ones.

I am, Sir, etc., J. LEO PRAUGHT, Cherry Valley, P. E. I.

DEALERS CRITICISED

Sir,—It is amusing to read the different letters in your paper about the potato question, especially the dealers having the farmers' interests so much at heart. I wonder what brought this about so suddenly. I am sure all anyone has to do is stop and look at the swell homes, luxurious cars and fat bank accounts the dealers enjoy to know to what extent they are concerned about the poor farmer. Why not come out and tell them the reason is really that they are afraid they are going to lose the fat pickings they have enjoyed those past years. Now they are afraid the farmer is going to organize and be in a position to demand and get what is rightfully ours.

Everyone else is excepted by unions, etc., of their own protection. When we were getting 6 cents a bushel for our potatoes a delegation went to Ottawa and were told, "We dare not interfere with the price of potatoes; supply and demand govern the price and we can't interfere." The farmer took his kicking but during the last war, when potatoes were going to grow away up and we farmers were going to get back some of what we lost during those 6-cent years, the Government stepped in over-night and put a ceiling on "Supply and demand" had died.

I think we farmers are the most abused class of people on earth. Who gives the papers the big write-up every Fall about the potato farmers? When we were getting 6 cents a bushel for our potatoes in February or March about the shortage of potato or ammonia or such, and fertilizer being \$2 or \$4 a ton higher? Then again, when wages go up the railway, freight rates are immediately increased. Steel goes up, the price of machinery goes up. Jute bags we used to pay 6 cents for, now 25 cents a bag. And there is no one to say, "Now if it is costing the farmer four times or more to produce his potatoes we will have to see that he is protected." You can't find that individual or Government, or anyone else who is interested. It is only the farmer who is involved who worries.

I wonder why these dealers who claim they have the farmers' interests so much at heart, do not do something. It is very plain they don't want the Potato Marketing Board to survive. I say, if there was an error in forming it, form another one properly. They are demanding of some concerned to open their books for inspection. I wonder if they would produce their invoices of what they receive for potatoes and what they paid the farmer to correspond with it. If we farmers don't stand solidly together and insist on our Marketing Board remaining, we may as well fold up. Let the dealers get out and follow the farmer a few 16-hour days and they will be convinced we have something to fight about.

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POTATO MARKETING

Sir,—Our potato marketing problems have been causing a good deal of controversy through your columns, and some good points have been brought out on both sides of the argument. Being a dealer I suppose I am naturally somewhat biased in my opinions, but there are certain angles to this controversy which the majority of farmers fail to take into consideration and which I feel, in fairness to all, should be brought out into the light.

It is well recognized by all that the producer has not been receiving a fair return for his potato crop the past few years, but make no mistake, it has been no fault of the dealer. In fact it has been caused by their considerable uneasiness. Every dealer knows full well that the producer is the foundation of his business, and if he is going to stay in business he must utilize every reasonable means of keeping the grower in business. That is the reason he has made it so easy for the farmer to buy his fertilizer, spray materials, and other supplies necessary to the production of his potato crop, or practically his own seed.

The farmer, on the other hand, should recognize the fact that the dealer is a necessary link in the chain of distribution of his farm products, and that everyone who renders a service is entitled to a fair reward for that service. This is the pivot point of the whole controversy; the farmer considers the dealer is bleeding him white, while the dealer thinks the farmer is trying to freeze him out—exactly the same situation we find existing between management and labor (and I have heard some farmers giving the labor unions a good sound cussing, especially during the rail strike).

These differences of opinion have become greatly magnified in the minds of both dealers and growers to the point where I have had farmers point out certain apparently prosperous dealers, mostly large exporters, and openly accuse them of lining their pockets with farmers' money through unethical business practices. Yet I have had dealings with and have found these same dealers to be fair and square business men. The farmer seems to think that everyone, except the farmer, who makes a dollar makes it dishonestly. It is difficult for him to understand that volume business at a small profit earns large profits.

For instance, a shipment of a hundred thousand bags of potatoes at a margin of five cents per bag shows a profit of \$5000.00, and any hard headed business dealer a banker would brand a dealer a complete idiot to assume the headaches and hazards involved in handling a shipment of this size for five cents per bag. I have yet to meet the farmer who would be willing to take the chances of investing \$100,000 in perishable merchandise, go through the agonies of assembling his cargo at a certain point on a definite date to connect with a ship for which he has secured the Atlantic coast to secure a charter, and stand behind that cargo until the buyer at some distant point has accepted it, for a return of \$5,000. Is it reasonable, then, to ask someone else to do something you are not willing to do yourself?

Another common complaint among the producers is that these exporters make large profits from the farmers' potatoes by contracting early in the season at a good price for large quantities for fall delivery, then buying the requirements to fill these contracts in the fall at prevailing market prices. The point the grower fails to grasp is the tremendous risk the dealer takes on these contracts. Should one of any number of things happen to the crop after the contract is signed which would cause potatoes to be scarce and high in price in the fall, that dealer stands to lose his shirt. He is obliged to take big chances, and he has a right to be paid for doing it—next year he just may miss it.

That is the way the insurance companies earn their living, and a much rarer living than the pro-

Memoirs Of The Hon. A. E. Arsenault

Former Premier and Retired Justice Supreme Court of Prince Edward Island

I Visit Louisiana

(Continued)

Back a few paragraphs, I mentioned about the book the woman in LaFayette had loaned me. Judge Vohries, the author, had written the story when he was an old man. In it he relates that when he was but a child, his grandmother, a very old lady, used to tell him the story of the Dispersion.

In the year 1755 she was a child of 14. Her parents had adopted a young girl, Emeline Labiche, and had come to regard her as their daughter. She had become engaged to a young man, Louis Arceneux, of the village of St. Gabriel. When the English soldiers came to that village in Acadia to deport the inhabitants, Louis Arceneux tried to get in the same boat with his fiancée but was pushed back. He persisted in trying to gain the boat and in the struggle was so severely wounded that he was left on the beach for dead.

After a long and perilous voyage the deportees were landed on the coast of Georgia where they were met by two planters by the names of Charles Smith and Henry Plant. Those men were kind to the strangers landed on their coast. They fed the Acadians and established them on their lands where they remained for three years and prospered. Finally, having heard there were French settlers in Louisiana, these Acadians determined to pull up stakes and make their way to Louisiana in the hope that among those French settlers they might find some of their relatives or friends. The planters, Smith and Brent, tried to dissuade the Acadians from making the long journey and not altogether from selfish motives. They pointed out the great dangers and difficulties to be met in making such a trip through hundreds of miles of wilderness, but the minds of the Acadians had been made up.

They took some horses and cattle and set out. Smith and Brent supplied them with guides for the first journey. For three months they labored through forests, swamps and other heart-breaking obstacles until they came to a tributary of the Mississippi. They built rafts and set out on the river and after great hardships reached the Teche country where they found an Acadian settlement.

One day, Emeline Labiche, who had accompanied the Acadians on their long pilgrimage was walking near the Acadian settlement when she saw a young man approaching. It was Louis Arceneux. With cries of "Louis! Louis!" she ran towards him. "I am your Emeline," she sobbed as she threw herself into his arms, "your long lost Emeline. Have you forgotten me?" but the young man did not answer. He turned ashy pale as he hung his head in silence.

"Louis!" she cried once more. "Why do you turn from me? I'm still Emeline, your betrothed. I have kept myself pure and unsullied waiting for you. Have you no word of welcome, Louis? Tell me, tell me that you love me still!" With quivering lips and a tremulous voice Louis answered, "Speak not so kindly to me. I am unworthy of it, for, thinking you lost to me forever, I have married."

Such was the shock to the young girl of this disclosure that she lost her reason there and then and never recovered it. She strolled along the bank of the River Teche; she spoke of Acadia; of Louis; and of familiar scenes of her childhood. She was so good and so gentle that people gave her the name of Evangeline—"God's Angel"—and when she died along the bank of the Teche River where now stands the town of St. Martinville she was buried close to where the Church is now located. And that is the story of Evangeline.

Longfellow, in his poem, "Evangeline" gives a very faithful picture of the country of Louisiana, its bayous, and its bearded oaks, and readers have often wondered how Longfellow, who had never visited the country, could depict it so accurately.

During my stay in Louisiana, I duce dealer, but I have never heard a farmer complaining about paying his insurance premium. He considers it a good sound investment, and rightly so, although he hopes it will never be necessary to collect any of it back.

But, they argue, they are gaining some benefit from this investment in case of fire which, nine chances out of ten, will never happen. Right. And they are reaping the same benefits from the early potato contracts by being assured of certain definite markets for a large block of the crop, without which there would be a good deal more distress and confusion in marketing our fall shipments.

Those early contracts are in reality insurance policies against a glut of potatoes which would completely demoralize our domestic markets. Many of our customers have reaped rich rewards as a result of these early con-

happened to mention this strange ability of Longfellow's to Judge Justice. He replied that it was something that could be easily explained. His father, he said, and another young man from Louisiana were students at Harvard while Longfellow was Professor of English there. He was then working on his great poem and, learning about those two young men had them up to his house frequently in order to obtain from them the information about their State which he later incorporated in his famous poem.

A few years ago, I was invited to attend at Cambridge, Mass., the celebration which was being held in honour of the 75th anniversary of Longfellow's publication of "Evangeline" but was unable to do so. However, I wrote the secretary and, in the course of my letter informed him of the abovementioned explanation of Longfellow's knowledge of Louisiana. He replied that there was no record of this story, that he was glad to get it, and that it would be incorporated in the records of the celebration.

South western Louisiana is lying low so that much of it is below sea level. Those lands are protected from inundation by high banks or levees along the rivers and bayous. There is much good lumber, especially of oak and cypress, and the lumber industry is an important one of the State. There is very little mixed farming, but large crops of sugar cane, cotton, corn, and rice are grown. A noticeable feature was the covering of the large trees with what is known as Spanish Moss. Introduced in Louisiana during the Spanish regime, it hangs from the trees in the form of a beard. Gathered in the fall, much of it is used for upholstery purposes.

Louisiana, like all Southern States, has a large population of negroes. As everyone knows, these ancestors were brought from Africa as slaves to till the plantations of the wealthy Southern landowners. The slaves were, as a rule, treated well but socially were on the same level, so far as the white Southerner was concerned, as his mule. The planter took good care of his mules so that they would be able to work well; for the same reason he took care of his slaves.

But there was no thought given to the negro's soul. He was considered soulless and was bred as one would sell any thing on the plantation—a piece of machinery or a piece of land, and when a mother was sold the infant child went with her. For years no provision was made for their education or their moral welfare. Many of them were employed as servants in the household of a white man, or as workers on the plantation. "Mamas" were taken into white men's homes to look after the children and, in many instances, those children thought as much of their black "mamas" as they did of their white mothers.

Socially, the negro still has no standing in the South. If a white woman marries a negro, she immediately is looked upon by her own race as a negro. Even the negroes look upon a white woman as "poor white trash." In the trains, the negro travels in the Jim Crow car and on the street cars a seat at the back is reserved for him. He dare not sit elsewhere. In church, the negro sits in a seat reserved for negroes. He must not even sit with an Indian for the Indian was always free while the negro was once a slave.

As an illustration of the extent to which such social ostracism was, and to a great extent still is, carried, the following tale told by the parish priest of Fort Breux should be of interest. The priest related that when an order of black Sisters was introduced in the parish, the Mother Superior of the white Sisters walked out rather than sit in the same church with the black women. When the student was brought to the attention of the Bishop, he dismissed the white Sisters and there was no more trouble.

(To be continued)

The Poets Corner

"THOU WINTER WIND" A grey dwarf has been tapping on the door Ever since dark, but no one lets him in; He tries the chimney, rushing with a roar; Then raps on windows, beckoning with a grin. Piling and scattering leaves must make him tired, And playing in the wind, a little cold; But still he bustles as though he were hired To rake the earth. He is too weak and old To jump and run and flit— he laughs and prance, And do this pattering in such a hurry. But even as I watch him in the dance, He seems to know I disapprove his flurry. So drops down quietly by the hedge to rest, While small white feathers waft from the West. —Cullen Jones

The Age-Old Story

Blessed are those, O Lord! teach me thy statutes. ... My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken thou me according to thy word. ... I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgments have I laid before me.