Strange But True

By F. H. MacArthur

Every country has its own ideas about raising money for charity. But I think the most unique money raising scheme I've come across is carried out in India. Here's how they go about it.

Every decade or so the leader of the Ismaili Moslems of India is weighed in precious tones — for instance, in 1946 the Aga Khan was weighed in diamonds. He tipped the scales at 243½ pounds and his followers paid in $2,200,000 for charity.

The next weighing party in scheduled to take place on August 15th, of 1954. This will be a platinum weighing, and the Aga Khan hopes to raise enough shekels to build more schools, hospitals and libraries for Moslems in East Africa.

Under the French Regime the Prince Edward Island habitant was a farmer, fur trader, carpenter, blacksmith and tailor all rolled into one. And when the crops were harvested and the fishing boats laid up for the winter, he left farming to his wife and children and hired himself out to one of the merchants to carry goods to the Indians.

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Farm tools were extremely primitive. The same kind of wooden plow that first turned the sod in France were used to turn the first furrows in the garden of the gulf. The oxen yoked by their horns did the plowing. The harrow was a triangular affair of wood, its two long sides each about six feet in length was fitted with wooden teeth about five inches long. Many of those wooden harrows were used by the English speaking settlers a century later.

Pigs were pigs in the island. They were by far the most numerous of all the farm animals. But how many there really were no one probably ever knew, for they ran loose in the forests, and though they were branded with their owner's marks, they had to be hunted like wild beasts.

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It might be of some interest to readers of this column to briefly cast an eye on the social customs of the French habitant during their regime in the Million Acre Farm.

We are told that he danced on Sunday after mass, was an ardent gambler, at all hours. He gossiped long over a friendly pipe and mug of liquor in the grog shops.

There were 27 fete-days in the year which called for respite from work, the donning of glad rags, and feasting not fasting without end. In addition to these holidays of obligation, there were the Name-days of the people's patron saints to be observed. As in our time Christmas and New Year's was the gayest season of the year. Midnight Mass was celebrated on the 25th of December. The crude altar blazed with candles that shed their flickering lights on fair skinned French and red or copper colored savages as they knelt together in prayer.

Old Santa Claus made his annual visit to the children, leaving them gifts from their godparents.

On the eve of Epiphany it was the custom among the French girls to invite young blades to a pancake frolic. The flap jacks were placed in long-handled frypans over the fire and when cooked to a crisp brown were eaten with maple syrup. Yum, yum! Then too, they played such games as "Hide the ring, young shepherdess," etc.

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On August 26th the people celebrated the feast of the King of France and drank the best wine to his health and happiness.

French-Indian marriages were not to the liking of the royal ministers. On Dec. 18 1728, a decree of the Canadian Superior Council, made in view of a statement by Father Boulanger, ordered that the property of Indian wives who died without issue should be confiscated. These women were not to have the disposal of any real property remaining after the death of their French husbands, but were paid an annual pension of 1-3 of the revenue of such property. The remaining 2-3 went to their heirs, or failing these, was to be administered by the curator for vacant estates.

Army officers found it hard to get a wife due to the red tape then in vogue. In order to marry they had to get permission from the government first. This often took so long that the betrothal was broken on the rocks of delay.

Such was a brief picture of the life of the French habitant of Minigoo of the 18th century. Many of their descendants live today in the land of their fathers.

The Commerce Department of the U. S. A. says the average family income in 1950-51 was $4,460 while the family's spendings for those years was $4,906, a figure arrived at by adding 10 per cent to its income.

Jealousy may be a factor in the fact that most wives outlive their husbands. They live on as one guy puts it, "to keep 'em from marrying again."

R C A F Station S'side Announce Plans For Air Force Day 1954

—R.C.A.F. station, Summerside, announced yesterday that Air Force Day 1954 will be held Saturday, June 12.

Headlining the many events to be featured at the local air base will be a new type flying show, which will include the take-off of a Canso aircraft assisted by jet units. The Canso, an amphibious aircraft used for search and rescue operations, takes to the air like a rocket when the jet units go into action. The normal speed of the Canso is a little better than a new car on a good highway.

The members of Greenwood's para-rescue team will be dropped by parachute over Summerside airport shortly after Lancasters of the Maritime Operational Training unit carry out a mock attack on a submarine, while the submarine won't be real the bombs will and it's difficult to say whether the jets going through the sonic barrier will make more noise than the Lancs bombing the sub.

A full two hour airshow is planned with thrill and surprises guaranteed. The ground display this year will be centered around the expanding activities of the R.C.A.F.'s role in guarding Canada coasts and smipping lanes.

Exhibits, completely new to Island residents, will be featured as John citizen visits the R.C.A.F. on airforce day.

On the lighter side, and with an eye to beauty, R.C.A.F. Station Summerside will hold a beauty contest among the Airwomen for the purpose of choosing a queen for Airforce Day. Judging will take place before the public in the afternoon and the lucky queen will be crowned at a station dance in the evening. Interest is running high among the girls as the big day draws near. The only problem will be—there can be only one queen. —S.

Burton And Vicinity

—Sympathy of the community is extended to Mr. Hillery O'Halloran, Burton, who suffered a severe loss on May 15, when his home was destroyed by fire.

Mr. and Mrs. Wendell Scott, West Point, were recent guests of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Dalton, Burton.

Mrs. Andrew Corcoran, who spent the past week visiting her daughters, Mrs. Melvin McGregor and Mrs. Lance Dalton, Burton, has returned to her home in Pisville.

With the arrival of warmer weather farming operations got underway, many of the farmers are planting potatoes while others are sowing grain.

In the absence of the pastor, Rev. J. N. Trainor who is receiving treatment at Western Hospital, Alberton, Rev. William Simpson, of St. Dunstan's College, Charlottetown, celebrated 9 o'clock Mass at St. Mark's Church, also 10.30 Mass at St. Bernardettes Church on May 16.

A large quantity of Irish moss was harvested recently along the shore. This extra revenue is a grent boom to the farmers and fishermen of the community.

Friends and neighbours are pleased to learn that grand old man of this district, Mr. Thomas Doyle is able to be up and around again following his recent illness.

An interesting ball game was played Sunday afternoon in Campbellton, between Cape Wolfe and Campbellton teams, with a score of 25 to 3 in favour of Campbellton.

Messrs. John Monaghan, Frank o'Halloran and William Monaghan, Campbellton, were visitors to Alberton on Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Justin McCarthy, also Mr. Alfred Cousins, Campbellton, were recent visitors to Summerside.

Mr. Fred Ramsay and family, Campbellton, left recently for Rustico, where they will join Mr. Ramsay who is employed there for the fishing season.

Mr. John Ellis, O'Leary, was a recent guest of Mr. and Mrs. John Monaghan, Campbellton.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jones, Mr. and Mrs. John Monaghan, Campbellton, also Mr. John Ellis, O'Leary, were Sunday visitors to Sea View.

Mr. John Yeo and dtughter Lillis, Knutsford, were recent guests of Mr. and Mrs. Emerson Cousins, Campbellton.

Mr. Reyburn Doyle who is employed in Summerside, spent the week-end at the home of his mother, Mrs. Myrtle Doyle, Campbellton.

Miss Beverley Howard, student of Tignish high school, spent the week-end at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett Howard, Glengarry. —C R.

LONDON (AP)—A stone statue of Christ, believed to date back to the early 16th century, has been found beneath a chapel destroyed by bombs during the war. Joan Evans, director of the Society of Antiquaries, and Norman Cook, keeper of the Guildhall museum, described the figure as "certainly one of the major archaeological finds made in London during this century."

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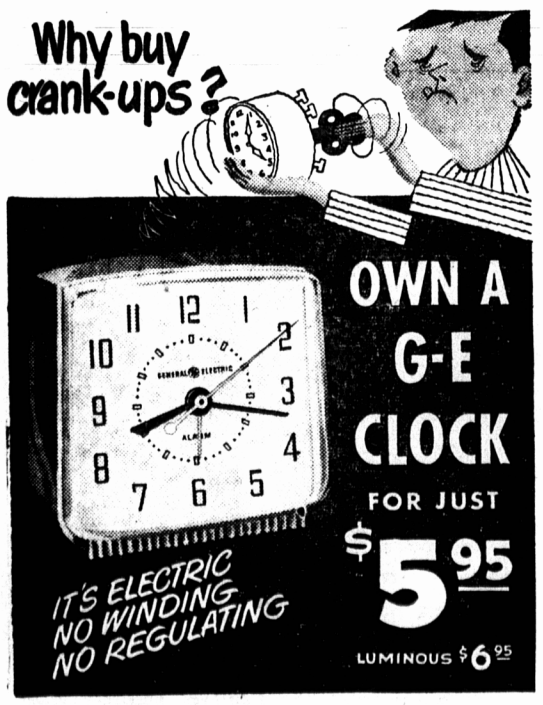

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