THE GUARDIAN

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"The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink."

TUESDAY, SEPT. 14, 1954

Speaking Of Storms

Hurricane Edna was indeed no "lady"; but in destructiveness the celebrated Yankee Gale of October 3-4, 1851, far outdid the storm experienced here over the week-end. On that occasion seventy vessels engaged in the Gulf fisheries were wrecked on the rocks and sands of the North Shore. The lives lost were estimated at one hundred and sixty. Nineteen of the vessels hailed from Gloucester. Commencing at the east of the Island and continuing westward to Savage Harbour, fifteen vessels were driven ashore, besides a large barque from Europe in ballast. From Savage Harbour to Richmond Bay the stranded vessels numbered seventeen; in Richmond Bay there were twenty-four, and from the latter place to North Cape seventeen came to grief.

As described in newspapers of the day, the afternoon of October 3rd was "warm and still; the sky was heavily clouded, but as yet no indications of the approaching tempest were apparent, except a lurid, brassy appearance to the north and northwest about sunset. The moon had passed her first quarter, but the dense canopy of clouds, and heavy rain, rendered her light hardly perceptible. About an hour after sunset the wind blew from the north, and soon increased to a heavy gale, which then continued with unabated violence until nearly noon on Sunday."

On shore the tide flooded areas never before seen under water; fields where harvests had been recently gathered were inundated; bridges and milldams were carried away, great forest trees blown down, and for days the roads were made impassable by windfalls. On the beaches, the windrow of wreckage was truly appalling. Many of the vessels were so completely broken as to be indistinguishable. Some vessels came ashore with bodies fastened in their rigging, their clothing in shreds. About fifty corpses were driven ashore between Brackley Point and Cavendish—a distance of only about 20 miles—within 24 hours after the storm had abated. Several were washed up weeks after the storm.

The care given to the survivors was noted gratefully in the New England press. The Lieutenant Governor had issued a proclamation directing "all officers of the revenue, magistrates and other subjects of Her Majesty" to render all aid in their power the storm victims. But, said the Gloucester News of Oct. 29, 1851, "it appears from what we learn of our fishermen who have returned from the scene of the disaster that this proclamation was unnecessary, for they all speak in the warmest terms of gratitude of the universal hospitality and kindness they and all the shipwrecked men received at the hands of these generous and humane Islanders."

No doubt, with modern meteorological knowledge and equipment, much of the destruction of the Yankee Gale could have been averted. But it stands as the most tragic event of its kind in our history, relieved only by the examples of warm compassion and sympathy it inspired.

President Eisenhower's Proposals

To give a proper balance to atomic development, President Eisenhower has proposed that quantities of raw uranium and of fissionable materials made from it be set aside to form an international pool on which all the member nations of the new agency could draw for their peaceful needs. He also proposes that a school be set up in the United States to train technicians of friendly nations in the building and use of reactors—the atomic "furnaces" for the generation of power—and that non-military atomic information be exchanged through the agency. Formal negotiations to this end have started in Washington, involving the United States and Canada first and other nations of good will later.

But for one thing, and one thing only, comments the Hamilton Spectator, the fission of the atom would already be harnessed for hope and not for fear, for the betterment of human life and not for its destruction. The one thing is the obduracy of the Soviet Union, on the reef of which, for nearly a decade now, every attempt to find a workable way of ending the threat of atomic warfare has been shattered. With utter cynicism the Russians have hammered the world's ears with cries of "Ban the atom bomb" while refusing to accept the system of international inspection without which any ban would be meaningless. In consequence the world has been plunged into an atomic armament race which has turned attention and effort away from the other and wonderful uses of nuclear fission that are possible in industry, medicine and almost every phase of human life.

The Eisenhower plan is a step in the right direction. If we cannot today find a way of stopping the nuclear armament race, at least every effort should be made to bring humanity the vast blessing which this gigantic new field of science is capable of offering.

Mr. Deakin And Mr. Attlee

Arthur Deakin, head of the powerful Trades Union Congress in Great Britain, evidently does not think very highly of the visit of former Prime Minister Attlee to Russia and China where, in Mr. Deakin's words, "people go and get indoctrinated". Whether the trip was wise or foolish is, of course, a matter of individual opinion, and Mr. Deakin is within his rights to call it foolish if that is the way he feels about it; but no one who knows anything about Mr. Attlee and his political record will doubt his good intentions in going on his goodwill mission or question his readiness and ability to uphold the integrity of free political institutions in any controversy with the proponents of Communist totalitarianism.

It is incredible that Mr. Deakin or anyone else should imagine for one moment that the former Prime Minister could possibly be led astray by Russian or Chinese propaganda. Even Pravda, the official Soviet newspaper, knows better than that; in a recent issue it attacked Mr. Attlee for suggesting that the Russians should prove their oft repeated protestations of peaceful intent by cutting down on their armaments and granting political freedom to the countries they now hold in bondage.

It does not appear likely that the visit of Mr. Attlee and his entourage will do much towards creating a better feeling between the Communist powers and the free nations; for, evidently, the Communists are bent on keeping the world in a state of turbulence. That does not mean, however, that the visit was a waste of time. It can do no harm for the leader of a great political party in a free country to see for himself just how the Communist philosophy works in regions where it has been converted into political action.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Finance Minister Harris seems to be following in the footsteps of his predecessor in being an optimist. Canada's economy, he says, "has nowhere to go but up." He also can be as close mouthed as Mr. Abbott, however, for he declined to tell reporters whether any tax reductions are in prospect.

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A preliminary summary of a study by the Canadian School Trustees' Association shows there are 19,996 one-room schools in this country, about 66 per cent of all school buildings. Nearly half the schools in this Province consisted of one room, compared with 16 per cent in Ontario and eight per cent in British Columbia.

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The world has been enjoying a period of "remarkable stability", reports ILO News. The organ of the International Labour Organization notes that 44 countries reported consumer price increases or decreases of 2 per cent or less for periods of a year or longer, and 56 countries, less than 4 per cent.

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The first Viscount Cecil, long known as Lord Robert Cecil, was born this date 1864. He was long an advocate of women's suffrage and was author of the bill which made women eligible to sit in Parliament. He assisted in drafting the Covenant of the League of Nations and attended the first Assembly of the League as representative of the Union of South Africa. His writings include "The Way of Peace", "A Great Experiment", "A Real Peace" and "All the Way."

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In preliminary discussion which led to the drafting of the SEATO treaty for the protection of Pacific countries it turned out that the United States was reluctant to go as far in the way of automatic guarantees as some of the other governments. A commentary by W. N. Ewer is to the effect that it might have been expected that the nations directly threatened would want the more binding guarantees. In any case it upsets the Communist idea that SEATO is a mere manifestation of "American Imperialism."

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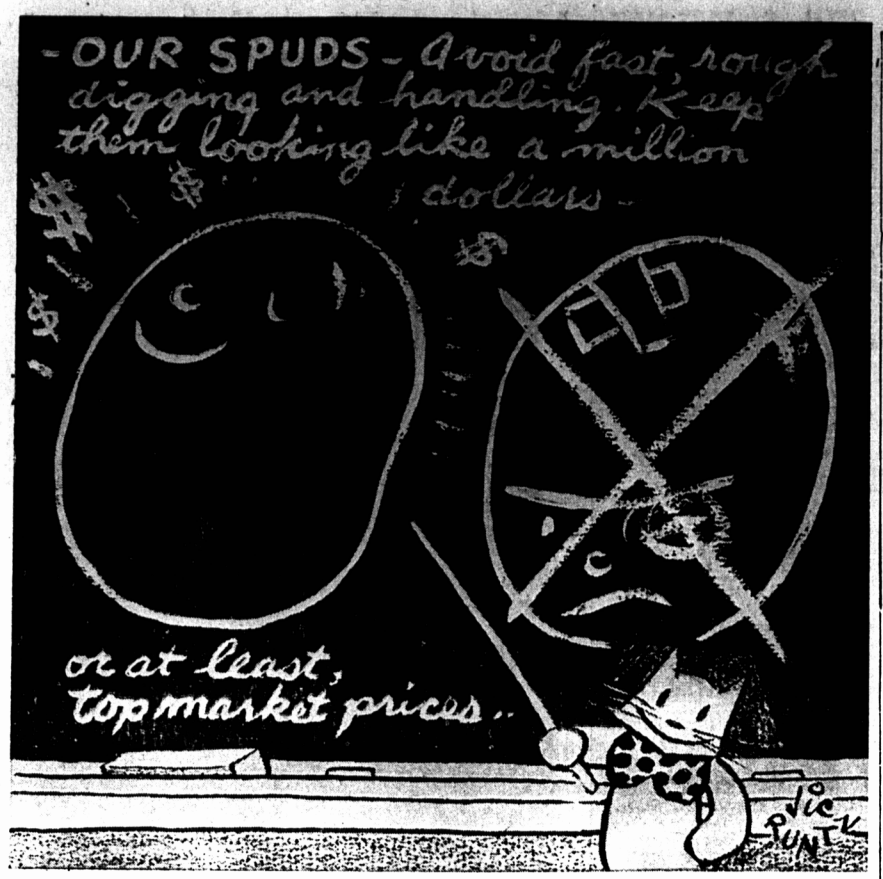
Seasonal unemployment worries the Canadian Construction Association as it does many people in this country. At the Maritime regional meeting the president made an eloquent appeal for having projects carried out in the winter months. Much repair and maintenance can be done as readily in winter as in summer and Mr. Raymond Brunet pointed out that against some higher costs of winter construction can be balanced lower prices for off-season contracts, better supervision, availability of materials and earlier completion dates.



Health And Beauty Hint

The Poet's Corner

WINTRY PRELUDE

The sky is low, the clouds are mean,
A travelling flake of snow
Across the barn or through a rut
Debates if it will go.

A narrow wind complains all day
How some one treated him;
Nature, like us, is sometimes caught
Without her diadem.

—Emily Dickinson.

"Tugboat Annie"

News of Norway

Thousands of Americans have enjoyed reading the "Tugboat Annie" stories created by Norman Reilly Raine. However, many may not be aware that "Tugboat Annie", later made into a popular movie with Marie Dressler in the title role, was based on the life of a Norwegian immigrant. Arriving virtually penniless, Thea Foss and her carpenter husband Andrew, laid the foundation for the large tugboat company developed by their sons.

"The Sons of Tugboat Annie," as told by Alfred L. Gehri in "Saturday Evening Post", reveals how Norwegian skill, thrift and hard work have contributed to the development of the Pacific Northwest. The story began when Andrew Foss arrived in Tacoma, a stranger, with about two dollars in cash, and no credit. His main assets were a carpenter's tool chest, and his wife, Thea. Salvaging two huge cedar logs for floats, they beachcombed drift lumber and built themselves a float shack. They moored it at the foot of a street, near a small creek spilling into the bay. For years this was to be home to the sons, Arthur, Wedell and Henry, and daughter Lilian, of "Tugboat Annie."

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One evening, a casual acquaintance rowed up to the float shack and asked Thea: "Know anybody who wants to buy a float cheap?" "How much?" "Ten dollars." "Five dollars is all I'm able to offer you." It was a sale. Thus, Thea Foss began to buy, sell and rent rowboats, using the slogan, "Always Ready," which today is the copyrighted slogan of the Foss Tug Company of Tacoma, Wash.

Complementing his wife's sagacity with his own skill, Andrew Foss started to turn out skiffs and clinker-built rowboats that were praised as "easy running." While competitors furnished their boats with heavy factory-made oars of oak or ash, Andrew equipped his with homemade oars of featherweight spruce. The knack of riving his oar material from the whole log, instead of using sawed lumber, he had learned in Norway. Thus, the finished spruce oar incorporated all the strength of the natural grain of the wood.

When the boats were finished Thea painted them green and white, and these are still the colors of the Foss Company. The sons of Thea and Andrew carry out the color scheme in religious detail. All their tugs, barges, buildings and equipment are painted green and white. Their stationery is printed green on white, typewriters have green ribbons and green ink is used for bookkeeping. Mother Foss was the banker, and her original ledgers are still treasured by her sons. She paid no stated wages, but several successful Northwestern businessmen got their first stake from the hands of Mother Foss. Doing all the cooking for her crews, she kept a large henhouse, pigs and a cow.

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The boat business expanded as the three sons and the daughter grew up. Father Foss, as he was called, invented a balanced type of rudder which greatly facilitated the handling of tugs with awkward tows. As they grew older, Thea and Andrew Foss gradually surrendered the cares of their booming business to their sons. When Mother Foss died, in 1927, the attendance at her funeral service set a new record for Tacoma. Father Foss passed on in 1937.

Log towing still accounts for the greatest volume of the Foss business. In the company storage basin, there are millions of feet of saw logs, gathered on Puget Sound, Hood Canal, British Columbia, the coast of Oregon, and as far north as the panhandle waters of Alaska. The Foss tugs tow these huge booms to the storage basin and from there to their final destination.

The Foss Launch and Tugboat Company today owns 150 large tugboats and 70 freighters, in addition to extensive shore facilities. The sons of Tugboat Annie—Arthur, Wedell and Henry Foss, now in middle age, play a prominent role in business and civic life. Among their many notable achievements is laying the groundwork for the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge, linking Tacoma with the Olympic Peninsula.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Great mining cities envisioned for Canada's northland. Now is the time to lay out parking spaces. —London Free Press.

The bride of last June who used to get her cosmetics at the drugstore is discovering she can get the same effect over the kitchen stove. —Kitchener Record.

And then there was the girl who found the summer-vacation boy friend didn't look half so attractive when she saw him in town—minus goggles, snorkel and flippers. —Hamilton Spectator.

A 14-day reducing diet for dogs is on the market, having first been tried out on human beings. It remains to be seen how Towser goes for lettuce and skim milk. —Cornwall Standard - Freeholder.

Tea is being grown in Canada. This fact will amaze Canadians, says the Fort William Times - Journal. Our primary education has pin-pointed tea as being grown in Asia, in India, China and Japan, in warmer regions than we are accustomed to think are contained in Canada. "Yet, it's true an 80-year-old ex-magistrate in British Columbia, last year grew, processed and packaged a thousand pounds of palatable tea which he marketed. He tried tea plants from India, but they wouldn't grow, so he is making five varieties of tea from leaves of trees native to British Columbia. The best variety is being made from leaves of a black walnut tree. British Columbia is noted for its fruit farms and orchards. Now, another great horticultural industry may be in the making. Arthur William Jervis, is looking forward to the day when British-Columbia-grown tea will supply the nation's requirements." —Sydney Post - Record.

The trouble with retail food prices is the consumer, when making a purchase, is buying more than calories. Rents, taxes and labor costs have the habit of remaining firm or moving upward. —Farmer's Advocate.

The American tourist will not come here just to look at scenery if he can find scenery just as fine and accommodations much better in his own country or on other continents. —Victoria Times.

Old Charlottetown and P. E. I.

PICTOU STEAMER SERVICE

"Agreeably to requisition, a meeting called by the Sheriff of Queens County was held in the Court House on the evening of Tuesday last, for the purpose of considering the expendiency of forming a company in this Island to purchase a steam boat to ply between this port and Pictou, and if practicable, to Miramichi. The meeting was respectably, although not very numerously, attended. The Chief Justice having been called to the chair, several gentlemen addressed the meeting.

"But one opinion prevailed as to the absolute necessity of keeping up a regular intercourse by steam with Pictou, in order to secure the advantages of a speedy communication with the parent country; but as no plan had been matured, a committee was appointed to ascertain, as correctly as they could, the expense of procuring a boat of not less than fifty horsepower, adequate to run twice a week between Charlottetown and Pictou, and also the additional outlay that would be necessary to provide a boat of sufficient power to make, in addition, one trip to Miramichi within the week. The following gentlemen were appointed a committee for this purpose: Hon. T. H. Haviland, Messrs. Young, F. Longworth, Duncan, Coles, Tremaine, Beers, E. Palmer and Capt. Swabey."

—Royal Gazette, Sept. 22, 1840.

The Age Old Story

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

The Passing Scene

By Observer

HURRICANE NAMES

There has been a good deal of complaining in the American press recently about the name system used by the Weather Bureau in designating hurricanes which, incidentally, seem to be roaming farther afield that they had been in the habit of doing. (There has been a feeling abroad for some time that atomic and hydrogen explosions have had something to do with the increasing frequency of tornadoes and hurricanes and other atmospheric abnormalities. Hitherto the experts have repudiated the theory, but now the possibility is being discussed by meteorologists at an international gathering in Rome. If it should turn out to be a valid theory it would not be the first time that lay opinions have led to scientific discovery.)

One paper in a community where the third hurricane of the season-Carol, by name—did considerable damage called the practice "inappropriate and facetious". Another said that meteorologists should know better than to cast unnecessary "slurs" on the female of the human species.

There is some evidence, too, that young ladies generally don't like the implication that seems to be involved. They argue (in letters to the editor and other orthodox media) that if the big storms must be given the names of persons it would be better, and certainly more logical, to give them boys' names, since everybody (except, presumably, the weather experts) knows that boys are more likely to be obstreperous in their tempers.

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That, of course, is a matter of individual opinion; it is a very debatable point and could be argued pro and con for hours without any possibility of bringing it to an amicable agreement. Just the same it does seem a bit unchivalrous to associate the weaker sex-so-called, at any rate—with one of the most cruel and destructive weapons in the arsenal of nature.

(Here I recall that a well known philosopher, who must remain nameless, said once that this "weaker-sex" business is one of the very ludicrous myths of history. Even so, it has been on the go for a long time and, because of its age, if for no other reason, is entitled to respect.)

In taking note of the expressions of indignation in the press and elsewhere, Mr. Ivan Tannenhill, a high official of the United States Weather Bureau, said that, while he had much sympathy for the viewpoints of the critics, it was a mistake to assume that the designation was a matter of whim, much less of facetiousness. On the contrary, according to Mr. Tennenhill, it is a matter of expediency and the result of long scientific research.

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A number of systems had been tried from time to time. First, it was the practice to designate hurricanes by number; storm one storm two, and so on. For some reason that didn't work. Then, the A B C system was tried; but that interferred with other radio signals and had to be abandoned. A body of experts then worked at a plan based on the Greek alphabet, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, etc. The trouble with that was that it was "all Greek" to many ship captains who had neither the ability nor the inclination to delve into things lexical.

It was after that, that the girls names idea was copied from a long used in the Pacific with respect to typhoons. This has been found the most satisfactory of all plans from the standpoint of aerial patrol, which keeps watch on hurricanes and plots their courses; an additional advantage is that it is the one most likely to avoid confusion with other radio communications.

"We have been doing the best we could," said Mr. Tannenhill," but we would be only too glad to change to a better system if one could be found." He added: "While the Weather Bureau regrets that the designation now in use may seem inappropriate, especially to those who have suffered hardships from the effects of hurricanes, we must also remember the airmen who fly into those hurricanes and chart their courses."

That sounds reasonable enough. The risk taken by the men who must fly into the centre of fury in order to be in a position to give due warning to ships and communities which lie in the path of great danger, is very great indeed. They are the heroes in the battle which modern man must wage against forces over which, thus far, he has no control. He can explode an hydrogen bomb, but he cannot keep the wind from rising in fury nor the rain from descending in floods.

Anything that helps the hurricane charters in their risky and dangerous work should be retained; even, if necessary, the seemingly discourteous practice of linking girls' names to the wild winds. Perhaps on further consideration, in the calm that follows the storm, girls and women who would never think of acting tempestuously will feel honoured that, in this indirect way, they are helping the experts to take away from an angry aggressor the tactical advantage that goes with sudden and unforseen attack.

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