THE GUARDIAN

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"Covers Prince Edward Island Like the Dew"

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

Miss Keller's Journey

Among all the statesmen and diplomats who are now traveling from one nation to another on missions of peace there probably is not one who will make any greater impression on the world's conscience than that which will be made by a physically frail, blind, and deaf woman who is now on the first stages of a 40,000 mile air journey which will take her to Britain, Italy, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Burma, China, and Japan, in the interests of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind. She is Miss Helen Keller, who has been called—and with good reason—"the most courageous woman of modern times."

Totally blind and deaf for seventy-four of her seventy-five years, Miss Keller learned to talk, read, and write after she was eight years old. From there she went from one achievement to another; since the early 30's she has been recognized as an author of distinction. Her genius for inspiring cheer and courage among those who have been deprived of sight and hearing and the unconquerable joy in living that has featured her own life and work will, doubtless, be put to good use in the Asiatic countries she will visit; reports say that more than 10 million sightless persons, for the most part lonely and uncared for, live in that general area.

Miss Keller's time, for the most part, will be occupied in formal conferences with Government and civic officials. In her own words: "I am anxious to increase the interest of governments and peoples in the training and education of the blind, so they can lead more cheerful and independent lives. Also I am going on a crusade against preventable blindness, for in this lies the most important work for the blind. I am not expecting to find it simple, but I hope I shall meet my adventures and hard work with flying colours." But, although she will not have much opportunity for direct contact with the people, it is certain that news of her mission and tidings of her courageous spirit will filter through the towns and villages; and—who knows?—perhaps the message of a blind and deaf woman, directed to the alleviation of human suffering in one of its more poignant forms, will help to dissipate the fears and doubts which hinder all efforts to make and preserve peace.

Strategic Island Prizes

The hit-and-run war that has suddenly flared into full scale action off the China coast has for its background a 600-mile chain of island bases of both Nationalist and Red Chinese forces. The current fighting in the Tachen area is taking place in the northern part of the chain. In this region, 200 miles north of the embattled Tachens, lies the world-famous port of Shanghai. Linhai (Taichow), another significant mainland port for Red China, is west of Ichiang.

Against the vast bulge of the China coast, Ichiang is only a tiny dot on the water's surface. Actually it is the larger of a two-island combination. It is a mile and a half long and rises from lowland in the west to an eastern hill about 430 feet high. Although of little value in itself, the Ichiang pair lies between Communist-held island bases and the Tachens, with the biggest prize of all, the Nationalist stronghold of Formosa, about 250 miles to the south.

The Nationalists held 30-odd islands in the coastal regions stretching north and south of Formosa. Some are surprisingly near mainland Red ports. Nationalist Quemoy and Little Quemoy, for instance, lie just outside the harbor of Communist Amoy, facing the west coast of Formosa. Matsu Island, farther north, is in the approaches to mainland Minhow (Foochow), which looks across Formosa Strait toward the Nationalist capital, Taipei. Along the southeast mainland, high and rugged mountains separate coastal villages, with their offshore islands, from the Chinese interior. Occasionally, a narrow, steep path leads into the highlands. But there are few through roads, and in many places traffic is all but impossible.

Except for a short line from the port of Swatow, no railways reach inland between Britain's Hong Kong on the far south and Hangchow and Shanghai to the north. Cultivated plains are rare along this rocky shore, and the small, infrequent farms often climb in terraces to the hill tops. Thus most people of the heavily populated coast look to the sea for their food and livelihood. Many live on houseboats tied up in deep inlets. They are sailors skilled in coping with windstorms and torrential rains that frequently batter the region.

The late summer typhoon season annually threatens life and property — a factor to be heeded by military strategists. A National Geographic Society bulletin notes that in the United States Navy's "Sailing Directions" the little Ichiang Islands are called the Squall Islands.

A Disturbing Word

A disturbing word has been heard in the United States Senate; it is all the more so in that it was spoken by one of the more level-headed and experienced legislators in that country, Senator Arthur George of Georgia. The word is "bluffing"; and it was applied to the Chinese Communists' provocative actions in the Formosan Straits and to their repeated declarations about "liberating" the Nationalist stronghold. It is disturbing because it adds a new danger to what is already a very dangerous situation. It is, of course, possible that Mao and Chou will stop short of challenging the might of the United States Seventh Fleet; but it must be said that the history of war-makers is against it.

To go back only a few years, it was said of Hitler that he was bluffing; that he was deadly in earnest was believed by hardly anyone outside of Germany until the moment he sent his armies across the Polish frontier and the Second Great War had begun. In 1950 the general opinion in the United States, as well as in Britain and this country, was that the North Koreans were bluffing; they would retreat as soon as they were convinced that their aggression meant war with United Nations forces. Well, to the world's sorrow, it did not happen as expected in either case.

To most Westerners it seems incredible that Communist China would deliberately provoke the United States into all-out war. But it must be remembered that wars never are started by wise men, but by men maddened by lust of power or racial hatred. It must be remembered, too, that "face-saving"—to some degree an universal human emotion—is an Oriental obsession, amounting to an insatiable religious fanaticism. Further, and quite apart from these considerations, there is more than a possibility that the Communists have persuaded themselves that United States officials, on their part, are talking more loudly than their actual intentions would warrant—in other words, bluffing.

The hope of every inhabitant of the free world is that something will happen to restrain the Chinese Communists from plunging the world—or even a large part of it—into war; but, as things stand, the way of vigilance and preparedness, and not an assumption of Communist bluffing, is the only intelligent course to take.

EDITORIAL NOTES

At long last women's hose guaranteed never to wear out is nearing reality. The secret: atomic radiation. Just why men's socks are not covered by this scientific achievement the report from the American Atomic Energy Commission does not say. A Congressional Committee should look into it.

* * *

The choice of a leader for a political party is, of course, a matter for the members and adherents of that party to decide. However, Mr. Coldwell, the present head of the CCF appears to be well regarded by members of all groups in the House of Commons and by the people generally. He is a man of moderation, a skilled parliamentarian, and a politician of long and rich experience. Certainly, political direction of the CCF could be in less capable hands.

* * *

The world-wide illicit traffic in opium has been hit hard by two Canadian scientists. Because all opium, regardless of where it originates, is made from the same species of the poppy flower, the police of the world have always had trouble in tracking down the source of illegal drugs. That is no longer so. We can now tell from which nation any opium comes by analysing its ashes. Samples of the drug from different areas contain characteristic amounts of certain minerals. The differences, the scientists report, depend on the varieties within the species and on such local features as soil, climate and farming techniques.

* * *

Charles Lamb born this date, 1775. His "Essays of Elia", begun in the London Magazine in 1820, entitle him to a place beside Montaigne, Sir Thomas Browne, Steele and Addison, and for refined and exquisite humour are unexcelled in any language. But his style has an antique air repugnant to modern taste, and lacks the salacious qualities of 18th century writers who are now being revived in cheap popular editions. Poor Lamb slaved for most of his life at a small clerical job in the East India House, on a beggarly salary eked out by slim literary rewards. This should be borne in mind in reading his sonnet in today's Poet's Corner.

Still No Surefire Cold Cure

The Poet's Corner

WORK

Who first invented work, and bound the free
And holiday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business in the green fields, and the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad,
To that dry druggery at the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies, 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from which are no returnings;
Where toiling, and turmoiling, ever and aye
He, and his thoughts, keep pensive working-day.

—Charles Lamb (1775-1834).

Fall Of Mendes-France

By Heath Macquarrie

Some wag once remarked that "A Frenchman changes his government as often as an Englishman changes his shirt." Whether this reflected more on the French or the English is not clear but certainly France has long been noted for the frequency with which it overturns its cabinets. Last Friday the brilliant Mendes-France fell from power as the result of an adverse vote in the National Assembly, upon whose support all governments rest. He was the twentieth Premier since 1945 and now President Coty must find the twenty-first.

Nor is this political fluidity a post-war phenomenon, for under the Third Republic in the seventy years between 1870 and 1940 there were over a hundred ministries. Such political instability is not altogether explainable by observations on the French temperament. The constitutional structure — in many ways quite different from either the British or American — lends itself to the kind of apparent instability of which Friday's vote is the latest manifestation.

The British cabinet, like the Canadian, is responsible to the House of Commons and must maintain its confidence at all times. So far the relationship is similar to that which exists between the French cabinet and the National Assembly. But under the British system the cabinet may bring on a dissolution and force the members of parliament to go to the people. Such a threat serves as a powerful weapon in cabinet domination of the legislature.

* * *

But it is a weapon, however which for all practical purposes the French premier does not have and the Assembly may topple governments with almost reckless abandon. Another obvious difference is in the multiplicity of parties in France. All governments are coalitions and the premier who cannot keep three or four groups in an harmonious cabinet relationship is bound to fall. We in this country are more accustomed to large and broadly based political parties in which the different points of view are compromised within the party framework. In France this compromising is done on the floor of the legislature with all the resultant uncertainties of insecure governments.

The political picture is complicated in recent years by the presence of large Communist blocs in the National Assembly. This means that a sizeable number of deputies must be counted out when it comes to putting together a government coalition. Out of 626 members in the Assembly, the Moscow-loving followers of Jacques Duclos total 103. When he was bringing the Indo-China war to an end Premier Mendes-France had the support even of the Communists, but not surprisingly they opposed him vogorously on other policies by which he hoped to strengthen the national economy.

On some features of the German rearmament the Gaullists with over a hundred members, voted against Mendes. The MRP, the party of Schuman and Bidault, could not forgive the man who refused to support their cherished idea of the European Army plan and they too turned against him. Mendes-France's own Radical Socialist party (actually far from radical) divided on the question of supporting his cabinet and in the end only the Socialist group of 104 members stood solidly behind him. Thus the most colorful and dynamic French leader in the post-war years lost the power he had held for nearly eight months. It is expected and hoped that the broad lines of French foreign policy will be followed by whoever succeeds the fallen Premier. Complications at this time might seriously damage the prospects of bringing West Germany into the NATO alliance and uniting its forces with the anti-Communist alliance. But Paris has weathered many crises before and it is likely this one will be taken in stride, for while cabinets may change, the administrative machinery of government still functions even if the determination of higher policies is in abeyance.

St. Paul's Cathedral

Port of London Authority Monthly

"From the time of the Saxons to the present day, London's chief sanctuary of religion has stood here above the river, a landmark to the ships of all nations that have floated on the welcoming waters of the Thames." So wrote Walter Thornbury in his Old and New London three-quarters of a century ago. Tall buildings erected since then have obliterated many views of St. Paul's Cathedral from the river.

The earliest authenticated church built on this site was endowed by Ethelbert, King of Kent, about the year 606. With the coming of the Normans, William the Conqueror gave "unto God and the church of St. Paul's of London . . . all freeships by strand and by land, on tide and off tide . . . of all that bishoprick on mine land." The Dean of St. Paul's informs me that these lands were ultimately taken over by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The second Cathedral was Norman to begin with, but later had Early English additions and was constructed between 1087 and 1285. The stone for the Norman cathedral came from Caen, Normandy, and was brought up the Thames by barges. This cathedral remained in existence until it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The south-west tower of Old St. Paul's was the one in which the Lollards were imprisoned—not the tower at Lambeth Palace as is sometimes stated. The bell of St. Paul's was used in Saxon times to call the citizens of London to folkmoots held in the churchyard. Today, the "official" bell of St. Paul's is "Great Tom" which is tolled only on the death of a member of the Royal Family, a Bishop of London, a Dean of St. Paul's or of a Lord Mayor during his year of office.

* * *

From the middle of the 16th century to the middle of the 17th century, the centre aisle of the Cathedral, known as Paul's Walk, was used as a meeting place where it was usual for the populace to foregather between 11 a.m. and noon, and again from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Here "the principal gentry, lords, and courtiers and men of all professions not merely mechanics," discussed business and exchanged news, and the lawyers stood at the pillars to receive their clients. Men seeking employment displayed their bills for service, and the font was used as a counter for payments. In 1569 a lottery was held at the west door where a wooden shed had been erected for the drawing of the prizes.

After the fire of 1561, some repairs, including re-roofing, were carried out. For this, timber was brought to London by sea from Yorkshire. In 1620 the Cathedral was in an almost ruinous condition and still without its steeple. A Royal Commission, of which Inigo Jones was a member, was set up, but despite its recommendations no progress was made in reconstruction work.

The Great Fire of 1666 damaged Old St. Paul's beyond repair and in 1675 Wren laid the first stone of the present Cathedral. It was opened for worship in 1697 but it was not until 1710, when Wren was 78, that the last stone was laid in the dome. The cost of the new building, about £850,000, was raised partly by public subscription but most of the money came from a levy on seaborne coal at rates ranging from 4½d. to 2s. 6d. per chaldron. This levy was in force from 1670 to 1716. It is interesting to reflect that Wren wanted the burning of coal to be banned in the City of London, as he foresaw that the smoke would blacken the stone and also cause it to crumble.

* * *

Wren was the first person to be buried in the crypt of the new Cathedral (1723). His grave is marked by a plain black marble slab and on the wall is the famous inscription "Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice." Nelson lies in a coffin fashioned from the mainmast of L'Orient, a prize taken at the battle of the Nile, and his sacrophagus had been constructed at the expense of Cardinal Wolsey and was originally intended for the burial of Henry VIII in the tomb house at Windsor. There are monuments to Admirals Collingwood, Howe and Rodney, and more recently to Admirals Jellicoe, Beatty and Keyes. All Souls Chapel contains the Kitchener memorial; the south-west chapel is dedicated to the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and there is a memorial chapel to 28,000 American servicemen who lost their lives while serving in Great Britain or in operations based on Great Britain during the second world war.

MOST MOSLEMS

Pakistan is the world's largest Islamic or Mohammedan state.

Medically Speaking

Herman N. Bundesen, M.D.

TOO-CHILLY WEATHER CAUSE OF CHILBLAINS

Acute chilblain is about the mildest form injury you can suffer from the cold. Children and adolescents are usually the chief victims. This is particularly true if they are undernourished.

If the blood supply in your veins is below normal, even moderate exposure to cold may produce chilblain. Your fingers, toes, heels, nose and ears are the most likely targets. The rest of your face is vulnerable too.

You might be unaware that the low temperatures have affected your skin until you feel a burning or itching sensation. The area will turn a bluish red, but the color will disappear when you press the affected finger, ear or whatever it may be. The unnatural color will return shortly after pressure is relieved. The area will feel cold and will probably be clammy to your touch. This is caused by much sweating.

DIFFERENT FROM FROSTBITE

Chilblain differs from frostbite, which we discussed several weeks ago. In frostbite, the affected areas are frozen, and deprived of their blood supply.

Warm stockings, earmuffs and mittens, of course, will help prevent chilblain. These things are still important after you have contracted the ailment.

If your feet have been the target for chilblain, it's a good idea to wear woolen socks when you go to bed during the cold months. During the day, two pairs of socks should be worn. A thin pair of cotton hose inside a pair of woolen socks is usually advisable. Thick boots will also help. You've got to protect the sensitive portions against cold, dampness or injury.

HEATING PADS

Use electric heating pads or hot water bottles occasionally to warm the sections bothered by chilblain.

You should clean the areas with water each day, and massage them gently with warm oil. You may also apply Hydrocortone ointment. Some persons have reported relief after taking nicotinic acid or vitamin K by mouth.

Exercises to improve your circulation also are important.

There are other things your doctor can do for you, too.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

A. G.: If a woman has her tubes tied so she cannot become pregnant, is there any chance of having it undone?

Answer: Operations to restore the tubes in many instances are not successful. Occasionally, such an operation may be carried out satisfactorily. You should consult with your physician about this matter.

The Age Old Story

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Love may have laughed at locksmiths in those good old days when young couples got married, and moved into their own homes and lived happily ever after. But with housing the way it is these days they get married and move in with mother and dad with the result that the laughter sometimes becomes a little hollow. — St. Catharines Standard.

Mathew Lawson, the Toronto city planner, announced recently that moving sidewalks might soon be introduced there. They will move at about half normal walking speed. Just another example of the benefits of modern science, they will cost a lot, hold up traffic for a year or so while they are being constructed, and then will get you there in twice the time.—Kingston Whig Standard.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, we note, expects the cost of home building in Canada to take a drop this year. But before you start rushing for the hammer and the piggy bank, and ordering plans for that dream house, you'd better look a little further than the headlines. There's a catch to it. The cheaper houses will be in Montreal, Toronto and other big cities in the favored central section of the nation. In Newfoundland, we are sorry to say, houses will be more expensive than ever.—St. John's Telegram.

After January 1 next year the Canadian nickel will be nickel. For the past three years the five-cent coin has been made of steel. The change to the original metal is due to "improvement in the international situation." What we need now is a nickel that is a nickel; one that stands for a good cigar, a cup of coffee, a scoop of ice cream, a bag of candy, a pair of luscious doughnuts, a pencil, or a choclate bar. It doesn't matter whether it is of steel, nickel or wood. Purchasing power is what we want.—London Free Press.

The Queen will launch the new liner "Empress of Britain" now being built at Glasgow for the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company, on June 22. The launching will take place at Glasgow-on-Clyde. The Queen will then proceed to the Rosyth naval dockyard on the Firth of Forth to go aboard the royal yacht "Britannia" for her state visit to Norway. The 22,600 ton liner will have a "new look." Her bridge is to be streamlined and she is to have one mast and a single funnel. Her graceful lines can already be seen at the Glasgow shipyard where she is under construction. Even at the moment, in partially constructed state, the "Empress" is an imposing sight, towering high above the slipway. A honeycomb of scaffolding and staging encloses the hull, providing footholds for welders and riveters who are busy fitting plates. Inside alleyways and compartments give an idea of the generous size of her accommodation which will provide for 1,500 passengers. The liner will be equipped with everything necessary for passengers' comfort and enjoyment. There will be theatres, libraries, ballrooms, shops and two swimming pools. Air conditioning with individual control is to be installed in all passenger space and in the crew's quarters. The liner is expected to be ready for her maiden voyage by the Spring of 1956. — U. K. Information Office.

Concluding a graduation address, a professor, said to be happily married spoke as follows: "Gentlemen, many of you will marry. Let me entreat you to be kind to your wives. Be patient with them. When you are going out together, do not worry if your wife is not ready at the appointed time. Have a good book nearby. Read it while you wait. And, gentlemen, I assure you that you will be astonished at the amount of information you will acquire." — Niagara Falls Review.

Alderman W. Stewart McKeough deserves credit for initiative in bringing to the attention of the city council the Windsor proposal to utilize teachers as deputy returning officers and poll clerks in the municipal elections. . . . True, the teachers would be paid for their election work, and there is at least strong hope that some of the more dilatory returns would be expedited. Though we believe that a goodly share of the election officials now employed have had considerable experience in this class of work. There is the further matter of the public reaction to the discarding of returning officers and poll clerks whose work in most cases has been entirely extra money for time for which the public is already paying them. Alderman McKeough was quite within his rights in bringing the Windsor scheme to the attention of his colleagues. The scheme probably merits study. In fact, it demands very close study of all its implications. — Chatham News.

A British specialist in ejection seats for fliers is planning to install them in automobiles, as the ultimate test in low-altitude escape. This arrangement already has worked with dummies, and man's turn is coming up. If the inventor succeeds — if explosive seat ejection can be operated successfully at an automobile body's distance from the ground —the idea should not be applied solely to airplanes. One can think of half a dozen situations in which the automobile rider needs that protection. In that split second before the motorist knows he has failed to outrace a train to a crossing, or has gone out of control on a turn, or is about to be smacked by another car, an ejection seat powered by explosives could be just the thing. The rider would describe a graceful loop over danger, with good prospects of coming down alive. Perhaps his descent would be more perilous than the airman's, because he might have to land on a street instead of a field, and streets nowadays are unsuited to forced landings. But at worst the second hazard would be less than the first. The ejection seat for cars has definite possibilities. — Windsor Star.

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