

THE GUARDIAN

Authorized as Second Class Mail Post Office Department, Ottawa. The Island Guardian Publishing Co. President and Associate Editor, Ian A. Burnett, Associate Editor, Frank Walker. CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew" "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink".

CHARLOTTETOWN, SATURDAY, JAN. 24, 1953 Committee On Defence Spending

The Currie Report is off the floor of the Commons and in the hands of a committee which is to study defence spending since 1950. The respite from public airing of Defence Department cupboards is probably a relief to all parties and to the public. Parliament can enquire into a great many government activities and it began to seem that too much criticism was being directed at the administration of National Defence.

Only one subject may be debated at a time, of course, which makes for reasonably efficient conduct of business, but a long drawn out debate gives the impression that one particular branch of the Government is being singled out for criticism. When that branch is National Defence, which every citizen feels inclined to support, the very hammering of the Opposition at misdeeds is not continued without qualms.

When other matters are allowed to take their place in the public eye and other Departments subjected to criticism, the charges against Mr. Claxton's Department will become part of the general campaign by the Opposition and C.C.F. The Army will no longer occupy the unenviable position of whipping boy for the Government.

Yukon Diversion Rejected

Resources Minister Winters has rejected a proposal that the water of a Canadian river be diverted to Alaska to provide power for a huge U. S. aluminum development in that territory. Mr. Winters has informed the president of the Aluminum Company of America that it is the duty of the Canadian Government to see to it that the waters of the Yukon River are used for the greatest benefit of Canadians and that the Ottawa government would turn down any formal application to divert water from the Yukon to Alaska.

The proposal, notes the Winnipeg Tribune, was to build a diversionary dam on Canadian soil near Whitehorse which would permit the Yukon River to be carried through two tunnels through the mountains to a point near Skagway. This water would be used to generate the large amounts of power needed to operate an aluminum plant with an output of 200,000 tons a year.

From the Canadian standpoint there were two big objections to the proposed diversion. In the first place it would mean the loss of a large amount of hydro-electric power. Canadians are coming to realize that the seemingly endless hydro-electric resources of the country have limits and that in some areas these limits have already been reached. It would be folly to alienate the power potential of the Yukon River to foreign use. The second objection is that the Alaska plant would have a harmful effect on the Canadian development at Kitimat, which incidentally received little help from U. S. sources.

New Consumer Index

How much Canadians have changed their ways in the recent past is revealed in detail by the new consumer price index, subject of the Bank of Montreal's latest Business Review, which emphasizes the importance of the index as a comprehensive "trigger figure" affecting incomes and costs all over Canada.

The bank comments that the cost of living index has been among the most frequent topics of conversation in recent years. Nor is this interest casual, since a sample of collective bargaining agreements signed in the first eight months of 1951 showed that something like 40 per cent of union workers were protected by "escalator" clauses which made mandatory a change in wages with each specified change in the index. Moreover, many employers are greatly influenced by the movement of the index in considering general revisions of pay rates. Despite the familiarity and importance of the index, it is among the "least understood and most misunderstood" of the figures produced by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The appearance in the last four months of the new consumer price index has provoked added interest, and the discontinuance of the old index in the near future is necessitating the renegotiation of many labour contracts.

As its new name implies, the index is intended to reflect "only the influence of price changes upon the cost of the typical

purchases of a representative cross-section of Canadian consumers." During four years of preparatory work the Bureau consulted business, union, welfare and consumer groups, and made a detailed study of the year-round purchases of 3,600 Canadian households. Next, a "target group" of 1,517 families was selected, ranging in size from two adults to two adults with four children, with annual incomes ranging from \$1,650 to \$4,050 in the year ended August 1948, and living in 27 Canadian cities of over 30,000 population. The detailed expenditures over a year of this "target group" were then analyzed to determine what items should be included in the new index. While most of the commodities and services bought in 1948 were found to be the same as in 1938, the previous survey year, over 30 items included in the old cost of living index had receded to negligible importance and were dropped, while nearly 100 new items were added.

"These deletions and additions provide an interesting commentary on the changes that have taken place in the Canadian way of life in the short space of a decade," the Bank states. "The modern family eats proportionately more pork and less beef, and more fresh fruits, vegetables and fruit juices than ten years earlier." Nylons have replaced rayon or woollen stockings, and pyjamas have supplanted the cotton nightgown. And, in the home, fuel oil has gone a long way toward replacing coal and coke for heating. The costs of soft drinks, beer, liquor and of home ownership, as distinct from renting, have been included for the first time."

After examining the enormous task of keeping the new index up to date, the "weighting" of different purchases, and the reasons for the choice of 1949 as the new base year, the B. of M. review concludes by emphasizing the importance of "bearing in mind what it is and what it is not." It is not intended to apply to farm households, for which a separate index is compiled, nor to single persons or families larger than six, nor to families in the very low or very high income brackets. But it does apply, and apparently with a high degree of validity, to the average sized, city-dwelling family of moderate means.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Tomorrow, 3rd Sunday after Epiphany; Conversion of St. Paul.

Tomorrow, 193rd anniversary of the birth of Robbie Burns.

The drift to the town is vividly demonstrated in eastern Prince where eight farm houses are reported to have been moved into Kensington.

Britons contributing information for the new cost-of-living index must feel as though making a new Doomsday Book. Every last item of expenditure is being recorded by the "sample" section of the population.

The debating team of St. Dunstan's University will soon be busy defending the Dominion championship which they won last year. They have the good wishes of their fellow Islanders and certainly showed evidence in the exhibition set-to with the visitors from Toronto University.

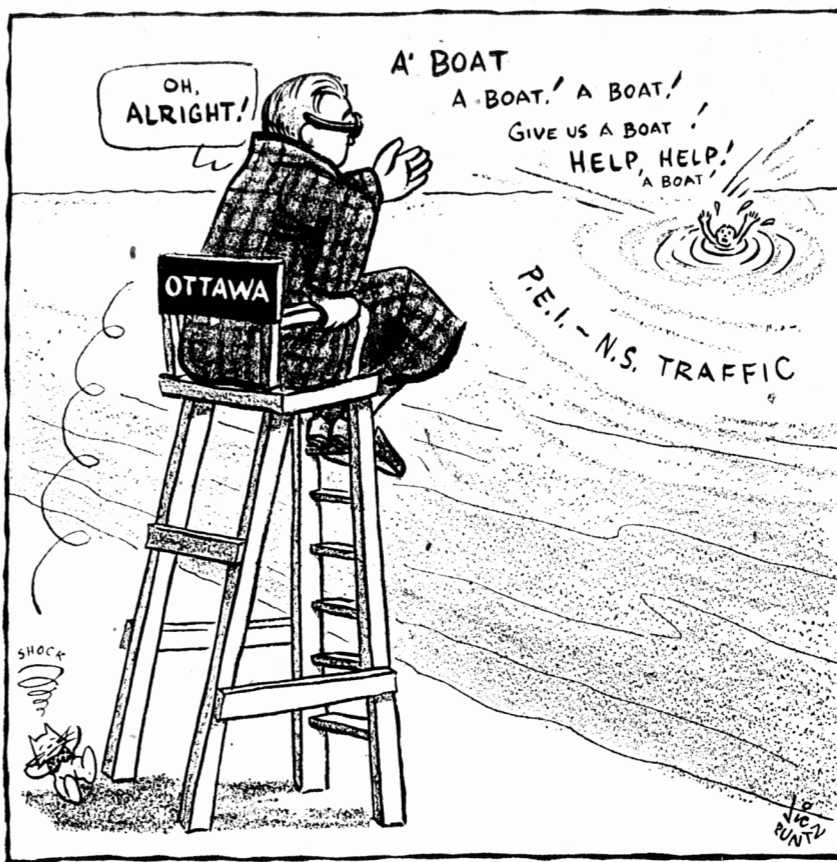
As travel becomes more rapid and common, so does the difficulty increase of localizing epidemics. A striking example is the current widespread outbreak of influenza which hits the United States, Mexico, Europe, Japan and Hawaii. In public health as in other things the world today is a neighbourhood.

Various remedies have been tried or proposed for the tendency of letters in the new Summerside post office to elude the boxholder and go flying back into the sorting room. Perhaps the R. C. A. F. could be persuaded to pressurize the sorting space so that letters would slide out to the boxholder rather than away from him.

As a commercial proposition Homecraft is under the disadvantage that few but fellow craftsmen fully appreciate the skill, labour and materials which go into fine handmade products. Even though it is scarcely a profitable enterprise, however, it has important returns in satisfaction to the creator of fine products and in attracting to the Province a particularly desirable type of visitor.

The Battle of Dogger Bank was fought this date, 1915. The British Fleet under the command of Admiral Sir David (later Earl) Beatty encountered a German raiding cruiser squadron under Admiral Hipper. Hipper headed for Heligoland. In the chase the Blucher was sunk, the Seydlitz and Derfflinger badly hit. The result of the action was to impose the greatest caution on the German naval authorities.

Rescue Promised



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.

POTATO PRICES

Sir.—Am wondering if the P.E.I. Potato Marketing Board by reducing the floor price of potatoes did the right thing for the potato industry. It seems to me they played right into the hands of the buyers in Montreal and Toronto because by lowering the price they are saying in effect "we have a large surplus of potatoes on hand and we have to lower the price to sell them all". Every time the floor price is lowered the Board is admitting to a larger surplus and this will be used against us when trying to make sales.

I am wondering if it would not have been better for the Board to have issued a statement something like this: "The 1952 potato crop is estimated at . . . cars; to date we have shipped . . . cars. Which leaves us only . . . cars still to be shipped. This amount is considered small for this time of year and we do not consider the floor price any longer necessary. Therefore we hereby suspend it. If at any time in the future we consider it necessary to re-impose the floor price we will do so."

Let us all work to get as much for our potato crop as possible. I am Sir, etc. SPUD Carleton, P.E.I.

KNOWN BY OUR READING

Sir.—The Vancouver Sun tried an experiment recently to find out how much interest their readers had in war news. For three successive days they ran an identical strip of Korean news. It had 500,000 subscribers but one protest came. If they had done that with or omitted some comic strip the office would have been flooded with protests. That illustration is illuminating. It reveals that, today, there is a lack of serious reading. I read lately that the funnies greatly help to sell the dailies. Many are not funny but grotesque and ugly. There may be a few ugly people in the world, I suppose. But no man or woman is ugly until they become debauched with drink or bad living; but many characters in the comics are repulsive. Some, of course, are clever and funny. It seems a pity that those strips should not display more of the beauty that God has bestowed.

Today, there is a lack of serious reading. Cheap stories, detective, blood and thunder stuff, that sells in the stores, and is read commonly, by young people. There are wholesome novels and most readable biographies, and they are read, but far too much of that other unwholesome stuff is devoured.

Our fathers and mothers usually read solid books. I visited a man over eighty last week. He was reviewing British history. A few years ago men and women read books that fed their minds with knowledge and ideas that were worth remembering and living by. It was sometimes laborious reading, but as sawing wood strengthens the arms, their reading gave power to the mind. Light trash does not do that any more than fog will feed the body.

And our fathers and mothers read their Bibles. A lady gave her neighbour a Bible at Christmas. Some time later she asked her how she liked the book. "Oh splendid," she cried, "and they all got married at the end of it." A lot of people today would display about that much knowledge of the Bible. The fact is the Bible is too serious reading for many in this generation. They crave what tickles and stirs the emotions.

A man can be pretty well judged by what he reads, not by the books on his shelves, for they can be quite dusty; but by what he actually reads and sometimes re-reads. Half the good articles I read I have to re-read to get the sense and fix them in my mind. The fact is there are so many important articles in magazines and

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

"The existence of a disease resembling cholera so near to us as Miramichi has led to the adoption of precautionary measures here. A special meeting of the Board of Health was held on Sunday evening, which was attended by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor. Resolutions were entered into for the establishment of a Dispensary in Charlottetown, for the purpose of supplying medicines to the country, whenever proper cases are appointed.

"It having been found that there was not a sufficient stock of certain medicines, which were considered the most efficacious in case of cholera, in the place, an order for a supply was immediately made out, to be forwarded the morning following to Halifax; and it was stated by His Excellency that the expense would be defrayed out of the public treasury.

"The endeavours formerly used to procure a suitable building for a Hospital having proved unsuccessful, directions were given to the members entrusted with that duty not to lose sight of so important an object.

"His Excellency, in alluding to the Quarantine Law, passed at the last sitting of the Legislature, remarked that the Assembly had failed to place any funds at the disposal of the Executive for carrying its provisions into effect, but expressed his readiness to do everything in his power, so far as the limited means at his command would permit, to co-operate with the Board in such measures as they might deem prudent to avert the threatened scourge from our shores, or to mitigate its violence, should it unfortunately obtain a footing amongst us." — Royal Gazette, July 3, 1832

Good editorials in papers that I find little time for books. One must try to keep abreast of these rushing times or be left behind. I think that we should neither think nor pray intelligently. Whether we can help to solve any of the problems or not we ought to live with them. One great trouble with our democracy is that too few people do their own thinking and deciding. God has given us all some brains and the least we should do is to try to use them. I am, Sir, etc. W. I. GREEN Stanley Bridge.

SEASONAL NOTE

PETERBOROUGH, Ont., (CP)—Four sparrows were seen splashing in a shallow pool of water here, which wouldn't be unusual except it was the middle of January. Residents said it's a rare winter when such occurrences are reported.

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The Poet's Corner

"MUSIC I HEARD"

Music I heard with you was more than music. And bread I broke with you was more than bread; Now that I am without you, all is desolate; All that was once so beautiful is dead.

Your hands once touched this table and this silver, And I have seen your fingers hold this glass. These things do not remember you, beloved— And yet your touch upon them will not pass.

For it was in my heart you moved among them And blessed them with your hands and with your eyes; And in my heart they will remember always— They knew you once, O beautiful and wise.

—Conrad Aiken.

The Age-Old Story

The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honorable and glorious; and his righteousness endureth forever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. The works of his hands are verily and judgement; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

TORONTO, Jan. 23.—(CP)—Prospective parents may soon know months in advance whether it will be a boy or a girl. A Toronto biological laboratory is working to perfect a salivary test on expectant mothers which they hope will determine with 95 per cent accuracy the sex of unborn children. The test is taken in the sixth month of pregnancy.

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

ALAS, POOR CHEDDAR!

It has finally happened. A semi-official report says that Canadians by a large majority prefer soft mild cheese to the once popular cheddar. What effect this revelation will have on our economy is a question that must be left to the experts. The effect it is destined to have on our way of life is obvious and not, I suggest, too good. Indeed, from my point of view it is a national calamity just as serious in a sense as the one suggested by the Currie report. Once majorities begin to pile up there is no stopping them and it is possible, though I dread to think of it, that in the not too distant future Cheddar will disappear entirely from the Canadian scene. When that time comes we shall be in dire straits as a Dominion, a Realm, a Kingdom, or whatever our politicians have decreed our status to be then. The time will be ripe for our return to colonial status or for our annexation to the United States. For how in the world can any people remain independent politically once the sharp, nippy tang of Cheddar is gone for ever?

I have no hesitation whatever in accepting the authenticity of the report. Long before it was given out it was as difficult to find old fashioned cheese in the stores as to find people in the front pews in a half-filled church. Plenty of cheese, to be sure, of all shapes, sizes, and hues. But THE cheese, the cheese that once upon a time rested on every counter waiting to be unveiled, that made man glad to be alive on a dreary day, and that helped to make Canada great and respected among the nations; for that you looked in vain.

Shopkeepers had all sorts of excuses to offer. They couldn't seem to get it any more. There was little demand for it. The packaged stuff was what sold. Now we know the actual state of affairs. It was gradually being removed from its historic position of supremacy and destined for extinction. If that is indeed true, and all signs point that way, another bright era in Canadian history is drawing to a close.

If it meant nothing more than a change in fashion we might get on with it. Fashion is often fickle and unpredictable. What it gives today it can withdraw tomorrow and what it withdraws today it is quite capable of restoring tomorrow or next week. But I am afraid that the true cause of fashion tells only half the story.

Something tells me that what has happened to Cheddar is merely a symbol of national deterioration in other ways. No great institution passes silently. With it invariably go those things which it represented and symbolized. In this case I suggest there is indicated a noticeable and significant weakening of the sturdy qualities which characterized our pioneer forbears. In fact, our pioneering days are over in both fact and imagination.

Think of the men who edged their way westward to the great prairies and beyond, who cut paths through the forest and extended civilization from sea to sea. Does anyone in his right mind imagine that they were satisfied with a mild, soft cheese? No, my friends. The one material thing that spurred them on was Cheddar, hard crumbly chunks of it.

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