

THE GUARDIAN

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Editor and Managing Director, 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 MONDAY, NOV. 2, 1953

P. O. W. Claims

There has been a protest by the National Council of Canadian Prisoners of War against the Federal Government's acceptance of the report of chief war claims commissioner Chief Justice Thane A. Campbell's report on the payment of compensation to former Prisoners-of-War.

The Council, of course, has the welfare of the former prisoners at heart but the objections do not seem to be well taken. Had the finding been otherwise and a fixed amount set for all who were in enemy hands the Council would almost certainly have felt bound to stand up for the right of individuals to prove special hardship as a basis for additional compensation.

It could well be argued that all the compensation is inadequate for the hardships that were undergone but the Council is on far firmer ground in suggesting that all necessarily suffered alike and should be compensated on the same scale.

Bill Number One

There is at least one respect in which our Provincial Legislature could well adopt the practice of Parliament at Westminster rather than the variation which has come into use at Ottawa.

The practice became a Standing Order of the British House on March 22, 1603 when it was ruled "That the first day of every sitting in every Parliament, some one bill, and no more, receiveth a first reading for form's sake."

In Ottawa it has become the practice for the "pro forma" bill to be introduced by the Prime Minister or other representative of the Government, a change which deprives the ancient practice of its significance.

Defending The Spud

The very name SPUD comes from the Society for Preventing Unwholesome Diet or something similar and the humble potato has been subject to bitter attacks over the years.

Dr. Redcliffe Salaman, a nutritionist of Cambridge University, has given what he calls the "sinful" potato a dreadful mashing.

Dr. Salaman even dates the beginning of Anglophobia in Ireland from 1588, when Sir Walter Raleigh introduced the potato to the Emerald Isle.

The doctor is wrong. The potato is not to blame for the ills he names. The eater is the culprit. Reliance on a single food crop has led to famine and poverty everywhere, as the peoples of Asia know too well.

H-Bombs

The impressive explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were followed a few years later by greater atomic bombs exploded by the United States and British and these in turn were followed by the even more powerful hydrogen bomb produced by the Americans.

The cheer which these scientific statements engenders will be short lived, however, if the report can be believed of the interview which a well known contributor to Punch, Mr. Christopher Hollis, had with one of the physicists employed at Britain's atomic research station at Harwell.

The savant assured the journalist that, "a lot of people have very exaggerated ideas about these explosions. There is no real reason to think that they would merely destroy all human life."

This would seem to be the point at which theologians should get into the picture. Perhaps they can tell us, if the scientists cannot, just what the consequences are apt to be in addition to annihilation for the human race.

EDITORIAL NOTES

All Souls' Day.

Medical men have long taken an interest in the diseases that attacked ancient people. Plant pathologists have a similar interest, which is not altogether academic.

In the interest of safety the Summer-side Community Planning Association has recommended putting a limit on the height of hedges and so forth at street corners and driveways.

November is so named because it was anciently the ninth month of the year. The Roman senators, for whose servilities it is said that even Tiberius often blushed, wished to call the month after him, in imitation of Julius and Augustus.

India had hoped to make Hindi, the language of 44 per cent of that country's population, used universally within 15 years of the attainment of independence.

Accepting the freedom of the city of London, the Queen Mother had some wise words to say about freedom in general.

The wisdom of having new industrial plants well dispersed and outside potential A-bomb target cities is being realized in the United States.

Boys: Here's A Quick Way To Make A Dollar



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.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Sir,—I am sorry "Gastric" could not digest my advice on discipline, also sorry he missed the point which I had hoped to make clear with respect to teaching.

From his references I assume he (or she) has never taught school. If I am right, then the best and most philanthropic advice I can give according to the small portion of wisdom afforded me, is "Don't!"

I must confess, however, that a fellow with horns, tail and pitchfork as I give this advice, lurks in the shadow of my conscience urging me to seize and tie up "Gastric", place him, willing or not, in a school of from thirty-five to fifty youngsters, ages 5-10, and see that he teach and grade every one satisfactorily in one year—no more.

I am, Sir, etc. ULRIC

BUS TRAFFIC QUERY

Sir,—A facetious American computed the hours he spent in church and shaving for church over a period of years. The total aggregated two years and some months. Had I calculated the time I spent at Emerald Junction waiting for trains, and the endless sessions on the Tignish run, I doubtless would be charged to realize the impressive percentage of my allotted span that was dissipated in such a colorless manner.

In the buses you can see the driver's name displayed, and you can read his qualifications: Safe - Reliable - Courteous. After two years of considerable bus travel, I am happy to be able to say that every driver measured up to the high standards of efficiency.

On one occasion, however, I was somewhat surprised at a certain driver's reaction to a request which several other drivers had considered quite in order.

The first time I came into Charlottetown from points west when the bus reached the outskirts of the city, I asked the driver to let me off at the intersection of Elm Avenue and Euston. He complied very graciously.

I am wondering whether that particular driver was complying with Bus Company regulations, or arbitrarily deciding that a bus stop could not be made at a street where there is a traffic light.

I am Sir, etc. WONDERRING WANDERER

ANCIENT GARDENERS

Landscape gardening was practised in early times by the Assyrians, Jews and Greeks.

Who's Out Of Step?

(Montreal Gazette)

A high school principal in Philadelphia finds himself in trouble. He made a suggestion that has been roundly denounced as "undemocratic."

What did he propose? It was only this. It might be a good idea, he thought, if a special program of studies were prepared for outstanding boys and girls. He felt that they could get along faster, and get more out of their years of education, if they didn't have to keep pace with those who were slower. But this, it appears, was a most undemocratic proposal to make.

Fortunately, this high school principal has not been without his supporters. After the first wave of attack had been launched against him, the other side was presented by those who thought there was a good deal to be said for his proposal.

One of those who came to his support was the eminent American educator, Seymour St. John. He pointed out that the freedom to keep one's best is surely just as much a freedom as any other. There is no moral or social virtue in pulling people down to the average.

As Mr. St. John said by way of reminder: "Michelangelo did not learn to paint by spending his time doodling. Mozart was not an accomplished pianist at the age of eight as a result of spending his days in front of a television set."

It is always necessary to be on guard against absurd ideas that may be presented for the time being, with all the seeming authority of proved fact. At the present time there is a curiously real possibility that democracy is coming to be identified with mediocrity. As a result, the educational process is in some danger of being kept so well within the child of unusual intelligence must almost be encouraged to assume mediocrity.

No doubt it is very true that little good comes of forcing people to do more than they are able. But this is quite a different thing from trying to induce people to do less than they are able. For whereas the simplified and easier studies may be suitable for those incapable of anything better, they can lead the more talented to believe that being shiftless and taking it easy are somehow social virtues, deserving of moral acclaim.

Yet there is little purpose to a theory that education should be without tears, when life cannot guarantee similar concessions. What Mr. St. John was saying has been said also by Dr. Sydney Smith, the President of the University of Toronto. In his last report, Dr. Smith used these outspoken words: "Education—real education—is no easy matter."

It is a process not without pain. I am thoroughly in favor of making dull things interesting, but question whether it is in the interest of pupils to make difficult things easy."

The emphasis upon mediocrity, the tendency to exalt a low common measure of accomplishment, is not entirely separated from the theory that society itself should be organized along similar lines. It is not only in the classroom that the mediocre are made the standard, so that those who exceed the standard may be looked upon askance, as exhibiting a regrettable anti-social tendency. It comes from the anxiety to magnify the group, so that group activities, group consciousness, group adjustments have all become methods of reducing things to an even level.

It is all rather reminiscent of the cartoon that appeared in Punch in the years of the First World War. It pictured two distinguished experts in the ancient history of Egypt. They were in the British Museum, examining a statue of three Egyptians walking together. One of the experts has turned to the other and remarks: "You know, my appreciation of this statue has greatly diminished of late. I just can't overlook the fact that Ramesses II is out of step."

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

NEWSPAPER ITEMS

From the Examiner, Dec. 9, 1879: Mr. I. C. Hall purchased on Tuesday, from Mr. Andrew Smith, Royalty, a carcass of pork which weighed seven hundred and forty-two pounds.

Posts have been substituted for one set of rails on the north side of Queen's Square, opposite Walker's corner. Pedestrians need not now wade knee deep through the mud as heretofore.

The Osborne House was sold at auction by W. Wilson Higgs on Wednesday, and purchased by the heirs of the estate of the late James Davis.

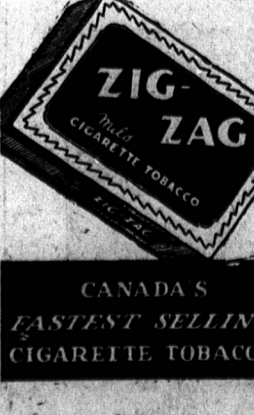
Hewson, McDougall and Seaman announce that they have on hand at their Charlottetown factory, large and select stock of material for the manufacture of sleighs, etc. They have recently purchased photos of all the latest prize sleighs of the Ottawa Exhibition. Parties requiring new sleighs would do well to call at their factory and examine before ordering elsewhere. They keep on hand and make to order Top Buggies, Phaetons, the famous Dexter Spring Wagons, and carriages of every description. Parties having their wagons repaired and painted in the spring will have them stored free of charge for the winter."

Another instance of the great facilities for loading grain at this port is that of the John F. Robertson, which cleared on Wednesday with a cargo of 35,104 bushels of oats, and 355 pieces of deal, with which she was loaded in four days.

FINCH PLAGUE

LONDON. (Reuters) — British colonial officials are getting worried about a plague of red-billed finches which is threatening grain crops throughout East Africa. In Kenya last year, when the invasion was classed as "small," they did about \$2,000,000 damage to crops.

For Quality Mildness Value



Notes By The Way

Seen from the ground with the brilliant reds and yellows, shading into purples, pinks and browns, against the solid green of the conifers laced with the gleaming trunks of white birches, a sunlit Quebec hillside presents a frustrating subject for the best of artists. And, if he waits till the afternoon sun which lights the slope, the artist may turn toward the west and experience the same impotency in what he sees there.—Montreal Gazette.

Denver University is offering a course in "Common Sense". Any one who enrolls might be taken as admitting that he lacks it, and if he fails the final exam, he'll be worse off than ever.—Brantford Expositor.

Luxury shoes made of turkey skin are being produced in Hungary, and this is a sensible idea as has come out of this country since the war. Turkey shoes could be one of the things the harassed satellite world needs, and shouldn't remain in the luxury class any longer than necessary. The report adds that the turkey skin looks like crocodile skin, and is almost as strong. Many will recognize this type. Those who have bitten into it during the festive season will recognize its source as an old gobbler that strutted out the wrong door at the processing centre, and was misclassified as a young tom.—Windsor Daily Star.

The Hellespont must have been reminded of old times when the notable American swimmer, Florence Chadwick, swam ashore and shouted "taman", which is said to be the equivalent of "O.K." Miss Chadwick had reason to be satisfied and jubilant, for she had crossed from Europe to Asia Minor under her own power. The passage between the two continents, however, was not as long as some of her other trips for she took the route between Sestos and Abydos, a distance of about five miles. This was the route that Leander took every night to visit Hero and every night, until that lamentable evening when the lighthouse failed him, he, too, no doubt shouted "O.K." as he scrambled ashore.—Toronto Telegram.

British historian Arnold J. Toynbee has forecast that if Europe does not unite now it will become the "world's playground, museum and alms house." An interesting place to visit but bypassed by the highway of world progress. Through a study of the past we may gain some inkling of what, given a certain set of circumstances, is likely to occur in the future. Few historians are as qualified as Mr. Toynbee to note trends that could bring about the decay of civilization. Historian Toynbee has specialized in the root causes that have brought to pass the rise and fall of successive civilizations and national flowerings in Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome. He knows the signs and evidence of growth and of withering away. He knows that the test of endurance is in the response or the failing to respond to challenge.—Sydney Post-Record.

The Poet's Corner

THE DONKEY When fishes flew and forests and flocks were upon thorns. Some moment when the moon was blue. Then surely I was born: With monstrous head and sickening cry, With ears like grant wings, The devil's walking parody On all four-footed things. The tattered outlaw of the earth, Of ancient crooked will; Starve, scourge, deride me; I am dumb. I keep my secret still. Fools! For I also had my hour: One far fierce hour and sweet: There was a shout about my ears, And palms about my feet. —G. K. Chesterton.

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PROFESSIONAL CARDS

Professional cards for J. A. McGuigan, Allison M. Gillis, Dr. K. A. MacEachern, J. A. Carruthers, Palmer & Haslam, Matheson, Peake & Nicholson, A. Walthen Gaudet, Gordon E. MacMillan, Frederic A. Large, Chas. R. McQuaid, H. J. Mabon, McDonald, Currie & Co., H. R. Doane & Company.