

Out On The Prairies

Out on the Prairies, which Prime Minister Pearson plans to visit shortly with nothing particular in mind, the mail carriers ignored the post office strike and stayed on the job. But if it isn't one thing it's another to keep the rabbit's tail short. The wheat crop year ended Saturday on an inauspicious note, due mainly to the impasse between the elevator system and the grainhandlers' union. The new crop year, 1965-66, started Sunday under the handicap of strike-bound grain at British Columbia harbors. Montreal is tied up, too, due to 1,000 striking grain handlers and 5,000 longshoremen in a sympathy walkout.

Judging by outward appearances, Mitchell Sharp, the minister responsible for the Wheat Board, does not seem to be too perturbed about the continuing tie-up of Pacific ports. But according to the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, his complacency is not shared by those farmers who have wheat for market, and who have failed to deliver the full quotas of their crop because of the blockade at export points. Mr. Sharp said in Winnipeg the government will not intervene until Dr. Neil Perry, the mediator, reports.

Meantime, farmers in western Saskatchewan and Alberta, whose export outlet is Vancouver, ended the old crop year short of cash to which they were entitled if they had fulfilled their delivery quotas. If they deliver their last year's wheat in the new crop year it will be allotted against their quotas—an arrangement to which the farmers strongly object. Inasmuch as they had nothing to do with the grain export tie-up, they don't see why Mr. Sharp shouldn't give them until August 31 to complete deliveries of the old crop.

Meanwhile, too, the elevators involved in the strike draw certain benefits in cash from their country elevators which profit from grain stored there by farmers.

Mr. Sharp will expect the 1965-66 crop will be the second greatest in history. In 1963-64, 525 million bushels of wheat were exported, far ahead of the previous record set in 1928-29 when 408 million bushels were exported. This year's estimate falls between these figures, and it is, of course, big news for the Prairies. For the time being, however, it does not lift the load of worry from the farmers. They wonder where they will store the new grain crop while the old crop remains on their farms or in plugged country elevators.

The Doctor Problem

If the national medical insurance plan proposed by the federal government goes into effect in July, 1967, Canada will be faced with a shortage of general practitioners. A feature of this problem, as noted in the Hamilton Spectator, is that it will tend to be more acute in provinces which are largely agricultural than in those which are heavily industrialized and have bigger centres of population.

Statistics are often deceptive and that which shows the present ratio of one physician to every 860 Canadians seems particularly so. A rule of thumb average for the country as a whole takes no account of specialists, nor of the uneven distribution of general practitioners. But it is the availability of medical aid that will become of cardinal importance in the scheme now being considered. The solution involves, of course, an intensive speeding up in the provision of medical schools.

The annual average of graduates from Canada's twelve medical schools in the 1946-61 period was 785. From this number have to be deducted foreign students who return to practice in their own countries, those who become teachers, others who

will become doctors in industry or take non-practising posts such as in public health, and still more who go on to specialize. As a result, the ranks of general practitioners are not greatly enlarged.

Before a doctor can be trained—and the period, including internship, is a minimum of six years—their must be a place for him in medical school. From drawing the first plan to graduating the first doctor may take upwards of ten years. There is, therefore, urgent need for the federal government to push ahead with aid for medical schools. Existing ones will have to be enlarged and new ones built. And hand in hand with this expansion must go vastly increased expenditure in research to keep up with modern developments in the field of medicine.

If national medicare becomes a fact, Canadians will discover that its costs escalate faster than any theoretical estimates made in advance. The need for new medical schools will be among the first and most pressing. Not only must there be enough general practitioners, but they must be distributed according to need. This is basic to any universal medicare concept, and it is the point about which we have heard least from federal spokesmen to date. Let us hope that at the forthcoming health ministers' conference it will not be overlooked.

On The Hudson

A group of U.S. politicians was exposed for six hours one day last week to what one of their guides called "the horrors of the Hudson." Oil slicks, dead fish, garbage, detergent bubbles, beer cans and other debris rode the majestic bosom of the river as members of the National Parks and Recreation Subcommittee of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs boarded a power cruiser to see for themselves what the water pollution clamor was about.

It must have been a chastening experience. The congressmen had previously held public hearings on legislative proposals to save what remains of the scenic beauty of one of America's most famous waterways. Native guides stopped at nothing to show how the river had become polluted and the shorelines desecrated—defiled by gas tanks, shabby marinas, grim factories, scabrous quarries and power plants.

What the subcommittee will decide is whether federal intervention is necessary to prevent further marmade havoc, especially in the region of the Hudson Highlands, where the river snakes for 15 miles between rugged wooded hills. New York's Governor Rockefeller opposes any such intervention, contending that his Hudson River Valley Commission is an adequate instrument for conservation. That appears to be wishful thinking on his part. There has been, at the New York Times well says, "a woeful absence of legal protection for a great national heritage."

A "highway of history," the Hudson was filled with forts and encampments in the Revolutionary War, but one landmark is now partly hidden by the rusting wrecks of an automobile graveyard. "The Great River of the Mountains," as Henry Hudson called it, flowed for centuries through raw wilderness, undisturbed. The red men who dwelt beside it hardly altered its primeval fastness. But in decades to come it may cut through a vast urban and suburban complex thrusting north under pressure of expanding populations.

Our waterways are undergoing a similar transformation in this country, though more slowly, and are worthy of the combined efforts of all who would preserve them unspoiled for future generations.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The head man of Indonesia is quoted as saying that "God willing," his country will have the atomic bomb. God willing, indeed!

The Quebec government is making a real effort to get to the bottom of the province's farm problems. It has appointed a commission to study "the steps to be taken so agricultural production gives farmers revenue in line with that of other classes of society." The areas singled out for special attention are: creation of more profitable markets; improving marketing procedures; cutting the net cost of production; reducing the cost of processing farm products; and consolidating farm operations. The commission, in consultation with the minister, is to fix an order of priority for its studies and produce preliminary reports on key subjects. Its final report is to be turned in by the end of April, 1967.



A PICNIC WHILE IT LASTED

JORDAN'S NATIONAL PARK

Reclaiming A Once Marvellous Country

Maria Sorenson in The Christian Science Monitor

Announcement by the Kingdom of Jordan that it will establish its first national park could mean the beginning of one of the most hopeful land rehabilitation projects yet established in the Middle East.

The Middle East contains the largest man-made desert areas in the world. Centuries of use and overuse of this area make it the classic example of what can happen to the land when it is misused by man. The common belief that the Middle East is and always has been desert couldn't be farther from the truth.

A vivid description of what this territory was once like is found in Xenophon's "Anabasis." In 401 B.C. this Greek historian along with 10,000 Greek mercenaries found themselves trapped deep in what was then country ruled by the Persian Empire. Xenophon's first hand report of the 1,500-mile march made by the Greeks in order to return to their homeland is one of the classic accounts of antiquity. When this army passed through what is now the Middle East here is what they found:

"In this part of the country was one great flat plain like a sea, covered with asphint; whatever was besides of wood or reeds, all were small-smelling like spices. There was no tree, but all sorts of animals, troops of wild asses, plenty of ostriches, bustards also and gazelles; and the horsemen often chased these. The asses, if they were chased, ran ahead and stood still, for they ran much faster than horses, again when the horses came near they ran as before, and they could not be caught unless the horsemen placed themselves at intervals and hunted in relays. The meat of those caught was like venison but more tender."

In 1964 when Guy Mountfort, the British ornithologist and explorer, journeyed through approximately this same region at the invitation of Jordanian King Hussein he found a land where in some places, "nature has simply given up the fight." The wild ass and ostrich were extinct. The gazelles and bustards (a bird as large as a turkey) were down to so few that he felt certain that within ten years they and other animal species still in the area would disappear completely. Yet as late as 1917-18 Lawrence's "Seven Years in the Desert" described the region as a "paradise of the East."

Our Yesterdays

(From The Guardian Files)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(August 3, 1940) The Bremen radio suddenly shut down late last night, indicating stern continuation of Britain's sledge-hammer air raids on Germany-raids which the Air Ministry announced had scored smashing successes against supply dumps, ports, airbases and war industries in more than 100 German cities. With such raids Britain hopes to sap any Nazi Blitzkrieg at its roots.

TEN YEARS AGO

(August 3, 1955) Cyrus Eaton paid a flying visit to Charlottetown with several guests which included some of the world's most noted scholars as well as a number of newspaper men representing several

of Arabia had been able to feed his Bedouin raiders off this same desert. What has happened: Several things. Goats have proliferated and literally eaten the remaining vegetation away. Goats can strip a land of every trace of vegetation and when this is gone learn to climb trees and eat the leaves.

The last of the forests went to fuel the Hejaz railway during World War I. Today, the Bedouin who must find fuel for their campfires are pulling up the small surviving bushes. Mr. Mountfort expedition recommended a government subsidizing program of kerosene for the Bedouin as a first step in allowing the vegetation to begin to grow again.

Dedicated Jordanians will no doubt find plenty of help in the world's conservation and scientific community. The results could mean the beginning of a new area for Jordan's people and wildlife.

Brief Annual Boom

National Geographic Society

Canada's Hudson Bay port at Churchill, Manitoba, booms for 10 weeks of the year, then hibernates through a long winter. Late in June, ice in the Bay and the Churchill River begins to break. It cracks into myriad floes that float out to sea or pile up on shore. The town becomes watery with slush.

Churchill's business and population soar during the brief two and a half months of warm weather. Workers swarm into town to unload freighters from around the world and fill them with grain from Canada's Prairie Provinces—Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

SHORT-CUT TO EUROPE

The ships disgorge goods ranging from toys to tractors. Most come from England and continental Europe. In turn, more than 20,000,000 bushels of wheat are poured into waiting holds.

Ships brave the forbidding waters, perilous with icebergs, for a sound economic reason. This route to Europe is 1,000 miles shorter than the route down the St. Lawrence River. Churchill cannot be reached by car or truck, for no road extends into this desolate region. Twice weekly, however, the Muskeg Express waves Winnipeg and chugs across the bleak tundra to Churchill. When weather permits, a plane lands regularly.

End of the line for travelers from the south, Churchill is a jumping-off spot for north-bound scientific expeditions and for Indians, Eskimos, and trappers. Many keep summer cabins at

Usefulness Of Surgery

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen Industrial temperatures several hundred degrees below zero and other hotter than the sun's surface are undergoing tests to determine their usefulness in surgery.

The use of intense heat as a high-speed bloodless cutting tool also has possibilities. The instrument (plasma arc scalpel) shoots a jet stream of ionized gases ranging in temperature up to 20,000 degrees F. The fine needle of hot plasma in the surgical device is enveloped by a cool gas mantle to protect tissues adjacent to the incision.

The discovery of any new tool or technique is followed by a rash of reports on its usage in many diseases. Past examples include radium, X-ray, the cobalt bomb, and electrocautery. Cryosurgery is having its day.

Dr. Irving S. Cooper of St. Barnabas hospital in New York City, a pioneer in this field, has performed several thousand successful operations on victims of Parkinson's disease. He freezes the affected nerve centers without damaging the surrounding areas. The tremor and muscle rigidity in selected patients disappeared when these centers are destroyed. Other neurosurgeons do the same procedure with electrocautery or caustics such as alcohol.

Cataracts are removed by cryotherapy. An incision is made into the side of the eye and the hollow probe containing the liquid nitrogen is inserted until contact is made with the opaque lens. The cataract freezes immediately and adheres to the probe. It is then pulled out. Time will tell whether this is better than grasping the lens with an instrument, freeing the connections, and lifting it out of the orbit. Freezing also is used in tumor removal.

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The stream derives its heat from the dissipation of electrical energy into ions and electrons within a gas passing through an electric current.

BENIGN BREAST TUMOR Mrs. F. writes: Can a benign breast tumor become cancerous? REPLY This seldom occurs, and for this reason everyone concerned leaves a sign of relief when the laboratory report comes back that the lesion is benign.

NAILS AND JOINTS B. D. writes: Can osteoarthritis in many joints of the body affect the nails? Mine split and show ridges since I developed this condition. REPLY I doubt if there is a relationship except that disturbances of the nails and joints are common in later years.

MINOR ATTACK OF EPILEPSY M.I. writes: What is petit mal? Is it hereditary? REPLY Petit mal is a minor attack of epilepsy in which the individual has a blackout lasting a few seconds. There is no convulsion and the victim does not fall.

NOTES BY THE WAY

If some universities spent as much money on good teaching as they appear to on public relations, the latter would take care of themselves. — Stratford Beacon-Herald.

Do fish go around bragging to one another about the size of the fisherman they got away from? — Calgary Herald.

A woman in an English court, charged with shoplifting, was asked by the magistrate if she had anything to say on her own behalf. "Yes sir, I have," she replied staunchly. "I take only British goods." — Hamilton Spectator.

The basic differences between the United States and France on the future of the Atlantic alliance—more integration in all fields including defence or less—remain on ice. That at least is the official American position.

But within the next year a lot of fur is expected to fly and knowledgeable American observers feel some sort of showdown with President de Gaulle is overdue. Just how far Le Grand Charles will go is another matter which raises all sorts of conflicting views.

Most pessimistic is that de Gaulle intends to take France right out of the treaty, signed in 1949, as he can do on a year's notice in 1969. His latest gesture has been to boycott naval manoeuvres. The West German elections in September are cited as one reason for the United States urging restraint in fresh overtures for a stronger alliance.

The nuclear question is particularly sensitive in West Germany and it is held that the U.S. desire is far from dead to have West Germany under the NATO nuclear cloak with the check and balances of some sort of multilateral control.

FLEET DYING However, the idea of a mixed-manned fleet of nuclear-missile surface ships may be dead. The uncertain political situation in Britain and the load of the Vietnamese war are other

American reasons for saying nothing currently. But there is some evidence that the U.S. is determined if necessary to keep NATO functioning militarily even with the loss of France as the primary base.

France controls entry to Europe geographically and contains the bulk of the complex and expensive physical facilities—including headquarters—that makes NATO tick. The U.S. is believed ready to start anew outside France with London, Brussels or The Hague as new headquarters, replacing the pipelines, airfields and other equipment now in France.

Some American thought has been given to this possibility, at least among men who if no longer officially connected with NATO have intimate working knowledge of it from the past and still keep in touch with American and other NATO countries. For doubters who suggest that the U.S. is unlikely to force a showdown with de Gaulle, there is one citation invariably given. This is a portion of the speech beamed May 7 by President Johnson to Europe and which says: "Let us therefore continue the task we have begun, attentive to counsel but unmoved by any who seek to turn us aside. We will all go together if we can. But if one of us cannot join in a common venture, it will not stand in the way of the rest."

Differences With France

By Arch MacKenzie Canadian Press Staff Writer

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London Bridge Coming Down

Christian Science Monitor

We imagine that most non-Britons who have seen London Bridge cannot remember what it looks like. (A goodly number of Britons living outside London would not be able to remember either.) Indeed, we suspect that many people mistake Tower Bridge for London Bridge—at least when they are away from the scene.

This is because the English-speaking world has learned in childhood the well-known rhyme about London Bridge falling down—yet sees repeatedly in travel posters, as a symbol of the great and proud city, not London Bridge but Tower Bridge.

There must be a touch of sadness about the disappearance of London Bridge—a landmark to thousands who see and use it every day. But we must admit a greater attachment to the London Bridge of the rhyme than to the London Bridge now settling into the bed of the River Thames at the rate of an inch every eight years. (If it were Tower Bridge sinking into the mud, it would be for us, quite a different story.)

The Corporation of the City of London has done the wisest thing in deciding to demolish London Bridge and replace it with another structure spanning the Thames at approximately the same point on the river. The bridge that is to come down has been there for only 134 years and has little that is distinctive about it—except its name.

Yet that very name is a symbol. For centuries, London Bridge was the only one across the Thames within the city. The first structure was put up by the Romans, and the present one is the third on the site. The one sung about in the nursery rhyme was the second—a bridge that had houses on it, as still has the famous Ponte Vecchio over the Arno in Florence.

The financing of the fourth London Bridge—due for completion in 1970—also has something symbolically historical about it. Building it will not cost taxpayers a penny. It will be paid for out of corporation funds accumulated in an account opened in the thirteenth century. Which all goes to show that tall oaks from little acorns grow.

MANY DIE YOUNG About 13,000 Canadian infants die each year before reaching their first birthday.

Advertisement for CN travel bargains. Features a large 'CN' logo and a list of fares to various cities: Montreal \$17.00, Moncton \$3.80, Saint John \$5.90, Halifax \$6.40, Sydney \$10.50, Corner Brook \$17.50, Toronto \$24.00, Winnipeg \$39.00, Vancouver \$62.00. Includes text: 'These are examples of CN's new White Economy Fares. Sleeping car prices including complimentary meals are equally attractive. Call CN about the Red, White and Blue Fare Plan.'