

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN, FRIDAY, NOV. 23, 1951

The Ontario Election

The return of the Conservatives in Ontario yesterday was, in the opinion of usually well-informed sources, almost a foregone conclusion. Even the personal defeat of the Liberal leader, Mr. Walter Thomson, was not unexpected.

It is reported also that Ottawa Liberals, shocked by Mr. Thomson's extremism, wisely kept their distance. Be this as it may, the reaction will not be unfelt at Ottawa. If, as is rumored, a Federal general election is being planned for next year, yesterday's results cannot fail to have effect on the party prospects in Ontario.

There is a lesson in yesterday's returns from Ontario which might be taken to heart by all parties. Oldtime campaigns of abuse no longer make an appeal to electorates. It is the duty of an Opposition party to criticize, but it must do so within reasonable limits.

It is not here suggested that the Liberals were altogether at fault for the heat engendered in the Ontario campaign, but in relying chiefly on such tactics their board of strategy made a serious mistake.

Regularizing City Affairs

Now that the acclamation in the by-election for Mayor has put the City government on an indisputably legal basis attention must be given to regularizing past acts of the Council which may be of even doubtful legality.

City business is too important to be left under a cloud of doubt. Individuals and firms dealing with the City are entitled to feel that transactions would be upheld in law and offenders against by-laws should not be permitted to expect that they can carry on with impunity.

As to the creation of offences, however, it would be neither necessary nor just to make any conduct punishable which was not so at the time of its commission.

Manitoba's Good Example

Governments across Canada have been emphasizing the alarming increase in highway accidents, but it appears that in Manitoba they have really done something to bring about an improvement.

This, notes the Ottawa Citizen, may seem to be an overly-ambitious scheme for any government to undertake. But by concentrating its efforts on only about 20 per cent of all drivers, those who were found to be incompetent, the Manitoba government has made its plan practical.

A safety point system allows it to discover who are the drivers lacking proper qualifications for use of the highways. Under this system, all motorists who commit traffic offences are scored according to the seriousness of their offences.

tests at the end of their training, their licenses are suspended.

New drivers are required to pass written or oral tests, visual examinations, and a practical test of their driving ability. All are assigned a permanent license number, in order to simplify the government's continuing task of screening drivers and, incidentally, to provide a convenient mail-order system of renewing licenses.

The downward trend of accidents on Manitoba highways is steadily accelerating. But the Manitoba government, by itself, cannot control the rate of accidents on its highways. As the director of the government's safety division has pointed out, the continuing effectiveness of provincial safety campaigns is dependent on the establishment of an organization designed to co-ordinate these efforts on a nation-wide scale.

The establishment of such an organization was proposed by the Good Roads Association at its recent convention. Its function would be to encourage a national program of highway transportation research; assist existing organizations to co-ordinate their efforts; and disseminate technical information on road research. And its aim would be to make Canadian highways safer.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Province's Fur Gift to Princess Elizabeth has attracted much public attention at home and abroad excelled only by the Mounties' visit to London.

Country properties are at least equally endangered by fire as urban ones, and insurance rates are extremely high because of the lack of protection. The answer, in part at least, is some system of rural fire-fighting.

Canadians at home are not apt to be taken in by returned soldiers' breezy protests that it was not so tough in Korea. Soldiers have generally considered war rather pleasant than otherwise, once they are out of it.

The case of the personation of Dr. Cyr should serve as a warning against too much dependence on documentary evidence of identity. Documents can always be stolen or forged. A spy, for instance, would almost certainly make a point of being better documented than average.

Here is something for Island sportsmen to blow about. Fishermen catch on an average of two-and-one-half trout an hour, while in other Maritime Provinces only one trout an hour and that during the months of May and June.

When the directors of the National Dairy Council meet in Ottawa early in December they will consider, among other things, how to reduce the cost of milk and boost production. The great seasonal variation in milk output makes it particularly important to have profitable outlets for the surplus during the peak periods.

Canada could probably have made out a case for Germany paying much of the cost of maintaining the 27th Brigade in her territory, but it is certainly more satisfactory that this country should have made a point of footing the bill without calling on our former enemy.

It will be for the City Council now to decide ways and means of filling the vacancy for a Councillor or otherwise looking out for Ward V, following the elevation of Mayor Stewart. A 1950 amendment provides that if any vacancy shall occur within six months next before the date set by statute for the next general civic election, next Feb. 13, then a by-election to fill such vacancy need not, but may be called, but shall be called if the same be ordered by the Supreme Court or any Judge thereof on Mandamus proceedings instituted by any qualified elector.

The United Kingdom is not sparing efforts or money in the development of Scottish industry. Membership of the Hill Lands (North of Scotland) Commission, designed to stimulate the more rapid expansion of cattle breeding and rearing in the Highlands, has recently been announced. Lord Balfour of Bureleigh is the chairman, and among the nine members who will serve with him there are five farmers well acquainted with the problems of hill grazing. The commission, which will work north of the Highland line (from Dumbarton to Stonehaven) will select, in consultation with the Scottish Department of Agriculture and other agencies, those areas most suitable for cattle rearing, advise on the best methods of promoting schemes, and seek the co-operation of farmers and owners. Improvement works will generally take the form of comprehensive schemes, grant-aided under the Hill Farming and Livestock Rearing Acts.

The Prospect Of Not Growing Up To Pulpwood



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.

SPONSORS FOR D. P.'s

Sir,—It is well known that there are over 200,000 displaced persons in Europe today who are homeless, jobless and stateless through no fault of their own—simply victims of war.

They represent a cross section of humanity including doctors, lawyers, university professors, farmers, plumbers, etc. The first named are having a hard time to enter Canada. I note in a recent issue of The Guardian that the executive of the Medical Association has forced Dr. Hamison to resign—apparently against the wishes of the people. Yet Canada needs brains as well as brawn and a few more doctors and other professional men could be used.

But time is short. The I. R. O. which provides trans-oceanic passage for these people ceases to do so at the end of the year. Then it will be too late and numberless human beings will be condemned to a future without hope and who knows what a threat to peace, this may become as destitute despairing throngs are the best possible recruits for Communism.

The Canadian Council of Churches has undertaken to seek sponsors in the churches for hundreds of these D. P.'s and has secured the services of Mr. G. Ernest Trueman, 3 Wilcocks St., Toronto 5, Ontario, as director of settlement. He has dossiers of information about persons and families wishing to come to Canada. These have been prepared by representatives of the World Council of Churches who have interviewed these people and who recommend them to prospective sponsors, and the terms are simple.

Housing and employment must be guaranteed for one year (after which the individual or family is on its own). Transportation from Halifax to destination may be paid by the sponsor or taken out of the immigrant's wages, in easy instalments. If going direct to a farm, the Federal Department of Labor will pay the worker's travel fare. Wages must be in keeping with what is paid in the community. (The persons must not be exploited). There is an erroneous opinion held by many, that these people demand exorbitant pay. This is untrue. All they expect is a living wage like their fellow workers receive.

Mr. Trueman will gladly forward dossiers containing information re the trades, skills, professions and ages of these people. I am, Sir, etc.

Central Bedeque.

BLUE CROSS - BLUE SHIELD PLAN IN P. E. ISLAND

Sir,—The annual meeting of the Prince Edward Island Medical Society held in Charlottetown in September 1951 adopted the following resolution: "That Blue Cross-Blue Shield Plan be approved by the Prince Edward Island Medical Society, such approval not to include any other plan of prepaid medical care to which the Prince Edward Island Medical Society may subsequently grant approval."

The by-laws of the Maritime Hospital Service Association were amended on April 30, 1951 and now entitle the P. E. I. Medical Society to nominate one person to its Board of Directors. Our Executive Committee met on November 20 and confirmed the appointment of Dr. G. S. A. Inman, Montague, P.E.I., to the Maritime Hospital Service Association Board of Directors.

The Age-Old Story

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

medical profession. Our Society has been observing the policy and administration of the Blue Cross-Blue Shield plan since its inception in Prince Edward Island. It is our opinion that prepaid medical care in this Province should be carried out on the indemnity principle as operated in the Maritime Hospital Services Association. The doctors of the Province as individuals have been participating and co-operating with these plans. At the present time practically all of the practicing physicians in the Province are participating professional members of the Blue Shield plan.

The action of the Society as a body is a recognition of the valuable work done by the Maritime Hospital Service Association Board of Directors. In addition, the official designation of the Blue Shield as our agent for the provision of prepaid medical care in the Province will enable us to become participating members in the Trans-Canada Medical Service set up by the Canadian Medical Association in June, 1951. The primary purpose of the latter organization is to provide a means whereby national employers may obtain medical care insurance.

The Medical Society feels that the provision of voluntary prepaid medical care insurance should be expanded as experience is gained so that such coverage may be available to all persons who may wish to purchase it.

I am, Sir, etc.

F. J. WHITEHEAD, M.D. Secretary, P.E.I. Medical Society Canadian Medical Association

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY IN THE BELFAST DISTRICT

Sir,—It is not difficult to guess in whose interest "Taxpayer" took up so much space in your issue of the 22nd with reference to the "Trans-Canada" Highway in the Belfast District.

In locating the Trans-Canada Highway the principle has been laid down by Ottawa that the route selected should be the most direct, and it is true that after getting to Millview, that seven miles could be saved by going through the Selkirk road as compared with the route selected.

If Premier Jones leaves no other monument to his name, the location of this section of the road as has been decided, will be sufficient.

In order to have a Department of the Federal Government adopt a change in principle, the arguments presented must be sound and beyond question, and in this case the Premier had so many facts to support his views that there was nothing that could be brought forward against the Shore route.

Tourists do not come to Prince Edward Island to visit the blueberry fields, the gravel pits or even the woods, attractive as they may be at certain seasons. They come to see, and we wish to show them, the prosperous farms and magnificent scenery such as are in sight by the route being followed, which is one continuous panorama of beauty from Orwell to Wood Islands through Historic Belfast District where we hope in the near future to see erected more suitable memorials to the pioneers who settled this beautiful section of the Province.

The route selected passes near the site where the pioneers landed and near the historic Belfast Church, where tourists can spend to advantage many hours in viewing the church and cemetery that speaks so splendidly of the early history of Prince Edward Island. The purpose of this construction is to attract to our shores the tourist business, and keep the tourists here as long as possible. The ten minutes saved by passing them through the woods out

The Poet's Corner

THE AFTERTONE

The harpist spreads her hands along the strings Caressing them to silence, and so mutes Among the ferny violins; the flutes With thrortle sweetness flee the threat of drums Up the harmonic zenith, and then fall To be extinguished as the trumpet comes Out of the forest sounding a final call. All but the harp as through a single throat Climb to a chord and cease, but I can hear Between the hands of silence one faint note That still eluded them, pulsating clear As in the dark a jewel may ensnare One ray of light we did not know was there.

—Robert Hillier.

Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.)

NEWS FROM THE FANNY

The Brig "Fanny" sailed from Charlottetown on Nov. 12, 1949, with a large contingent of Islanders to share in the California gold rush. The tardiness of navigation in those days, and of news received from ships at sea, is illustrated by the following item in The Islander of April 26, 1950: "We regret to learn that the Brig Fanny, from this Port, for California, only reached Bahia, a city of Brazil, about 13 deg. S., on the 31st January. This gives little more than an average of two knots an hour with a rattling trade wind on her quarter, and beam the greater part of the way; so that, at the same rate, she may reckon on reaching California about 12 months after her departure."

This expectation was a little too pessimistic. Actually the Fanny reached San Francisco on May 28, 1950, seven and one-half months en route.

LONDON — (Reuters) — Agriculture Minister Gardner of Canada arrived here by air from Montreal on his way to Rome where he will attend the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization conference. He will fly on to Rome tomorrow and will visit Britain again on his return journey to see British Government ministers.

reach of everything except the squirrels, would be defeating the whole purpose of the project. On the other hand, they will now be carried through a section that will, I am certain, bring them back year after year to spend their holiday along these shores where in the near future, we should have another section of the National Park.

When the tourist season is over, we will now have a road that will be of great service to the present farming section between Wood Islands and Orwell, a section that has long been deprived of suitable transportation facilities, while the route favoured by "Taxpayer" would be of little use during the time the Wood Islands ferry service is discontinued.

Our Province is indeed fortunate that we have men of the calibre of Premier Jones and Douglass MacKinnon, who are able and willing to take up on behalf of the people and carry to such a successful conclusion matters such as faced them in this instance, and the increased tourist traffic made available to the Province, will be their reward. I am, Sir, etc.

ANOTHER TAXPAYER

Lessons From Europe In Community Progress

By Leo P. McIsaac Part Two (continued) (All Rights Reserved)

REVISION OF RURAL DISTRICTS

Although assurance has been given at almost every election and by many politicians during the last three or four decades that our election system would be reformed, no action has been taken yet. Our antiquated system of election and voting qualifications still exists. This idea of having one representative for the property owners (Councillor) and one for the working classes (Assemblyman) is a relic of the old landlord system which has been discontinued for national and provincial elections in the rest of the democratic world. Not only is our system archaic, it is dangerous and not fully democratic.

Our present Provincial Election Act was drafted in 1893 by the late Honorable Adrien Peters, then Premier of the Province. Since that time most other important pieces of legislation have been revised to meet the needs of changing times and conditions, but the Prince Edward Island Election Act still stands as it was drafted, some fifty-eight years ago without any major alterations. It still permits any person owning property to the value of \$25 in any district, to vote for Councillor.

This means that a man and his wife owning about \$5,000 worth of property spread across the fifteen districts would have 30 votes. His property might consist of a warehouse, a few acres of land, blueberry barrens, or forest, which he claims to be worth the above amount. This practice is frequently followed and it is possible for a few in such circumstances to change the results of an election in defiance of the majority of the resident voters. This has happened in the past in cases where small majorities obtained.

Candidates with legal facilities have been known to alter property deeds in order to qualify family members who promised support on election day. In many instances such temporary changes in property deeds legally permitted several members of one family having the ownership of sufficient land or property during the election period to cast a property vote. After the election was successfully won, they again altered so that the original owner resumed full ownership.

Our present division of electoral districts is almost as out-dated as the voting regulations, for it certainly does not permit representation by population. Our people do not have equal voting at the local poll, because of the property restriction, and their elected representatives do not have equal voting power in the Legislature because of out-dated district divisions.

For instance, in the election of April, 1951, the Fifth District of Queens had 20.9% of the votes, Fifth Prince had 7.7% and Fifth Kings had 2.45% of the votes. Yet, in spite of this discrepancy in population, each district has 6.6% of the representation. To add to the problem, it frequently happens that in a dual system of representation one member leaves responsibility for attending to local matters between elections to the other. The result often is neglect. There are now only two dual constituencies remaining in Dominion politics—proving that single representation is more desirable and satisfactory.

Examples of out-dated electoral district boundaries are: (a) Third Queens, where the district is divided by East River and where, apart from election purposes the people have no occasion to come together nor have they any very common interests; (b) Fifth Kings, consisting of four peninsulas along the east coast of the Province, which can be contacted only by water or air unless the candidates pass through parts of the third and fourth districts enroute; this district is about 23 miles long "as the crow flies", but nearly 40 miles from one to the other by following the most direct road through this and the adjoining districts; and (c) many Wellington and Malpeque residents cite their district as another example of arbitrary and unsatisfactory division lines.

When the last complete electoral list was compiled before the 1949 Dominion election, there was a total of 55,772 eligible voters on Prince Edward Island. Of this, Kings County had 11,078 or about 21%; Prince had 19,189 or about 35% and Queens had 25,505 or about 44%.

We realize it is not possible to have exact representation according to population; local conditions and conveniences have to be considered. But would it not be possible to adjust our present basis of representation so that it will comply as nearly as possible with present population trends? This may necessitate the raising or lowering of the total number of seats in the Legislature slightly, but is that so important when the people are concerned and paying for it anyway?

Recently in Nova Scotia, the boundaries of several electoral districts were changed to allow the people in heavily populated areas to have a greater voice. This has resulted in six new members being brought into that Provincial Legislature in recent years, a precedent that it might be necessary to follow in Prince Edward Island.

The following is an excerpt from a speech made by Hon. R. R. Bell, Leader of the Conservative Party in Prince Edward Island prior to the 1951 April election, as it appeared in The Guardian, April 17, page 7.

"We will, if elected, revise and reform our present election law so that every voter shall have a general franchise as in a Federal election. The property qualifications shall be dispensed with and every effort will be made to see that elections are run uprightly, and free from fraud and bribery. No advantage will be allowed to any party or an inconvenience to voters by the calling of snap elections as now practiced by the Liberal Party in this Province, and the deposit necessary for a candidate to nominate shall be reduced to at least \$50.00..."

Plank 12 of the Liberal Platform which appeared in The Guardian, April 18, page 11, reads thus: "It is hoped to improve the Election Act to reform districts by referendum, and have eventually one member only in each district elected by franchise vote."

The following is an excerpt from an address by Premier J. Walter Jones prior to the April election, which appeared in The Guardian of April 24, 1951: "We plan a reform of the Election Act, and thus we are agreed on that. We plan to change districts if the people wish it. They plan to do it hocus bolus by legislation. "The election deposit is \$200.00 which is returned if the candidate polls half as many votes as his opponent. They would change it to \$50—a small matter. It might be changed, no one would argue the point; only too small a deposit induces weak candidates to come out and it is costly and troublesome to print ballots for them..."

Such promises and planks have been prominent in many election platforms. All seem to be agreed that something must be done. Can party politics be set aside long enough to revise those divisions and give our people the fundamental rights of political democracy? A private franchise and proportionate representation will come only, it seems, when the people demand it in an organized way.

Recommended Reading Hicks, Ursula: Public Finance. Hyde, Douglas: I Believed. McKinnon, Dr. Frank: The Government of Prince Edward Island. Reports of the Public Utilities Commission for Prince Edward Island. (To be continued)

Profits In Potatoes

(The Telegraph-Journal) Good news for New Brunswick is the rapid uptrend of potato prices these last few weeks. Instead of the disheartening losses they suffered last year, growers are cashing in on tidy profits. The stimulating effect of the boom will be felt throughout the economy of the potato belt—and, for that matter throughout the Province generally—because this is New Brunswick's most important single crop. The growers have always contended that their business is the biggest gamble in any industry, and the experience of the last year or so seems to prove it convincingly. At this time in 1950, the farmers were getting around seventy or seventy-five cents a barrel of 165 pounds. As they figured it cost them \$1.50 a barrel to grow potatoes, they were taking a fifty per cent loss. There was nothing they could do about it; potatoes were plentiful and prices had slumped. United States prices, supported by a government "floor", were better. When New Brunswick managed to sell some potatoes across the border, to a country which its didn't know what to do with its own surplus, a loud howl went up by U.S. growers. Many American farmers, who had been raising the heaviest harvests they could in their allotted acreage, adding to the glutted market, went so far as to blame the entire U.S. potato plight on the imports from Canada, which were so relatively small as to be a negligible factor. This autumn finds the picture completely changed. In an encouraged farmers had planted smaller crops, and adverse weather had reduced the harvest. The U.S. crop-trimming was accelerated by the fact that an exasperated Congress abolished the highly controversial and expensive price-support program. New Brunswick farmers planted 45,000 to 50,000 acres instead of the usual 60,000. The upshot: active competitive bidding among buyers. In this Province, the October starting figure of two dollars a barrel has soared to now it is around five dollars or more. If the boom keeps up, numerous New Brunswick farmers will realize enough to make up for their loss last year, which even the Federal aid overcame only partially. Whether to sell the potatoes now, or wait in the hope that prices will climb still higher, is the question perplexing them. Oddly enough, the Canadian price now is higher than the American, with the result that U.S. potatoes are flowing duty free into Toronto and Montreal markets and keeping a checkrein on Canadian quotations. No one will begrudge the growers their long overdue good fortune, even if it adds in consequence to the grocery bills—especially as history repeats itself, planting next spring in both Canada and the U.S. may be so enthusiastic that a rain that prices will inevitably drop.