

THE GUARDIAN

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The Indemnity Boost

The Speech from the Throne contained many matters for discussion at the present Legislative session, but it failed to anticipate in any way a measure which was introduced and given first and second reading yesterday, raising the members' indemnities from \$700 to \$1,000, and increasing their travelling expenses from \$300 to \$500. There may be justifiable grounds for the increase on both counts, but there can be none at all for the unseemly haste with which the bill is being put through. No advance notice was given, the rules of the House had to be waived in order to permit of a double reading the same day, and the bill passed through committee a few minutes before the 6 o'clock recess with a minimum of discussion. If, as is reported, His Honour will be called in today to receive the Draft Address and give assent to bills passed, this measure can be given third and final reading this morning and become law in time to make its provisions applicable to the current fiscal year, which ends March 31.

In any case, the action is one which will challenge public opinion, and the taxpayers will have a right to ask why all the haste and secrecy. If the increase in teachers' salaries was important enough to be debated at length, surely a bill of this kind is important enough to warrant strictest adherence to the rules of procedure in all its stages.

A Fine Beginning

The Fat Stock Show now in progress at the Exhibition Grounds marks a new departure for Prince Edward Island, but it has proved its value and popularity elsewhere and there is no reason why it cannot be developed into a successful annual event in this Province. Much, doubtless, will depend upon the success of today's sale of breeding stock and beef animals. It was, of course, not to be expected that the initial showing would rival the Maritime Spring Show and Sale at Amherst, either in number or quality; but if we are to judge by our progress along other lines of agricultural exhibitions it will become more widely patronized and of greater general value and interest as time goes on.

We are prone to think of pioneer achievements as of something in the past. They loom large because we see the aggregate result, not reflecting that this result was attained by slow and imperceptible steps. So it is with present day efforts in improvement of livestock and field production, in farm living conditions and other measures. Our Exhibitions have proved one of the most stimulating incentives to continued progress agriculturally, and the Fat Stock Show will be no exception. An excellent start has been made, and the sponsors and all participating are to be warmly congratulated on their efforts.

Moscow's Bid For Germany

If there be any who still doubt but that Germany has emerged as the cockpit from which the policies of post-war Europe will ultimately emerge, the latest Soviet bid for German favor should banish such illusions once and for all. In notes handed to diplomatic representatives of the Big Three western powers a few days ago, the Kremlin has proposed an early four-power conference on German unity and the preparation of a German peace treaty.

Such a treaty, a draft of which Soviet authorities have thoughtfully attached to each diplomatic note, would, say the Russians, have to be framed with the participation of an "all-German" government and submitted to a conference of all the states concerned. This sine qua non of negotiation of itself poses some rather neat and not too readily solved problems of procedure.

The propaganda value of the Soviet bid, however, is not likely to be diminished by mere procedural hurdles. It is the substance of the draft treaty, which proposes, among other things, the end of partition, the withdrawal of occupation forces within a year, the safeguarding of "democratic rights", the acceptance of the frontiers laid down under the Potsdam agreement, freedom of trade, and support for Germany's admission to the United Nations, that are most likely to provide German Communists and other leftists with the most useful platform fodder for the next several weeks. It would be interesting to know the

views of CCF leader M. J. Coldwell regarding this latest development in international affairs in Europe. The chances are, however, that Mr. Coldwell, who no more than any other responsible Canadian desires once again to attract Tim Buck's kiss of death, will prefer to maintain a discreet silence.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Legislature meets.

The Red Cross drive is progressing.

The Big Fat Stock Show and Sale continues today after an auspicious opening yesterday.

Professor Ian Maclaren Thompson, University of Manitoba, was recently elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

There is nothing backward about Montague. If its citizens have their way in such matters as a new high school and nurses' home it will be a regular boom town.

There is no record of a Premier leaving the Legislature in session while he went to Ottawa on legislative business. Premier Jones has set a precedent in this respect.

Congratulations are due Mr. George A. Fraser of the Tourist and Information Bureau on issuing a very complete calendar of local events from now till Dec. 31. Not only will it be useful to visitors, but will be an asset as far as the organization and arrangement of local events and meetings are concerned.

It is reported the C. N. R. intend sending 40 new trucks here to develop their express and l.c.l. freight traffic all over the Island. It is also mentioned that the Round House, Charlottetown, will be converted into a garage where many men will be employed taking the place of those transferred to Moncton some years ago.

Members of the Clan MacLeod in all parts of the world have presented their chief, Flora, Mrs. MacLeod of MacLeod, with her portrait. It is understood this is the first time in Scotland's history that members of a clan have presented their chief with a portrait.

For last year the index of farm prices as compiled by the Bureau of Statistics stood at 287.2, almost 27 points higher than for 1950. Despite high prices, however, the farmer finds that he must watch costs more closely than ever to avoid operating at a loss.

Stephen Butler Leacock, Canadian economist and humorous author, died this date 1944. He became head of the department of economics and political science at McGill University and wrote on economics and Canadian history. He is best known, however, as a genial iconoclast, through such books as, "Literary Lapses", "Nonsense Sketches", "Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town" and "Winnowed Elements of Hickonomics."

In connection with the Party conferences now being held or contemplated, little effort is made to keep the machines operating on a year-round basis. Canada's socialist party, the C.C.F., organized on a different basis, is much nearer to being ready for the next election than either the Government or Opposition parties. The latter are now trying to make up for lost time. The retail price maintenance legislation, which provoked such a bitter controversy in the last parliamentary session, is still awaiting its first test. Not a single complaint has been made that the law is being violated by manufacturers or wholesalers. And not a single investigation under the new act has been carried out by Justice Department authorities, notwithstanding the tremendous opposition that the bill roused in Parliament.

The Railway does not ask a monopoly for its proposed bus service, only a license to venture upon it. Should the roads become unfit any time in another winter like the one we are just getting out of, the Railway guarantees to use the old system of transport. Nothing fairer could be offered than that. As regards strike conditions, the railroaders struck a year ago, and what was there to prevent them? The only kick we had was that the Car Ferries, which we contend to be part of our National Highway, joined the strikers which they had no right to do. As far as employment is concerned, the railway bus service will provide more vacancies to fill than there are present railway employees. Moreover in the event of a strike, every farmer and business man having a car or truck could step into the breach. Everything seems in favour of the project from the Province's point of view.

When After The Snow Was Over



Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.)

ICE BOAT DISASTER

This month marks the ninety-seventh anniversary of the worst iceboat disaster in the history of the Province. The following letter from A. McFarlane, Esq., of Wallace, N.S., to the Hon. Edward Palmer, Charlottetown, March 14, 1855, gives the most authentic account of the details.

"Dear Sir,—Yesterday morning I received information that the iceboat from Cape Tormentine to the Island, in charge of McRae's, with the mails and passengers, had succeeded in getting on shore at the rear of Fox Harbour, about five miles from Wallace, in an exhausted and perishing condition. I immediately hurried to where the poor people on the shore had succeeded in getting them to shelter, and found the scene awful in the extreme.

"The boat left the Cape on Saturday, with the crew of four men, and three passengers: young Mr. Harry Haszard, and Mr. Richard Johnson, son of Dr. Johnston, both of Charlottetown, medical students, on their way from the United States, and an old gentleman, Joseph Weir, of Bangor. After crossing without incident to within half a mile of the Island shore, the storm of sleet and snow grew violent, and the lolly lay so deep that they could not force the boat through it. After repeated attempts, and being in danger of swamping the boat, they were forced to return, and drawing the boat on the ice, turned her up to form a shelter from the raging storm and intense cold, and thus drifted helplessly in the Gulf throughout Friday night, Saturday and Saturday night.

"On Sunday morning—having drifted about midway in the Gulf, and the flow of drift ice making it utterly impracticable to reach the Island shore—they commenced, with much fatigue, drawing their boat towards the mainland, the three passengers being their considerably frost-bitten; they toiled on throughout Sunday, and until about midday on Monday, when the boatmen being utterly exhausted, neither they nor the passengers having tasted food for three days, were about giving up in despair. Fortunately, Mr. Weir had with him a small spaniel which they killed, drank its blood, and passengers and crew ate the flesh, raw! This revived them, and being then, as they supposed, within four or five miles of the land, they lightened the boat by throwing away their baggage, and gage, put Mr. Haszard, who had become unable to walk, into the boat, and Mr. Weir also, occasionally, he being much exhausted, and thus crawled on towards the shore.

"Monday evening, Mr. Haszard died of exhaustion; they toiled on through the night, and just after daylight on Tuesday morning reached the shore, and unfortunately, two miles from any dwelling. Two of the boatmen succeeded in reaching a house, gave the alarm, and the inhabitants carried them to their houses.

"The surviving passengers are both badly frozen. Mr. Weir I had brought to my house, where he now is. His hands and feet are frozen, the latter so badly that I fear the toes will be lost; the old man is in good spirits. Mr. Johnston's hands and person are safe, but his feet are frost-bitten, one of them pretty badly, but Dr. Creed, of Pugwash, who has examined them, thinks they are not dangerous. He remained last night at the house where they landed; I have just learned that he slept well, and feels quite refreshed. A friend of mine, Mr. Judson, has just gone to take him to his house, where, his friends may feel assured, he will receive every care and comfort required.

"The boatmen, with the exception of one (Robinson) who had almost entirely escaped, are badly frost-bitten in the feet, and so exhausted that some time must elapse ere they can be recovered. In the meantime they will be suitably treated and taken care of. The surviving passengers entirely clear them from blame, and

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.

SOME TARDY REFLECTIONS

Sir,—I have read the interesting letters that have appeared in The Guardian about the village of North Rustico when it was isolated, owing to blocked roads.

I may have delayed too long in expressing the thoughts that crowded my mind while reading these letters. Why? Well! I was just wondering at the time, if any of my former pupils, whom I have not forgotten were really in want of food and fuel.

Now that they are men and women, I still think as highly of them as I did many years ago, when they entered my class-room, smiling and ready for their day's work.

I am certain that one of them is still quite alive, and he is the J. P. "Don't worry, James, about people having a poor impression of North Rustico! I have taught in that community for three years, and I know that, if there really was a shortage of fuel and provisions this winter, those good folks down there could subsist for a long time on their friendliness and neighborliness."

They may not have provided themselves for stormy weather, but it was no comedy on their part, as was mentioned by a certain correspondent.

Adding 7 lbs. to his "ego" while looking leisurely at snowbanks (white battalions) is more of a comedy, as well as a sign of "middle-aged spread."

I am, Sir, etc.

PRINCE COUNTY SUBSCRIBER

SAMBRO

Sir,—In October last we visited Sambro, 16 miles down the shore from Halifax; and ever since then I have been rhapsodizing about the place. I have not seen before a place of such enthralling interest. Fishing in the industry, and in their season, they take halibut, tuna, swordfish, cod, mackerel and lobster, out of which they make considerable money. Last summer for July and August, six men of one family went out to the fishing ground and brought in \$8,000 worth of swordfish. No wonder they live in fine houses and drive the latest cars.

A half dozen inlets form safe harbours for their boats. For a mile around the place, no trees will grow, rocks, rocks, rocks! Few gardens can be planted, no cattle raised. While there I saw one cow but no horse; but the place is alive with cars of the latest model.

The scenery is magnificent. As the sun rises over the sea the ships, big and small, make their way out to the banks; and away in the distance are the dimming lights of four beacons that have been sending their beams across the sea since 1759 when the great Sambro light was erected, and right off there, two noble ships were sunk during the war, one with a cargo valued at 1 million dollars, the other at \$700,000, a good deal of which decorates and enriches the homes of Sambro.

But far and above all interests are the people, the soul of kindness, a very likeable people, always ready to do a good turn for anyone in need.

The church is in the centre of the village and is the centre of their social life. For miles around members walk, regularly, to that church—a rather uncommon thing in these days.

The Age-Old Story

O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise.

National Health Service Next

(The Printed Word)

Under the heading "Next Step in Social Security", the Ottawa Citizen in January published an editorial recommending a plan of national health insurance for Canada. It is an editorial that deserves attention, for it may be a pattern for a campaign designed to advance further the cause of the welfare state. The campaign may also be designed to enhance the importance of the minister of national health and welfare before a higher post is thrown open to the competition of all cabinet ministers.

The pattern is evident in the first sentence of the editorial. "With the universal old age pension a reality," the Citizen declares, "a national health insurance plan seems to have priority as the next great step toward social security in Canada." That has the true ring of welfare statism. The editorial writer simply assumes that the old-age pension scheme has been a good measure, that a health insurance plan would also be good, that it is necessary and that the taxpayers can afford it.

Several other assumptions are latent in the sentence. It implies that the average Canadian is incompetent to handle his own affairs, that government officials always know best what is best for everyone and that health insurance has some connection with maintaining the health of the nation, so that every child now drawing a baby bonus may live to collect his or her old-age pension. The Citizen goes on to say that health insurance "has already been the subject of such wide public interest, so many studies and so much preliminary work, that parliament would do well to refer it to a joint committee of the house of commons and the senate . . . From such a committee could come, as in the case of old-age pensions, a definite report on which legislation could be based."

The phrase, "wide public interest," is always useful and generally meaningless. What it probably means in this context is that a certain unstated number of people are interested, for various reasons, personal, financial, political or pseudo-humanitarian, in foisting a scheme on the public. The rest of the public, which is probably the majority, remains as uninterested as it usually is in all public questions, until it is too late to do anything but pay for Ottawa's bright ideas.

For an Ottawa paper, however, the Citizen displays a surprising ignorance of parliamentary procedure. The first step to be taken with a measure of this kind is to refer it to a party caucus. If that body considers it to be politically safe and advantageous, the measure then goes to parliament. The joint committee stage follows after the government has settled on a report for the committee to endorse.

It is like home to me now that my children are there, but the fascinations of the sea and the kindness of the people are other good reasons why we want to return.

I am, Sir, etc. W. I. GREEN, Stanley Bridge.

Notes By The Way

Because of the United States prohibition against Canadian livestock, American tourists may not come to Canada to hunt this year, for they would not be able to take their game back with them. This is a pity for it is doubtful if pictures of Samuel de Champlain will in themselves be enough to attract tourists. — Ottawa Citizen.

Water made available to the lighter land area of south-central Saskatchewan will restore population to what it was before the drought of the thirties. It will even make that land capable of maintaining many thousands more people than it did at the height of its producing years. It will make it possible for this area to provide feed for livestock right on the south-central plains and in other parts of the West. Every pound of produce off every acre in Saskatchewan is needed somewhere in the world. It is needed because population increase is greater than land production increases. With new land not available, the only solution lies in the conservation of water and land. — Moose Jaw Times-Herald.

During an "open house" last week, some 90 Cornwall adults underwent a series of tests on physical qualities that have a bearing on driving ability. Every person was scored on such things as his reaction time, his eyesight, depth perception, field of vision, steadiness, etc. It was a soul-shaking experience for a great number of those who took the test, and there were a few who had defects which would make them positive hazards on the road. It is unnerving to think that the person driving ahead or behind you may be unable to put on his brakes in anything like the average time, may be unable to see you as you approach until your car is almost ahead of his own, or may see you approaching him without having the faintest idea just how far away you are. Or he may be so color-blind that he can't tell the difference in the

traffic lights. — Cornwall Standard-Freelander.

Suggestion of Mayor Allan Lamport of Toronto that his city should confiscate part of the money recovered from the bank robbers, to compensate it for the cost of catching the culprits, is somewhat startling, especially to orthodox financiers. Which indicates Toronto has got itself somewhat since the regime of Mayor Sam McBride, a more than 20 years ago, Toronto has had several chief magistrates. They have served well and efficiently. But Toronto always had somewhat of an inferiority complex when it compared its striped-trousered, orthodox mayors with the ebullient Camille-Houde of Montreal or the late irrepressible "Gerry" McGeer of Vancouver. Perhaps Mayor Lamport is just what Toronto needs. — Windsor Daily Star.

The Poet's Corner

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet; She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet. She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree; But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand, And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand. She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs; But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears. — W. B. Yeats.

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