The Guardian

Covers Prince Edward Island Like The Dew

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PAGE 6 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1962.

Poet Frost's Tour

The Russians probably didn't know what to make of Robert Frost, veteran American poet who has just returned from Moscow after chatting informally with—among other Soviet bigwigs—Premier Khrushchev himself. At 88, Poet Frost showed that he retains all the homespun wisdom and puckishness which his writings have reflected for over half a century.

He was honored, it will be recalled, by being invited to read one of his poems at President Kennedy's inauguration. But that was an occasion, really, of the State honoring itself, for Frost's reputation had long since been established throughout the English-speaking world.

But the Muscovites don't speak English, as a rule. This didn't deter Frost from reading his poems to them, leaving the translation to an interpreter and to his own ability to get his meaning across. He spent ten days touring the Soviet Union, giving them, among other things, a good dose of one of his favorite poems, "Mending Wall", which pokes fun at the stupidity and futility of trying to maintain dividing walls between neighbors.

"Something there is that doesn't love a wall," it begins; then goes on to draw the homely conclusion:

Before I build a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was likely to give offense.

The poem is about a wall in New England, really; but many in Frost's audience got the impression that he was talking about the Berlin wall. He didn't disillusion them. Before his listeners could call for an explanation he told them that "people were frequently misunderstanding and misinterpreting it," and that the real meaning was a secret he kept to himself.

Whether or not the Soviet poet Alexei Surkov, who presided at this gathering, got the point, he expressed the hope that President Kennedy would "send more such ambassadors to the Soviet Union and neighboring countries."

Khrushchev struck the visiting poet as being "rough and ready". He said something about the American people being "too liberal to fight", and Frost, in his dead-pan way, said he thought the Russian people were "humanizing a little down from the severity of their ideals—easing off toward democracy."

Did he accomplish anything by his meeting with the Soviet Premier? "No, not at all," Frost said cheerfully on his return to New York. "I just went over to assert myself."

Perhaps, however, his way of doing so may prove as helpful to an international understanding as more formal visitations on the diplomatic level.

A Serious Matter

'If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year
Do you suppose,' the Walrus said,
'That they could get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

Tears will be just as unavailing at Ottawa as in Lew Carroll's immortal jingle, in mopping up the mess revealed in the Glassco Commission report on Government Organization. The paper mess, that is. Half a year's sweeping won't do any good unless the the inflow is stopped at its source. It would be as amusing as anything in "Alice in Wonderland" if it weren't putting the taxpayers to such staggering expense.

So many forms and other paper work are required by the regulations, or have developed in the federal civil service—says the report—that last year they cost the government $500,000,000, or one-twelfth of the total Canadian budget. At least 100,000 civilian and military employees (one out of every eight clerical workers in Canada) are engaged in the routine operations of typing, despatching, recording, filing and storing paper items. Each year 250,000 feet of filing space—the equivalent of 83 box cars—are added.

Not only is the total cost of this production of pieces of paper unknown; its purpose is largely obscure. Of those in the government service who design and control the forms, less than one-third have had any professional training in work of this kind.

Nor do any two government departments follow the same paperwork procedures. When 1,200 employees were recently transferred from one department to another, so different were the forms being used that the equivalent of one employee's whole year's work was needed simply to transcribe their personnel records from one kind of form to another!

Mounds of paper also go into making out reports. Too many of these reports only report that there is nothing to report. Many others are never used at all. "At every point," said the commission, "your commissioners found reports which served no useful purpose, or cost more than the use justified . . .In one department, 44 reports, used by no one, are still preserved and widely distributed."

He had forty-two boxes, all carefully packed,
With his name painted clearly on each:
But since he omitted to mention the fact,
They were all left behind on the beach.

There we go again, quoting Carroll instead of getting down to our proper business of moralizing on this outrageous extravagance! The funny side of it keeps striking us. The Glassco commissioners were made of sterner stuff, it's their money as well as ours that is going down the drain, and they are not amused. They tell us, firmly, it will have to stop; and we quite agree with them. So, tossing Carroll back where he belongs on the juvenile shelf, we say that this is indeed no laughing matter. And we hope that neither Jack Pickersgill nor any other humorist in the House will take our quotations as an excuse for levity when Parliament gets round to discussing this serious matter!

Quebec Tory Losses

Rumor has it that the chief subject of discussion at the recent Conservative post-mortem at Ottawa was the party losses in Quebec. Unlike those in other provinces, these were spread right across the board. The Government might have been able to retain many of its rural ridings, but for the upsurge of Real Caouette's branch of Social Credit. In the end, they lost 17 rural ridings, and of these 12 were won by Socred candidates.

To stage any kind of recovery in Quebec, the Conservatives must regain city and mixed constituencies, especially in the Montreal district, from the Liberals, while recapturing rural seats lost to Social Credit further east. It's a tall order. But it must be filled in all or in part if the government forces hope to improve their position in the next election.

Chiefly, however, the Tory problem will be to enter the campaign as a farm party in Quebec—a position to which they are unaccustomed. Across the nation, they hold 69 farm ridings, as against 33 urban constituencies and 14 in the "mixed" category. By way of contrast, the Liberals have 54 urban, 29 rural, and 17 mixed. Seventeen of the 30 Socred seats are in the rural category. But the NDP, once a straight farm party, won 11 of its 19 seats in city ridings last June.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Of general interest is the news that a species of Canada goose believed extinct for many years has been discovered in huge numbers within the limits of Rochester, N.Y., by a U.S. naturalist. This bird is known as the greater Canada Goose. The species is from 11/2 to three pounds heavier than the common Canada Goose, running about eight pounds for an average specimen. It was feared that it had gone the way of the dodo and the carrier pigeon.

"ETHIOPIA WAS NEVER LIKE THIS"

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

Dark Age Nearly At An End

National Geographic Society

Nearly at end is the revolution that has lifted American farms out of the dark ages — and the farmer out of the dell.

Not long ago, on a cattle ranch in New Mexico, a housewife put away her kerosene lamps, her washboard, and heavy sadirons. The flick of a switch flooded her home —for the first time — with electric light.

The event would hardly have been noteworthy, if it were not the five millionth time it has happened since the United States Rural Electrification Administration was established in 1935. Since then, power lines have been stretched over the loneliest valleys, plains, and deserts to bring Thomas A. Edison's miracle to more than 97 per cent of all farms.

Today's farmer, as a result, is not much given to heigho-the-derry-oh'ing in the dell, and the tall, many-bladed windmill probably sings a song of Telstar, having been converted from a water pump into a TV antenna.

VARIETY OF CHORES

Electric machines feed and milk cows, churn butter, shear sheep, cut feed, dry hay, load silos, shell corn, incubate chickens, pick feathers, and —giving nature an added nudge—shake the cherries from the trees.

A farmer can produce four times more food in an hour's time than his dad did in 1920. His efforts can easily keep the larders of himself and 25 other people well stocked.

The wife who by today's farmer may know little more about milking and churning than her city sister.

More than half of America's farms, the Census Bureau has found, have milk delivered to their doorsteps. With supermarkets handy, only 60 percent bother to keep chickens. Not one in five grows potatoes.

The farm of grandma's day—with vegetable cellar, a smokehouse redolent of hickory-cured hams, its cast-iron apple parers, patchwork quilts and feather beds— exists only as an anachronism. As likely as not, grandma has sold out to a suburban developer and serves Thanksgiving dinner from TV trays in her cooperative apartment in town.

The barefoot country boy has swapped faded overalls for Bermuda shorts, and he knows all about Paree. Unless he can go into partnership with his father when he comes out of high school or college, and the farm is big enough to support two families, he is not likely to choose agriculture as a career.

FARMS CONSOLIDATED

There are now only 3,700,000 working farms in the United States, National Geographic reports. Mechanization has caused consolidation. Less than a tenth of Americans live on farms, as compared to a fourth in 1920. Farming has become a tough, highly competitive business.

The American farm is no longer a placid, self-contained little rustic world. The family farm is vanishing so rapidly that the Government's Agricultural Advisory Commission is pondering the possibility of national policies to save it as a traditional agricultural unit.

It has been suggested that farms taken out of production, because of the Nation's incredible efficiency at growing food and fibers, might be turned into recreational retreats for harassed city-dwellers.

Push-button farming has come in one generation. Hardly a farm in ten had electric lights in the mid-1930's when REA began offering low-cost, long-term loans to enable farm cooperatives and power districts to take light to sparsely settled areas that could not be profitably served by private industry.

Lunar Lunacy

Financial Post, Toronto

Dr. R. L. F. Boyd, British physicist, has said something original about the race to the moon. He thinks the Russians may be stringing the Americans along.

Moscow's plan, he suggests, may be to get the U.S. fully committed to spending $20 billion to $40 billion on putting a man on the moon, and all geared up for the attempt, and then to announce that the Soviet Union would not dream of spending money so foolishly.

Boyd is not an Englishman crying sour grapes. One of Britain's top space scientists, he belongs to the official Anglo-American committee on space co-operation.

He is against moon shots as a waste of funds. He says 90 percent of the information they might yield is obtainable by observation from the earth. He is "ashamed" that space explorers can get all the money they ask for while medical research is starved.

One of the cliches of this argument is that man must satisfy his limitless curiosity and use his inventive powers to the full. This is true as a theoretical proposition but of course it is not the reason for the lunar competition.

The moon, conceivably, could be a base for missiles and H-bombs. Whether it could or not, getting to the moon first will impress a lot of Asians and Africans. They are going to be convinced of the technical superiority of the country, and the economic system, that manages the feat.

It seems quite certain that, were it not for these military and political profits from the scheme, neither Russia nor the U.S. would be bothering about the moon. They would be spending the money on cancer research, irrigating deserts and a hundred other jobs waiting to be done on earth.

What it comes to is that a settlement of the Soviet-American quarrel is necessary not only for peace but for the best use of humanity's resources.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of matters of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents. All letters published are subject to editing and condensation where necessary. The Guardian is unable to enter into any correspondence regarding letters submitted.

HELP APPRECIATED

Sir,—For the last three summers, I have been enumerating in connection with a forest production survey which is being conducted here in P.E.I. as well as the other provinces of Canada. The principal purpose of this survey is to accurately estimate the quantity of forest products cut from privately owned forest lands.

It is a well known fact that Canada is the world's leading exporter of forest products, and that her 17½ million people are dependent to a great extent upon continued and extensive participation in the world markets for forest products. It follows, then, that an adequate knowledge of timber supplies forest drain and the relationship between these two on a localized basis is essential for the maintenance and development of Canada's contribution to world needs for forest products.

I now, through this column, would like to take the opportunity to thank all those whom I have called upon throughout the Island for their generous co-operation and hospitality extended towards me in my work. I have been to other provinces in Canada and some states in U.S.A., and I can honestly say that the people here on the Island are the most understanding and hospitable I have ever met.

I am, Sir, etc.,
JOHN B. MACDONALD

Wig Back In Style

World Book Encyclopedia

The wig is back in style and —judging from newspaper reports from Chicago and Hollywood — so is wig-snatching. But if history is any teacher, the worst is yet to come.

The Egyptians were among the first to use wigs, but World Book Encyclopedia points out that they had an excuse of sorts — wigs protected them from the heat of the sun. When the style came back in the 1600's it was strictly for vanity's sake, and the repercussions were felt by innocent babes and national treasuries.

From the moment Louis XIV became bald, the wig was the thing in Paris, and the style quickly jumped the Channel into England. The English, eager for a diversion after the gloomy rule of the Cromwells, took up wigs with a passion. Wig-snatching might have been expected. But soon children were being forbidden to go out of doors alone, lest some enterprising thief snip off their locks.

Fortunately for French children, their elders preferred horsehair. And they imported so much of it from Germany that it threatened the country's gold reserves. Colbert, the minister of finance pleaded in vain for a law to prohibit wig-making.

Wigs finally fell with the Bastille, and after the Revolution anyone appearing on the street in a wig was likely to lose it, as well as his head, because of its aristocratic connotation. French hairdressers, of course, were ruined, but the National Assembly decided the new liberty made them part of the fraternity and voted them 22 million francs in compensation.

England, disgusted by the revolution's excesses, kept its powdered wig on. That is, until the government needed money to fight the wigless French. The fashionable Englishman might remain unperturbed as he powdered his wig with flour that would otherwise have been made into bread for the poor. But when the government slapped a tax on hair powder, a principle was at stake. Millions for wigs, perhaps, but not one cent for a tax. . .and the wig went the way of all fads.

OUR YESTERDAYS

(From the Guardian Files)

TWENTY - FIVE YEARS AGO
(September 11, 1937)

Carl Tibert of Charlottetown was inducted into office as governor of District Six Gyros at the three-day convention concluded today at Truro, N.S. Delegates enjoyed a sports program this afternoon and wound up the convention with a banquet and dance tonight.

F. W. Fraser, Canadian Trade Commissioner to Jamaica arrived in Charlottetown last night. Mr. Fraser said the purpose of his visit was a view to increasing trade with the West Indies Island where he is located. The principal export from Prince Edward Island to Jamaica was potatoes. While here he will meet business men, particularly exporters.

TEN YEARS AGO
(September 11, 1952)

Miss Gladys Bernard, Chesterfield Corner, P.E.I., has enrolled in the Household Nursing School for Attendant Nurses, Boston, Mass. This nursing school has graduated 2,200 women since its establishment 25 years ago.

Gerald Richards, Summerside and Cpl. R.L. Jones of the RCAF Station had a narrow escape from drowning Sunday afternoon when the sail boat in which they had been sailing in the harbor, capsized. For seven hours with a high wind blowing they clung to the boat. Mr Richards was able to swim but Cpl. Jones could not, so they stayed together. A passerby on the shore saw the overturned boat and contacted the RCMP in Summerside.

Rest And Fluids Aid Recovery When Colds Hit

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen

COLDS and other respiratory tract infections are the largest single disease problem of man. Most of us have one to three bouts of sore throat, sniffles, or bronchities a year, lasting five to eight days. Recovery is the rule but the complications may be serious.

Colds travel in all circles of society and from one person to another within a short period of time. They are contagious and are passed along when the causative virus is inhaled or carried to the nose and mouth via contaminated fingers or food.

This is the reasoning behind our plea to those with colds to avoid others, to cover the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and to wash the hands frequently, particularly when handling food. Stay home when there is fever or symptoms are of more than average severity.

We must rely upon established remedies until a preventive or a cure is found. But be sensible and avoid nostrums that make millionaires out of those who promise "prompt relief or cure."

Recovery is hastened by getting ample rest, additional fluids and moisture, and drugs that relieve congestion, sore throat, and other unpleasant symptoms. The wonder drugs should be reserved for complications or the more serious infections. Call your physician for expert advice—without fail, if fever persists more than two days.

Most of us work to live and cannot avoid others who insist upon going to school or work despite everything. Some help can be obtained by remaining in top physical condition when colds are rife. Get enough sleep and avoid excesses. Avoid overheated and dry rooms which lower the resistance of the nasal membranes. Extra humidity can be obtained through a commercial humidifier, turning on the hot water, or placing pans of water on the radiator. Get plenty of fresh air and exercise.

(Dr. Van Dellen will answer questions on medical topics if stamped, self-addressed envelope accompanies request.)

PANCREATITIS

W.J.N. writes: Can inflammation of the pancreas be cleared up without a doctor or medicine?

REPLY

There is an outside chance that the disease will heal spontaneously but pancreatitis is more painful and more serious than the majority of gastrointestinal infections and I would recommend medical treatment.

DIET OR MEDICINE

D.M. writes: Can a gouty person eat meat between attacks or must he remian on a strict diet all the time?

REPLY

He should remain on a strict diet unless he takes Benemid to hasten the elimination of uric acid from the kidneys. A person with mild gout can allow himself several servings of meat a week.

FEELING NO PAIN

H.S. writes: My neighbors are convinced an intoxicated person cannot hurt himself. I say he is more likely to do so because he can't see the dangers around him. Please comment.

COMMENT

The drunk can and does hurt himself, despite the common notion to the contrary. He may be too numb to feel his injuries and awakens in the morning with bruises and sore muscles.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Some girls get their ears pierced and lots get them bored.— Stratford Beacon-Herald.

One good way to tie a teenage student down is to use a telephone cord.—Chatham Daily News.

Premier Nikita Khrushchev is quoted as saying that Communist co-existence with capitalism is like living in a house with a smelly goat— "Undesirable, but better than going to war." It is a sentiment we reciprocate.— Vancouver Sun.

The respectable citizen hides the liquor bottles at the bottom of the trash bin; the hypocrite puts them in the barrel next door.— Medicine Hat News.

To keep a paper napkin from sliding out of your lap, wad it up in a tight ball and toss it to the farthest corner of the room. —Welland Tribune.

"I'm afraid my charge is double the usual fee," said Madame Clare, the seaside crystal gazer. "I see you are going to marry twice." Montreal Star.

Says Magistrate Woodhouse, of St. Thomas, Ont., "Nine out of 10 youths who come before me with ducktail haircuts eventually end up in more serious trouble." Sideburns, maybe, or even goatees? — Ottawa Journal.

Millions of fishing licences have been sold for the summer season, which is an awful lo. of loafers. — Sherbrook Record.

Figures may not lie but girdles and other camouflage keep many of them from telling the truth. — Galt Reporter.

Someone asks what has become of the old-fashioned literature that was suitable for reading aloud to your aunt — but what has become of that type of aunt? — Brandon Sun.

At the cost per ounce the average man's bathing suit sells for, it is estimated that a man's overcoat would cost $795.63 — Galt Reporter.

The reason the average girl would rather have beauty than brains is that the average man can see better than he can think. — St. Catherines Standard.

In many a case, the man who plays golf builds up his muscles and a profane vocabulary. — Galt Reporter.

Some men seem to have acquired a large vocabulary by marrying it. — St. Thomas Times-Journal.

Son: "Daddy, what's an opera?" Dad: "That's where some guy gets stabbed in the back and instead of bleeding he sings." — Hamilton Spectator.

For Pipe Smokers

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Tobacco stoppers, after suddenly going out of fashion about 1840, are coming back in, according to an article in the Times of London. Varying in length from one inch to four, they are ornamented tampers for adjusting the draw of a pipe by correcting the "rise" of the tobacco in the bowl. The Times explains that tobacco stoppers are replacing discolored fingers, pen and pencil ends and even points of umbrellas.

On that basis it is to be hoped that the tobacco stopper comes to the United States. Certainly it is more dignified to have an ornamented tamper of silver, wood or bone for one's pipe than it is to use one's fingers or whatever object is handy for packing down the hot embers in a pipe. And the pipe knocker and reamer should be able to make an impressive ritual out of manipulating his pipe if he had a stopper.

As a modern symbol, the tobacco stopper seems to possess potentialities. Many of those used in England during the 16th and 17th centuries were quite ornate if not imposing: Figurines and busts of famous persons, arms and legs, birds and beasts, headgear and boots, skulls and satyrs.

Over here, a miniature elephant or donkey perched atop a stopper would show a man's political likings. Similarly his occupation or avocation could be registered.

The automobile as a status symbol, with its size, complexity, glitter and cost, might well yield to something as small and simple as a tobacco stopper. Of course, this is the land where the gold plated toothpick, the silver snuffbox, the Malacca walking stick, the watch fob and the ostrich plume fan once held sway as status symbols.

The Poets Corner

MY ISLAND HOME

My Island home by the sea
Is calling from afar,
The pounding surf beats in my dreams
Through all the night — until it seems
The old farm-house before me gleams
And beckons, like a guiding star;
"Come back to the Island, and back to me.

"Your sires, the exiled Scottish, came
Of the sea to worship God
In peace, unhampered by the hand
Of a despot ruler. And my land
Held promise of a future grand.
They settled down to turn the sod,
And wilderness and forest tame.

"I was home for twice one hundred years
To all your kin, before
You left my fields to travel wide.
Your fathers tilled my soil—their pride—
And families dwelt side by side
In friendship, on my fertile shore,
Through times of gladness, times of tears."

To a distant city my footsteps led
Far from my native shore.
While far away from it I roam,
I can no longer call it home—
The small, green Isle by ocean's foam.
But my Spirit shall return once more—
To home— and rest— when I am dead.

—Raymond J. MacDonald
St. Laurent, P.Q.

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