

Another Rates Boost

The additional freight rate increase of 12 percent, the third major increase granted by the Board of Transport Commissioners in recent years, now represents a boost of 53 per cent since 1948. As has been pointed out many times, these horizontal increases affect particularly the outlying Provinces, and perhaps Prince Edward Island most of all by reason of the dependence of our potato growers and shippers on railway transportation.

There is, however, indication that the rates on long-haul traffic will be held down. The Board has served notice that it will move for the implementation of some of the major recommendations of the Tourgeon Royal Commission on Transportation in this connection. The Commission recommended, among other things, that special attention should be given to long haul traffic and to rates on basic (or primary) commodities. "The Railways," says the Commission report, "should be in a position to do this especially in the light of new statistical procedures. But if the railways do not approach the task in this way, it ought to be the duty of the Board to see that they do."

Until further information is given as to the Board's intentions in this respect, it is difficult to say to what extent our Island shippers will be affected by the new rates. That it will mean some increase in their already exorbitant carrying charges is obvious. Nor is there any guarantee that a further rates boost is not pending in the near future. Yesterday's award is a temporary one, until the Board has completed a further examination into the railway's financial needs next fall.

The only long-term remedy for our Island shippers appears to be in the development of competitive truck and water transportation. It is competition of this kind in the big Central Provinces that is giving them a preferred position now in railway rate making. Both the Royal Commission and the Board of Transport Commissioners take the stand that competitive rates are necessary. This being so we should seek to discourage railway monopoly of our transportation services by every means in our power.

Back To Nature

Although other aspects of our civilization are more spectacular, an important development is a renewed interest in natural forces and an awareness of how dependent we are on them. The age of steam and the building of great cities for a while promoted the attitude that nature, after all, could be ignored.

A generation finding itself bound more by railway and steamship time tables than by the phases of the moon came to look upon the eruptions of nature as a carry-over from primitive times which could soon be totally ignored. The answer to flood or hurricane was to build stronger walls and bigger sewers.

Since those comfortable days we have discovered forces undreamed of previously and are only beginning to harness them to our own advantage. Weather forecasts, which were of mere academic interest to the Victorian townsman, are now of vital concern to the man in the street because he is once more aware that his water supply, light, power and transportation depend upon the good behaviour of the elements.

Butter And Newsprint

Dairy farmers and newspaper publishers are in the same predicament with regard to Government inaction.

Our butter production (says the Globe and Mail) is rapidly declining. From 347 million pounds in 1948 it fell to 335 million in 1949, and 312 million in 1950. This year, unless there is some miraculous change, it will go below the 300 million mark. As the production of butter has fallen, the price has risen, with the result that many thousands of Canadians are forced to use cheaper substitutes. It would be fine to have both guns and butter. It would be satisfactory just to have guns. It would be some kind of accomplishment just to have butter. But we seem to have precious little of either. Instead of guns, we have pensions; and instead of butter, margarine. Against the rise in newsprint prices (says Quebec's L'Evenement-Journal) the Provincial Government is taking into account such

facts as may justify this disagreeable step of putting an embargo on repeated rise in prices. It is doubly authorized to do so, not only by law but by its duty as trustee of our forest patrimony. Without abusing his power, Mr. Duplessis intends to exercise it in the general interest. From such an intervention, the Province may gain a real benefit. It will show to the foreign press that the exploitation of Canadian forests is regulated by a wise administration. . . . Whatever may be the result of the Prime Minister's representations on the matter, already they have won him the approval of the press of Canada and the United States."

EDITORIAL NOTES

Festive Week—Fourth Day.

The Firemen's "All Out" was a welcome sound yesterday.

Fire-fighting, doll carriages and pets hold the center of the stage today, or rather the firemen, little girls and small boys having such interests.

An Englishwoman attacked on an Iranian golf links put ten toughs to flight with a golf club. Being a golfer, she used the proper club, a driver.

The Douglas Skyrocket speed of over 1,300 miles per hour is almost incredible yet it is authentic according to U. S. A. authorities. Imagine travelling through space at the rate of 22 miles per minute!

This is the earliest of the proposed dates for commencement of preliminary talks which may lead to a cease-fire in Korea, and the prospect of long and perhaps discouraging negotiations towards a general peace.

George Henry Borrow, English philologist, traveller and author, was born this date 1803. His boyhood, spent wandering with his father's regiment, is reflected in "Lavengro" and "The Romany Rye." His other books also record his journeyings with vivid and adventurous imagination.

The British Navy is soon to use jet propelled boats. This was disclosed recently when the Admiralty gave a demonstration on the River Thames of naval vessels driven by jet propulsion. These included the world's first sea-going boat with a jet engine.

Dark glasses come in vogue at this season and prove a blessing to glare-tired eyes. They have their dangers, however, not least of which is that of blindness resulting from looking at the sun which may sometimes be done without pain but with disastrous results.

A Wolverhampton, England, firm of metal refiners has developed a process for reclaiming 50 tons of zinc oxide which normally "goes up the chimney in smoke." The zinc released in the melting process of copper and other metals is oxidized, passed through cooling tubes and caught in special sleeves. Zinc oxide is currently selling at from \$240 to \$360 a ton.

Prime Minister St. Laurent's prediction that the population of Canada would reach 35,000,000 before the end of the 20th century is optimistic, but at the same time sober. This country has much greater potentialities than necessary for that goal and it should be reached even in the face of extraordinary difficulties, which, however, may never arise.

After all it is the contemplative mind that really enjoys fishing. There are between two and three million "Isaak Wallons" in the U. K. according to an estimate by Britain's Association of Fishing Tackle makers. This compares with about 800,000 adult Britons who regularly play football, the game of the physically fitters.

The laying off of auto workers due to high taxation and credit restrictions calls attention to the most spectacular wage increases going to city workers. Farm labor has been boosting its earnings too. Latest figures show that wages paid to farm help moved up from \$84.64 to \$94.88 a month with board. Without board, the average monthly wage jumped from \$113.76 to \$127. Lowest monthly wages to farm help in Canada are paid here, where the figure is \$105. Highest is B. C. where the provincial average is \$141.67.

Outstanding among the attractions during Festive Week is the I. O. D. E. exhibition of historical objects at the Prince of Wales College hall. It is to be hoped that accommodation can be found for maintaining this exhibition permanently, at least during the summer months, as it would form a splendid nucleus for a Provincial Museum. In the meantime, all our citizens and visitors are urged to see the display for themselves.

Other Possible Prizes For The Beauty Contestants



I couldn't help taking note when I saw you on the stage.

He's all hers!

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

NOVEL LAUNCHINGS

"On the 9th inst., two vessels—the 'Waltron', of 110 tons burthen, built by Mr. J. H. Moore, and the 'Caledonian', of 101 tons, built by Mr. John Moore, both of Lot 49—were drawn from the sites where they were built, to a sufficient distance below high-water mark to cause them to float on the rise of the tide—about a quarter of a mile—in the short space of two hours, although the ground was quite bare the whole distance. To accomplish this, two sloigs were constructed, each 47 feet long, and having six cross-bars, upon which the vessels were placed, drawn by 85 horses, and assisted by 260 men. After their object was effected, the men employed, together with a number of women and children, who had assembled to witness this unusual spectacle, were hospitably entertained at the house of the builders."
—Colonial Herald, April 18, 1840.

Seaway Controversy

(New York Herald Tribune)
The St. Lawrence Seaway project, which has dazzled the imaginations of its enthusiasts for half a century or more, has been under more active agitation this year than for some time past. Through the winter and spring the House Public Works Committee has been holding hearings on the subject, culminating in a fine Congressional junket down the great valley. Governor Dewey has not wavered in his demand for immediate development of the power features through state action; while the President has continued to insist on all or none—seaway as well as power development, through Federal action—thus pleasing the Great Lakes communities but also subjecting the whole plan to the determined opposition of New York City and other coastal interests.

To New York City the navigation feature has always looked like a proposal for spending a vast amount of Federal money, very largely contributed by the city's taxpayers, on a scheme which would undermine essential foundations of the city's prosperity if it succeeded and would be a vast economic waste if it failed. Decades of dispute have never produced any really convincing estimate of what the economic effects would be under any given conditions, and in the meantime changing conditions have changed the arguments again and again. Once they were based mainly on the grain trade, when the price of wheat at Liverpool dominated the market; in two wars "defence" was the great talking-point; more recently, access to Labrador iron ore, as a substitute for the diminishing Lake Superior supplies, has been a prominent point in the argument.

"Defence," however, cuts several ways. Rearmaments unquestionably intensifies the need for both power and iron ore, but makes it more difficult to divert men and materials to a project which could not affect the supplies of either for some years. Meanwhile the development of promising new iron ore supplies in Ontario has underpinned the argument based on Labrador iron; while the development of new forms of warfare has made it very doubtful whether a transportation system dependent on vulnerable dams and locks and exposed for much of its length to submarine attack would be any great addition to our defensive strength. The current revival of the endless controversy has so far done little to strengthen the case for the seaway, or to overthrow Governor Dewey's stand for the power development alone. There exists one high-level national agency, the National Security Resources Board, which in theory ought to be able to cast up a complete accounting and decide the question of what course, under all present circumstances, represents the best utilization of our re-

Training The Paratrooper

By Edward Thurston
(U. K. Information Office)
Of the British Airborne Forces Field Marshal Lord Montgomery of Alamein has said: "When the maroon beret is seen on the battlefield it at once inspires confidence, as it is well known that the wearers are good men and true and have the highest standards in all things."
That reputation and those standards Airborne Forces are determined to keep high, in peace as in war, and it is inspiring now to see something of the processes by which young men of the British Army are first selected and then trained to be parachute soldiers.
For this branch of the service all are volunteers, and no second chance is given after a definite refusal to make a training "jump". A parachute unit depends more than most sorts of fighting unit on every individual in it, and the risk of accepting even one man who may "crack" at a critical moment must be eliminated in the interests of all. Moreover, the cost of producing a parachute soldier is high and the service authorities concerned are aware of the need for conserving public funds.

Therefore, the pre-parachute course at the Airborne Forces Depot at Aldershot is a hard and, on the face of it, merciless business (though, in fact, the instructors have plenty of human understanding, and sympathy, when there is occasion for it). The volunteers come to Aldershot at every stage of military proficiency and from all arms and services—regulars who have done years of service (some straight back from foreign stations) and national servicemen with only a few weeks experience of the army—officers and other ranks together. The medical examination is the strictest possible and the candidates are also given a series of progressive intelligence tests by diagrams devised with an eye to the possibility that any parachute soldier on first reaching the ground in a warlike operation may be thrown on to his own personal resources for some time. Then on one of his 10 days at Aldershot every man is interviewed by the assistant officer, who by careful questions and trained judgment can usually arrive at a reasonably accurate estimate of his fitness for the parachute job.

In squads of 10, officers and other ranks alike, the candidates begin with gymnasium and outdoor physical exercises. They also, through lectures and films, absorb something of the already strongly established tradition and abounding morale of airborne forces. They come to the actual course, taken in fatigue dress and steel helmet with complete disregard for the state of the weather. A new thing to many of them is this daunting series of obstacles which they must in turn climb or jump over or crawl under, or gingerly pick their way across, and all at a "steady double." The course must be done three times without a stop and, after a break, twice more, for the deliberate intention is to tire men out and neutralize their reactions during training periods. The candidates begin with gymnasium and outdoor physical exercises. They also, through lectures and films, absorb something of the already strongly established tradition and abounding morale of airborne forces. 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