

Pedestrians' Rights

Our civic authorities now have excellent equipment for clearing the streets after snowstorms, and are doing a good job in this respect. Complaints are still being heard, however, with respect to tardiness in attending to street crossings in areas outside the main business centres, where snow removed from the streets is left as a further hindrance to those travelling on foot. Eventually these blockages get removed, or tramped down, but they constitute a nuisance in the meantime.

More troublesome, however, is what one might call the permanent winter condition of sidewalks in areas fronting on some of our gasoline filling stations. When these stations are situated on street corners, and car traffic goes through from one street to the other over sidewalks buried deep in snow, the nuisance is intensified.

Surely it is a civic responsibility to see that sidewalks in these areas are kept available for the purpose for which they were built, and not left to be navigated by blind reckoning. Haven't the proprietors of these stations the same obligation as merchants and householders to keep their sidewalks shoveled? Not infrequently these rights of way are not only left impassable, but one finds cars parked in the only cleared areas pedestrians can use at all.

Elderly people in particular find these obstructions annoying, and sometimes try to bypass them by walking out into the streets. There is no place for them there either. And if they should get struck by passing cars, who would be to blame? This is a matter which should, we suggest, be given more attention than it has received.

Indeed, there is just as good reason why the city should be responsible, itself, for clearing the sidewalks as it is for clearing the streets. In many municipalities this is standard practice. The sidewalk plows are out as soon as the street plows, and the joint operation makes for a much more workable system than we have here.

A more equitable one, too, since people who use the sidewalks are also taxpayers, and have the same right to assistance at public expense in a matter of this kind as have those who drive their cars during the winter.

For Safer Insecticides

As indicated in an Ottawa dispatch, the House of Commons food and drugs committee has recommended to Parliament that pesticides be labelled to indicate the degrees of danger from poisoning. This is evidence of the growing awareness of the need for protection to livestock and wildlife—not to speak of human life—but it is doubtful if it goes far enough to ensure the measure of protection required in some instances.

Those cited by our provincial minister of agriculture, Mr. MacRae, for example, with reference to the need for banning the use of potato top sprays containing sodium arsenate. Agricultural officials elsewhere have been issuing warnings of a similar kind, and progress is also being reported in the development of new insect killers which will be more selective than any yet produced.

Speaking to students and representatives at the University of Alberta recently, Dr. E. Y. Spencer,

of the University of Western Ontario's Chemistry Department, said that researchers have found they can produce chemicals which have a low mammalian toxicity and a high insect toxicity by adding a methyl group to the structure of many existing products. The new chemicals will be more expensive, but the results will be well worth the extra cost.

For instance, it is known that certain enzymes in mammals work to protect the animals from toxic materials. When a methyl group is added to the makeup of some of these products, the chemical is changed into a form which promotes enzyme formation. At the same time, there are substances in many forms of insect life that oxidize these chemicals and make them even more toxic. This gives a weapon which will knock out insects and leave animals unharmed. "By using a close relative of DDT," said Dr. Spencer, "we will even be able to control Dutch elm disease and still keep our robins."

One thing the speaker deplored was the lack of co-operation in this country in the banning of chemicals considered too dangerous. Often nothing is done in Canada for six months after a material has been ruled unfit for use on foodstuffs in the United States. Even then, possibly only one or two provinces will post restrictions on it because our provinces vary widely in this field of regulation.

This being the case, doesn't it constitute a strong argument for bringing the matter under federal jurisdiction? What provincial right would be violated if the Federal Government exercised as much authority in this matter as it does in the enforcement of pure food regulations? Insecticide poisoning has become a problem of national-wide concern. It would pay not only to force dangerous compounds off the market, but to subsidize the use of safer chemicals if there were no other way of bringing the latest results of scientific research to bear on the problem.

They Threw It Out

Kipling, who is undeservedly downgraded by literary critics nowadays, has an amusing poem about how our common father Adam sat under a tree and scratched with a stick in the mould. The first rude sketch that the world had seen gave joy to his simple heart, "till the Devil whispered behind the leaves. 'It's pretty, but is it Art?'"

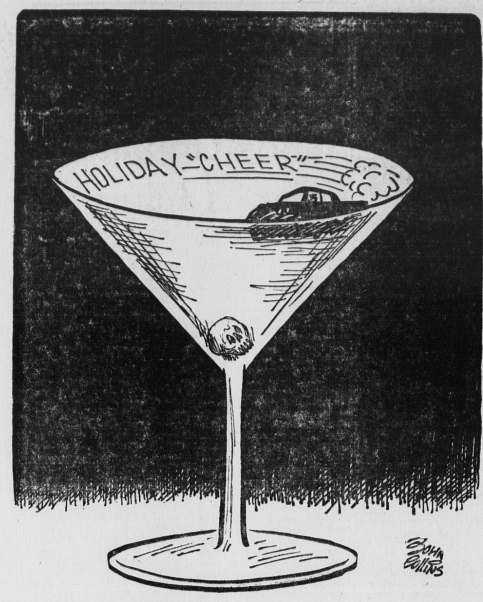
We were reminded of these lines by the reaction of members of all parties in the Commons last Friday to the symbol chosen for the 1967 Montreal world fair, and their unanimous agreement to throw it out. Opposition Leader Diefenbaker called it an artistic monstrosity. Mr. Regan, Liberal member for Halifax, said it was "a heinous type of symbol." And State Secretary Pickersill said he hoped it would be a lesson to governments not to submit art to legislation.

The nearest thing to a compliment was the comment of one Social Credit member, who said the designer had at least fulfilled his purpose—"a drawing in which people could imagine whatever they want." Apparently it was intended as a set of primitive symbols for arm arranged in a circle, each symbol being in the form of a vertical line with two diagonal lines stretching upward to represent arms. But Mr. Bert Beboe, Social Creditor for Caribou, insisted that it represented "a combination of a tractor wheel and a bunch of power poles."

In any case, the Commons refused to pass it and the bill relating to the fair went to the Senate with all reference to the offensive symbol deleted. The members found it neither pretty nor artistic, thus going the Devil one better in his criticism, if we are to believe Kipling's account of how Adam fared in a like attempt to give symbolic expression to his thoughts.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Now it's Ontario that is complaining about other provinces trying to lure industries away from its jurisdiction. Ontario Economic Minister Randall says this "industrial sabotage" is going on, and it's leading to an "unhealthy situation" in Canada. He didn't name the offending provinces.



MOST DANGEROUS CURVE ON THE ROAD

SECURITY MEASURES

Should Prime Ministers Be Guarded?

Sarita Observer
U.E. Baughman, former chief of the United States Secret Service, was critical of some points of the protection offered the late President Kennedy in Dallas, Texas. It is natural for those people now in retirement to find areas in the performance of duty wide concern. It would pay not only to force dangerous compounds off the market, but to subsidize the use of safer chemicals if there were no other way of bringing the latest results of scientific research to bear on the problem.

Mr. Hays' Secret
Agriculture Minister Harry Hayes, with his passion for serving as an auctioneer and his frequent absences from the House of Commons, has been more a figure of fun than anything else during the Pearson administration. Quite suddenly he has ceased to be fun.

Our Yesterdays

Twenty-five years ago
December 23, 1938
Hollywood, Calif. Dec. 23 - Shirley Temple, the little song-and-dance star, was promoted to box office queen of the movies for the fourth straight year.

Ten years ago
December 23, 1953
The hearts of some 75 kiddies were glad as the Legion Christmas party held at the Clover Club yesterday afternoon.

Christmas Joy
Sir—The joyous joy of Christmas is certainly wonderful. We ring the bells when Princes are born, or toll a mournful dirge when great men pass away.

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. All letters published are subject to editing and condensation where necessary. The Guardian is unable to enter into any correspondence regarding letters submitted.

Mineral Spas Very Popular

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen
Every year thousands of people journey to national mineral baths and spas in search of health. The Romans were among the first to popularize public baths which were constructed in the vicinity of artesian wells or wherever water bubbled from the earth. I recently visited a modernized version of such a place in Palm Springs, Calif.

People in public life have to meet the press element and in that they take chances. Even in the United States when an election is on, presidential candidates disregard the security measures laid down for them.

Modified surveillance because Canada was making so many contributions to the Allied cause. Nikita Khrushchev does not always abide by his security rules. He likes to move freely.

Time-Wasting Reading

Railway President Donald Gordon one of the busiest men in Canada, came to Ottawa and for 50 minutes had to read to the Commons. Railway Committee the text of the CNR annual report for 1963 which was printed and ready for distribution on March 14.

Members of Parliament can read for themselves and come to meetings with their questions ready. That would be a mark of efficiency and may make Parliament earn its place as a sign to be prized.

SIGNS MILITARY BILL

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Johnson signed a bill Saturday appropriating \$1,500,000 for construction of hundreds of military projects in the U.S. and abroad. The amount, to be spent in the year begun last July 1, is about \$425,000,000 less than appropriated for such projects last year.

Advertisement for Eastern & Chartered Trust Company, featuring 'FIRST MORTGAGE LOANS' and listing services like ample funds available and competitive interest rates.

eight lucky HUMPTY DUMPTY winners

Large advertisement for the Humpty Dumpty Thunderbird Contest, listing names of winners like Rene Girard, Richard Berry, Denise Paquin, and others, along with prizes and contact information.