

THE GUARDIAN

Authorized as Second Class Mail Post Office Department, Ottawa. The Island Guardian Publishing Co. Editor and Managing Director, Ian A. Burnett, Associate Editor, Frank Walker. CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew" "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink". CHARLOTTETOWN FRIDAY, JAN. 15, 1954

Senate Portfolio

It is thirty-four years since the last cabinet post went to a senator, a lapse of usage which on the whole seems about a quarter of a century too long. It is true that members of the House of Commons look with disfavour on Government departments being headed by anyone who is not directly available to answer their questions. On the other hand there is a great reservoir of experience and ability in the Upper Chamber that has gone too long untapped. The appointment of Senator W. Ross Macdonald, solicitor-general, shows that the Government has finally realized that appointment to the Senate does not necessarily deprive the nation of the administrative ability of a man with cabinet experience. The Government leader in the Senate has had wide experience, including that of acting for three years as Speaker of the House of Commons and is highly regarded by all parties.

It would, indeed, be a serious mistake to deprive the House of Commons of the right to ask questions of the responsible ministers of a number of important departments. There are already more than enough activities of government removed from the direct supervision of the House by the technique of setting up Crown corporations. In the case of a portfolio, however, like that of solicitor-general which seldom gives rise to such questions the move is purely gain.

Talking Points

People in the United States and elsewhere who cling to the view that in some mysterious manner the United Kingdom continues to dominate Communist thinking perhaps will learn something to their advantage by reading the first report to come out of the finance conference now being held in Australia. This report indicates that the first proposal put forward by a British delegate, Sir Leslie Rowan,—that the Commonwealth's dollar and gold reserves be used to meet problems arising from any American economic slump—was met immediately by vigorous opposition from all other delegates. Apparently, Sir Leslie took the rebuff in good spirits; he explained that he had introduced the idea only as a talking-point.

Many talking-points will come up in the course of this conference; in fact, discussion is its primary purpose. The countries represented have many common interests, but each has some interests and needs which differ from those of the other. In such a situation some disagreement on methods must be expected even when accord can be reached on principles. This is not to suggest that no community strength can ensue from the Australian conference; in the long run there probably will be a good deal of it. It will be, however, a strength born of friendly diversity, not of formal and rigid unanimity.

Plowmen's Olympics

Nine European countries as well as Canada and the United States participated in the first annual world championship plowing match held last year on a farm near Cobourg, Ontario. The contest received wide publicity at the time, but some interesting background information is provided in an article in the current Imperial Oil Review.

The first world match came after years of hopes and planning. First steps were the early international contests established in Ontario for competition between Canadian and American experts. Then in 1946, Imperial Oil offered an all-expenses-paid six-weeks' trip to Europe as grand prize for the two top plowmen of the meet. Each year two crack plowmen went overseas, accompanied by a team manager appointed by the Ontario Plowmen's Association. They competed in European plowing matches and their visits stimulated the idea of a world match.

Three international conferences were held to discuss the project and finally, at the last of these at Falkirk, Scotland, in November, 1952, the World Championship Ploughing Organization was formed and a governing board elected. The world championship trophy, known as the Esso Golden Plow, is a miniature of an eighteenth century Norfolk plow, the ancestor of many of the plows used today throughout the Western world. It was designed and made by the same English craftsmen who recon-

ditioned the Imperial Crown Jewels for the Coronation. The trophy is held for a year by the plowing organization to which the world championship belongs. The winner is presented with a smaller replica.

Today the first replica rests proudly in the Ontario farm home of last year's winner, Jim Eccles, and the original is on display in the Ontario Parliament Buildings. But next year, who knows? The second may come to rest in a Prince Edward Island farm home, or in England, Ireland, France, Germany or Scandinavia. It may even end up under the sweltering North African sun. Twenty-two countries have already indicated their intention to take part in the 1954 match which will be held near Killarney in Ireland.

On Russia's Farms

A vivid picture of the ills of Soviet agriculture has been painted in a London dispatch to the New York Times. Poverty among the farmers, great shortage of manpower, poor mechanization of farm work, and semi-starved livestock, these are among the features of the Soviet farm scene described by defectors from that country. That these reports have more than a small element of truth, says The Times, is apparent to anyone who has read Khrushchev's pronouncement on the failings of Soviet agriculture as published last September. It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the Soviet agricultural situation as a whole is completely near collapse. The Soviet Union is a very large country. The problem is to strike an accurate average for an assessment.

Clearly the great gains in farm production since the famine year of 1946 indicate that the Soviet authorities have been able to build agriculture up from the sorry state to which the Second World War reduced it. The same testimony is given by the Soviet Union's ability to reduce food prices substantially since 1947. Some areas of production, such as cotton and sugar beets, have done relatively well in recent years; others, such as livestock, have improved slowly and then retrogressed; others, such as flax-growing, have experienced near-debacles. In the face of this diversity it has taken great pressure to enable the state to squeeze from the farmers the large amounts of products needed for the urban population, but the Soviet state has been able to do so.

Agriculture, as Khrushchev indicated last September, is one of the weakest links in the Soviet economy. But there is little evidence as yet to suggest that a complete collapse has occurred. The military threat posed by the Soviet Union is not lessened by the poverty of Soviet farmers, but the political discontent born of that poverty is a key problem for the men who have succeeded Stalin.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Sulky racing in New York will have a "czar" if legislation proposed by Gov. Thomas E. Dewey is passed, as anticipated. A state harness racing commissioner will be appointed to prevent a repetition of recent scandals.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Richard A. Butler's "declaration of independence of United States aid is not a new objective. It is a continuation of the aim of "trade, not aid", that depends, however, upon American markets being made reasonably available to products of the sterling area.

It has been ruled in the past by Mr. Speaker that a minister need not answer a question in the House of Commons and further that he need not give any reason for not answering. A recent ruling, however, seems to go further and hold that a statement that the minister cannot answer the question must be accepted as an answer.

Henry Dupre Labouchere, English journalist and politician, died this date 1912. After diplomatic service he entered Parliament and became one of Gladstone's most faithful supporters. He was editor and proprietor of "Truth", a society paper successful in exposing scandals of various natures and was also a contributor to the "Daily News". He served on the Jameson Raid Commission.

All R. A. F. pilots under training will eventually have to qualify in jet planes the Air Ministry has announced. Under the new training system to be established in two or three years' time, all flying pupils will have to pass jet tests before being granted their wings. Formerly, R. A. F. pupils received their basic training in low-powered piston-engined planes, graduating in planes with more powerful piston engines. In future they will begin training in Provosts which have 550 h.p. piston engines and will complete the course at an advanced training school in De Havilland Vampire T-11 jet trainers.

Neighbour With The Large Family



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.

THE R. C. M. P.

Sir,—With reference to your recent editorial concerning an article by Richard Neuberger in the New York Times Magazine under the R. C. M. P.—it may be of interest to know that this year he has published a book called "Royal Canadian Mounted Police". This is a very interesting history of the famed Mounties, anecdotes of their prowess, their method of training men, their experiences in the last century in the wild west, etc.

I am, Sir, etc. HELEN MERRILL

MORE ISLANDERS ABROAD

Sir,—A few weeks ago as I was walking down our street in Toronto, a man came towards me from a nearby house, and as he came close enough to be heard he said: "Lady, if you know anything about potatoes you will know that these are good, he held up a large well forlorn potato. "These come from Prince Edward Island," he went on; "and they know all about growing potatoes down there. They take the greatest care in grading them and they are sent up here in refrigerated cars."

I told him that I had lived for twenty-five years among the Island potatoes and we walked to his truck. It was good to see a picture of the little red Island on each sack and read familiar potato names on the shipping tags such as A. G. MacNutt, Kensington, Webster, Carleton. For \$2.25 I bought a bag of Mr. MacNutt's potatoes and now each day as I prepare them for the table I think of the enviable reputation the Islanders enjoy for honest dealing and care in shipping out the best. These successful little Islanders they send abroad are good sound advertisers for the Island potato growers.

I am, Sir, etc. ROSE RICHARDSON, (nee MacDougall) Toronto; Ont.

FEEDING THE MIND ON TRASH

Sir,—Is not this significant bad habit of this age one that has the most far-reaching consequences in human character? Last Sunday I listened to a sermon—"Healthy-mindedness", a good sermon it was and most timely. It set me thinking. People, today, especially young people are feeding their minds on trash, not bad but just of no vitamin value. Some are feeding their bodies plenty but getting no nourishment. Their food lacks vitamin value. This sickness of all kinds results. This, bad as it is, is not so serious, in its results, as feeding on trash. I went into a store in Charlottetown recently and there displayed were over one hundred cheap books of the hugging and shouting kind. They sell and people are reading them. Country stores stock them. I cannot think of any other habit that is more deleterious to character than this, and those who read this stuff rarely read any worth-while book. They lose their taste for good literature. To them the Bible is a closed book.

The ideals of the writers of this cheap stuff are not high. They write what will sell. The writers whose names endure had high ideals. Sir Walter Scott's novels, for example, interesting and thrilling, are full of clean and noble characters. What a woman was Rebecca in Ivanhoe! Scott was a great lover of the Bible. He read it daily and copied its literary simplicity and beauty. Shakespeare in his plays has over

The Poet's Corner

KIND OF AN ODE TO DUTY

O Duty, Why hast thou not the visage of a sweetie or a cutie? Why glitter thy spectacles so ominously? Who art thou clad so abominously? Why art thou so different from Venus? And why do thou and I have so few interests mutually in common between us? Why art thou fifty per cent martyr and fifty-one per cent Tartar? Why is it thy unfortunate wont To try to attract people by calling on them either to leave undone the deeds they like, or to do the deeds they don't? Why art thou so like an April post-mortem Or something that died in the orburn? Above all, why dost thou continue to hound me? Why art thou always sabbatrossly hanging around me? Thou so ubiquitous. And I so iniquitous. I seem to be the one person in the world thou art perpetually preaching at who or to whom? Whatever looks like fun, there art thou standing between me and it, calling yoo-hoo. O Duty, Duty! —Ogden Nash, in "The Pocket Book of Humorous Verse."

Two hundred quotations from the Bible. His characters are among the choicest in literature, strong and beautiful.

There are so many books that young people would love. When I was twelve I read "The Scottish Chiefs", much of which I remember to this day. To me it was a great book. Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island", for example, has thrilled many a boy and girl. Oh, so many most interesting books! No need to fall for inferior stuff.

And closely allied to this trash are many of the comics. Some are clean and clever with a good moral point, but so many of the hugging and shouting kind, quite unfit for young people, especially children. It is a mercy the law does not allow obscene pictures to reach the public, or there would be a flood which even Noah would not escape.

This is not prudery. We have got to think of our children. They have very impressionable minds. Every stick in their minds a life-time. If they are clean and good, well, if they are not they poison the mind. Parents can do much to guard their children. This is their greatest responsibility. I am, Sir, etc. W. I. GREEN Stanley Bridge.

THE NEW YEAR

Sir,—At this time I would like to extend to all my friends and readers of your very fine paper, a very happy New Year. The old year is dead; let it die. It's had its share of sorrow, but it also brings to a good many, but it also brings joy and pleasure to many. One thing we must be thankful for and that is good health, one of our most precious possessions; work to keep us in trim; happy homes, and lots to eat. True, prices for some things have not been so good, especially potatoes, but I can well remember selling them for far less, hauling them to St. Peter's starch factory, losing all day to get one load in the factory. Today trucks take them from our door almost as soon as graded. Other lines have been good; pork, beef, lamb, poultry, butter fat, all have been good. While the price spread between the producer and consumer is too great, there seems not much we can do about it; so in the New Year that we have entered upon,

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

PIONEER ENTERPRISER

From the secretary's report at the annual general meeting of the Central Agricultural Society, Jan. 6, 1954:

"When they contemplate the natural advantages of this Island, both for farming and fishing our committee entertain hope and firm expectation that prosperity must attend the united efforts of our population at no distant period, and in this hope they are encouraged by the fact that, whatever the general state of commerce and agriculture may be, there has been much individual advancement and increase of property, as must be evident to every person who travels the Island. Within ten years the miserable log huts, then so common, have disappeared in a great degree, and their places been supplied by substantial well-finished frame dwellings; farm buildings are improved, and a large portion of farmers have some comfortable vehicle to transport them whenever business or pleasure may induce them to leave their homes."

"Among the causes of this advance may be noticed the wisdom of the Legislature in appropriating so large a portion of the revenue to make roads of communication and encourage education; but chiefly perhaps may it be imputed to the facility with which the soil may be cultivated—a great benefit during a short season—and the very grateful return it makes for any attention paid to it; no stronger proof of which need be recited than the fact of persons who have quitted the Island in quest of a more favored spot, having returned; and some who were deputed to inspect the famed neighborhood of Toronto, have made such a report as to satisfy their constituents with their present location.

"Your committee would reiterate the maxim so often enforced, of not exporting agricultural produce in a raw state. The price of potatoes in the Halifax and other Colonial markets has been ruinous to the grower. Barley also has been low. It would be very encouraging were the time arrived when every farmer in the Colony could be induced to cure, were it only two barrels of pork, for exportation.

"It has been argued that the fisheries will never be prosecuted while land is to be obtained on easy terms, and yields a living with so little labour compared with the tools of the fisherman; but would not the many young men who go to Miramichi and elsewhere to obtain the means of commencing a farm, be willing to employ the summer in fishing, were persons of capital established in the Island? The progress of Georgetown alone will soon afford an ample population for commencing a fishery, which, once established, would bring other fishermen; and the prosperity of such an establishment would not only confirm the prosperity of Charlottetown, but its example and success would be felt throughout the Island."

PIONEER PASSES

MEADOW LAKE, Sask. (CP)—Francis Beaudry, pioneer of north-eastern Saskatchewan and one-time buffalo hunter, died here at 100. In his youth he lived in a teepee. let us do so with courage and carelessness, knowing full well that we shall have our sorrows, but we can also have our joys too. And let us put our trust in Him who long ago said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will be with you even unto the end." Who knows perhaps next fall, the old "spud" will be \$2.00 per bushel. So cheer up boys, hitch up the old overalls and let us plug along. I am, Sir, etc. GBO. MACWEN St. Peters

Notes By The Way

The Pittwood Man is several thousands years younger than everybody had thought he was, and we wish we could say the same.—Winnipeg Tribune

Sir—Is this new world of the scientists, "fissionable", "admissible"? ALFRED HURST: Portland Place.

Sir—In my opinion, even though I am a scientist, fissionable (an Americanism, I believe) is not admissible, though fission is.

A. L. BACHARACH: Willow Road. —Letters in London Times.

Words, like breeds of dog, enjoy fashions, and when a word comes into popularity it is in danger of being "run to death", until, ragged and threadbare, it becomes a pauper of the dictionary. The clearest example is provided by descriptive adjectives which have long since ceased to have any sense of their original meaning. Such a word as "terrible" or its corresponding adverb seldom today conveys any sense of terror; and it is not merely in the teen-age vocabulary, with its "keen" and similar terms, that such misuse is found; even in adult and reasonably educated speech we have come to the point of requiring a new degree of comparison beyond the superlative.—Halifax Chronicle-Herald.

Recent reports from Russia tell of success attained by scientists in inducing two heads of cabbage to grow from a single root. Moscow Radio explained that on one collective farm 33,000 pounds of cabbage heads were harvested from a 2 1/2 acre plot. These heads were removed in such a manner as to leave a few leaves on the plant. These were stimulated with mineral fertilizers so that new heads grew on the root, netting another 10,700 pounds of cabbage. If Russian scientists would give closer study to duplicity in the Kremlin they might find the means of perfecting their cabbage crop even more by having the two heads develop simultaneously, instead of with a time lag as at present.—Winnipeg Free Press.

Mr. Speaker

(BBC Weekly Talks Summary)

Stanley Hyland, talking in the BBC's European Service on "How Parliament Works", said that no Member of Parliament can take part in a debate in the House of Commons unless the Speaker calls upon him by name to do so. The Speaker was elected by the House and had to be a member of it. "He must be there in person," said Hyland, "present in the House as a Member when the debate takes place in which he will be named, proposed and seconded." Very occasionally more than one member was proposed for the office, but once a speaker had been elected he was re-elected without opposition at the beginning of every Parliament until he decided that he must retire.

Traditional ceremonial expected the Speaker to seem reluctant to take office. "The Members who have proposed and seconded him lead him to the chair as soon as he has been elected and his show of reluctance is historically interesting," said Hyland. "It's not always been pleasant to the Speaker of the House of Commons. The office was once in the direct gift of the Crown, and his unpopularly was a King's man and his unpopularly was justified for centuries until he broke away from the royal direction."

The Speaker was no longer the Sovereign's man but a servant of the House of Commons. His official residence was within a few yards of the Chamber and he could not leave it so long as the House was sitting except to take his place in the Speaker's chair. His full-time job of enormous responsibility had become a symbol of the House's sovereign supremacy. "The Speaker of the House has a lonely and elevated dignity which all the symbolism and ancient ceremonial helps to maintain," said Hyland. "He starts as a member of a political party but as soon as he becomes Speaker he severs himself from every political connection; he resigns from his political clubs, he expresses no political views, he separates himself in actuality as well as in implication from his fellow-members."

He avoids the rooms which Members use and has a separate part of the Library, the grounds of the House and part of the Terrace facing the River Thames facing the House for him. His salary is high, he has a large pension when

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

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