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 "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink."

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1955

The Elizabethan Party

In an apparent effort to counteract the liberal tendencies which today characterize both major political parties in Britain—one almost as much as the other—a few right-wingers are reported to be laying the groundwork for a new grouping to be called "the Elizabethan Party". According to the chairman of the sponsoring committee, the move is being made because "there are millions of men and women in Britain who are looking for an alternative to the present political set-up in this country."

It is not a new story. Dissatisfaction with existing political parties is a familiar feature of political life in every country where electors are free to express their opinions; indeed, it might almost be called democratic necessity. But, unless a new movement can manage to capture—or at least appeal strongly to—the public imagination, and retain it for a long period of time, it is almost certain to find the going very, very hard. Not that there is no precedent to give it courage; the Labour Party itself started out against seemingly formidable odds; yet, in a few years, it was strong enough to dislodge the traditional Liberal Party from its historic fastnesses. It must be said, however, that the British Socialists made their political debut at just the right time. The industrial revolution helped them along, and the new thought, which was not confined to any particular segment of society, was of tremendous assistance. The Elizabethans—all honour to them for putting their imaginations to work in selecting a name—do not appear to have any such lucky circumstance on their side. This is not to suggest that there is no possibility of their becoming an important group in British public life, but only that the way they have chosen is beset with many difficulties.

Mr. Muir's Proposals

Canada's trade problems have been accentuated this year by increasing competition in world markets. Some suggestions with a view to aiding Canadian traders in two serious difficulties they now encounter were offered by Mr. James Muir, chairman and president of the Royal Bank of Canada, at the bank's recent annual meeting. His recommendations are of a definite and practical nature and call for effective government action.

One trade difficulty, Mr. Muir points out, arises from the high price of the Canadian dollar in international trade. This high price (which results not from a favorable trading balance but from the inflow of investment capital into Canada) places Canadian exporters at a trading disadvantage from the very start. It means that Canada's customers have to pay more for Canadian goods, partly because they have to pay a premium on Canadian dollars.

Another difficulty is that Canadian exporters are unable to supply their foreign customers with the long-term credit terms that their competitors are able to supply. European suppliers, with government support, offer long-term financing to their customers in the world market, and American export houses, in one form or another (notably through the Export-Import Bank of Washington) are able to do likewise.

Mr. Muir urges that Canada fill these gaps with financing methods that would be available to it. The Bank of Canada now regulates the rate of interest in Canada by its open market operations in buying government securities. It could also, Mr. Muir suggests, influence the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar by purchasing U. S. dollars in the open market. The increase in the money supply that might result need not be inconsistent with policy under present business conditions.

In the same way, he recommends that the Canadian Government provide Canadian traders (through a corporation which it might own wholly or in part) with the means of extending the long-term credit to their customers that conditions of present competition demand. This type of credit would not conflict with the present operations of Canada's chartered banks, as it would involve the power to discount export paper of longer term than these banks can handle.

It was in his address at the Royal Bank's annual meeting last year that Mr. Muir recommended the establishment of a Canadian money market, as a means of expanding world trade and investment and as an expression of Canada's economic maturity and strength. Five months later such a money market was established. The additional recommendations made by Mr.

Muir deserve the same serious consideration. They are advanced in the same belief that "before we can be a great nation, we must begin to act like one."

Last, but by no means the least, among his remarks was a word of warning. The redistribution of income through taxation, desirable as it may seem, may become a self-defeating policy. It is a policy that may become so concerned with redistribution as to lose sight of the need to encourage production. If rewards dwindle under the oppression of taxes, effort is likely to dwindle also. And Mr. Muir is convinced that the incentive to produce has been already blunted.

Progress Is Slow

One of the unmistakable signs of the present age is impatience. This is especially noticeable in the field of international relationships and in that of social advance. War, which has been the fashion ever since men first began to live in communities, is expected to disappear almost suddenly with the discovery of atomic power. And, because the United Nations has not been able to enforce peace in a world which for many centuries has been geared to war, its critics say that it no longer serves any purpose. Racial discrimination, underprivileged conditions, economic injustice, social insecurity, and all the other unpleasant facts which have helped to make up the human story, are expected to wither away in one or two generations under the pressure of scientific knowledge and widespread education. Apropos of this impatient trend, perhaps the following story will be of some interest and even some benefit:

Two frogs, having celebrated one of their national holidays a bit more jocularly than wisely, decided to take a short cut across a swamp on their way home. However, when half-way across they made up their minds to take a short nap. As they were dozing off they saw a tortoise and asked him if he would be good enough to bring them a box of headache pills from the nearest drug-store. He said he would if they were not in too much of a hurry. So the frogs gave him a dollar and went to sleep. They slept for six months; and when they woke up, there being no sign of the tortoise, they began to think he had stolen their money and run off. Just as they were in the middle of loud complaints about the untrustworthy character of tortoises generally, they heard a slight rustle in the grass and a voice which cried out petulantly: "If that's the way you feel about me you can go and get your own pills." But by this time the frogs had no need of medicine; for the headaches, which had called for drastic treatment, had disappeared.

The moral of the story is not that drastic and dramatic measures are never necessary if political and social progress is to be made, but that, regardless of methods, real progress is sure to be slow and, sometimes, imperceptible. Moreover, given a little rest and cooling-off treatment, some social ills might very well lose some of their alarming features, without being subjected to unduly severe alleviative measures.

EDITORIAL NOTES

President Eisenhower inaugurated this date, 1953.

Russian butter production is to be expanded as much as 50 per cent by 1956 to attain a goal of 1,500 million pounds a year. Included in the plan is the building of 750 dairy product plants, 100 urban milk depots, 16 milk canning factories, and 80 cold storage plants.

The total population of England and Wales is now listed at 44,480,000, representing a 184,000 increase—mostly in the over-65-age bracket—during the last fiscal year. The number of children under 14 also increased, but the remainder of the population decreased by 20,000.

A signal tribute has been paid to the Scout movement by the United States ambassador to Canada, Hon. R. Douglas Stewart. Speaking recently in Montreal, Mr. Stewart said that no single movement can do more for world understanding than Scouting, and that "nothing can happen to North America" if the movement continues to prosper with membership of scouts and adults who guide them ever increasing.

Protection of sea-fowl is one thing; removing an important article of food from isolated settlers is quite another. This latter, in the opinion of one of Newfoundland's M.P.'s, is the effect of the current federal ban on the shooting of "turs" in that province. For 300 years fishermen in out of the way places have been shooting these succulent birds without, apparently, causing any serious depletion in their numbers. Now, if the ruling remains, they must either give up their traditional source of fresh meat—especially in the winter months—or resort to poaching, in which no good citizen likes to indulge.



Due For A Shock

New Guinea Catching Up

National Geographic Society

New Guinea, the island that time forgot, catches up with the world a little more each passing year. Explorers, prospectors, aerial mappers, missionaries, agricultural experts and government officials are penetrating farther and farther into the Stone Age interior of Australia's northern neighbor. An island second only to Greenland in size, New Guinea is one of the least developed inhabited lands on earth. It is a place of wild mountains, equatorial rain forests, rare birds-of-paradise and natives who have never seen white men or a metal implement. Much of its area has uncertain political status. Yet investment in its future continues to grow.

Oil geologists survey unexplored ranges by plane and helicopter. Hydroelectric sites and coffee plantations are being laid out in the remote headwaters of forbidding rivers. Gold long has drawn adventurers, but other minerals exist too: copper, bauxite, nickel, perhaps uranium. From headquarters in the island's southeastern sector, Papua, Australian administrators the United Nations Trust Territory of North-East New Guinea. The Netherlands holds western New Guinea, although for five years the young Republic of Indonesia has claimed that section under its own name of Irian.

Stretching some 1,500 miles from end to end, the great island on the map resembles a prehistoric bird hovering between Australia and the Philippines, its misshapen beak open to snap at the Moluccas, Celebes, and Borneo.

A Portuguese ship first sighted New Guinea in 1527. A Spaniard named U in 1545, largely because the people pecking from shore seemed to resemble those of Guinea in Africa halfway around the world. Gradually the Dutch came, then the Germans and British, and in World War II, the

Japanese. General MacArthur's forces used New Guinea as a springboard back to the Philippines. They gave it a glimpse of mechanized bases, air and sea armadas, and all the activities of global war. When the soldiers departed, they left many buildings and materials behind. Now, dark Papuan boys pedal furiously on their bicycles out of the Stone Age, as it were. In Netherlands New Guinea, MacArthur's old base of Hollandia has become a modern and model town of 10,000 inhabitants. At Sorong, an oil refinery produces an estimated 4,600 barrels a day. Blak island has a naval station and a new airfield.

In United Nations Territory within the last two years, more than 13,000 square miles have been explored for the first time by patrol. The coastal ports of Lae and Madang are bustling. Inland, entire European communities have been planted by air—the buildings, cars, trucks, people. Engineers now are striving to hack a highway over the Bismarck Range.

A million natives, speaking hundreds of languages, tilling remote cultivated valleys and warring among themselves, inhabit New

The Poet's Corner

GRACE BY ASSOCIATION

Those who are fond of cats, I have observed, Have usually a certain quiet grace With motions pleasantly relaxed and curved, Not angular and awkward; with no trace Of jerky hesitations such as mar The gestures of high-tension people who Find cats unnecessary, and who are

Uninterested in the things they do. And I have noticed, also, that the mind Of one who is a cat's associate Lacks the rigidity I often find In people who refuse to contemplate The swift dexterity and supple power That any cat can teach, at any hour.

—Jane Merchant.

Guinea. They are heartily disinterested in any progress that entails either change or work. But as they gradually give up their stone axes and primitive artifacts for more modern tools, New Guinea faces a certain future of change.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

Perhaps the best test of good manners is being able to put up with bad ones. —Toronto Star.

No one knows the age of the human race, but at all events it should be old enough to know better. —Edmonton Journal.

There's no use pretending to be other than Canadian. But let's be our best selves. Good food, courteous treatment. Good roads—don't let us forget them—and reasonable prices. These are things we can offer our friends across the border without trying. And they should prove our best advertisement if we only knew it. —Vancouver Sun.

The new venture in our midst is taking shape through solid investment by public-spirited men. With efforts directed toward goals of additional employment in Sydney provided by small new industries that SIDCO will assist in establishing here. Our sights are being trained on what is obtainable and attainable. We are going to hear a great deal more about it—something new in the light of the sun arising on our Atlantic horizon—a new Cape Breton saga in the making. —Sydney Post Record.

History has many facets. A phase of Nova Scotia history far from negligible and indeed important by every count of what makes history worth recording, is being recorded by Helen Creighton of Dartmouth. With her recording machine she goes about the province gathering the cherished songs of by-gone days, collecting the folk-lore of the people of our rugged coasts, and in so doing saves for posterity values that really are priceless. Ourselves and those yet to come are profoundly indebted to Helen Creighton for a service worth beyond anything she possibly could be paid for her dedication. A service she performs, we can be certain, far more for the love and devotion she expresses in doing it than for any remuneration it brings to her. This is something one felt about this patriotic lady in seeing a picture of her recently in this newspaper recording a folk-song by a woman at Chebucto Head. The songs of our fishing villages, farming hamlets and mines, thus will continue to be heard. They will not perish, but be sung again in years ahead when those whose songs Helen Creighton recorded have gone their way as all must, along the mysterious courses that lead away from earthly destiny. —Sydney Post-Record.

Five more important words: "I am proud of you." Four most important words: "What is your opinion." Three most important words: "If you please." Two most important words: "Thank You." Least important word: "I." —Kitchener Record.

A turkey, naturally dressed and boned, would be a veritable godsend. And, if Dame Nature could be coaxed into stuffing it and adding a few oysters as well, so much the better. For the researcher, here as elsewhere, it is a matter of imagination as well as industry. —Regina Leader-Post.

We never catch up, despite prodigious expenditures—indeed the tendency is to fall farther behind the parade. Many passenger cars are being made up to a foot longer in their newest and shiniest dispensations and we read of an experimental "car of the future" that is a foot wider than current models. Already the added length means that fewer vehicles than in the past can be accommodated in street parking spaces or in lots and buildings provided for fee-parking, and longer cars clearly add to the congestion in the roads—to widen cars by a foot would be to make useless most of our present vast highway system, return it to the horse and buggy. —Ottawa Journal.

It would seem incumbent upon automobile manufacturers to view every car coming off the assembly line as though it may be involved in a crash, and to design it with that assumption in mind. Preoccupation with the design of hoods and tail lights should give way to a greater concern with the center and interior of the car, where, after all, its occupants are. The increasing horsepower of motor cars is looked upon by many as an invitation to danger. Statistics show that speed is the responsible factor in many accidents and the question asked whether there will have to be a limit on the horsepower of cars to be used for passenger purposes. Automobiles have been a blessing in many ways. They have changed entirely our way of living. People are better informed because they can travel so easily from place to place and the realm of business and social possibilities has been greatly enlarged. It does not seem right that we should accept these benefits only at the cost of many deaths. Anything and everything possible should be done to reduce the toll of highway accidents and fatalities. —Welland Tribune.

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