CURRENT COMMENT

The New Hydro Radial Commission

Premier Drury has named his commission for the investigation of the Hydro Radial plans of the Ontario provincial Commission. The idea of appointing one commission to check the work of another appointed by the Government is a novelty and while Premier Drury assured a Markham audience that he had taken no stand against Hydro radials and only wanted to know, it is impossible to regard the appointment of the second commission otherwise than as a reflection on the integrity or the intelligence of the first. Had Premier Drury selected a commission of engineering experts to make a report the new commission might have been accepted as he suggested as a measure to strengthen the confidence of the public in the Hydro radial proposals. But as the ablest expert opinion has already been obtained by the Hydro Commission, the new body can only retrace the same ground and perhaps assure the Government that the Hydro Commission was not mendacious, but had actually secured the information it alleged it had obtained. But this would come perilously near looking like a gratuitous insult, not only to the Hydro Commission, but also to the Hydro Radial Union of Municipalities which accepted the Hydro Commission's reports, in many cases after investigations of their own. It is certain that Premier Drury has not intended all this, but undoubtedly this is how it appears to the great majority of the municipalities which are committed to the scheme, and which are much concerned over the delay which Premier Drury's intention to check up the work of the Hydro Commission involves. Premier Drury should see that while he professes friendship for the Hydro plans he has taken the same course that would have been expected of him had he professed enmity. As it is he has divided the province on a question upon which there has been no popular division and he has unwittingly aligned himself and his government against the supporters of the most popular plank in any political platform.

Facing Coal Problems

A most important statement has been made by Mr. H. A. Harrington, the provincial fuel controller, on the coal situation. It is the first official effort to face the facts of the coal supply and to place the conditions before the people so that a full understanding of what is necessary to be done can be had. The first thing is the recognition that within a measurable time all the anthracite produced in the United States will be required for their home consumption. Once this is generally seen to be the case it should not take Canadian public opinion long to come to the point of insisting on steps being taken by the government for a proper development of native Canadian fuel resources. The United States has been most considerate and generous, as Mr. Harrington says, in letting us have coal. But God helps those who help themselves, and when Mr. Harrington dilates on the anthracite deposits in Alberta it is a clear indication that the job of supplying ourselves with fuel has been given to ourselves. "Coal will be one of the big items in interprovincial trade," says Mr. Harrington, and it means that Ontario must learn to look west for her anthracite supplies, unless, as Alberta engineers insist, coal can be found in our own or the Manitoba north. In our climate coal is a necessity. We cannot heat our houses with electricity, unless perhaps we learn to harness the wind and the tides and to store their energy. Water power as we have it will probably be sufficient for our commercial and manufacturing needs, but fuel for the home is a necessity upon the annual supply of which the householder depends for the existence of himself and his family. Government, federal, provincial, municipal, should deal with this necessity as it deals with the necessity for water or transportation.

Toronto's White Elephant Dilemma

Some kind of a game is being played in Toronto in connection with the new Union Station there, the outcome of which is of more or less interest to the whole province. Everybody goes to Toronto at one time or another, to the Legislature, to the University, to Osgoode Hall, to the Exhibition, to the Royal Ontario Museum, to the Grange Art Gallery, to the annual convention of the lodge, or on the honeymoon. So we all have to pass through the ordeal of the old Union Station, which is about the worst specimen of a railway depot on the North American continent. Those who do so get off the trains at Sunnyside, Parkdale, the Don or North Toronto. They do not stop at Riverdale. A new Union Station has been going on since 1904, when the great fire missed its chance to burn the old one. Toronto people are supposed to admire the new station, but the rear view looks like a jail, and the only front view at present is a fence. The fence view, according to the perennial Mayor Church, is to be continued indefinitely, and other authorities say it will be a year before the station is ready. It could be finished in a short time if the authorities would agree to have the trains enter on the level. Ten years ago some members of the Board of Trade conceived the idea of building a mud wall 230 feet thick along the water front, and putting the railway tracks on top of it. They got an engineer to draw a plan of this monstrosity with tunnels through it at the main streets. He has fled the country since. The new harbor board which spends the money supplied to it by the city and the Dominion Government, actually adopted this plan instead of the bridge plan which is so satisfactory at Sunnyside, and it is estimated that the cost of the mud wall, the right of way, the land damages and bridges which it will necessitate will run up to fifty or sixty million dollars. The railways naturally do not want to build this obstruction, but the Board of Trade and the Mayor and the Harbor Board are obsessed with the idea and insist upon it. A Toronto paper says that Montreal interests are forcing the mud wall on Toronto in order to handicap the city's development and keep back the growth of water front traffic. As the whole province is interested and no reputable engineer has ever endorsed the mud wall idea, it has been suggested that the provincial government should take a hand in the matter with a view to having the situation reconsidered with expert engineering advice.

Our GreatestSeaman Gone

Already the greatest figures of the Great War are beginning to disappear. Nothing in the universe is more impressive than the march of time, obliterating every record, removing every mark as it goes. The death of Lord Fisher closes an epoch in naval warfare. Those who take the providential view of history are justified in pointing to Fisher as the agent who won the Great War in advance when he designed the dreadnought and the battle-cruiser, and adopted the policy of concentrating the navy in the North Sea. The opposition of Lord Northcliffe and Winston Churchill appears to have been largely responsible in preventing Fisher from taking a greater share in the actual direction of the navy in the war. Undoubtedly had he been in Jellicoe's place at Jutland the Germans would have had no excuse to regard their escape as a victory. Like so many great men, his actions and utterances were of an uncommon order. Shocking to the conventional, indiscreet to the official, eccentric to the commonplace, he had all the marks of genius that lead lesser men to speculate on the borderline between genius and insanity. The dipping needle will always seem insane to the ordinary compass needle with its more restricted range of motion. It was like Fisher to write to the German Admiral Tirpitz when that worthy retired in 1916: "Dear Old Tirps.—We are both in the same boat. What a time we've been colleagues, old boy! However, we did you in the eye over the battle-cruisers, and I know you've said you'll never forgive me for it when bang! went the Blucher and Von Spee and all his host. Cheer up, old chap! Say, 'Resurgam.' You're the one German sailor who understands war. Kill your enemy without being killed yourself. I don't blame you for the submarine busines. I'd have done the same myself, only our idiots in England wouldn't believe me when I told 'em. Well, so long. Yours till hell friezes, Fisher." This may be commended to gentlemen who take themselves too seriously. Lord Fisher might very well have been entombed in St. Paul's, near his great predecessor, though he was thought to have more of the qualities of Blake than of Nelson. But he preferred to be buried beside his wife at Kilverstone Hall, in Norfolkshire. The nation, however, gave him a funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Germany and Coal

It is difficult to determine from the cables whether the German Government and its representatives negotiating with the Allies are acting in perfect good faith or not. The policy of France is certainly not to give them the benefit of the doubt, but rather to take no chances. Such it is to create a reputation for bad faith. At the same time, the German delegates appear to have been very earnest in their representations. They fear the red peril of Soviet Russia, whose armies are not far away, and they fear civil war and revolution in Germany itself. When the concession was made of reducing the supply of coal for France to be mined by Germany to 2,000,000 tons monthly, Dr. Water Simons, the foreign minister, declared Germany stood between civil war and invasion, alluding to the Allies' threat to occupy the Ruhr district in case of noncompliance. Britain's answer to this was that Germany produced over 13,000,000 tons monthly, and could easily spare the 2,000,000 stipulated. The Allied demand was reduced from 108,000 to 70,000 tons daily. Hugo Sinnes is regarded as the present "bad man" of the German situation. He is a coal baron and the worst type of Prussian. Simons was formerly his secretary. Verb sap.

ADVICE TO GIRLS

By Rosalind

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Dear Girls:—

This is just a little personal note to all my readers—to tell you that I am glad you like the column and to assure you that I am enjoying it very much myself. I have heard people sneer at columns such as ours, but that was because those people never realized that there are thousands of people who have no one to whom they may turn for advice; and because these scoffers did not know that even if one has plenty of advisers there are some things it is heaps easier to tell to a stranger. I know that three-quarters of my letters come just because I do not know the people who write or the circumstances which have caused them to seek advice.

But whatever your reason for writing, I am glad to do what I can, and I shall advise you to the best of my ability on whatever subject you choose to talk about. Your letters have to be forwarded to me and I find that quite a number have gone astray. Please write again, and mark your envelope very plainly, "To Rosalind, 515 Manning Chambers, Toronto."

—ROSALIND.

Dear Rosalind:

I am a Yank; quite young, and in spite of the latter I have here a good sized problem for you to thrash out for me. First, I beg to be excused for trespassing on your columns, however, knowing that you wouldn't mind me after unraveling my story. Away back in April, 1913, I met a very nice girl at a place where I was working near Hamilton, and as the result we became very good friends. Everything went well until November, 1915, when I left her, and then of course I went up north to seek adventure. All the time, since our first meeting I used to take her out, going to parties, theatres and little excursions just as the season and time warranted. Through summer and winter we got along very nicely indeed. In fact, she and I became real sweethearts, and to look at this affair square, I may say that I had proposed to marry her in December of 1915, to which she consented. And it happened I wanted to go up north early in November of the same year, so I packed up and armed myself with a Winchester and a couple of revolvers and enough ammunition to last me for a month of sport up in the north. I set out. While I was out one cold, frosty day somewhere—heaven knows—up in the wilds of northern Ontario, I met with a shooting accident. I made out to get back to the cabin to have my wound fixed, and later to write home to tell her how badly I was wounded. A fortnight followed, and a letter came. To my suprise, it wasn't from her at all, but instead, it was from another lady friend of mine. She told me that my sweetheart had eloped and gone over to the central States. At this I was much shocked and I couldn't believe it. So I thought of writing to her, but no answer came. As the result of this misfortune, I determined to stay up there till the 23rd of April, 1916, and when I finally came home I found that she really was gone and married. This entirely upset me, and I immediately made a decision not to pry into any questions about her at any time. At the same time I found myself going about aghast in wonderment and surprise of how I came to be so ill-treated by this girl after being so long acquainted with her. However, in spite of this, I tried to forget it all by enlisting in the R. C. D.'s at Toronto in May of the same year, and it was in June next I was sent overseas and in September I was in the trenches in France, then serving with the 4th Batt. All this time I couldn't forget her at all. But before I left I heard her hubby was to go over with the same convoy to England and as a result I kept an eye open for him, and while we were detraining at Liverpool, England. I met him as expected, but I never said anything. So things went on just as smooth till in October of that year, 1916, I saw my first actual fighting. This was at the Somme, and I came through this alright without getting a scratch, except a good scare.

However, all through the next fight at Vimy Ridge, I thought of this queer girl of mine away back in Canada, and through the scrap at Fresnoy in April, 1917. It was at the latter fight I was struck by a machine gun missile and was laid out in No Man's Land till I was gassed, but fortunately about 2.30 in the morning stretcher-bearers found me and I was carried back to some dressing station behind the lines. Then it happened that in September of that year after a long convalescence in England, I was to sail home for Canada—so I did. On the Llandovery Castle we came, and landed at Halifax on October 2, and it was on the 17th of October when I landed at the station here in Hamilton along with many returned me. To my surprise, as I hobbled along through the alleyway of many citizens who were welcoming us home at the station, I noticed the girl who left me and eloped, standing close by to where I passed. She gave me a welcoming smile, but I never took the slightest attention of her, but still she pursued me to where we were taken to the automobiles in which we were to be taken to our homes. Still, I took no notice of her, but I could tell by an occasional glance toward her, that she was worried by the way I treated her. So it happened that on the day I arrived home her man had been killed in France, and of course, I, in a good natured way, wrote her a sympathetic letter. Then, ever since up till now, she has written me often and many times she has pitifully requested me to forgive her for what she did to me, by eloping and being married to another boy. Now, I cannot see any reason why I should forgive her, as she had no reason to treat me as she did. Now, in this queer case, what should I do?

—VIMY, C 4.

Dear Boy:—

I'm afraid "with all her faults you love her still." I think you would be foolish to let your pride stand in the way of your happiness. If I were you I would go to see your old friend, and see how your friendship has stood the test of the hard times you have both gone through. I would be very canny about becoming engaged again. Wait a while, and see whether your experience has helped both of you to live bigger, better lives—lives not so easily upset by silly pride or false ideas. I enjoyed your letter very, very much, and I shall be glad to welcome you back to the column any time. Write us another big, long letter. We shall like it, as I'm pretty sure you like writing it.

—ROSALIND.

My Dear Rosalind:—

In today's paper I read a letter from a girl, signed "Cheated." It touched me very much.

I am a girl eighteen years old, and I was wondering if it was possible for you to get me that girl's address. My home surroundings are quite different to what hers seem to be, and yet I am well acquainted with hers, as I have a girl chum in the same position as she.

I am very fond of writing, as I thought I may not be able to smile at the girl. To cheer her, I could at least write her a nice, cheery letter each week. I also have a married sister, and know several girls in Toronto whom she might care to know. I have been away from home a good deal, and I know what it is like to be lonesome, but a good letter always helps one on. I am not a silly kind of a girl. My only boy friend is a cousin my age. But some day I hope to make an ideal wife for my Prince Charming. I do not want that day to come though, until I am in my late twenties.

You might write me if you think my plan a good one. —ADA.

Dear Ada:—

I do think your plan a good one. I would like very much to forward a correspondence club among my girl readers. Writing letters is a splendid aid in developing character. The art is educative: one learns to express ideas for the benefit of another, and unconsciously one lives better, that she may be a worthy friend, even to an unknown letter writer. I repeat I shall gladly send on letters from my readers to each other if they enclose the necessary stamped envelope.

—ROSALIND.

FACTS ABOUT CANADA

It is not often that a missionary is the means of removing an entire tribe of Indians to a new site. In the early days of April, 1859, the Rev. Mr. Duncan, a missionary who had been settled among the Indians of British Columbia, decided that the tribe with which he was working must have a new home. He had begun a little school for the Indian children the previous summer with an initial attendance of 26 children meeting in the house of a chief. Before the year ended he had an attendance of 110 children and 50 adults. The result was that the missionary decided to remove the whole band of Indians to a new village of Met-lah-kat-lah. But before he would permit the braves to join in the enterprise he made certain rules they were to obey. They must give up Indian deviltry, cease calling in the conjurers when they were sick; quit gambling, cease painting their faces, quit drinking intoxicating liquors, attend religious services, pay their debts and be clean and honest.

It was a very severe test for the Indians, who sat around their camp fires when the conditions of residence in the new ideal village were announced. For a long time they sat in silence and thought. Then one after another they arose and announced before the gathering that they would subscribe to the rules of life laid down by the missionary. Four years later a bishop of the church arrived and baptized nearly 60 adults and children at the new village.

The settlement grew rapidly until over 1,000 clean and honest Indians were living together in peace and harmony. They built good homes for themselves and a little Gothic church for all the religious exercises. Then they established a reading room and last of all a brass band was organized. The experiment in village building was a success.

GODMOTHERS FOR FRENCH TOWNS

The "godmother" idea to help towns in the devastated area in France to rebuild, is becoming very popular. Many cities who did not suffer from the German shells and bombs have taken a town that was the target for the German artillery as a "filleul" and are lending their support and money to rebuild. M. Binet-Valmer, a widely known newspaper man in Paris, has undertaken a campaign to show the French people that they cannot expect the Americans to help rebuild the devastated areas unless they try to help themselves. The city of Havre has adopted several towns, and a public subscription was started. The city itself gave 100,000 francs and a total fund of a half million francs was raised. Other large cities are doing the same, and material aid to the shell-torn towns and villages that formed parts of the battle front will be given.

DRIVER MUST SHOW SKILL

Owners of automobiles in New Zealand are required to pass an examination in driving to show that they are capable of operating their machines before a license is granted.

ADVERTISING CANADA

The Canadian Pacific Railway has opened a moving picture house in London, England, for the purpose of illustrating the life and manufacturies of Canada.

Foolish Francesca

By Olive Wadsley

(Continued from last week.)

His arm tightened round her, she moved a little nearer to him.

"Am I a bundle of emotions? Oughtn't one to be? Isn't it nice?"

He really laughed then. "Nice," as applied by Frankie, was so deliciously humorous.

She drew herself away quickly.

"I think it's horrid of you to laugh at me! No, don't; I don't want to be treated like a child."

He drew back his hand, still laughing.

"You funny little kid."

"That is what you always say. You just look upon me like that, and I—I—" She stopped, her voice shook a little.

"Yes—what? Go on," Wynton said softly.

"I don't know; I can't explain," she half whispered.

"You baby!"

He put his arms round her, and kissed her gently.

She clung to him.

"Oh, Kit!"

Her voice sounded as if she were crying.

He kissed her again.

Suddenly, swiftly, her arms were round his neck. She pulled his head down, her lips touched his for an instant, and then he was alone.

"By Jove," he said after a minute, and laughed rather jerkily.

CHAPTER IV.

Their Very Last Evening.

There were only two days left. Each morning when she woke Francesca's first thought was "one day less." Now there was only one day, one night, and a morning.

They were due at Marseilles on Friday. Mrs. Salter had decided to go straight on to Paris, and then on to London. For a week she and Francesca had not spoken.

Outraged annoyance, when at length she had grasped the state of affairs, had roused Mrs. Salter to almost vitriolic censure. The kindest criticism of Francesca's conduct had been "mawkish sentimentality." That had cut deep, for a first idealistic adoration shrinks at bitter ridicule more than at anger or grief, or even vituperation.

A chaplain's wife had told Mrs. Salter of that "little Trent girl's idiocy."

"Follows poor Captain Wynton about like a shadow, I assure you." And Mrs. Salter had promptly taken the matter in hand.

The result had estranged Francesca, and, if possible, rather deepened the halo round Wynton's handsome head.

And in the meantime Wynton was growing bored. The good night kiss had become customary, and if he did not see Frankie to say good night she wrote or looked so utterly wobegone that he feared others would notice.

She still charmed him; but a great deal of her happy, infectious gaiety had been lost in her new-found adoration, and she had become shy and diffident.

"You will come the last evening, won't you, Kit?" she begged, tears in her gray-green eyes, a poor, lost-looking, very thin figure.

"Of course, kiddie; top of the stairs at nine. I'm in a hurry, dear, off to play quoits—so long, be good."

She watched his tall figure run down the deck. It was just after breakfast. There were hours and hours to get through before the evening, and its wonderful five minutes.

She sat down and stared unseeingly at the tossed foam.

To-morrow they would be in, and she would have said good-by to Kit. He was to stay in Paris; but later on, in a month perhaps, she would see him in London.

If only she could become a great singer, and he could be proud to know her.

Once she had asked him wistfully, "Do you love me?" and he had laughingly kissed her lips and said, "Doesn't it seem like it, kiddie?" Was this love, then?

A constant sort of worried longing to see him; and when she did see him, a queer, shy kind of feeling toward him, and a funny, breathless joy that was half an ache in her heart.

She supposed it was, and that Kit felt it, too. If one person did, then so did the other.

Perhaps it was her temperament that made her feel so depressed about it. Kit certainly wasn't depressed—anything but! He was fearfully keen to be in Paris, fearfully keen about it all. Of course he was very brave; that explained it.

Never for one instant did the beief leave her that one day, some day, when she had become famous and older and better-looking and quite smart, she and Kit would be married. People who were in love always did marry.

She felt she would wait forever and work, work as hard as no one before had ever worked, so that she might be worthy of him.

Wynton was bored when he remembered the farewell scene. Frankie was a dear little kid, but, of course, she was a kid. A faint, uncomfortable remorse made him tie his white tie badly.

He tore it off, crumpled it up, and chose another.

Of course, really, he'd nothing to feel remorseful about. He'd kissed the child a few times, spoilt her a bit, given her chocolates, and so on, and that was all. Hang it all a man must have some sort of amusement on the way home, and it had been so innocent that it had been desperately dull on the whole.

He would cut the farewell short, send the kid some chocolates from Paris, and perhaps take her to a show in town, if, that was to say, he ever reached the wilds of Shepherd's Bush.

He was late again for the "indiscreet assignation." Frankie was rather silent, too sad to be amusing. Wynton smoked and looked twice at his watch, then he jumped up and said:

"You've made the voyage sweet, little girl; kiss me good night, and promise not to forget me."

He was forced to accent the words with feeling—he could not say that sort of sentence without doing it. Frankie, tears trickling down her poor little nose, kissed his hand. He took out his handkerchief and patted her face.

"Well, so long, kiddie darling. See you in the morning. Good night. Run along to bed."

He was gone, and it was the last, the very last evening!

CHAPTER V.

To Kit in Paris.

Marseilles was a weariness, the journey to Paris endlessly tiring. Mrs. Salter slept noisily. Frankie had seen Wynton for a minute only, surrounded by friends, and that was all.

They stayed that night in Paris, and also the next day. Mrs. Salter was moved to appear robed in garments labelled "French" upon her return to Willesden, so all that morning and afternoon Frankie followed obediently up and down, up and down the endless shops.

Once a flash of interest came when she heard Mr. Salter tell his wife that "that chap Wynton was staying at the Meurice. Good bit of money he must have," he added.

Frankie treasured up the address, the "Meurice." She would write to Kit before they left for London.

It was at the early dinner that the "affair" began, and as usual it bore reference to Wynton. Frankie's harmless little letter had been discovered on the hall table of the hotel, awaiting postage, it appeared.

Mrs. Salter waxed eloquent. Francesca, silent, pale, glowering, was being slowly consumed by a white rage so intense that it made her feel physically ill. She had been on a strain for weeks, she was really tired out; the foolish tirade was the last thing.

She had her plans ready; as they drove toward the Gare du Nord she perfected it in her mind. The carriage was chosen, she placed her rugs on the rack; there was still five minutes before the train started.

"I'm going to examine the restaurant place," she said to Mrs. Salter.

Her unexpected amiability relieved Mrs. Salter immensely. She had regretted her outburst of temper, but was unable to apologize for it. Frankie's apparent aceptance of things as they were obviated her difficulty.

"As long as you are on the train," she said indifferently.

Five minutes later the English express non-stop steamed out, and from the Salle d'Attente Francesca watched it exultantly.

She was free at last! Free to go to Kit. She hailed a taxi—it was nearly half past nine—and gave the address "L'Hotel Meurice."

As the taxi flew along the glittering streets her spirits rose. Kit would comfort her, help her, and oh! it was all so hopeless without him!

A giant in gorgeous livery came down the marble steps to open the taxi door.

She felt a little afraid suddenly in the vast hall through which beautiful women in trailing frocks and big, lovely cloaks were passing. The fear increased.

She stared anxiously about.

If only Kit's face would appear!

But it did not; instead another gold and blue giant asked her deferentially what she desired.

She felt suddenly conscious of many eyes. She faltered Kit's name.

"Would madame be seated, while a page went to inquire if M. le Capitaine Wynton was receiving?"

Poor little Frankie sank down upon a deep lounge. Again the eyes stared, and she felt suddenly very poor and shabby and little.

She pulled down her short, tight skirt to try and hide the little brown shoes with their turned-up toes.

A page, a being whose hair and face and uniform shone dazzlingly, bowed before her and informed her that "Monsieur was dining out."

"Out!"

Unspeakable unhappiness filled her.

She rose and said in a voice that would shake, "I will call again—later."

(To be continued.)

DIED ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS

The following famous people died on their birthdays:

Shakespeare, born April 23, 1564, died April 23, 1616.

Sir Thomas Browne, author of "Religio Medici," born Oct. 19, 1605, died October 19, 1682.

Timothy Swan, composer, born July 23, 1758, died July 23, 1842.

Maria Taglioni, dancer, born April 23, 1804, died April 23, 1884.

John McLean Taylor, a nephew of Zachary Taylor, born November 21, 1828, died November 21, 1875.

St. John of God, a famous Portuguese saint, born March 8, 1495, died March 8, 1550.

John Sobieski, king of Poland, born June 17, 1629, died June 17, 1695. A great storm marked his entry into the world as well as his exit.

Moses, according to the Talmud, was born on the seventh day of Adar, and died on the same day, 120 years later, "his age being exactly the same length of time which Noah preached to the antediluvians."

Oliver Hazard Perry, born August 23, 1785, died August 23, 1819, as his ship was entering the harbor of Spain, Trinidad.

A machine that by magnetism arranges nails in parallel lays for packing is the device of a Swiss inventor.