News Parade

Commentary on the Highlights of the Week's News . . . By Elizabeth Eedy

DEMOCRACY ON THE SPOT: Instead of planning to march in and take over Czechoslovakia wholesale, at a single "coup", as he did Austria, Adolf Hitler is in the present case using other methods which are calculated either to cause Czechoslovakia to blow up from the inside, or to give Hitler reason for coming to the "aid" of the German minority inside "Central Europe's bulwark of democracy."

The campaign being waged is a cruel affair. Here in one of Europe's happiest, best run, most efficient countries, internal dissension is being stirred up, brother turned against brother. Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten Germans, a party in the Czech parliament, takes his orders direct from Hitler, makes most unreasonable and uncalled-for demands on the Premier of his own country, insists that Czechoslovakia abandon democracy and become part of the "true Fatherland, Greater Germany." It is predicted that early in June, Henlein will demand that the Germans in Czechoslovakia be permitted a plebiscite, expressing whether they desire to remain where they are or join Greater Germany. About that time, or even a little sooner, the crisis is likely to come to a head.

(How would we Canadians like it should the French Government stir up all sorts of trouble in Quebec and cause our French-Canadians to demand a plebiscite: "Shall we stay with Canada or become part of France?")

Czechoslovakia has allies, pledged to come to her aid—France and Russia. But now France is tied up in the new Anglo-French military alliance which does not guarantee Britain's help should France choose to aid Czechoslovakia. In fact, Britain is already telling the Czech Premier that his concessions to Germany are not good enough, that he must give in to Hitler still further.

Czechoslovakia is in an intolerably difficult situation. Democracy has never in the history of modern times been put on so bad a spot.

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SPEED AT CROSSINGS: A statistical survey made by the Motor Vehicles Branch of the Provincial Government reveals that most accidents in Ontario occur at intersections when experienced drivers are at the wheels of cars, in good condition, in broad daylight. Too much speed is said to be responsible—a speed greater than the traffic or road conditions warrant. Nuff said.

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HIGHWAY TO ALASKA: Being pushed at this time by the Government of the United States and the Government of British Columbia is a proposed "five-nation" highway to Alaska, from Mexico, through the U. S., British Columbia and the Yukon territory. Premier Pattullo, of British Columbia, was in Washington last month conferring on the matter, and now the U. S. House of Representatives has passed and sent to the Senate a bill authorizing the President to appoint a five-man Commission which would negotiate with representatives of the Dominion Government.

The building of such a highway would open up a whole new territory for tourist development in Canada and tap untold sources of revenue (which we badly need). Incidentally its value as a "military road" is self-apparent.

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AFRICAN OPENING: Italy is eyeing South Africa as a possible field for new trade developments. Prospects there are indeed inviting from the Italian point of view. Sale of coffee, cement and other goods from Italian East Africa to the Union of South Africa would pay for the purchase of South African meat for consumption in Ethiopia, and for raw materials to be used by Italian industries at home.

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WHAT CAROL'S AFTER: Dictator King Carol of Rumania is working up to something down there in his corner of Europe. After all resistance at home has been crushed (of the peasants, of the "Iron Guard"), observers tell us that he is likely to make a go for Hungary, swallow it up, with the connivance of Poland, eventually create a Baltic-Black Sea axis favorable to the schemes of Hitler's Germany.

John Gunther's "Inside Europe" informs us that Rumania is a country rich, rich in natural resources whose finances are bled white by mismanagement of funds, and political graft. Just now the government owes France a great deal of money.

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BLOWS TO PRESTIGE: Hon. H. H. Stevens, Reconstructionist member in the House of Commons, declares that Dominion prestige and Dominion credit have been dealt severe blows during the past year. Referring to the Dominion Government bond issue which went on the London market three months ago and hung fire for a week or ten days, he declares that the defaulting of Moosejaw on some bonds just previously, was responsible, together with the loss in credit of certain of our provinces. Each new default places an even heavier burden on the Dominion, detracts from Canadian credit.

May Make Park Of Huge Marsh

Would Turn Swamp Land Near Orangeville Into Game Sanctuary

The Luther Marsh, near Orangeville, a vast stretch of 10,000 acres, may be transformed from a wet, desolate area into a provincial park and game sanctuary, if plans of leading citizens and organizations are adopted by the government.

The marsh is regarded as the most important locality in the watershed of the Grand River from the standpoint of water conservation.

Ten Miles Long

Recently a proposal to turn it into a provincial park was made by the federation of naturalists. The marsh is 10 miles long and in some places two miles wide. It straddles the town line between East and West Luther for approximately six miles. It contains peat to a depth of 15 feet.

News In Review

Japanese Offensive Collapsing

SHANGHAI.—Chinese sent word this week-end that the second Japanese offensive in Southern Shantung Province, pivotal front of the war, was on the verge of collapse.

Crushing of the first drive last month was the most disastrous defeat of a modern Japanese army.

Now, Chinese declared they are ready to send 800,000 troops against the reinforced Japanese legions which, they say, are wearied to exhaustion and again running short of munitions.

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Axis Appears Solid

ROME.—Amid the memories of the two great dictatorships of the past, in the Rome of the Caesars and of the medieval Popes, the two outstanding dictators of our own time met this week to demonstrate their unity of purpose in building for their people new empires, each according to his lights.

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Will Benefit Canada

DUBLIN.—All trade advantages given to the United Kingdom in the Eire market under the recent agreement are also extended to Canada, according to the text of the "agreement with the United Kingdom" issued here.

Canada is the only member of the British Commonwealth of Nations that is mentioned in the bill, apart from the signatories.

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Demand Bishop Resign

STUTTGART, Germany. — The National Socialist Governor of Wuerttemberg, Wilhelm Murr, has publicly demanded the resignation of Bishop Johann Baptist Sproll of Rottenburg, head of the Catholic Church in Wuerttemberg, because he failed to vote in the Anschluss plebiscite and Reichstag elections. The demand appears in the local party organ, National Socialist Kurier.

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France Increases Defenses

PARIS.—France this week met a new show of Italian-German solidarity by ordering a bigger army, navy and air force.

The National Defense Cabinet, headed by Premier Daladier, geared the wheels of French economy and finance to a bigger and stronger war machine by decrees issued just as Adolf Hitler approached Rome for a visit to Premier Mussolini.

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King Opens Exhibition

GLASGOW.—The great Empire Exhibition, termed by the King "a hallmark of a great Commonwealth of Nations," was opened by His Majesty here.

Cheering throngs, exceeding 100,000, assembled in Ibrox Stadium, acclaimed the King and Queen as they arrived in an open landau. The Empire in miniature was depicted in a stately, modernistic group of buildings in Bellahouston Park, with the high shaft of Empire towering over the scene.

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Pump-Priming in Britain

LONDON.—Britain already is laying plans for future pump-priming, Sir Kingsley Wood, Minister of Health, revealed last week when speaking at a luncheon celebrating the Manchester centenary.

His department is asking local authorities to prepare plans for five years ahead in order that the program of public works may proceed as rapidly as possible when once started, Sir Kingsley said.

Twenty-Two Million Bees Are Imported

Huge shipment Will Weigh 22½ Tons; Hitch-Hiking Bees Join In Big Parade.

EDMONTON. — Approximately 22,500,000 Italian bees along with a few hundred thousand hitch-hikers will emigrate to Alberta this spring. The Italian bees, which will settle down in various parts of the province, are the type most highly favored by bee-keepers through North America because of their hardiness and neat housekeeping. They come to Alberta from California.

S. O. Hillerud, Alberta's chief apiarist, estimates the 22,500,000 bees will weigh about 22 1-2 tons. The hitchhikers of course, will make the total immigration higher than that.

In Screened Cages

When the bees start out from California, Mr. Hillerud said, they are packed in screened cages. The queens and the drones and the workers all get the same class of transportation.

As the trucks, their heat carefully regulated en route, travel along, hundreds of thousands of the hitchhiking bees fasten themselves to the sides of the cages. The ones inside feed them just as generously as they feed themselves.

"The hitchhikers are not even necessarily of the same race as the bees inside the screens — they get feed anyway," Mr. Hillerud said.

Italians were not introduced to America until 50 or 60 years ago. Before that the most popular genius was the German black bee. But in one year 50,000 colonies of black bees in New York state were wiped out by a disease which seldom hits the Italians because the Italians are better housekeepers.

Canada's Flax Industry Gains In Importance

Growers Expect Increase in Business As Canada Receives More Consideration on European Markets——Prices Have Risen the Past Few Years.

In 1915 flax fire sold for 90 cents a pound and the price of fibre flax seed was $3.00 a bushel. The high price of fibre was directly due to the excessive war-time demands at that time. In the period from 1917 to 1918 the price of fibre flax reached an all-time high, going from 90 cents to $1.25 a pound. In sympathy with this sensational increase the price of fibre flax seed jumped from $5.00 to $9.00 a bushel.

Flattened Out After War

After the war (1914-18), the price of fibre dropped to an all-time low of 15 cents a pound and the seed prices tumbled from $9.00 to $2.00 a bushel. During the interval of the 1927 to 1937 period the price of fibre flax seed rose from $2.00 to $6.25 a bushel. This encouraging rise in price level was in no small way due to the introduction of pedigreed varieties of fibre flax. These special varieties were imported from the North of Ireland through the co-operation of the Ministry of Agriculture in Ireland and the Fibre Division of the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, Ont.

However, from 1935 to 1937 flax fibre prices have slowly risen to about 18 cents a pound for the best grade and quality. The introduction of mechanical flax pullers and turbine scutching machines by the Dominion Government in 1937 has lent new stimulus to Canadian flax production. The flax acreage has advanced from a little over 6,000 acres in 1923 to 7,900 in 1937, with a further increase of 2,000 acres expected in 1938.

Less Competition

Future prospects for fibre development in Canada are encouraging, because Canada may secure more consideration on the European markets. Russia is exporting less and less fibre each year to Ireland on account of the fact that she requires a much larger amount for her own spinning factories which she has been developing these past few years. In addition to this, Canadian flax growers are better organized to handle the expected increase in business than they have ever been, also Scottish and Irish buyers are beginning to look to Canada for a large portion of their future supplies.

A scale strong and spacious enough to weigh three elephants has been installed near the zoo in Johannesburg, South Africa.

"Immediately on attaining power each dictator has suppressed all free speech except his own." — Herbert Hoover.

The BOOK SHELF

By ELIZABETH EEDY

"Here Are My Lectures And Stories" — By Stephen Leacock.

"A year ago," says Mr. Leacock, spoofingly, "I retired from college lecturing, at the urgent request of the college trustees, who were very grim about it. Now, at the request of innumerable friends all over the country, I am retiring from lecturing on the public platform as a humorist." Here in one book are the funny speeches and some other miscellaneous items from the lunacy of Leacock, Canada's premier humorist.

Elsewhere Mr. Leacock has spoken of his excruciating experiences while lecturing; here you get the lectures themselves, and quite a feast they make for those who have followed his written word for lo, these many years. The lectures are more serious, at least in spots, than some of us had been imagining. "How Soon Can We Start The Next War?" for instance, turns out to be a timely oration full of sound sense, amounting almost to one of those talks for serious listeners-in on the radio.

Lunatic But Happy

Our lecturer is happiest, perhaps, in his talks to college audiences, such as "Recovery After Graduation, or Looking Back on College," in which he mulls delightfully over the dear old campus scenes, gayly misquotes Shakespeare.

"What I Don't Know About the Drama" and three lectures on "Frenzied Fiction," give Mr. Leacock lots of leeway to give us scraps of burlesque.

You can't tell exactly how Mr. Leacock feels about life at this point, of course. In the final piece in his lecture volume he's a trifle pessimistic about retired professors who think they are going to complete their great masterpieces now that the hustle and bustle is o'er. Here is his last word on that: "When people say to me, "You'll be able now to finish your book on the History of Political Theory," I answer, 'To hell with it'."

"Here Are My Lectures and Stories," by Stephen Leacock, 251 pp., $2. McLelland and Stewart, Limited, Toronto.

"All younger generations, ever since the beginning of time, have been naturally 'wicked'."—Hendrik Willem Van Loon.

Because of the Japanese invasion, in 300 square miles north of Shanghai there will be practically no harvesting of rice, cotton or beans this year.

VOICE of the PRESS

CANADA THE EMPIRE THE WORLD AT LARGE

CANADA

Our German Minority.

Any day now Canada may expect to be faced by a demand from Hitler that we cease oppressing the German minority within our borders or else.—Stratford Beacon-Hreald.

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Not Perceptibly Sweeter

The world is reported to have consumed more sugar last year than ever before. But it does not seem to have sweetened international relationships in perceptible degree.—Brockville Recorder and Times.

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Service to the Community

A single grain of sand is almost infinitesimal, yet every grain counts in forming the far-flung shores of the sea. Similarly every individual wh is honest, industrious, and imbued h the spirit of service is an influence of real worth in any community.—Kitchener Record.

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Getting Lots of Help

One result of the Rowell Commission has been the excellent work done on its behalf by private and public organizations. Through it, citizens in most parts of Canada have had an opportunity to study and probe the fundamentals of governmental expenditure and operation. These studies in themselves should reap rich rewards in a better understanding of public questions, quite apart from the deliberations of the Commissioners themselves.—Financial Post.

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Smoke in the Hills

The weather grows warmer and Nova Scotians are beginning to enjoy the best of the Spring season. Anglers are going to the lakes and rivers and others are taking to the open road for a change of scene and air. It is a pleasant season. The sun begins to give some warmth, signs of life are on every hand, and the whole world is filled with anticipation of growth and bloom. The countryside has a beauty peculiar to the season. Sturdy horses draw ploughs through the rich earth and blue smoke curls up from the hills as men of the soil clear their land of brush.—Halifax Chronicle.

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Sick Motor Cars

Tre Safety League is on safe ground when it insists that all used cars should be examined for mechanical defects before they are resold. If they were, many of the death-traps to be seen on th highways would be on the junk-heap. Pending a general examination of motor vehicles, drastic attention should be paid to those that seem to be falling to pieces. These are a menace and should be speedily removed. Special care should be exercised toward making sure that permanently diseased cars, made temporarily convalescent with a paint brush and a monkey-wrench, are kept off the highways.—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

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Indian Not Vanishing

They used to refer to the Indian as the "Vanishing American," but the figures refute the theory entirely. The Indian, far from vanishing, is increasing in numbers, in Canada at any rate, so the picturesque and pathetic title no longer holds.

Indian population figures in this Dominion have varied somewhat in the last few years. The Red Man did, indeed, appear to be declining numerically in 1924, when a census showed that the Indians of Canada numbered only 104,000, as compared with 110,000 in 1907. But latest returns issued by the Department of Mines and Resources show that there are now approximately 114,000 Indians resident in this country.—Brantford Expositor.

THE EMPIRE

All in the Next Front Line

"For 'Barcelona' read 'Battersea' or 'Birmingham,' and one need go no further than the day's newspaper for a picture of th next war. None will be able to tell when he may be in the front line. Men and women alike will find the menace of death confronting them in aspects more horrible than ever tried the stamina of classic heroism. The King of Terrors, when Hector and Lysander faced him, was a gentleman in comparison with the shapes in which peril, death, and suffering will overhang every Englishman's home. The bomb will rain alike on the just and the unjust, the stalwart and the coward. Tenderness of nerve or conscience will gain no exemption. One and all, we shall be faced by a menace deeper than has ever darkened the page of history. If it be true that 'all that a man hath will he give for his life,' the instinct of self-preservation has never been aroused by a such a summons."—London Observer.

Ghost Frequents Drinking Pool

So Irish Believe; Several Say They Saw Man Dead Three Centuries

DUNSRIM, County Monaghan, Ireland. — Ghost of a 17th century planter who evicted a poor widow and her eight children from their Dunsrim farm is haunting a drinking pool near here.

That's the story local residents tell, anyway, and they back it up with vivid descriptions.

Reflection Of His Eyes

The planter, says legend, was thrown from his horse and found one night after sunset with his neck broken. The ghost is said to appear after sunset near the spot where the evicted woman and her eight children were found dead in the snow.

John Francis Smith said he saw "the tall figure of a man, dressed in old-fashioned clothes," as he walked home. The figure knelt at the pool to quench his thirst. "As I watched, spell-bound," said Smith, "I could see the reflection of his eyes in the clear water: They were like two large red coals."

Suddenly the figure disappeared and Smith, who had stood in a trance, began to run. He said as he ran he heard the sound of spurred boots.

Patrick Connolly and Miss Ellie Reilly also claim to have seen the ghost. Legend has it the figure still haunts the district to frighten people out of their lands.

Canadians Keep Talkative Title

Are Still World's Champion Talkers By Telephone And Otherwise

Canadians are the most talkative people in the world and they are getting even more so.

Apart altogether from the wordy briefs presented to Royal Commissions and the 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 words spoken in the House of Commons each session, telephone statistics award loquacious laurels to Canadians.

Telephone conversations per capita during 1935 in Canada numbered 210.8 compared with 197 in the United States, 173.9 in Denmark and 152.2 in Sweden, the next highest countries. Still on the increase, Canadian calls were 222 a person in 1936, latest year reported.

222 Calls Per Person

Birthplace of the telephone, discovered by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, Canada retains the lead in Empire advancement of this instrument in establishing the longest direct wire voice path of 2,2000 miles between Toronto and Calgary, Alta.

Canada stands fifth in world comparison with 1,266,228 telephones installed, showing approximately 10 per cent. of her population benefits by telephonic communication. The United States is the only country showing a larger number of telephones installed per capita.

Although it is impossible to determine whether men or women are the greater users of the telephone, men use the long distance service more frequently during business hours.

Believed to be more than 22,000,000 years old, a tooth of an unknown sea animal was found in Ragusa, Sicily, by Richard Hunter, who displayed it recently while visiting Johannesburg, South Africa.

Modern Civilization Reaches Old India

The Indian population of Bombay, India, has adopted at least one of the modern weapons of civilization as it is practiced in the enlightened West. This girl picket is urging a strike!