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EDITORIAL

Motor Accidents Give Reason for Concern

Recently, the Chief Constable of Toronto, in making his annual report, revealed facts concerning motor accidents which provide food for serious thought not only to Toronto but to the Province of Ontario generally.

It was stated that 18 out of 22 charged with manslaughter and 35 out of 41 charged with criminal negligence last year were concerned in motor accidents.

To quote the Chief Constable, "In most cases the charges were withdrawn, dismissed or no bill found. Three persons convicted of criminal negligence were placed on suspended sentence and five fined."

In some cases, perhaps, the evidence may have been inadequate, but it seems safe to assume that in the majority of cases, if not all of them, the police were sure of the facts before they took action. Which brings us to the painful conclusion that some judges and juries seem to think more of the driver than of the people who were run down, killed or painfully injured.

The Honorable T. B. McQuesten, Minister of Highways, sees very clearly the need for more drastic action in this respect. He has, repeatedly, and in no uncertain terms, stated the seriousness of the problem created by unjustifiable leniency towards motorists and drivers of commercial vehicles whose negligence has caused fatalities.

The plain truth, of course, is that criminal negligence in driving is being practiced on an alarming scale and most of it does not get into the law courts. And, when it does, with a manslaughter charge laid, the juries become soft-hearted to an amazing degree in face of the evidence presented.

A Change of Heart In Drivers Would Help

Personal, individual care and responsibility among motorists is, of course, the most effective means to scaling down the toll of accidents. As the Motor Vehicle Branch of the Department of Highways is constantly pointing out, "Ontario must start thinking safety".

The appalling toll of accidents would soon be reduced if operators of motor vehicles would discipline themselves to drive at sensible speed; if they would make sure that their tires, brakes and lights were effective; if they shunned liquor when called upon to drive; and if they stopped taking chances near street cars, at cross-sections, on curves and hills, in places where there are liable to be children, in fact, everywhere.

Undoubtedly many drivers are taking their responsibility seriously and are honestly trying to drive as responsible citizens should, with due regard for everyone—including themselves; but these seem to be in the minority, judging by the ever-increasing accident list.

Reckless drivers, however, are finding the courts far less sympathetic than of yore. Jail sentences are becoming the rule rather than the exception; and there is a marked tendency towards the utmost severity in cases where a death has occurred. This, of course, is a sign that the public generally is waking up to the situation.

It is too bad that a supposedly enlightened province like our own should need the penitentiary held over its head to prevent criminal negligence when driving; but, until the province, generally, is fully aroused to its responsibilities while at the wheel of motor vehicles, there seems to be no effective alternative.

When everyone in Ontario—and elsewhere—realizes that mad speed is a species of crime, then we shall have a very different, and a bettered, situation. The sooner that happy day arrives, the better for all of us.

The Week at Ottawa

by Frederick Edwards

Liberal Quebec, through its first citizen, Premier L. A. Taschereau, thinks Mr. Bennett's reform for security programme is all right.

From the very threshold of St. James Street, the hub of opposition to any reform of the present economic system, came this official Liberal approval of Mr. Bennett's plans for improving the lot of industrial worker and farmer.

It was in no less a place than the Quebec Legislative Assembly that Premier Taschereau made his pro-reform declaration. When the full effect of the Bennett reforms is established, the Liberal premier said, Quebec is ready and willing to co-operate with the Dominion government by passage of implementary legislation to give effect to minimum wages, limitation of working hours and establishment of unemployment and other social insurance.

Then up spoke Labour Minister C. J. Arcand. He had had no request from organized labour in the province for minimum wage legislation as it affects male workers. "I will take the occasion, however," he remarked, "to pay homage to the parliament of my country for its sincerity in presenting these measures."

These sincere compliments from Liberal leaders to Prime Minister Bennett and the Conservative government of the Dominion came after Aime Guertin (Ind., Hull) had made the suggestion that Quebec should, with other provinces, pass necessary laws to give effect to Dominion reform legislation. There had been need of such legislation in Quebec for at least 15 years, the Hull member told the Legislature. "Do the people live for the constitution, or is it the constitution which should live for the people?" he asked.

At Ottawa members are beginning to trickle back from their constituencies for the last lap of the Seventeenth Parliament which opens May 20. Prime Minister Bennett is on his way back from England; and if it be judged by the vigorous way he spoke over the air from the British metropolis, his trip abroad has revitalized his over-strained physique. There is much speculation as to whether or not he will again lead the Conservative party in the forthcoming election, but there will be no definite pronouncement until Mr. Bennett is ready to speak.

Departments are humming with activity. As rapidly as possible legislation is being framed to give effect to the findings of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads. The Labour Department is making preparations for the million-dollar geological survey in anticipation of parliamentary sanction of the scheme. Hon. George H. Sedgewick will travel west to open the probe into the automobile industry in Canada. The first sittings will be in Vancouver on May 20, moving from there to Calgary on May 27.

Many Canadians are wrath that they did not receive one of the ten thousand King's Silver Jubilee medals distributed in Canada. The government has been flooded with letters of protest during the past week, mostly expressions of indignation over non-receipt of a medal while someone else had got one. What these protesters do not realize is that the government has nothing to do with making the recommendations. The list submitted to and approved by the King was compiled from nominees of the Canadian Legion, medical associations, nurses' and teachers' organizations. Neither ministers or private members of Parliament had any say in the matter whatever.

J. Earl Lawson, K.C., chief organizer for the Dominion Conservative party, opened the campaign in Quebec on May 8 with a stirring address to party stalwarts in Montreal. Dubbing Mr. Bennett a "crusader", Mr. Lawson went on to stress three vital factors to success in an election—a leader, a policy, and most important of all, votes. The Conservative party had the first two already, he said, and it was now up to the rank and file of the workers to "go into the highways and byways and spread the gospel".

Senator Joseph Rainville, provincial Conservative organizer, in an optimistic speech, declared that the party would contest at least 45 seats in the province of Quebec.

Religious Forum

Your Church

Of all the institutions that minister to the general welfare, your Church is the only one that depends upon you for its growth and support. The agencies that protect your life and property have behind them all the power of Government. Training for the mind and healing for the body are provided in schools and hospitals, and every citizen shares in their maintenance.

Your Church, however, stands alone. It functions or ceases to function according as those who belong to it—or who should belong to it—uphold its teachings and its work.

Yet it ministers to something quite as important as life, health or property. Yea, that to which it ministers is far more important than all these together. It does more to make your town a good place to live in than any other institution. It can do more to make your own life broader, more wholesome and worthwhile. What about your relation to the Church that stands ready to serve you?

Sermons in Church are all very well for those who are present, but the very large number of people who seldom or never attend a place of worship are necessarily untouched by the most faithful deliverance from the pulpit. This gives special value to any utterance which can reach those who are not usually found in Church. One of these recently appeared in a secular newspaper and as the words are applicable to many other places than the place mentioned this message deserves attention by all who are not particularly regular in their Church attendance:

"A more vivid sense of responsibility for the Church habit is needed, not only in the Church, but outside it. In a great city there are men by the ten thousand, able, successful, prosperous, earning fair incomes, who would regard it as a calamity if the Churches were to disappear. They want a clergyman at baptism, marriage and funeral, and they want Sunday Schools for their children. They believe in the value of the Church as an organization. They like to feel it is active. They admire and approve its work. But they do nothing for it. They neither attend nor support it. They forget their personal responsibility. Unconsciously, they are working and acting to sap and end an institution in which they believe, whose loss they would deplore, and which they always use when they want it. Plainly, such men have a duty to discharge in supporting and attending the Churches of the faith to which they belong, at least enough to keep the present organization of religion alive, active and growing."—Selected.

DORNOCH

(Intended for last week)

Mr. John Shell of Peterborough is spending some time with his sister, Mrs. John W. Lang.

Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Lister and Patricia attended the Dowdall-Kennedy wedding at Arthur last Tuesday.

Messrs. Wm. Vasey, Edward and Tommy Melosh left for Northern Ontario last Tuesday, where they have secured positions.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Reinhart of Guelph were guests for the holiday with Mr. and Mrs. P. H. O'Neill.

Miss Blanche Duggan of the Irish Block is visiting at the home of her sister, Mrs. Wm. Kenny.

The Melosh family spent an evening recently with Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Vasey.

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Corlett entertained a number of their friends to a party on Friday night. An enjoyable evening was spent by all.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Grahman and Clarence, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Goldsmith and Vernon and Mr. Joe Sullivan spent an evening with Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Lister.

Mr. Fred. Hiscox spent Sunday with his sister, Mrs. Jos. Dyer.

Mrs. Kenny sr. is visiting with her daughter, Mrs. Michael Casey.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. George Frizzell on their recent marriage. The bride was formerly Miss Valarie McCracken.

Miss Vernie Shewell is holidaying at her parental home here.



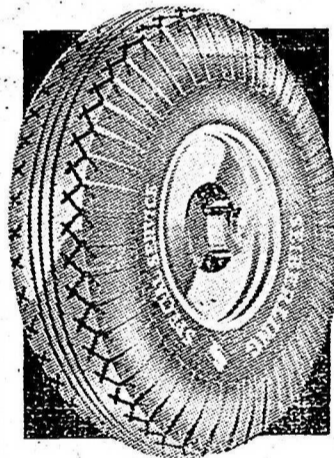
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