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The Head Table

It has been estimated by experts that the men who sit third from the ends of head tables have the best time of it. A well-organized head table has men at each end. Next to each man is a lady. Beyond her, towards the middle of the table, is another man. The lady naturally has to talk to the man at the end, otherwise he would be left in peace, which would never do.

The third man's conversational companion might be expected to be the lady next to him towards the middle of the table. However, other forces are at work, as a pairing off of conversationalists has set in from the middle of the table. Man and woman, man and woman — the talk (apparently talk is compulsory) pairs off until, as usually happens, it doesn't come out even and the fifth from the end (a man) finds he has drawn the fourth from the end (a woman). This leaves the third from the end (the victim of this account, along with the reader) without anybody. All he can do is get out the papers he's been carrying around and go back to figuring his income tax. Or he can look ahead of him at the common folk at the ordinary tables, which are square or round and permit general conversations.

Many reformers have tried to do away with head tables, but the things won't stay dead. They grow like the civil service, until, in extreme cases, split-level head tables appear, the speaker's section being highest and flanked, away off in left and right fields, by lower people. Sometimes a few of the cosier small tables, close in front of the speaker, are designated as another, less important, extension of the august head table.

People who are so careless as to let themselves in for sitting at a head table usually have to work a bit harder than usual at making conversation, as nobody ever previously knows anybody he is placed next to. And with only the one person to talk to, and talk being compulsory, the job of keeping off touchy subjects and getting into something that will keep going conversationally is almost as bad as having to make one of the speeches.

A sound policy, in trying for a safe subject that will have a future to it, keeping words moving for a while, is to ask the fellow combatant in this duel the following question: "I would be very interested to know your views on capital punishment?" At an informal dinner one may put it this way, "What do you think of hanging?" It's well worth trying this gambit. The other person almost always goes on at length, while one is able to eat in peace, as well off as the isolated gentleman third from the end.

The Rambling Reporter

Break-Ins. The BP Service Station on the North Road of New Liskeard seems to be setting some kind of a record. True, it is not one that businessmen like to set-up, but nonetheless it is a record of sorts. Last week-end it was again broken into, and cigarettes appeared to be the only items of consequence that were missing. The burglary marked the nineteenth time that this one business has been broken into since Harold Price who operated the station until last fall started keeping a count—and even then he says his count is a little hazy and he might have missed one or two—or there could have been some before he took the station over.

Curling brooms will be hung up for the season this week-end at New Liskeard and Haileybury. With the closing mixed scheduled for New Liskeard this week-end it will mark the end of the curling season in the Tri-town area. On Monday night of next week the inter-town bonspiel finals will be played at New Liskeard and the Women's Inter-Town will likely be held in Haileybury either Thursday night of this week or the same evening as the men are winding up at New Liskeard. And while we are still under a few feet of snow, golfers are getting ready to get into gear for the season and work will likely start at the Haileybury Golf Club in a couple of weeks. In the meantime, while the ice is still solid the boys are getting in a little late season ice fishing.

Spring came with a bang. This week we started to look up a date in April to fix an appointment and turned up a desk calendar, only

to find that in spite of the weather, March had slid right into May and skipped all the dirty April weather—not even an April Fools day was showing. It is a nice way to get along, but after all we do need a few days to get ready for the opening of the trout season on May the first, so I guess we will just have to figure that it was an error and get another calendar with 12 months in it.

Tom McDougall has set a record for truck drivers in Temiskaming at least. When horses went out of style Tom changed over for trucks and for the past twenty-five years he has been driving a truck for National Grocers at New Liskeard without an accident. Tom should get a medal of some kind from the insurance companies for saving them money over the years, but then again we suppose that they have lost some of what Tom has saved on other claims.

Harnessed Rivers

About 90 percent of Canada's electric energy is produced by water power.

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Film Council

Many interesting films on various subjects are available during the month of April through the local Film Council.

From the following list, organizations should be able to choose one relating to almost any program; "Arteries of Life"; "Cinderella"; "The Curlers"; "Earthquakes and Volcanoes"; "Eye Witness, Item 71"; "Inside Tibet"; "Instruments of the Orchestra"; "Musical Ride, R. C. M. P."; "Picture Making by Teenagers"; "War on Want"; "Electricity"; "Escape the City"; "Fundy Holiday"; "Hunters of the North Pole"; "Landscape Gardening, Back"; "The Man in the Peace Tower"; "One Little Indian"; "Photo Canada"; "Physical Regions of Canada"; "Tri-Service Review".

Baseball Has Long History

The question of 'what's in a name' has never been more hotly debated than in the case of baseball. The name 'baseball', according to Encyclopaedia Britannica has been traced back to the 18th century when Lady Hervey in a letter (1748) satirized Frederick Prince of Wales and his habits: 'The Prince's family is an example of cheerful and innocent amusements . . . they divert themselves at baseball, a play all who have been schoolboys are well acquainted with.'

In 1744 *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, published in England illustrates a game called baseball, with pitcher, batter and men standing at two bases, marked by posts instead of bags. The book was reprinted in America in 1762.

Jane Austin in *Northanger Abbey* (written about 1798) tells of her heroine, Catharine, preferring cricket and baseball to books.

Many English immigrants to America in colonial times were from the southern counties where Lady Hervey and Jane Austin lived. It seems probable that the old game called 'baseball' in that region (as it was called 'feeder' in London and 'rounders' in west England) was brought by the immigrants to America.

On the other hand, a commission of impressive names in the U.S., including the Maryland senator Gorman, issued a report in 1908 stating that the game had no relation to rounders and that the first rules for playing baseball were devised by Abner Doubleday in Cooperstown, N.Y., in 1839.

Whatever the true facts, it is recorded that in the game taught to Cooperstown by Doubleday, the fielder put out the runner by hitting him with a ball. This means, of course, that Doubleday's game was much like the old English version, where a soft ball was used. When the hard ball was introduced, obviously it was too dangerous to throw it at the player, so he was "tagged" with it.

Professionalism made its appearance in 1865, says Encyclopaedia Britannica, although players did not derive their livelihood from baseball but accepted money from clubs that would engage them for occasional games. Gentlemen players caustically criticized this as deterioration. Conflict between amateurs and pros eventually led to a professional organization, and in 1869, the Cincinnati team was hired as an outright professional organization.

Culture, like custard, curdles when it's overdone.


— Roll Back the Years —

10 Years Ago

Two members of the Haileybury fire brigade, Captain Jim Blair and fireman Harold Sadler, were overcome by smoke while fighting the blaze in the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Smith, North Cobalt. . . With the purchase of the Earlton Grist Mill from Urgel Deslandes, by local interests, Earlton will have the start for a new co-operative. Mr. Deslandes told the Speaker that for a time at least the co-operative would be operating the grist mill as its main business . . . ten years ago the motorists of the district had until March 31 for the deadline on licence plates. . . Bernard Hartman 12 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Hartman is in hospital here

where he is recovering from serious injuries resulting from the accidental discharge of a rifle in the hands of his chum Jim Heard, 17 at the latter's home . . . Officials of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church are busy this week preparing for the dedication service for the new chimes which is to be held Sunday afternoon. . . In the "Roll Back Column" of 1949, President Hughes welcomed a large attendance at the meeting of the Canadian Club held in the Masonic Hall. Representatives were present from Cobalt, Haileybury and New Liskeard and enjoyed immensely the talk delivered by Prof. Shortt of Ottawa. This happened 44 years ago so the Canadian Club is not exactly new to this area.

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