

Editorial Page

Mr. Conservation

National Wild Life Week is not just another week to promote sales of some dusty merchandise but, on the contrary, is a week when the public of not only this generation but for generations to come will be on the receiving end.

Most Canadians are fast becoming educated to conserve our natural resources and observe conservation throughout the year but this one week is designed to focus public attention on the importance of conserving or saving from extermination our wild life.

This week was created by a unanimous vote of the members of the Canadian House of Commons and Canadian Senate on April 18, 1947 with a two-fold project: One to create public interest in the conservation of wild life which was ably pioneered by the late Jack Miner, Canadian naturalist, through his lectures, writings and example set forth at his world famous Jack Miner Sanctuary at Kingsville.

The other object of the week was to allow have it fall on the week of April 10th which was his birthday, and such an appropriate time of the year when the birds are returning. This is the country's national tribute and memorial to the late Jack Miner. This year the dates fall on April 6-13 inclusive when all schools have been asked to stress the educational importance of the week and carry out what Jack Miner meant when he said, "I stand for more education and less legislation."

All government officials have great praise for the conservation work started by the late Jack Miner. Dr. C. H. D. Clarke, supervisor of wild life management for the province of Ontario, on March 28, 1952, said, "The wild goose flight at the Miner Sanctuary is to me the best wild life show in the country."

On April 8th, 1948, during the first observance of National Wild Life Week in Canada, Mr. J. Smart, Superintendent of National Parks in the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, paying tribute to the late Jack Miner said: "Jack Miner was indeed possibly the father of conservation in this country."

Dr. Harrison F. Lewis, former chief of the Canadian Wild Life Service, in April, 1949, the second anniversary of National Wild Life Week, writing in The Canadian Forest and Outdoors, said: "The most famous name in the annals of Canadian Wild Life Conservation is that of the late Jack Miner. Jack Miner enjoyed wild creatures, he thought and acted to meet their needs and he made outstanding use of his exceptional gifts to enlist several millions of people as supporters of Wild Life Conservation. Much of the present day recognition of the value of wild life conservation stems from the work of Jack Miner."

Last but not least the King of England in June, 1953, a year before Jack Miner's death, bestowed upon him the O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire) with a citation: "For the greatest achievement in Conservation in the British Empire."

Steps to Health

In the hectic war-time days of 1943 the government became alarmed at the low standard of physical fitness among recruits—soft abdominal muscles, crouching shoulders, "car legs" and weak feet. Something had to be done about it; what better than to legislate the nation into physical fitness? The result: the National Fitness Act which produced the usual crop of committees, and streams of pamphlets and exhilarating slogans.

In June, 1954 the act was interred with scarcely a toot on the bugle of regret. Its swan song was a pamphlet on shot-puttling. If this experience taught us anything at all it was that people cannot be legislated into health through the back door of welfare statism.

Now the Ontario government, fulfilling the promise in its Throne Speech, is to study the question of physical rejuvenation in the province. In 1960 health department estimates \$35,000 had been allotted and as a preliminary the inevitable committee is to be formed.

There is no need to jump the committee's conclusions; most of us know we eat too much—usually the wrong food; we ride instead of walking; we lounge in chairs, perhaps watching superb athletes perform on

television for our critical consideration and, worst of all, we do little or nothing to encourage the natural aspirations of the young to enjoy physical fitness for itself alone.

And it is a slender on our young people to say that they do not seek this natural outlet. A young man wrote to the Editor of a daily newspaper complaining that in the coldest weather the privilege of skating in a public park had been withdrawn; a twelve-year-old schoolboy wrote pleading for bicycle tracks so that he could enjoy, without risking his life, the healthy sport of cycling. The urge is there, but the leadership is lacking, and that must come from adults.

The committee can make what discoveries it like. No legislation will change things. There must be a reform of public attitudes. For example, there are few footpaths for walkers. Anyone bold enough to go walking runs the risk of being flung bruised and broken into the ditch.

When cycling is generally regarded as healthy exercise and not a pastime "for kids"; when walkers are not cranks, but are respected; when new sub-divisions are perforce built around playing fields with the same enthusiasm as they are now built around shopping centres, then we shall be starting to build a truly healthy nation.

Shadows and Substance

In an essay Stephen Leacock wrote nearly 40 years ago on Oxford as I see it, he said "a student, or at least the only student with whom the university cares to reckon seriously, is a young man who desires to know. This is an ancient medieval attitude long since buried in more up-to-date places under successive strata of compulsory education, state teaching, the democratization of knowledge and the substitution of the shadow for the substance and the caskest for the gem."

A similar point was made recently by Robert M. Hutchins, a former president of the University of Chicago. The noted educator—speaking of the U.S. but with words that have application in Canada—said that schools have become a place to accommodate young people "until we are ready to have them go out to work. Thus we must divert a tremendous amount of time, money and energy to chaparrage."

We were surprised recently to learn that it costs approximately \$500 a year to educate a student through one year of high school.

We have very carefully and enthusiastically laid out the right of every child to receive this education.

On the other hand we have made it compulsory for a child to attend school until he or she is 16 whether they have the desire to study or not. The law insists they attend school. Their attitude is not considered, except in extreme cases where expulsion is warranted. They may disrupt classes with their lack of interest and so, besides losing out themselves, they interfere with the progress of others. Teachers are robbed of valuable teaching time by their foolish attitudes.

There is little value in trying to pour knowledge into an unwilling and uninterested student. In Leacock's words "a student . . . is a young man who desires to know." We are not all equal in education no matter how many equalizing factors may be written into the law. Surely there is some solution other than forcing unwilling students on classes until they are 16.

Odds and Ends

Acton's mill rate increase is nothing unique in municipal financing Hamilton is up, Toronto is up, Oakville is expected to go up, Burlington will jump, Georgetown is to rise and Milton is slated for a boost. Just seems we have to pay for our services and

meet the higher cost of education and municipal services. While the province is paying more money to education it is a much smaller percentage of the cost with the increasing percentage coming from municipal coffers.



—Photo by Esther Taylor

"Peek-a-Boo"

Sugar and Spice . . .

BY BILL SMILEY

Took part in a debate on Canadian education last week, and it got me thinking about the whole business. I'm afraid we parents don't give enough thought to the education our children are receiving, and how it fits them to enter society and look the world in the eye.

As long as our kids come home with reasonable marks and their own rubber boots, we are happy to leave education alone. Adults imagine they have enough troubles with the economic system, the political system and the heating system, without taking on something as complex as the educational system.

And it is complex. Start a discussion about it and you'll find out. A lady who is known as a superb cook and homemaker, for example, will tell you flatly that teaching domestic science is an utter waste of time, that girls should learn it at home. She has forgotten that when she was married, her piece de resistance was mushroom soup on toast, and it took her all morning to do the breakfast dishes and make one bed.

I think domestic science is a good thing. But I'd make some changes in the course. One thing girls should be taught is to get the top off a jar of pickles without going all feminine. They give a couple of intellect-

ual twists at the dills, then hand the jar to big, strong husband. This is good for his ego, bad for blood pressure, as he will invariably lose his temper, sprain his wrist, and wind up pounding the thing on the edge of the cupboard, cursing like a Cossack.

Domestic science, to my mind, should be a course which would not only teach girls how to make an apron or a white sauce, but how to make a happy marriage. They should be taught: tolerance, forbearance, patience, silence, thrift and humility; how to run a power mower and a stoker; that money does not grow on trees, either deciduous or coniferous. Why should their husbands have to spend the first ten years of the marriage pounding these things into them, when they could learn it all in school?

Manual training, or shop work, is another controversial subject in our schools. In my opinion, it should be taught only to those boys whose fathers have a workshop in the basement. My Dad used to turn out lovely birdhouses and things for me, while I stood by and egged him on with admiration of his skill. But my son has a father who can't nail two boards together without making a hand sandwich of it. The kid gets a D in shopwork every term, and the house is filling up with half-finished

wall brackets and half-finished key cases.

Something I would definitely chuck right out of the system is religious instruction. It destroys the respect of children for their parents. I'm as religious as the next fellow. But it's a blow to parental pride to have the kids quiz you and find you can't get through the Lord's Prayer and know only about four of the Ten Commandments.

My prejudice against this course was confirmed last year when my daughter, aged seven, asked me how many books of the Bible I could name. So help me, all I could remember were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There was an insolent silence while I gaped. I suggested Jonah. Her lips curled and I had to sit, shamed, while she recited them off, from Genesis to Revelations, in a triumphant singsong.

One thing I would like to see added to the curriculum in our public schools is a course in ethics and manners. We could call it Social Behavior or something fancy like that. It would start by teaching youngsters that practically everything they learn at home is wrong. At the same time, they would be taught to treat their parents with respect instead of derision. This, as you can see, would be a difficult course, and would require specialists to teach it.

For example, at home kids get the idea that (a) the world owes them a living and that (b) the old man will supply it until the world starts to kick through. At school they would be taught that it is a privilege just to be alive and that they owe the world their best efforts and the old man something better than a room in a nursing home when he can't produce any more.

In this course, children would learn the rudiments of kindness, generosity, trust and sympathy.

To some extent this would offset the themes like "Never give a sucker an even break," and "Nice guys finish last," and "Don't trust nobody," and "Always look out for No. 1," which are instilled in them by well-meaning parents.

Girls would be taught that it takes more than a bust and a behind to make a well-rounded woman. Boys would learn that good manners are more important in a man than good looks. Girls would be told that their primary role in life is not improving the characters of men, but having healthy children and a good marriage. Boys would get a grounding in the fundamentals of their life-long career—trying to handle women and children without resorting to violence.

Aside from these few points, I can't find much wrong with our educational system. Except that the arithmetic, science and grammar are too difficult. I can't even do it myself. I've discovered when helping with homework, so how can the teachers expect the poor kids to do it?

...Dodging 'Round the District

BY ROY DOWNS

Spring Optimist
STREETSVILLE—One four-year-old lad is quite an optimist. Last week he amused witnesses by walking beside the tall snowbanks edging the road pushing, with great concentration, his toy lawn mower.

Burned Boy Home
BURLINGTON—Ian McKinlay, one of five boys burned in a shed blast three months ago, returned to home and school last week after 83 days in hospital. One boy died after the explosion and three others are still hospitalized from burns. Meanwhile, their benefit fund has surpassed \$21,000 in contributions from organizations and individuals.

Rabid Skunk Found
WATERDOWN—An almost dead skunk was found just south of the village and Health Unit Authorities confirmed the animal was rabid. Parents were urged to ask children not to touch any dead animals.

Humane Society in Debt
OAKVILLE—Terming it the most difficult year (financially) ever witnessed, the Oakville and District Humane Society's annual meeting approved receiving a \$5,000 loan to cover a budget deficit. Last year, said president Herb Merris, the society tried serving too large an area which included all Halton except Esquesing and Nassagaweya.

Hospital on the Way
GEORGETOWN—Hospital workers are happy their quarter million dollar drive for new hospital funds reached the \$225,000 mark last week. The new structure is estimated to cost a full million. Among out-of-town districts giving donations were Acton \$100, Ash Grove \$2,300, Ballingalad \$2,000, Bannockburn \$282, Limehouse \$830, Norval \$735, Silvercreek \$1,897, Spenside \$2,505, Stewarttown \$2,332, Terra Cotta \$642.

Peel Follows Halton
BRAMPTON—Following in Halton County Council's path, Peel has announced a plan for assisting hospital growth by county grants. The county will pay \$8,000 per bed, and assume all existing debenture debts for hospitals. Approval of the plan assures immediate construction of the long-awaited 129-bed addition to Peel Memorial Hospital.

Plenty of Twins
OAKVILLE—There were three sets of twins in the nursery at Oakville-Trafalgar hospital a week ago, and the parents of all three sets live within half a mile of a street where five other sets of twins reside. . . . The 109-year-old Central School on Colborne St. is being torn down to make way for a proposed municipal centre. Council received \$425 for the old building.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1910

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, April 7, 1910.

Last Saturday night on Sunday morning, burglars entered the store of W. E. Moore by prying back the lock with a "jiminy". They got into the safe but fortunately for Mr. Moore, there was nothing deposited there but a small amount of silver and coppers—about \$5 or \$6 in all. The contents of the safe were scattered about the floor. No goods were disturbed in the store as far as could be ascertained.

Yesterday morning Mr. R. Sinclair, wagon maker, found that three of his large chisels were missing. He supposes they were taken for use in opening Mr. Moore's door. The thieves are evidently well acquainted with the town.

At the last meeting of the county council, the majority of the members thought the time opportune to be good to themselves and to the county officials so far as financial matters are concerned. They increased their own pay from \$3 to \$5 per day while in session, and raised the salaries of the county treasurer and county clerk \$100 apiece. The former now gets \$700 per year, and the latter \$500 a year.

The council will need to consider the question of widening the pavements, if there is going to be a steady advance in the dimensions of women's headgear, else the men of Acton will have to adopt the Englishman's style and take to the middle of the street.

Miss Lauretta Gray of Acton and Miss Mabel Tochar of Toronto have sent out invitations for their piano recital to be held in Toronto. Many Acton friends are expected to attend the affair.

The time has come when Reeve Hinds' very worthy proposal at the nomination meeting and the council organization meeting to put a competent caretaker in Fairview cemetery for the summer months, should be put into effect. The revenues from the cemetery warrant it.

Eggs are down to 18 cents a dozen with butter keeping at 24 cents a pound. Prices have been steady this past while. Quite a number of the farmers have been out on the land and already the country is showing signs of being cultivated.

BACK IN 1940

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, April 11, 1940.

During the council meeting Tuesday night, members were notified that a representative of the Bickle Fire Engine Company would attend the next meeting to discuss the possible purchase of a second hand piece of equipment. It was learned the pumper had small mileage and a new vehicle guarantee would be issued if the truck was purchased. Councilors decided to give the representative an opportunity to report on the new piece of equipment.

The Force five-pin bowling team continued to pile up some excellent scores on the weekend when they defeated the Aberfoyle team 7-0. Norm Morton led the local team with a 744 triple and 293 single and Bill Corry was a close second with a 676 triple and 274 single. The local team represented in the league have had a good season and stand a wonderful chance of coping the championship in the Guelph league.

The Acton Agricultural Society are already making plans for this year's Fair and the possibility of a home and farm improvement feature looks very promising and a committee under the leadership of E. L. Wright has been selected to work out the details. The appointment of judges and arranging for special features was also discussed during the meeting last week and indications point to another large and successful fair this season.

Mrs. Malcolm Leitch gave the address during the Fireside chat at the Y.M.C.A. on Sunday and a large group of young people were present to hear the speaker. Charles Landsborough and Doug Chaplesden played a cornet duet, which was very well received and called for an encore. The group of 60 young people entered into the singing particularly well. Representatives from the Presbyterian Young People's Society had charge of the lunch.

The Y.M.C.A. is beginning to operate on a more steady basis now that the hockey season has ended and classes have started to fill up once more. The badminton players have been turning out in good numbers and already some exhibition games have been planned with neighboring clubs.

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