

Free Press Editorial Page

Let's use the schools . . .

Recreation and education may soon be headed in the same direction, if hints and scraps of information being ladled out in the last few weeks are based on fact.

It is expected that the new County Board of Education will soon announce a new policy regarding use of school buildings after class hours.

Optimists are looking for a wide-open door policy which will make school facilities available for all sorts of adult education and recreation. Pessimists envision a toe-in-the-door policy at first, perhaps followed by a more liberal attitude later.

It is popular to pillory the/new board of education for its policies regarding teachers' and trustees' wages, not to mention the salaries of the senior administrators, but this move will erase some of the bitter taste in taxpayers' mouths.

We can think of all kinds of recreation activities and adult

educational classes which would be right at home in school facilities here, and in the district. With a few additional facilities many more educational and recreational possibilities could exist as well.

Taxpayers have contributed the money for educational facilities. It is only right they should share in the benefits. Brand new buildings are only being used from 9 to 4 in many cases, standing idle for the evenings and weekends.

At a time when taxpayers could use additional recreation facilities and meeting places but are hindered by skyrocketing tax rates, it is a forward step to make the schools available for other purposes. It will help take off some of the edgy feeling if ratepayers are sharing in the program.

Recent suggestions that Acton could have an indoor swimming pool in a school make sense if they are available for all to use. It is not necessary to point out that a fair sized grant is also available.

Derelict autos eyesores . . .

Yes, we'll go along with a campaign to clean up eyesores caused by the broken down hulks of old cars.

There is nothing so obscenely grotesque than a graveyard for old cars piled along the side of the road or in someone's yard. Some of the prettiest spots in the district are marred by useless auto hulks rusting away.

While old boats may make a seascape picturesque, derelict autos

offend the eye and add nothing to the landscape.

A well broken-in car with lots of life in her yet and rust spots is like an old friend, as someone has suggested. Nor is there anything more gallant than a battered old heap which still rumbles along with a desire to get you to your destination.

But an old rusting of better days parked on the side of the road is nothing but an eyesore.

There ought to be a law? In some places there is.

Patronage abolished . . .

The post office department has traditionally been accused of patronage through the years and recent remarks by Postmaster General Eric Kierans do nothing to allay the suspicions.

Testifying before a House of Commons standing committee, Mr. Kierans maintained that the post office would no longer be available as a political preserve to the M.P.'s. One M.P. asked if this meant that there was a certain amount of patronage now being done away with.

Mr. Kierans answered with a parable.

"Let me put it this way," he said. "When you find, let us say, four sub-post offices in an area of about 2.8 miles and you look at it and you figure that you can replace the four sub-post offices by adding 2.8 miles to an existing rural route and save the Canadian taxpayers many thousands of dollars in the process, and give the people who live in that area much better service, then you have to ask yourself how it was that the four sub-post offices were opened?"

Would that all government departments had the same philosophy—and the intestinal fortitude to implement their decisions.

Wheel on ice . . .

Summer ice-skating practice is made easy with a new fun invention. The Financial Post reports. It is a roller skate that acts and handles like an ice skate. To achieve the effect the wheels are set one behind the other.

Off the cuff . . .

One point in favor of the horse over the car, says an old timer, is that it didn't drop \$500 in value the day you drove it off the lot.

Prisons teach us to live according to our convictions.—J. Ollier.



TWIN TOWERS of the Toronto Dominion centre are clearly visible from the St. Helena road, south of Speyside, on a clear day. Last Saturday afternoon was such a day and the Free Press camera captured the panorama from the escarpment road. The main 56-storey 740-foot Toronto-Dominion Bank tower is the tallest building in Canada and the Commonwealth. The adjoining 48-storey, 600-foot Royal Trust tower will be completed in July. The gleaming black skyscrapers—it is reported—could hold Toronto's entire population of over two million people.—(Staff Photo)



Sugar and Spice

by Bill Smiley

A couple of weeks ago, I sang a song of hate in this space. Since Spring, theoretically, is just around that corner which recedes steadily as you approach it, the least I can do is sing a song of love, and ask you to join me. Everybody loves something, even if it's only his car.

Looking into the backyard, it's pretty hard to get all goody about Spring. The pile of snow pushed up beside the garage is now down to six feet. My cedar lawn chairs look like a couple of matrons, buried to the waist in blanc mange, their arms extended pleadingly. The picnic table still looks like a freshly-risen loaf of bread.

But the sun sines, day after day, and eventually those articles must reveal themselves in all their scabby, shabby ugliness.

Spring in Canada is pure female; unpredictable, perverse, passionate, hot-or-cold, cruel-or-kind. And completely undependable, as far as mood goes.

In this crazy climate, I have lain on fresh grass in March and in love and in sun that suggested the following month would be July. And I have gone fishing on the first of May and had my line freeze to the rod.

There, having expressed my mistrust of Canada's Spring, I shall return to our theme: love.

This is a favorite topic for poets who can't think of anything else to write about. Not being a poet, I will avoid trying to be poetic and thereby save both of us a lot of embarrassment.

Some people think that love is a potion, especially in the Far East. You know: rhinoceros horn ground up in a mixture of oysters, and celery. Actually, I wouldn't mind taking a swig at it. Sounds jolly invigorating, or something.

Love is not a potion; it's a lotion. It warms the cold heart, as analgesic balm warms the sore shoulder. It lubricates the grinding nerves. It soothes the tortured soul as olive oil does the baby's bum.

It is ointment (by the way, Mecca ointment is good for practically anything. Unpaid commercial). And it is a Mecca toward which you travel, and from which you return, rather wondering whether the whole trip was worth it. Sand and flies and heat. And nobody else there but a mob of exhausted, hot, tired and disgruntled pilgrims like yourself. That's love.

However, one mustn't wax philosophical about love, even on a highly elevated plane like this. Not in this country, in this climate. Let's get down to specifics. What do we love?

I love my country. Not the government, or the people, particularly. The physical Canada. A black spring stream racing between the snowbanks in March. The ghostly mist of green that slips into the trees in May. The Rockies, in mid-summer,

aloof, sneering at the ants that crawl about their knees. The sculptured blue-white seascapes of January.

I love the peace and loneliness and they're darn hard to come by, now-a-days. It's beautiful to be alone, sometimes, without the yelp and clamor, the stink and garbage of everyday living. About the only place you can find it is in an inaccessible bog, with a fishing rod. The onboard motor and the skidoo have seen to that.

And I love all growing things: grass, flowers, leaves. Except when they have to be mowed, or cultivated, or raked. And nearly all children. Except when they grow up.

And I love a good poker game, especially when the cards are coming right. And a good argument, especially when I'm right, which seems to be nearly every time.

And I love my wife, but oh, YOU KID! And I love my kids, but OH, YOU KID!

And I love to do a good job, whether it's writing a column, or teaching a dumbbell, something, or finding a new gimmick in my tax return. It seldom happens, but it makes me happy.

Sometimes I can even love my neighbor as myself. It's a lot easier these days. He hasn't an ox or an ass or a maid-servant to covet.

See? I've just begun. I haven't even mentioned hot bonfires or cold beer, or a thousand other things. Put down a list for yourself, and you'll decide you're not such an old miser after all.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 31, 1949.

Employees of the Wool Combing Corporation in Acton will receive enlarged insurance benefits as a result of wage negotiations between the company and officials of Local 721 of the Textile Workers Union of America.

The company will bear the entire cost of the revised personal insurance plan. New V's Men are Ray Thompson, Ed Frootin, Harry Arsic, Art Lamoreaux, Don Wiggins and Tom Atkinson. Bill Benson conducted the induction ceremony.

William I. Dick K.C., dean of Crown Attorneys in Ontario, has retired after 45 years. Mr. Dick recalled there has been no serious outbreak of crime during his term in office. There was only one murder trial and the jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter. More recently he prosecuted during the trials of two of the Campbellville bank robbers.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 27, 1919.

Rev. Mr. Maunull of St. Alban's church walks to Rockwood along the radial line for the service at St. John's there.

A mass meeting of citizens is called for tonight to further discuss a suitable memorial.

Clerk Mr. George Hynds has tendered his resignation. The office of clerk and treasurer will be advertised at the salary of \$400 a year.

Pte. Thomas Bennett reached home on Monday morning. He was greeted at the Electric Railway station by hundreds of citizens and received a most cordial welcome home. Pte. James Cooney has also arrived home and is receiving congratulations on all sides for winning the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Pte. Fred Rowntree arrived home with a dear little English wife and two wee girls. But that spare quarter into a Thrift stamp, son.

W. Kelly has opened a new meat store at the corner of Mill and Elgin St. Linthouse Junior Relief held a box social and dance in the hall with great success. The proceeds of \$50 are in aid of the Returned Soldiers Fund.

Rockwood's gas well, which is located on the James Hamilton farm, has been drilled to a depth of 2,180 feet by the Imperial Oil Company. It has developed 70 pounds of pressure. It is anticipated oil will be secured.

Motor cars pass through in greater numbers now, some from distant points.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 29, 1894.

An exciting runaway occurred at Crewson's Corners. A son and two daughters of Mr. Benj. Watkins of the first line were driving past the Corners in a democrat when one of the lines broke and the horses, one of which was a colt, ran away. They were thrown out in the yard of Alex. Cripps. The horses were almost to McIntosh's before they were caught.

Miss Pauline Johnston, the Indian Poetess, will appear in Milton town hall with Mr. Owen Smiley, the popular humorous character, under the auspices of Knox church V.P.A.

High standing in examinations at Dublin school: William Somerville, Andrew Arthur, Duncan Scott, Aggie Mulholland, Mary Kaley, William McPherson, Herbert McLean, Chester Wallace, Willie Stalker, Cassie Mulholland, Christopher McPherson, John Kaley.

Colbran's Hotel, Campbellville, is for sale.

Boys, handle your catapults a little more carefully or the cops will get you. The special services at Churchill Congregational church have been productive of much good and over 50 persons sought salvation.

Kenneawin Chemist Our latest are wallpapers with ceiling papers and border to match. Prices commence at 4 cents a roll and with a 10 cent paper we border the room free.

James Gibbons of Esquesing says he formed the first Reform Club in Guelph in 1836 after the Rebellion.

My pretty new spring bonnet, alas I did not do it, for fear of snow upon it, last Easter morn.

The barbering business should be thrived done in town now. Two new shops opened during the past week.

100 years ago

Taken from the Issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, March 25, 1869.

Esquesing Agricultural Society—A meeting of the directors of this society was held at Stewarttown on Saturday, March 6 when, after a protracted discussion it was decided to hold the Fall Show in Acton, the people of that village guaranteeing \$100 to the prize list. Parties in the village or neighborhood willing to help to make up that sum can leave their subscriptions with Mr. P. McCreigh, merchant, Acton.

Salt and Pepper



by Bertley Coles

I'm about as popular as a skunk at a perfume testers' picnic after last week's column.

I was accused of being anti-marriage, anti-social and anti-female for my remarks on predatory instincts of the ladies.

Two wives said they were going to picket my place with large signs, one with her tongue outstretched, the other emitting a loud razzberry. Another, after a loud tirade was going to take a poke at me, justifying suspicions that I had touched a raw nerve with advice to the bachelors.

It's not true that I've got anything against women, however. After all, my mother was a lady. Which seems to be true of almost all the men I know, with one exception. His mother was a Mann, says she. Historical research bears this out.

There have been many famous women whom I admire. I've always had a soft spot in my heart for my wife, for instance. Women are very feminine. Most are ladylike.

This is true of very few men.

THERE'S AN OLD SAW that says something about there being a woman behind every successful man. Pushing, of course. But the old saw doesn't mention that.

You never really appreciate your better half until she takes a few days off, reports sick or decides she'll visit her mother. Mine has been on the shelf for the past couple of weeks, in and out of the hospital—and then back in again. We're like sheep without a shepherd here at home plate.

No orders. No instructions on what to do about the garbage. Are we underdressed, overdressed, or undressed? No one to tell us.

The bills are almost all unpaid, stacked on the dresser. The town's going to confiscate the dog unless we pay the dog tax. They're going to cut off my credit cards unless I pay the gasoline bill.

It's a good job I remembered to pay the water and electricity or we'd probably be without water and lights. The water bill was way up. I couldn't figure it out. Never thought we were using that much water. Then the mother-in-law who's been doing yeoman service, mentioned No. one sqn

has shown an amazing affinity for water lately. He's been taking a shower or a bath at least once a day.

What's so odd about that? Prior to 1969 he showed a remarkable aversion to H2O. Baths were a torment inflicted by unloving parents on boys. He'd been swimming last summer, gone out in the rain a couple of times. Wasn't that enough punishment?

Well it looks like the message has finally sunk in with a vengeance. Or wouldn't you call doubling the water bill a vengeance.

I'M ALWAYS A SUCKER for a good sports story. Ran across this one recently about baseball player Charlie Grimm.

Charlie Grimm regarded himself not only as a top first baseman, but also as a pretty fair banjo player.

At one time, when he was a Pittsburgh Pirate, he was with the team in California for spring training. One afternoon, following a workout, he returned to his hotel room, took out his banjo and began strumming. Pretty soon there was a knock at the door. It was the bellhop.

"Excuse me sir," said the latter. "Mr. Paderewski, the pianist, who occupies the room above, requests you not to play the banjo so loudly. He has to rest before his concert."

"Excuse me, sir," he told the pianist. "Mr. Charles Grimm, the first baseman of the Pittsburgh Pirates, who occupies the room below, requests you not to play the piano so loudly. He has to rest before his workout."

Well, when the old girl was around she told him in no uncertain terms that it darn well wasn't. I'm more open to argument. He had me persuaded going out in the rain a couple of times and three or four dips in Fairy Lake were enough for any normal Canadian boy.

Grimm complied. The next morning, he was awakened by piano music coming from the virtuoso's room. A few minutes later, there was a knock at Paderewski's door. It was the same bellhop.



CORNER OF MILL AND WILLOW, years ago, shows the Merchants Bank, Hunter's store and then Scott's store. Note the board sidewalks and the hitching post. The building remains, with the Cameo Shoppes in the corner location now.

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