

Harley to Halton

by harry harley m.p.

The most significant matter introduced in the House of Commons in the previous week has been a Government Bill to amend Canada's divorce laws.

It has been estimated by the Canadian Bar Association that some 500,000 Canadians are today living in common law marriages because our present laws make legal divorce and remarriage an impossibility. The grounds for divorce will be extended to include bigamy, physical and mental cruelty and marriage breakdown.

The marriage breakdown concept must be proved in the Courts. It could be based on imprisonment for one of the marriage partners for a certain period of time or gross addiction to alcohol or narcotics with failure of treatment for these disorders.

Separation will be grounds for divorce where the petitioner has been unable to locate her marriage partner for three years, or where one of the marriage partners deserts the other for at least five years. It was pointed out that most divorce laws in Canada were over 100 years old and as such had little relevance to today's conditions.

All of the speeches to date in the House of Commons have been in favor of the Bill and it would appear at this time that it should pass quickly.

The new Budget will be debated over the next six days and will provide the Opposition with further opportunities of voting non-confidence in the government.

It is expected that the Minister of National Revenue, the Honourable Mr. Benson, will be making a statement in the House of Commons concerning the various cutbacks that the government is making during the current year to limit government spending. It is anticipated that these cutbacks will affect every department of government.

It is difficult to say at this time whether any of these cutbacks will have any influence on the programs currently underway in the County of Halton.

Tree trimming

The prettiest Christmas tree looks its best only, if it is properly trimmed. The number of lights used - whether too few or too many affects the appearance of even the most perfect tree. Here's a formula used by professional lighting experts: Height of tree (in feet) x width of tree at base (in feet) x 3. It's not as complicated as it sounds. For example, if your tree is 6 feet high and 4 1/2 feet wide at the base; 3 x 4 1/2 x 3 equals 81 lights for a good lighting effect.

CANADA'S OLDEST known public clock, atop the fire hall in HMC Dockyard in Halifax, has just been repainted a bright gold. Constructed in London, England in 1767, the clock was installed over a sail loft in 1772 and operated continuously until becoming a casualty of the Halifax explosion in 1917. It was repaired, however, and in 1941 moved to the specially designed tower above the new fire hall, where it has since remained.

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JOLLY OLD SAINT NICHOLAS was everywhere this past few weeks, even Mohawk Raceway, where he flew in via helicopter direct from the North Pole to distribute bags of treats to over 800 children. Mohawk closed its winter meet Saturday afternoon and Santa's arrival, complete with three Santa's helpers in mini-

skirts riding on the raceway's fire truck, was just one of the closing day highlights. Driver Jack Kenney of Ancaster was "Santa" for the day. His pretty helpers were Susan Anderson, Barbara Beechy and Donna Strynyk. At the right is the fire truck driver, Henry Neave. (Staff Photo)



DOZENS OF "WHITE GIFTS" for needy children were contributed by the children of Bethel United Church at Drumquin during a pre-Christmas service on Sunday morning. A group of the children are shown with some

of the gifts they brought and placed on the altar. A Christmas play enacted by the "Young Folk" group was another highlight of the service. (Staff Photo)

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Three "wise" men probably Persians

In New Testament history according to Matthew, the narrative of the three Magi who followed a star to Bethlehem in search of the infant Jesus describes them simply as three "wise men from the east." It was not until the 2nd century that they were known as "kings" in a charming legend that traces its origin to that time.

The Magi originally represented the priestly caste of the ancient Persian Zoroastrian religion. As this religion moved westward, it came into contact with Babylonian beliefs and practices, and thus derived a strong interest in astrology, demonology and magic.

By the time it had reached the Graeco-Roman world, Zoroastrianism was almost identical with astrology and magic in the popular view. This explains the use of the term "wise men" in Matthew's New Testament account, for the three men described therein were actually astrologers and not kings.

The Empress Helena is credited with having brought the bones of the Wise Men to Constantinople; from there they were removed to Milan and afterward to Cologne. This explains why the Wise Men were often referred to as the Three Kings of Cologne. Their crowns are exhibited in the Chapel of the Three Kings in Cologne Cathedral, which is supposed to contain their relics.

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