

**"THE LIBERAL"**

Established 1878  
AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY  
J. Eachern Smith, Manager

Advertising Rates on Application. TELEPHONE 9.  
PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT RICHMOND HILL  
THE LIBERAL PRINTING CO., LTD.  
Member Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association  
Subscription \$1.50 per year — To the United States \$2.00  
Covering Canada's Best Suburban District

THURSDAY, APRIL 15th, 1937.

**WHY NOT IMPROVE YOUR HOME?**

Under the provisions of the Dominion Government's Home Improvement Plan citizens of the community are given a splendid opportunity to renovate and improve their homes. The plan allows for borrowing any sum up to two thousand dollars at low interest rates without the necessity of mortgaging any property and without red tape of any kind.

The loan is a strictly private matter between the borrower and the bank manager. The government organization plays its part in protecting the bank against loss to the extent of fifteen per cent of the total fund. Fifty million dollars has been set as the total to be guaranteed.

The borrower's note is to be discounted at 3.25 per cent which means that if the loan is repaid in 12 monthly instalments a sum of \$96.75 may be had on a note for one hundred dollars.

The scope of work which can be financed under the plan is almost limitless. Plans calling for an almost complete renovation of the home are allowed under the scheme. Everything from jobs calling for major architectural work to such simple improvements as painting, paper hanging and general redecoration are allowed.

Government and banks are doing a big thing in making possible this national improvement campaign. Both skilled and unskilled labour will be given opportunity to get back on their feet. Relief rolls will be cut and in a large measure prosperity should be restored through the measure.

The bill is designed to make life more liveable for the man with the limited income. If proper advantage is taken of its provisions a great deal of good should result not only in individual cases but on a national scale.

As the Home Improvement Plan gets under way in Canada, it is interesting to note what a similar movement has done in the U.S.A. Properties improved under the proceeds of insured notes since the plan was started in the summer of 1934 include nearly 1,000,000 homes, 250,000 two-family houses and apartments and 150,000 other properties, including business and industrial buildings, hotels, orphanages, colleges, churches and farms. In addition, Federal Housing Administration officials estimate that their better housing campaign has generated over \$2,000,000 worth of modernization and repair work which does not show in its own records.

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**JOHN BULL AGAIN SHOWS HOW**

Great Britain, despite a total of £186,072,000 spent on armament, comes to the end of its fiscal year with a real surplus of £7,530,000, and taxpayers breathe easier. Chancellor of the Exchequer Neville Chamberlain's program for financing the abnormal outlays on rearmament by loan or from surpluses, acts as a pacifier to income taxpayers. Although rearmament commitments are expected to bring the additional income required for the next year to some £32,000,000, it is anticipated that growth in revenue will cover it.

"The drop in unemployment which showed 11,250,000 workers employed last month — a new high record — likewise testifies to Britain's prosperity," says the Christian Science Monitor of Boston. "It is even claimed that it might be possible to balance the budget without any new taxation. Britain's emergence from the depression in the face of European unrest constitutes an example of national stamina. British financiers could have done little were it not for the people's determination to 'see it through'."

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The York County Council is sponsoring and we expect paying a goodly sum for the Coronation celebration in Aurora. While it will be called a County Celebration we wonder whether it will be a celebration for citizens of the County or for members of County Council and County officials. York County is altogether too extensive in size and population to have one Coronation celebration. Celebrations in each municipality are much more in keeping with the needs of the people. The County Council however was running true to form if they voted money for a County celebration.

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Just the other day we listened to some hour or other on the radio. The announcer was saying that he would dedicate the next song to Bill Jones or Pete Smith and two or three more who had reached mature ages around the eighties and nineties. And the next song was "But you never knew the sorrow that you brought me when you handed me that letter edged in black." Nice cheerful tune for any birthday. Eh! What? There are chaps who would dedicate a Blue Coal program to the gas man or "It Ain't Going to Rain no More" to the milk man, but the guy who would sing a song like that to old people on their birthday should be by mutual consent ordered off the air, earth and sea.

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More and more the radio is passing out of the picture as a form of entertainment, says the Durham Chronicle. There is altogether too much advertising, and most people would rather do without the program than listen to the blah-blah of the shaving cream and medicine barkers.

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It is a curious trait of human nature to drive faster than the law allows, observes the Brampton Conservator, and many who were satisfied with driving a little faster than the 35 mile limit will now try to exceed the 50 mile limit.

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The editor of the Fergus News-Record tells us that 2000 Fergus people made about \$5000 by not buying sweepstakes tickets at \$2.50 each. We have saved a lot of money ourselves by not buying things, but somehow or other we do not seem to have it.

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One sure result of all successful strikes will be a rise in prices. The economists differ in their opinions as to whether people are better off with high wages and high prices or low wages and low prices. Most people seem willing to take a chance on the high wages, however.

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Sunday radio advertising is one luxury we could get along very nicely without.

**THE LIBERAL SHORT STORY**

**LITTLE SISTER**

By Inex Cunningham Stark

In a cafe or public carrier one is sometimes depressed by the deviations of the human mold. One likes to think that perhaps the human individual is compensated for his human burden of ugliness, that departure from the classic ideal of beauty carries extra brains or the capacity for enjoyment.

On the other hand, a child is born now and then with all the gifts—beauty which is the prototype of all beauty and a prismatic mind which sheds charm and talent in a rainbow. But by these very gifts one can be more burdened than the ugliest. Such a one was Alden Tracy's little sister. So burdened was she by the great expectations that grew with her that she may have escaped in death.

She was in no sense a "wunder-kind." She was the youngest of totally undistinguished, substantial parentage. Into a family of clumsy, half-grown boys, she was born with the fairy gift for beauty. She was called Felicia because they were so happy about her. The year she came Mr. Tracy's business took the family to Switzerland. This move drew it closer together, and since she was its centre gave Felicia greater importance. When the Tracys came back to America three years later, she was an enchanting vision in Paris frills. That she spoke French as well as English was considered a miracle. Really it was the most natural thing in the world but because her three brothers could not or would not, it seemed more remarkable. She was a linguist to the Tracys. So they provided her with the opportunity to learn other languages. Since linguists have "an ear" music was next. Consequently at ten she knew French, Italian, English and a little German and could sing folk songs delightfully but not remarkably, in all four. She did not know her multiplication tables and could not spell but these things were interpreted as signs of genius. The eldest Tracy boy now married a wife as undistinguished and substantial as his mother, Felicia as flower girl made the wedding and added another admirer to her court.

The best dance instructors were provided for her but being the cherished one in her circle, her family were afraid of the strenuous physical effort, and long hours of rest after practice were prescribed by the doctor via her mother. Felicia was bored but with a daring due to success she filled these hours with another art. The only person in her environment not too impressed by beauty was her English teacher. So the effort was aimed in that direction. They were the beautiful naive thoughts of an intelligent child of 11, expressed in the simple rhythm of the folk songs of two Latin tongues. So, Felicia became a poet.

Her second brother, George now added a wife—a plain but chic French girl—to the family. She undertook to teach Felicia the mondaine arts. At 13, Felicia escaped the awkward age. Her childish beauty blossomed into something arresting under Annette's sense of costume and elegance. Now, Felicia added something of her own. She added wit. It was the final charm. For the beautiful, accomplished girl to be laughing at herself to give witty answers when asked. "What will you be?" "Which of your accomplishments will you pursue when you grow up?" was too enchanting. Martin's wife heard her one afternoon when her young friends were discussing their future marriages—"And who will you marry, Felicia?" some one asked. "Oh nobody but the son of Aga Khan would be beautiful or rich enough to suit my family," quoth Felicia.

Felicia became an actress, too. Who knows but here, except for her dotting family, might have been the solution of her problem. She did a satire at a class party and was offered the leading part in the school play. Mother said, "But Felicia, you have a poem in the magazine, you are down for dancing and singing at commencement—don't you think rehearsals will be too much for you? You must bone on math, you know." "Besides," said father, "you never want to be an actress. Stage life is a hard life—and well—it's not very nice. A girl with all your talents."

So instead of rehearsals, Felicia had a mathematic tutor.

Then the depression came. The solid Tracy fortune melted like a Chinese butter image in the sun, but every one knew that Felicia's education must be completed. So at great family sacrifice she went east to school.

There was much discussion of Felicia's wardrobe that late summer—Annette maintained that chic was

everything. Felicia must be given really lovely clothes. One could not expect her to go unless she was dressed as such a beauty should. Martha, the other sister-in-law said that Felicia was such a beauty it wouldn't make any difference. Their husbands said it was foolish to send her because so lovely a girl couldn't get through her first prom without the entire stag line at her feet. "Felicia will marry just like that," they said.

Alden didn't think so. He had seen her with her friends, older, of course, but still young men. One or two had fallen in love but most of them were afraid of her. "She's too lovely and talented," Alden said. The wardrobe was a compromise and a sacrifice to the family but a burden to Felicia. When she wore the pale satin robe she remembered Mother in last year's tailored flannels. In the Paris hat, Annette's gift she almost cried because her dear Annette was wearing last year's turban. The travelling clock from Martin and Martha was the baby's new kiddie car, and Alden's check for pin money was sure to post him for club dues. The bills poor Daddy would have to pay one hated to contemplate. Oh, well maybe things will be so bad next year that they would let her stay at home—so Felicia hoped as the train moved east.

Felicia's letters were a delight. The family read them to visitors. "They are so literary you know—so full of style." They were but they concealed Felicia. At Christmas she came home tired and wan. They loved her so much they were almost pleased she was too tired to go rushing around with her own set. She clung to Alden. She went to the movies and to dine at the cheap foreign cafes with him and his friends, who like himself had to give up the expensive places. He was proud of her and his friends admired her more and liked her better. Jimmie Sutton said: "I didn't know how human she could be—it takes some of the arrogance out of kids to go away to school." Alden noticed her humility, though he called it generosity.

The night before she left she came in and sat on his bed. "I want to talk seriously darling," she said. "You know I can't waste any more time. I've got to decide what it shall be—literature, music or the dance. Madame Yerska says I've got a fairly good voice but she does not think it's big enough for concerts—not really big ones. I would not say Edna Millay has made a fortune on her verse, would you? But there's Martha Graham. Nobody seems to know whether she's poor or not—she wears such funny clothes. Of course if I'm going to be a dancer seriously, I really should leave college now—Allie you're laughing at me." She kissed him quickly and went out.

February that year was a deceitful month. Green shoots gleamed through the thaws and the air was soft. Any girl might have been lured to walk in last year's leaves hatless, with her sweater open, while the nostalgic scent of spring mingled with her dream of being the greatest dancer or the greatest poet. The soft air lifted the curls on Felicia's lovely head and played with the hat she held in her hand. But the dream of being the greatest anything is as hard to capture as spring in February. Felicia lost them both. Her walk ended in a blinding blizzard and her dream in the pneumonia from which she never recovered. Did she shake off the burden of her life as lightly as the snow from her curls? One wonders.

**THOMAS McKNIGHT**

Thomas McKnight of Cookstown died at his home there on March 30 in his 69th year. The news of his passing will be received with deep regret by a large circle of friends. He was well known throughout Simcoe County as a prominent Orangeman, Mason and Conservative. On more than one occasion he was chief returning officer for his constituency. He was D.D.G.M. of Georgian Masonic District and held various offices in the Orange Lodges. In earlier life he was a school teacher but of late years had been engaged in the Insurance and Conveyancing business. He was a member of the Church of England.

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**A FIXED EASTER DATE**

Early Easters have become very unpopular, particularly in countries with colder climates. A movement was sponsored some years ago by the Church of England which would have Easter Sunday fall every year on the Sunday following the second Saturday in April. The proposal was accepted by the British parliament in 1928 but it will not be put into practise until its acceptance has become world-wide. While the League of Nations has not been very successful in solving major world problems it might be able to bring this fixed Easter date into world-wide effect.

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