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THURSDAY, JUNE 27th, 1940.

KEEP YOUR CHIN UP

There will be much sympathy with the local gentleman who said the other day that the hardest thing he found to bear in this war is the radio. News of ill-omen, without the background that would give it the proper perspective, keeps coming over the radio to annoy and depress. The hurried and often immature news over the radio has a tendency to confuse and alarm. The defection of the King of Belgium, for example, was a shock to all in its first announcement, but the fuller story showed that even this situation was not as calamitous as it first appeared. It may be imagination, but many are beginning to feel that the radio always gets the bad news first, while any good news seems to travel more slowly. In any event the newspapers carry a much more balanced account of the progress of the war, and people would be saved much anxiety if they waited for the more detailed accounts in the newspapers. This, however, is too much to expect, because all are so deeply concerned that they feel they cannot wait for anything. It should be admitted that the Canadian radio broadcasts, being based on Canadian Press newsgathering has been more reliable and less disturbing than some of the foreign broadcasts. Not only would nerves be saved some strain, but a better grasp of the war situation would be given the ordinary man and woman if they avoided at least some of the outside radio announcements.

There is trying news to be endured, however, these days, irrespective of radio or anything else. The great leaders in the lands overseas do not hold out comfort of much good news for the immediate present. Instead, they counsel all to be ready to bear passing ill-fortune with confidence in the final victory.

British peoples have prided themselves on being able to bear good news without undue elation, and to make ill news but prompt them to redoubled effort and renewed resolve. This should be the attitude of the day. His Majesty the King has placed the thought in noble words - words that might well be posted near every radio, held before the eyes as news may be read in the newspapers, enshrined in the hearts of all as news unrolls itself: -

"So now, peoples of the Empire, men and women in all quarters of the globe, I say to you: Put into your task, whatever it may be, all the courage and purpose of which you are capable. Keep your hearts proud and your resolve unshaken. Let us go forward to that task as one man, a smile on our lips and our heads held high, and with God's help we shall not fail."

ORGANIZING AGRICULTURE

A meeting representative of all rural Municipalities and all Agricultural organizations in the County will be held in Newmarket early in July with the aim of organizing a York County branch of the Federation of Agriculture.

The organization meeting has been called by a special committee of York County Council and it is hoped to make it really representative of Agriculture. The new body will have representation from breeders associations, Agricultural Societies, and all organizations now interested in farm work. It is hoped through the new organization to give the farmer a united voice in seeking needed reforms in the interests of those who make their livelihood on Canadian farms. The aim is that the new organization can truly speak for the farmer. It is a commendable aim and should receive enthusiastic support from the farming community.

THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND

We doubt if there is a home in this or any other community across Canada, that is not tuned into the news every time there is a broadcast in the early morning, or late at night. And unless you have a staunch British heart, you can come away from that radio feeling mighty down in the dumps. How it would help if, after each broadcast, the stirring tunes of "Rule Britannia" or "There'll Always Be An England" would blare out. It would be a great tonic to start the day or go to bed on.

Band music has a lifting effect that can dispell that dumpy feeling. It makes men want to put on a uniform and march with the troops. It gives a sort of "we can do it" spirit.

And in days like these we need a pepper-upper.—Express-Herald.

The fact that we are facing the greatest crisis in our history as a nation does not seem to have penetrated the craniums of some of our women who can still find time for bridge but who have not yet done a stitch of work for the Red Cross. It is amazing how complacent some slackers can be while others are laying down their lives to preserve human freedom.

Rain is just about as welcome on some York County farms these days as a German invasion. It is quite possible to get too much of a good thing.

A City Mother Pioneers

Talk given by Maida Parlow French, of Toronto, over the National Network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This was the first of a series of six talks by Mrs. French, who spoke from the CBC's Toronto Studios.

Did you ever think that the less you have, the more resourceful you are apt to be?

No. But that's true, though. You see, I'd always had things pretty easy. I'd lived in the city, until my husband died. And then, almost right away, my income went down. And the rent went up. And I was terribly frightened.

No, it wasn't just the money part. (Although I was worried about that, too). It was about the children. Suppose something should happen to me? What would become of my children? I had no power over life and death. Suppose I should be taken away from them, too?

I felt as though - well, as though I had to prepare them somehow. Make them able to look after themselves. But I didn't know how to do it, with children so young. All three of them.

Yes, they were young. David, my eldest son, was nine; Warwick was eight, and Alan, five.

Well, as I told you, the rent had gone up. And we had to move anyway.

And then, of course, we had this farm, down on the St. Lawrence River. We'd always had it. We could go there. You know, this farm was part of the original grant of land given to my father's people by King George III. That was 'way back in 1784. And the whole place was forest, then. We loved to read about them coming up the river in the little open boats. And it was spring, then, too. And now, here we were, this spring, going back to the very same place.

The children were wild to go. They hadn't ever known anybody who'd gone to live right on the bank of the St. Lawrence River.

Of course, we couldn't have the Homestead. The old stone house was rented with the farm. But there was another - sort of a cottage. Pretty ramshackle and tumble-down. Imagine how I felt! Nobody'd lived in it for years. My grandfather'd built it for the hired man. But it was in the orchard.

The orchard was awfully run down. I figured I could learn to run it. Grow apples, an' berries an' things. And so we took over the orchard, an' the house. Altogether about - About seven or eight acres of land.

Of course, we just love it now. But - the day we got there! I wish you could have seen it. The porch had fallen down. There was the shingle roof, lying right on the ground, like a floor. And it was pouring rain. We had to crash through the shingles. They were all rotten, and we had to sort of wade through them to get into the house. It seemed just, well, so sordid - to me, then. And I was sure we'd all break our legs.

Well, we didn't break our legs. The boys thought it was wonderful. Just another adventure, to them. (There was always that to help me along). They dashed all over the place. Our things had come on ahead of us (furniture and stuff), and the first thing I knew, the children had it all unpacked. All my linen, and clothes, and everything - all spread out in the dirt. Remember, I told you the house hadn't been lived in for years and years. It was awful.

I went to put a window up - and it came right out in my hand. But I must tell you about the windows. We had loads of them. It was just like a bower. The orchard around us. The apple-buds had had a sort of dimity-look against the river. And even in the house, in the rain, we could hear the birds. I never felt the squalor half so much after that. Even though we could see the sky through those zig-zag cracks in the wall; and there wasn't a cupboard, or a shelf, or any conveniences - even in the barn; and a creek was running through the cellar.

What did we cook with? Why, there was a stove. An old rusty range somebody'd left. An awful old thing. But all set up, ready to go. And, for wood? You remember the fallen-down porch. Well, we used that. I sent the boys over to a neighbour's to buy some milk and eggs. And or supper, there was the rest of our lanch, and we boiled the eggs over the shingles from the tumble-down roof.

It's funny, now. But I can tell you, it wasn't so funny that night. Trying to clean - by a little coal-oil lamp. And then I stood there, wondering where in the world to

empty my cleaning pail. Well, I'd brought the water in, and I had to take it out, even if it was pouring rain.

I used to think about my pioneering, great-great-grandfather fairly often, those days. Here, in their great, shadowy forest. The giant trees. Cutting them all down, so that they could farm the land. Making a place so that we could come here and grow our food. And all these apple trees, now. With the same river running by at the foot of the hill...

Well, of course, the children had to start to school. That was the first thing. And if they didn't hate to go - and leave the animals! They'd got a cat. They'd come in with a cat, about the second day we got there. And then they produced a whole basketful of kittens they'd been given too. Which I told them they could take right back - until David asked me sternly: "Didn't you take your children with you, when you moved to a new home?"

We'd got a yellow collie dog. Some baby chicks. And Warwick came in one day with a calf just a few days old.

I let them have any animal they would promise to look after. I figured that if they could learn to look after something, they'd be learning perhaps a little of what I wanted for them most.

And at first they were simply wonderful about it. They built a pen for the calf, and a chicken coop, and a dog house. Rough, you know, but they did it themselves. But - it didn't last very long.

The school was about a mile and a half down the river. And I guess they were pretty tired walking all that long way home, and all. But - well, pretty soon I had the chickens, and the calf, and the cat, and the kittens - all following me every place I went. (I never minded the dog).

And the house just drove me crazy. I tried to keep doing a little, fixing it up. And I did, too. Bit by bit. The paper was hanging in ribbons, so I scraped it off. And by the way, there were three layers of paper on the kitchen walls; and one layer was newspaper. Well, we finally got the paper off, and about a million holes filled up with plaster. And then we started painting it yellow. (I was for having a cheerful kitchen anyway).

I'd got an old couple. Well, they lived in a sort of shack farther down the river. They called each other "Old Man" and "Old Woman". Everybody called them that. It was this old woman who warned me not to stay. It was dangerous. She told me she'd often heard of a woman being murdered with her children, in her bed. "And you here alone," she said, "with money in the house."

It made me feel pretty gruesome. Because I had heard people around in the night. I used to be terribly frightened at night, sometimes. That's why we got the dog.

Well, this old couple came up, and helped me settle. I'd work, in turn, with each of them. Part of the time, in the house, painting with the old woman. And then outside, with the old man, trying to get a garden started.

I'd got a farmer from the Homestead to plough me a piece of ground. It was pretty rough land, but he ploughed it for me, after some persuasion. And that was one thing I couldn't understand. Everybody seemed to be wanting to discourage me. They said I couldn't grow a garden here.

They discouraged me about the orchard, too. I'd written to the Experimental Farm about the orchard, telling them I wanted to learn to run it. And they'd sent me their circulars and things; and the Agricultural Representative had come up to see me. And the first thing he said I needed was a spraying machine. It would cost me about \$300. It seemed the apple trees ought to be sprayed right away, unless I wanted to have scab all over them.

Well, the outcome of it was that I had to pay a neighbour to do the spraying.

We often wondered, especially at meals - we'd get talking about the pioneers. Wondering what they'd done about it, their first year. And how smart they'd been. And how much less they'd had, to do with, than we had now.

"Why, we'd never have been able

to grow this carrot," Warwick said, "if they hadn't cleared this land." And David thought perhaps we ought to be doing something. We ought to be doing something for our grandchildren, like that.

"Well," I told them, "we could plant some forest trees back in the bush. We keep using it up, you know. It's getting pretty thin." There's only a thin strip of bush left, 'way at the back of the farm. It was too late to plant them now. But we could get them from the Government Nurseries next spring. We could put back, for our grandchildren, what... what our grandparents had taken off, for us.

The children were so sweet. But sometimes, I'd get awfully discouraged about them. They were forever talking about getting themselves a job. They'd rush off. And I'd never know where they were. Looking for a job. And leave me with all my own work, and theirs too.

One day, when I hadn't any idea where they were, I went outside. And there sat the dog. He had a sort of funny look on his face. Just as if he was trying to attract my attention. And he was, too. He had a message for me round his neck. There was a note wired to his collar. It said: "We are over at the Midford's." I was tickled. They were certainly getting thoughtful of me.

Of course, they were so young. And there did seem to be a lot of things, on a farm, for boys to do. There was always the wood; and the water to be pumped. And they often forgot, being children. But - they always knew there were these things to be done. And when they did remember - I tell you, that was something!

One thing I noticed particularly was that they never asked me to buy them anything any more. Of course, there weren't any stores, and they didn't see things to buy.

At Christmas time they wanted to give presents, but as soon as I told them we had no money for presents, instead of coaxing, or whining, as they would have done in the city, they started right in to make things for everybody. That's what this life was doing for them. It forced them to make what they wanted, you see. Out of what was there. And then one day they did a thing that I thought was really resourceful.

It was on the day before Christmas. And I'd promised them that they could go back to the bush, by themselves. They wanted to go, to pick out their own Christmas tree. Cut it down and bring it in, without me or anybody to help them.

Well, it got to be noon. (They'd started off good and early). I had dinner all ready, and still they hadn't come home. But I was busy. (You know - all that Christmas stuff). But when it - you know the way it gets dark so early, around Christmas time? - I really commenced to worry about them. I kept going to the window. The snow was coming down, and I knew they were in a hurry to get back, because they'd left all the Christmas tree decorations out ready.

It got quite dark. And still they hadn't come. And I was awfully worried. I began to imagine all sorts of things. Wild animals and everything. And so I locked up the house and started back after them.

It was snowing like anything. But I hadn't gone very far, when I saw them coming.

As soon as they saw me, they started to wave their arms, and leap, and shout. They had the tree.

They had the tree all right. Roped to their sleigh. And their faces - well, they were just flaming with excitement. I - I couldn't understand a word they said.

But they'd met a man. A farmer back there. And this farmer wanted to have his barn cleaned out. If they'd clean his barn, he said, he'd let them chop their Christmas tree out of his bush, instead of out of ours.

And they'd been cleaning the barn all day.

That's why they were late. They'd had to earn the Christmas tree before they'd chopped it down.

No, I hadn't any power over life, or death. I couldn't prevent things happening to them. I couldn't protect them at all.

And yet I could put my children in the way of being resourceful; of learning how to take care of what they had. I was terribly proud of them.

And right that minute, standing there in the snow, I knew we'd done the right thing, to come here.

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