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CANADA NEEDS YOUR VOTE

It has been well said that on Monday, April 27, the citizens of Canada face one of the most important questions since Confederation. On that date every British subject twenty-one years of age or over who has been a resident of Canada for the past twelve months immediately preceding polling day, will have an opportunity of voting on the question: "Are you in favour of releasing the Government from any obligation arising out of past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service?"

In view of the grave conditions existing in the world to-day and the speed with which new and for the most part sombre developments take place, it is imperative that our Canadian Government be given a free hand to take whatever steps are necessary to cope with any situations that may arise.

An overwhelming "yes" vote by the people of Canada in the plebiscite of April 27 will release the Government for an all-out war effort to meet any set of circumstances that may develop.

The issue is not a political one; it is a great moral issue in which the people of Canada have a grave responsibility of citizenship to fulfil. The major fear at the moment, and it is a major fear, is that a large percentage of the citizens of Canada, through lack of appreciation of the seriousness of the issue, will fail to exercise their franchise.

In most York County communities, as in many other towns and districts throughout Canada, public spirited citizens have banded themselves together into committees with the object of informing the public of the importance of getting every possible vote to the polls. It is unthinkable that the citizens of Canada should wish to restrict the Government from any measure that is deemed expedient to the winning of the war, yet there will doubtless be many who, despite radio talks, newspaper appeals and personal solicitation, will fail to exercise their franchise.

The seriousness of the situation we are facing in the light of the tide of the calamity that has been sweeping against us in this war to date, was graphically illustrated in a recent address this week by Mr. George H. Rennie, of the Wartime Prices and Trades Board, who said:

"And now in conclusion, may I ask, do you remember Narvik in 1940, Dunkirk in 1940, the battle of Flanders in 1940, the fall of France in 1940, the terrific onslaught of destruction on England for the past two and a half years, the immense territorial gains in Europe by Germany, the loss of the Island of Crete, the capitulation of Belgium, the Capture of Greece,—Libya, the losses and gains and losses again—the sinking of the famous British battleship, the Hood, in the North Atlantic, the loss of the Repulse and the Prince of Wales in the far Pacific, the Pearl Harbour disaster, the fall of Hong Kong, the fall of Singapore, and the memorable words of Lord Roberts, spoken twenty-five years ago, "As Singapore goes, so goes the world"; the escape of the German battleships, the Scharnhorst and the Gneisneau, just two months ago, right up the English Channel, the extraordinary advances of the Japs in the East Indies, the threat to India, the threat to Australia, the successive bombings of Malta in the Mediterranean, now in number over two thousand.

"Certainly in the face of these grim, and getting grimmer; stern, and getting sterner, facts, there should not be much of the spirit of complacency in this country. As I view it, it is a matter of survival."

In the light of this gruesome and forboding panorama, is there any Canadian worthy of the name, who can conscientiously fail to do his duty on Monday, April 27.

THE BLIND AND THE WAR

According to a report made the other day by Lindsay Williamson, supervisor of employment for The Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Ontario, there are twenty-two blind or partially-blind men and women engaged in war industry in Ontario. Six men and three women are employed in assembling parts of war machines in some of Canada's largest industrial plants.

In a factory in a small Ontario town, there is a young lady gauging fuses. In another plant, there is a man filing off the rough edges of shell-castings. The few wooden parts incorporated in the modern warplane must be perfect, and in one great aeroplane works not far from Toronto there is a blind man regularly employed on a hand-sanding operation. There are men working at drill-presses and milling machines, and in several of the new warplants the restaurant is operated by The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, with a trained blind operator in charge.

The war has provided some employment for a few blind workers, but it has hardly solved the problem of blindness. In addition to finding employment for capable blind workers, The C.N.I.B. conducts a series of services which helps to make life worth living for those who are in the unemployable group. During the twenty-four years in which The Institute has been functioning, the lives of hundreds of blind people have been transformed by the services which The Institute was able to bring to them. Those services have been continued through the years of prosperity, the years of depression, the years of peace and the years of war, and will be continued. The Institute needs the help of the public to carry on its great work. In Richmond Hill on May 2nd there will be a tag day in aid of the blind.

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BIRD CHATTER

The afternoon was cold and the wind piercing but the excitement of seeing an unusual bird found us trekking into the quiet and peacefulness of the woods. Hundreds of little spring beauties and pink and white hepaticas in bloom greeted us at the entrance and their beauty lingered with us as we crept quietly into the denseness to catch a glimpse of this timid fellow who has been causing more or less stir among bird lovers. We did not have to wait long before we saw the flash of red and holding our breath in amazement and delight lest we frighten him away, were able to have a good look at him. Being an amateur in bird study we weren't prepared for the prickly sensation that seeing the pileated woodpecker caused us but it's a thrill we never want to forget. There he was, about the size of a crow, perched on the side of the tree, pecking and tossing the large pieces of bark and wood to the side, as he drilled with his sharp long bill into the centre of the tree. His body feathers are black, with streakings of black and white on the side and that brilliant red crest on his head. It was truly thrilling to watch him arch his slender neck backwards and attack the tree with his long bill. He is not a harmful bird as he only attacks diseased trees. We were fortunate in having several glimpses of him, once near the ground in the under brush on an old tree which suited him to perfection. He works very quickly, tossing the bark this way and that, and is soon ready to drill into the centre of the tree for insects. The pileated woodpecker is an unusual visitor in these districts, haunting mostly the more northern woods. We were really very fortunate to have seen him.

It was our lucky day though. Despite the wind we were able to identify twenty different kinds of birds. In a small clearing protected from the wind where the sun was bright and warm we noticed several golden crowned kinglets. They made you think of the busy bee flitting about so quickly from one small branch to another, their golden crowns so bright in the sunlight. These birds are the next smallest to the humming-bird and are just as dainty in appearance. A Sparrow Hawk perched in the sun on a broken limb of a pine tree with his back against the wind caught our attention, as did the yellow bellied sapsucker of the woodpecker family. We can't be quite as kind to him as we were to the pileated as he attacks perfectly good trees. He has a smart way of getting a tasty meal. First of all he digs a hole in the tree. The sap runs into the hole and attracts the ants. Then back he comes and with his long forked tongue removes the ants flavoured with sap and enjoys a well planned meal. The slate colored juncos, the white breasted nuthatch, the vesper, savannah, English and song sparrows were all having a hilarious time. We mustn't forget the little rusty headed chipping sparrow, the black capped chickadee, the yellow breasted meadowlark with his black tie, the horned lark, the phoebe and our more common birds, the red-breasted robin, the lazy crow and that ubiquitous starling (so well named by a recent contributor). On our way home as we were passing the pond the red-winged blackbird and kingfisher rose up from the reeds to let us know they were out for inspection too.

This week again we welcome contributions to "Bird Chatter" by two local enthusiasts. We are very grateful and again extend thanks with the assurance that these and future contributions are very welcome.

The bluebird comes with the winds of March,
 Like a shred of sky on the naked larch;

The redwing follows the April rain
 To whistle contentment back again
 With his sturdy call of cheer.

The orioles revel through orchard boughs,
 In their coats of gold for spring's carouse;
 In shadowy pastures the bobwhites call,

And the flute of the thrush has a melting fall
 Under the evening star.

—Bliss Carman.
 Our "choristers" are returning these days in ever-increasing numbers, a fact which was soon evident as we fared forth one bright warm morning during the past week. For

a number of days we had been hearing our old friend, the Flicker, and it was not long before he had made himself seen. This is the bird which you wish would choose some other person's roof on which to hammer his lone song at six o'clock in the morning. But spring would not be spring without his jubilant call and the flash of his yellow wing. A few rods farther on the savannah Sparrow was lisping his little song. The Savannah and the Vesper are the two sparrows which are so often seen along the fences and roadsides, but this morning the Savannah was much more in evidence, and a score or more were seen within a short distance.

A pair of Tree Swallows, their steely-blue backs gleaming in the sun, circled and wheeled gracefully over head, then disappeared in a neighbouring field. Recalling that in a previous year the Hermit Thrush had been seen in a quiet spot nearby, we decided to sit quietly under the trees, in hopes of seeing this shy songster. Across the field came the plaintive note of the Mourning Dove, but this bird did not come within sight. A Pheasant rose with a startling "whrrr". Next came a visitor that is not seen very frequently, the Winter Wren. This is the smallest of all our Wrens, with a very erect, stubby tail. He usually nests farther north, and is considered by many people to be one of the finest songsters of the northern woods. Then, just as we were about to leave, we caught a glimpse of a gray-brown back with reddish tail, and we knew the Hermit had returned to his former haunts. A little patience, and a splendid close-up view of his spotted breast was obtained. Now we are hoping that some evening we shall hear his flute-like voice with the melting fall, under the evening star".

Now with gasoline rationing many of us will be walking more than usual, so let us make this walking a real pleasure. There are always many interesting birds to see and also many to hear. We often read of the bird songs of other lands, and long to have the opportunity of hearing them, when we are missing the beautiful Canadian songsters at our very door.

How many of us hear the clear whistle of the Meadowlark these Spring mornings? It seems to say "So sweet, so sweet" and can be heard even without going outdoors. Then there is the varied melody of the Song Sparrow which he gives us so abundantly. He doesn't stop singing even when it is raining. Do we notice the different notes of the Robin, and how early and late each day he sings? Even that rascal, the Starling, can sing very sweetly. And so with many, many others!

So when we go walking let us use both eyes and ears and before long we will be wondering how we could have missed so much, so long.

There is an abandoned roadway along a hilly woods in Vaughan. We like to go there because it is quiet, pretty, and free from "No Trespassing" signs. It leads up and down hill and comes to a deep pool with steep banks. We have named this The Green Pool. We see many birds there, and in the Spring the woods is carpeted with flowers. Last August we turned off into a meadow and were delighted to see and hear a flock of Indigo Buntings. These birds are well named. In the sunshine they are a lovely blue. Apparently they enjoy the heat, for they winter in Central America and only come to us in midsummer, and the warmer the day the better they sing. We have remembered the date and hope to go there about the same

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time this summer. We rather think they will be there.
 Three Hermit Thrushes were observed this week near Boyle's pond. They are quite small brown backed birds with spotted breasts and reddish tails. They are supposed to have the most beautiful of all bird songs but we have never been fortunate enough to hear one.
 A Towhee was seen at the waterworks pond. This bird is smaller than a Robin but with somewhat the same colouring. The breast is white with red only along the sides, and it has white on wings and tail. It can often be heard before seen, owing to its habit of scratching among dead leaves in the undergrowth.

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Township of Vaughan Public Notice Re Dogs

BY-LAW NUMBER 1428 OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VAUGHAN PROVIDES:—

- (1) No dog shall be permitted to run at large within the Township of Vaughan.
- (2) For the purpose of this By-Law a dog shall be deemed to be running at large if found on a highway or other public place and not under the control of any person.
- (3) Any person who permits a dog to run at large shall be subject to a penalty not exceeding \$25.00 exclusive of costs, and every such penalty shall be recoverable under the "Summary Convictions Act."

The provisions of this By-Law must be strictly adhered to.

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