

# The Liberal

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DECEMBER 5th, 1959	"Are you in favour of a by-law to provide for Biennial Elections of Members of the Council of the Town of Richmond Hill."	YES	
		NO	X

Richmond Hill has been an incorporated municipality since 1888, and every year since it was founded, the taxpayers have had the right of having an annual meeting, an accounting of tax money collected and spent, and the privilege of saying with a secret ballot who is going to be entrusted with the responsibility of transacting public business for the next twelve months.

This is a right and privilege of citizenship in Richmond Hill which has been pretty much taken for granted. If this right and privilege is to continue ratepayers must turn out on December 5th and vote "NO" on the two year term proposal.

The system of annual elections has worked well through the years, and there was no demand at all from the people for the two year term. There was one letter written to town council. On receipt of the letter council with a minimum of discussion and amazing speed unanimously passed a resolution providing for a vote on the question. In many years experience covering council meetings, never have we seen a single letter get such quick and decisive action.

Your newspaper keeps in pretty close touch with the people, and when there are complaints we generally hear them. This year we have heard many complaints, some justified and many unwarranted. We have heard complaints about roads, sidewalks, lack of sidewalks, tax increases, engineering, water rates, zoning regulations, the police force, parking space, lack of parking space, and many other subjects, but NOT ONE SINGLE COMPLAINT THAT THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL WAS ELECTED FOR ONLY ONE YEAR. It would appear that the people really interested in a two year term are council members, and the moral is — TAXPAYERS BEWARE.

The last time the two year term proposal was submitted to the voters of Richmond Hill was in 1941 and it was defeated by an overwhelming majority. In fact ONLY SEVEN VOTES WERE CAST IN THE "YES" COLUMN.

A review of our old files reveals that a popular topic of discussion after the last decisive vote against the two year term, concerned the possible identity of the SEVEN "yes" voters. The opinion was quite freely expressed that FIVE of the SEVEN votes were by council members. So general was the speculation at that time that the then

Reeve, the late T. H. Trench, issued a public statement declaring he was NOT ONE OF THE SEVEN. Reeve Trench declared he favored annual elections and had voted AGAINST the two year term. Mr. Trench, one of Richmond Hill's most esteemed citizens and a veteran in municipal service said, "I welcome the annual nomination meeting and election, it's the only way I know if the people want me on the job".

There are no convincing arguments that the two year term will give the taxpayer better or more economical administration. There are many reasons why it is dangerous and undesirable.

Richmond Hill is one of the fast-growing municipalities of Canada. We face continually changing problems and something not dreamed of today may be a major issue in ten months time. Taxpayers now have the right of an annual accounting and the right to say every year who is going to transact their public business. Remember a great deal can happen in two years. Much that is regrettable has happened in many municipalities this year. It happened in Belleville where future generations will be paying for the folly of a municipal council. We hope such things never happen here, but don't say they couldn't, because THEY COULD HAPPEN HERE.

The suggestion of a two year term for a municipal council is a bad one at any time, but at this particular period in the growth and development of Richmond Hill the suggestion is most unacceptable.

From the council members' viewpoint the two year term may look attractive. From the TAXPAYERS' VIEWPOINT the issue is clear and simple. If the ratepayers are satisfied with the work and record and policy of a council member, they can re-elect him. There's no limit to the length of a term under our present satisfactory system. One good term can deserve another, and good municipal men in York County have been known to serve as long as forty years.

The council's proposal of a two year term was overwhelmingly defeated by Richmond Hill taxpayers in 1941, and there should be a decisive "NO" on December 5th, 1959.

Vote to retain the right of annual nomination meetings and election. Mark an X opposite "No" on the blue ballot on election day.

## - Speaking Personally - CONCERNING THE KNOWLEDGE OF EXPERIENCE (By Jane Fort Manning)

For anyone interested in education and who isn't concerned even if only financially, the 5th Annual Convention of York County Trustees on Wednesday was a stimulating experience — and thought-provoking.

Everyone seems to be worried these days either over the costs, the contents, or the results of our public education program. I can't remember seeing so many brows furrowed over these questions 20 or 30 years ago.

Is more money the answer? Better buildings, higher salaries, more specialists, degrees? Not entirely I believe. "Penny Pinching"

Pierre Berton during a panel discussion at the convention rapped "penny pinching" as regards education costs in Vaughan township. Mr. Berton assumed the ratepayers could easily and would be most willing to have an even higher education mill rate. While most people seem willing to pay their part in improving the school system, still there are quite a number of ratepayers in Vaughan whose salaries haven't risen, or never were, in comparison to salaries paid in Metro Toronto. And certainly the average farmer's net cash intake hasn't increased appreciably in several years in this township. And at present the farmer and the landowner in the south end of the township have had their land and building program "frozen". Presumably the ideal would be for each child to have a private tutor in a palatial building, but we must be reasonable and practical. Lower Standards

One question not touched during the discussion was: Have our teachers' standards been lowered? Are they being inculcated with the proper ideals and standards of excellence at the Ontario Teachers' Colleges?

I attended Columbia University Teachers' College in New York and have never been overenthusiastic concerning either its methods or philosophy. In the past ten years, American educational standards have filtered into Ontario educational circles and English standards seem to be filtered out. (I notice even the multiple choice method for provincial examination questions is to be foisted on our high schools this year — an American custom which came into vogue in the 1930's. Today some of the American educators are crying — back to the old essay type of question and answers for examinations.)

Teachers are instructed in the use of method until in some cases the method is of more importance than the pupil. Covering the material according to schedule seems the primary aim. Teaching after all is the ability to communicate and inspire — to whet the pupil's curiosity; to lead him into accomplishment and then grading the accomplishment. I don't think our pupils today are whetted or goaded enough.

The elementary course of study is too drawn out. And for an average child the eight year present courses can be completed in seven years. Assignments come in small, "spoon fed" doses.

The pupils aren't allowed to try some more difficult arithmetic. And they give up too easily. Out of a grade 10 class I know (topranked product of our three municipalities), only one youngster adjusted a powerful microscope so that he could view his object — the others simply gave up when the act couldn't be accomplished in a short time. Adjusting a microscope often takes perseverance. And it is a shame in the scientific age a child has to wait until Grade 9 to view through a microscope anyway.

Three Years Ago

In an old set of school papers my husband's mother kept. I see thirty years ago, Miss Bertha Carey at Maple Public School was teaching perspective, the vanishing point — technical point in art, and she was having her pupils draw and paint flowers, automobiles, etc., much as an art instructor does today — and Miss Carey had forty pupils in four

grades in those days. She required book reviews of "Treasure Island," "Pied Piper of Hamelin," "Robinson Crusoe," which she insisted be neat, concise, spelled correctly, and encased in pupil constructed and designed book covers.

Can your child write a well constructed essay or book report today? How many books has he been required to read and report on in the upper elementary grades?

In how many of our schools in Vaughan is there a physical education program? Pierre Berton thought it was wonderful that auditorium-gymnasiums would receive provincial grants beginning this year — it is grand. But — in Maple Public School 30 years ago — physical education was encouraged by the teacher — callisthenics, marching around the room, as well as outside games.

And how today can you compare what your child is doing with children from other schools? Thirty years ago, a school fair was held each year in the Fall at Vellore Memorial Hall. The children's drawings, sample of writing, etc., were displayed, there were singers from the various schools and climaxing the whole fair were exhibits of flowers and vegetables grown by the children from seeds and instructions issued by the teacher — experienced knowledge.

The rural school has not kept pace today — and it is a good thing it is disappearing. But let's not make the mistake of feeling that if we will just provide better buildings and more specialists we are ensuring our children a finer education — for education ultimately is a thing of the spirit.

The most appealing school I was ever in was in New York City eighteen years ago. The children were average in both worldly goods and mental equipment — the building was old and several stories high. But the children! absorbed, delighted faces seemed to be everywhere. All were working hard. Encyclopedias and books littered the desks; some were painting a gigantic mural depicting early voyages to North America.

Later we were permitted to attend several class sessions. In one the children were presenting a history lesson by giving speeches over play microphones in front of the classes. Each child had been assigned some phase of the history lesson and was presenting it (I'm sure many teachers today do that also.) But this class was different from most — the children were eager, the work was well done — but above all they seemed to just love learning.

Inspire Child

Our first task is to inspire the child, to make him sense that what he is doing is relevant, it is interesting to others, that doing a thorough job is important, and that there is no limit to what he can learn if he applies himself.

Your child cannot be the "successful" person we moderns envision if he has not learned the rudiments of how to speak correctly, how to calculate, how to write, how to spell, something of our heritage, how we are affected by our environment, good health habits, and something about the animal and floral life around us.

Somewhere along the line we are failing. Children today are more sophisticated than we were and I think they could be far ahead of us in their school work. But I don't think they are. I don't think we are demanding enough of them or seeing that they know what they are presumed to know. Until parents have the opportunity to know what their children are doing and what they should be doing I don't think it's probable a child will accomplish his best. I feel the teachers should encourage parental help and interest and not vaguely but specifically. Heretical though it sounds, a parent can sometimes spot a difficulty in learning the teacher hasn't realized the child is experiencing.

## Song Of The Drifting Leaves

Drifting leaves, —  
Drifting all over the ground;  
Withered leaves, —  
Soon not a trace will be found.  
Cooling winds, —  
From out of a northern sphere;  
Playful winds  
Will scatter them far and near.  
Falling snow,  
Cast down from a frosty clime;  
Soft white snow  
Will hide them in winter time.

— Elizabeth Dale Kelson

## FACTS and FAITH

A weekly Comment On  
Christian Life And Action  
— By Calvin H. Chambers —



### "The Beatitudes"

Within the great Sermon on the Mount there is an introduction which is commonly known as the Beatitudes. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of misunderstanding about these teachings presented here by our Lord. Quite often you will hear people say, "If everyone would only keep the Sermon on the Mount, everything would be alright with the world." This little bit of wishful thinking, fails to take into account the background under which the sermon was preached, and for whom it was meant.

In Matthew 5, we are told that Jesus took His disciples up to a mountain, probably the Mt. of Olives, and there instructed them in the principles of His Kingdom. But notice, that it was His disciples who listened to these words, and not the general public. In other words, this is a sermon which can only be received by those who have already committed themselves to Jesus Christ. Only those who have confessed Him as Lord, have the desire, the willingness to put into practice the high standard of living found here in the beatitudes.

The sentimentality which surrounds this Sermon of Jesus, has kept people from facing honestly the impossible demands which Jesus lays upon His disciples. Impossible that is, if we are not constantly receiving from Him that spiritual power which enables us to do the will of God. This sermon is not for the "do-it-yourself person," who feels that all he needs is will power and determination, and the goal of Christian living will be reached.

Before anyone can begin obeying the precepts of this sermon, he must come to grips with his inner weakness, and spiritual impotence before God. When we analyze this sermon, we will find despair welling up within us, and we realize what is being demanded of us. Are such things as humility, love, forgiveness of others, purity of heart, willingness to suffer for the right, things which can be easily attained? Does not the Sermon on the Mt. first of all judge us of our sin and failure? Unless we see this, we are not facing the blunt reality of these high ideals.

The city of Toronto was for a long time on 25 cycle voltage. Then it was decided that 60 cycle was necessary, and the city and outlying communities were gradually converted from the old cycle to the new cycle. The 25 cycle was no longer capable of handling the loads of current demanded to meet the growing demands of a large metropolis.

The same truth applies to the Christian life. In our own strength we may be able to fulfill certain moral standards which are acceptable to the community, but if we want to fulfill the standards of the Kingdom of God, we will need conversion from one cycle to another. Our Lord emphasized this fact when he said, "Unless ye be converted, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of God." There has to be a change of heart and life. This can only come about through Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Great Transformer. When the love of His cross and the power of His resurrection are accepted in our lives, we begin to live on a new voltage. Things which once seemed high and beyond us, now become attainable. "Without me ye can do nothing," said Jesus. Under His control, Paul's great

words are fulfilled in Christ, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

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