

The Russell Leader

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STIFFER PENALTIES NEEDED FOR SERIOUS TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

While we do believe in jail and longer terms of it, and the lifting of their permits for as long as a year where drunken motorists are concerned, we do not entirely agree with inexorable imprisonment for all cases of reckless driving.

This because there are various degrees of reckless driving, a charge which, with the abolition of the lower speed law, is a term now capable of very elastic definition.

But we do heartily agree with the determination of the Ontario Motor League to concentrate its efforts on curbing drunken and reckless driving.

As reported in the daily press: "Motorists convicted of reckless or drunken driving should be jailed at their first offense, the O.M.L. has decided."

"The League approves the impounding of the car and its license, plus a jail sentence for the driver convicted of recklessness, all these punitive measures to be taken at the driver's first offense."

Certainly consideration must be given to stiffer penalties for serious traffic violations, and we think that in addition to jail terms, drunken drivers should have their permits lifted for much longer than at present, should be forbidden to drive for from six months to a year.

But to make a jail term compulsory for so wide-ranging a charge as reckless driving would be to defeat the purpose for which this might be done—there would undoubtedly in some cases be a tendency not to prosecute, or not to convict. In smaller communities, at any rate, we believe in giving full publicity to reckless driving and drunk driving convictions. It undoubtedly has a salutary effect.

We believe that traffic is well handled here, generally speaking, both by those who participate in it, and those who control it. But the source of the trouble lies deeper than regulation, drunkenness, carelessness or lack of thought. It lies in the fact that a greater number of persons each year enters the driving field without being qualified to drive the modern, speedy high-powered car.

Few motorists today understand much of the mechanism of their car, and few have ever checked to find out just how long it takes to slow down, stop or turn. All they know is that you turn a switch, press or pull a starter, push down the accelerator, change the gear, unless you have a dingus which does it automatically—and off you go.

The time undoubtedly is coming, it must come, when would-be drivers will have to pass a real test before they get even a temporary permit. This will weed out quite a percentage of those driving today, and bring onto the highways a new generation of drivers who know what it's all about. It'll be tough on the man who has been driving for years, who can't pass the test, but, with the new system there will undoubtedly be driving schools of official standard where it will be contrived to teach a man or woman to handle a car without turning them loose on the open road to school themselves at the cost of other people's limbs and lives. Until that happens, we shall have to continue to jail, fine or banish from the roads in order to keep accidents at a minimum.

THE AUTO-CREDIT STRUCTURE SHOULD BE STUDIED BY OTTAWA

Half or more of all automobiles sold in America are bought on deferred payments. Without the aid of financial institutions engaged in lending money, for repayment in weekly or monthly instalments, to buyers of cars, the annual output of motor cars would undoubtedly be seriously curtailed.

The U.S. Dept. of Justice has expressed the opinion that the rates charged by lenders of such instalment purchases are too high, and that the automobile manufacturers themselves, should not be parties to instalment sales through ownership or control of such semi-banking institutions. As a result of the Attorney-General's inquiries the three largest makers of cars, General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, have agreed to relinquish their interest in lending firms.

That does not mean that it will no longer be possible for buyers of cars to pay for them out of income. It means that any profit from such loan transactions will not go to the makers of the cars. As a matter of practice, the companies lending

money to car buyers seldom do business with the manufacturers, but with the retail dealers.

Whether the lending company's charges are oppressively high is something that the Attorney-General can well look into. With the motor manufacturers no longer tied to particular lending companies, the way is cleared for chartered banks to come out openly into this safe and profitable field of finance by lending money to local people to buy cars from local dealers.

We say "come out into the open" advisedly, for no doubt, banking institutions now earn a full legal profit by loaning money to the loaning companies, who, in addition, secure a neat profit, and the transaction might better be paid on a direct basis, at least as far as the average car buyer is considered. While inquiring into this matter Ottawa might also poke into the differential in selling prices of cars in the United States and in Canada, and find out the answers to a lot of "Whys" and "Wherefors."

A GOOD NEIGHBOUR IS SOMETHING WORTH HAVING

A good neighbour is an asset to any community. He is the one, who, while interested in you, does not try to pry into your private affairs, much less run them. He may not rate the title of a friend and yet he is friendly. He has a chest full of cheery "hellos" and passes them out freely. He makes you twice glad when he says, "It's a fine morning." And a fine morning is much finer when you have a good neighbour to share it with and on the other hand a dull morning is much easier to bear.

A good neighbour is kind. Ordinarily he doesn't butt into your affairs, but if sickness comes he carries in trays of good things that are more than mere food. They are offerings on the altar of humanity whose aromas reach up to the divine.

If the illness proves too much for nature, neighbours and the doctor, the good neighbour comes in and lifts the load of common duties by helping. Nothing is too menial for him and he does it graciously and without show.

In short, a good neighbour respects you for what you are, is kind, clean living, friendly, helpful, unobtrusive, yet Johnny-on-the-spot to see you through the worst that life can hand you. Thank heavens, we have so many good neighbours in our small towns.

EDITORIAL NOTES AND COMMENT

If that lighter you got for Christmas still works, then it's a good one.

First thing you know, the Little Woman will be talking to you about an Easter hat!

Torch bearers might be all right if they didn't want to burn everybody in sight.

When a Canadian trekker from the West passed through Chicago, he could find no barn for the horses, and had to park in a police station. Evidently they didn't rebuild the barn burned down by the lantern which Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over.

Edgar Bergen is probably the only man in the world at the present time who is making a fortune by talking to himself. Even so, it must be admitted that his repartee is cleverly written, and just as cleverly presented.

To the Rome-Berlin axis now add the "Quebec-Ontario axis." So quickly have the headline writers borrowed a phrase from European politics to describe the new "bonne entente" between Canada's two chief pocket dictators. But what is an axis? The dictionary speaks of it as an imaginary line about which something may or may not rotate. That throws little light upon the matter. There is another definition. Axis is a word used to describe the species "cervus axis" known more familiarly as the "hog-deer." This starts a train of thought which probably will be pursued by citizens of the other provinces.

One Eastern Ontario lad, Kenneth Donnelly, aged 14, of Sharbot Lake, received one of the finest Christmas presents this year ever delivered. Badly burned when a baby, with his eyelids completely demolished, he has since the age of one year, lived his life with his eyes unprotected by lids. His case was brought to the attention of the Kingston Rotary Club last year when he saved the life of a chum from drowning in an accident on Sharbot Lake. A month ago the lad was taken to a Limestone City hospital where Dr. L. Noble Armstrong and Dr. Stuart Houston, of Kingston, performed a most unusual operation, using skin from the boy's leg to graft on eyelids. Christmas Eve bandages were removed and the young lad's new eyelids peeped open for the first time. It will take time and exercise to give the new eyelids strength but in possibly two years' time Kenneth Donnelly will be a perfectly normal boy again. Only one other operation of this type has ever been performed in Canada and all parties concerned deserve the greatest commendation possible for making this accomplishment possible. It is one which He, whose birthday was chosen to reveal the success of the mission undertaken, would have greatly blessed.

The Ottawa Spotlight

By Spectator

Ottawa, Jan. 11th.—In the first month of the new year Canada can look back with some satisfaction on the industrial record of 1937 and forward with some degree of optimism to 1938. In foreign commerce, in mining, agriculture (with the exception of wheat), in general manufacturing, the use of power and in many other forms of industrial activity, Canada, as evidenced by the year and reviews, has taken definite strides forward.

This does not of course mean that it seems all straight sailing from this time on. We have problems, heavy ones too, to combat and solve as best we can, but it is perhaps possible to take too serious a view of these. We are deeply interested in the maintenance of peace but our government has not the intimate immediate strain of the governments of those countries which geographically lie on the brink of the abyss, not to mention the two countries now ravaged by war. We have our railway problem, our differences over provincial and Dominion rights, our unemployment despite the marked improvement in the figures of unemployed during the past year, and many other questions which will tax the statesmanship of our legislators, but when we think of the troubles of some other countries, we can tackle our relatively lighter problems with stout hearts.

Conditions in the United States

Canada, however, will be taking a very real interest in the present session of congress in the United States and the course of President Roosevelt's struggle with big business in that country. The domestic affairs of the neighboring republic naturally do not concern us except objectively, even if we do hear their troubles voiced pretty often over the radio. In the modern world, however, the industry of any one country is not wholly confined within the boundaries of that country. International trade and international finance have helped to forge links between the industrial life of one country and another, and any change in

the industrial conditions of one country makes itself felt in greater or less degree in many other nations of the world. This is particularly true in the case of a nation as important industrially as the United States and the effect is particularly strong in a country situated so close geographically and bound by such closely interwoven industrial ties as Canada.

It has been mentioned that the departure from the gold standard has created a buffer to resist the effect of industrial changes of one country on another and this is probably correct. Canada has shown up to this time only a comparatively minor setback from the recession in the United States. Industry, however, is conscious of the latent danger in a prolonged decline in the United States.

While we will watch with casual interest and perhaps sympathy according to individual feelings, the result of Roosevelt's attacks on "the concentration of economic control" and "wrongful business practices" the fate of his wage and hour bill and his efforts to readjust taxation and to increase the purchasing power of various elements in his nation, we will have a personal interest in the reconciliation which will remove the barriers to improvement in industry. We want to see as early as possible the restoration of business activity in the United States. We also want to see our markets in the United States for newsprint, agricultural produce, timber, etc. restored to full purchasing power. We shall also watch with interest for the terms of our new treaty with the United States. Our purchases from that country have just been growing a little more briskly than our exports to that market. We shall be glad to see further concessions in United States import tariffs.

On the other hand Canadians doubtless all feel comfort from the large additions about to be made in American defence measures, which give further a feeling of security to the democratic nations of the world.

An instructive book is like preaching. The only people who will read it are the ones who don't need it much.

"GOOD MORNINGS"

I often wonder where they float
Off in the sunny air
The hosts of bright "Good Mornings"
That one hears everywhere.

We smile and say them to our friends,
And folks we barely know,
I wish I knew for certain where
These gay "Good Mornings" go.

Perhaps the dear, kind fairies
Guide them both far and near
To where a glad "Good Morning"
Would start a day of cheer.

Or, waft them off to sick-rooms
To ease the loads of pain,
Or into sad unhappy homes
To brighten life again.

Oh, surely these "Good Mornings"
Are guided carefully
By those wee watchful fairies
We love, but never see.

THE PREACHER'S NEW COAT

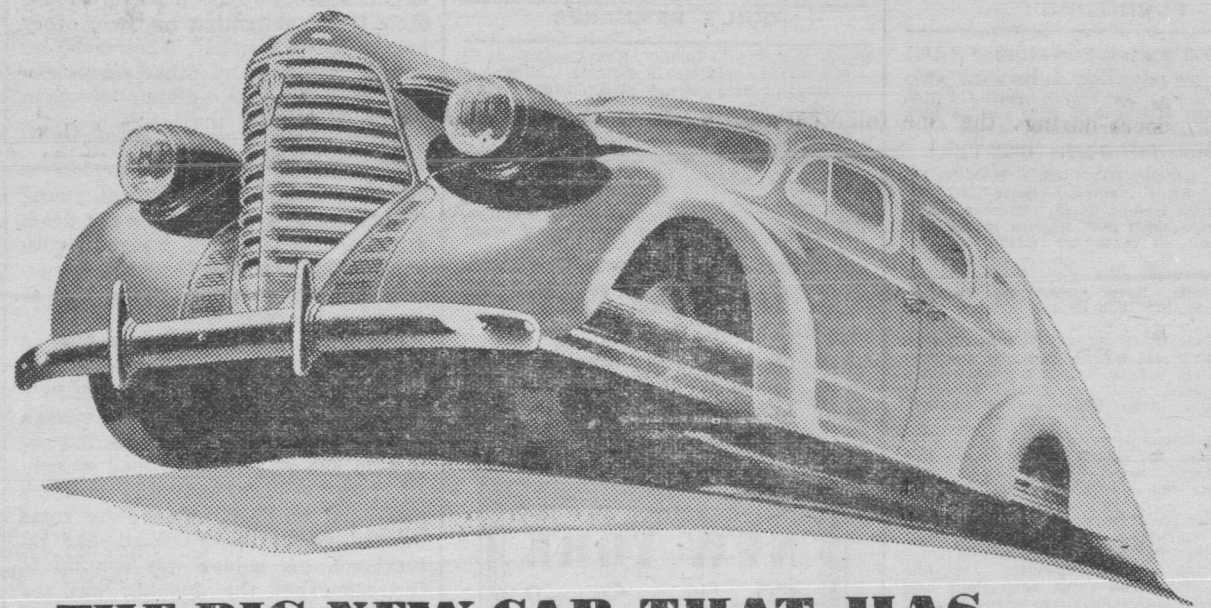
(Peterboro Examiner)

The minister at Chatham was in court complaining that some persons had stolen his overcoat. And it was a new one. The man who is said to have done the stealing was also in court, and from there he went to spend two months in jail.

Just how a minister should look at such a case we do not know for sure. As a rule we expect them to do all sorts of things which we ourselves would not do. They are not supposed to grow angry on short notice; they are supposed to keep the purse strings open and to receive all who come for aid and send them on their way rejoicing.

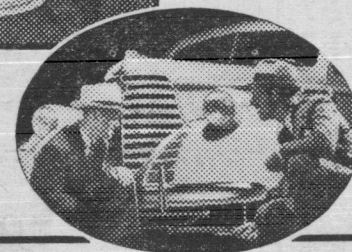
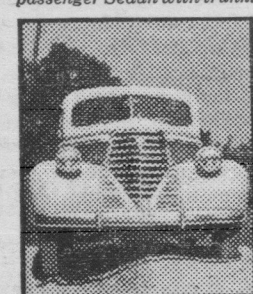
But losing an overcoat, and a new one, with winter settling down for business, comes in a peculiar classification. There is some reference to clothing in Matthew, where it says: "And if any man will sue thee at law and take thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." But of course that does not say anything about a man going into the home and stealing a new overcoat even if it was the minister's coat.

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