

# The Porcupine Advance

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## "SCOTS WHA HAE"

It was an Irishman who was supposed to have said that many a lie spoken in jest often proves true. J. V. McAree, who writes the Fourth Column on the editorial page of The Toronto Mail and Empire, has found out, with a dull sickening thud, that this also applies to Scotsmen. The gentle McAree, who must be Scottish because he writes so good a column, and has so many jokes on the Scottish and the Jews, some days ago essayed a witticism at the expense of the Scots, and another Scot made the little tale backfire into gruesome tragic history.

The McAree story was about a Scotsman who murdered his wife while on a honeymoon, and was detected because he had bought only a single ticket for her while buying a round trip ticket for himself.

Then another Scotsman, Louis Blake Duff, of The Welland Tribune, turns the McAree joke into tragic truth. This Duff writes:—"Arthur Hoyt Day a Scotch tailor, of Rochester, N.Y., met death from an accidental fall from a scaffold in Welland at three minutes to 8 o'clock on the morning of December 18, 1890. The sheriff happened to be present at the time. This was not the first hanging in Welland. Day had other and greater claims to fame. He took his wife on an excursion to Niagara Falls. While there she 'fell' over a cliff. Suspicion was first directed to the bereaved husband, when it was discovered that while he had bought a return railway ticket for himself he had bought only a single ticket for his wife. The authorities seemed to think he had a premonition something was going to happen to her at Niagara Falls. So thrift is not always a virtue."

Still another Scotsman criticizes the implication of both stories, pointing out that they do not illustrate the meanness of the Scot, but on the contrary prove that the Scot is really prodigal in such cases. A really mean man would have saved even the single fare as there are excellent cliffs on the New York side that may be reached by a comparatively short walk.

To the Scotsman there would be little satisfaction in telling a story or two stories, unless there were a moral attached. In the present case there are probably two morals. The first may be that it takes a Scotsman to improve upon a Scotch story. It is likely that the second moral was forecast by an old-time Scot named Boswell, when he spoke under the alias of Dr. Samuel Johnson. Dr. Johnson averred that the reason so many Scotsmen were famous in literary circles in London, England, in his day, was because they were so clannish that the one praised the other so assiduously that soon they were all well-known and contented.

## NOT OIL ON THE WATERS

The granting of concessions in Ethiopia by Emperor Haile Selassie in financial interests alleged to include the Standard Oil Co., as well as minor British interests, has not achieved much in the way of pouring oil on the troubled waters in Europe, though the concessions are said to assure a lot of oil. According to Francis M. Rickett, who is said to be the man who secured the concession from the King of Kings, eastern Ethiopia is rich in petroleum, the oil base lying in shallow pools. Mr. Rickett is further quoted as saying that the concessions will mean a rich return for Ethiopia.

The result of the announcement of the granting of the concessions has not had the effect that many would have expected. Perhaps the reaction of the different nations has been much different to that expected by Emperor Haile Selassie. Italy has not been frightened by the fact that the United States and Great Britain might now feel they had financial interests at stake in the matter. Indeed, Mussolini bluntly suggests that neither the United States nor Britain will deter him from following his plans in regard to Ethiopia. On the other hand Britain has shown keen resentment of the suggestion that money interests might move her more than love of peace or the idealistic desire to see that a weak nation was protected from a strong aggressor. Britain carried out a prompt and thorough investigation of the reported granting of the concessions and has found that the groups securing the concessions are entirely United States interests and that Great Britain is not concerned in that particular.

In the topsy-turvy condition of the world to-day any nation or individual expecting normal or reasonable reactions from any action or attitude or logical results from any line of procedure is practically sure to be disappointed. At first the chief effect of the announcement of the concessions was the suggestion that the whole Ethiopian question was becoming a matter of rivalry in high finance circles. One former member of the United States expeditionary force made a popular phrasing of the situation when he sent a sarcastic cable:—"Good old Standard Oil. I'd be glad to fight for

her!" There is little chance of either Great Britain or the United States going to war to protect the money of the Standard Oil or other financial interests.

It is an odd fact that in this topsy-turvy world the granting of the concessions in Ethiopia to foreign interests has been studied with apparent thought of all concerned—except Ethiopia—the nation naturally most concerned. In a more settled state of affairs and a more reasonable attitude it would be recognized that Ethiopia had the right to grant the concessions. It would be seen that at the moment the deal might be especially profitable for Ethiopia, promising not only the development of the wealth of the country but also providing ready cash for the defence of the country from any attempted invasion.

There is another point that may have been in the mind of Emperor Haile Selassie. While it may be true enough that neither Britain nor U.S.A. may feel that they can afford to go to war to protect private interests in Ethiopia, though at least one prominent Senator in the United States has announced that the nation would have no other course open, still there remains the fact that the concessions may prove a reason why Italy should not attack Ethiopia. If there is no wealth in Ethiopia, the real reason for Italy's attack upon that country is removed. Unless there is a possibility of gain, why should Italy waste its men and money in a useless war? If the concessions cover the greater part of the probable wealth of the country, as they are supposed to do, then the proposed invasion would be useless unless all rights of others were disregarded. While Mussolini may bluff about being ready to take on all the nations of the earth, it is doubtful, indeed, if Italy, or any nation, or combination of nations, can afford in this age of the world to admit that they are ready to disregard established property rights. Such a stand would mean that no nation would be safe. It would mean repudiation on a scale that would be staggering. It would promise such an upheaval in finance and industry that no nation, with the exception of Russia, could afford to contemplate it. Thus it may be, that Emperor Haile Selassie may have achieved a triumph in making the concessions when he did. If anything would remove the cause of war, it would be the taking away of any possibility of profit or return. If Ethiopia has mortgaged its future, Italy may consider that its debt of honour is not likely to be paid in cash. Peace may be nearer by virtue of what may appear to be another cause for war.

Or it may be in this topsy-turvy world that war may come in short order, and the concessions may be used as the reason for nations switching their support to or from Ethiopia on the principle that seems to prompt democracies in elections.

## ALL PARTIES HAVE CONTRACTORS

In his address at the banquet in his honour last week at the Empire hotel, Hon. Peter Heenan condemned relief road work. He claimed that enormous sums of money had been wasted in such forms of work both on the Trans-Canada highway and in other classes of public works. Hon. Mr. Heenan said that he now favoured the letting of all such work by contract as the better and cheaper method of securing value for public money. Few will quarrel with his plan of contract work under special government supervision. At the same time it is scarcely fair to allow wholesale condemnation of the relief work plan. For some years past in Timmins, for instance, public works were carried through on the relief work plan without any of the evils of which Hon. Mr. Heenan complains. The men on the work were paid a fair rate of wages. The work was well done. The cost to the town was little, if any, above what it would have cost under contract. Just why a provincial or Dominion government can not have work done in equally satisfactory way will puzzle some people. There does not seem to be any assurance that a government that can not protect the public purse from the incompetence or wastefulness of its own experts will be any more successful in guarding against the land becoming a contractors' paradise.

Cynical people may be inclined to suggest that under party government there must be contracts. If there are no contracts, how can there be contractors with money? And if there are no prosperous contractors where can the party secure its campaign funds?

In the North there will be little disposition, however, to quarrel with Hon. Mr. Heenan's methods, so long as the results are successful and satisfying. If in some form or another men now out of work are given relief, or better still, work—whether that work is under the government or a contractor, and if the needed roads are built and properly built and maintained, the general judgment will be that the plan applied is less important than the result.

## GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

Perhaps the people of Ethiopia are saying:—"Well, things couldn't be any worse than they are! Why not have a change? Let's try fighting Italy anyway! It may turn out all right, and if not, can't we quit?"

First prize for the most outstanding originality in daily journalism on this continent this year goes to The Toronto Mail & Empire. On the front page of the second section of The Mail and Em-

## Why Do People Vote in the Way They Do?

### Why Overlook Experience of the Past and Advice by Those who Ought to Know? And Some Other Questions.

There have been many questions asked in reference to the Alberta elections but the following is along a rather unusual line. The editorial was noted this week and seemed to be unusually interesting. With a couple of readers calling it to special attention and another sending in a copy of it clipped from The Ottawa Journal, it seems to be worth reproduction in these columns for the general interest of readers of The Advance. Whether all its points may be agreed with or not, it certainly appears to be worth consideration, and its various suggestions will be found at least thought-provoking. The Journal's reference to the newspapers that have been ignored in the matter will to many recall the Spanish Prisoner Hoax, Ponzl, the chain letter racket and other schemes that have flourished for a time despite all newspaper exposures. Eventually, however, the people come back to the reputable newspapers. There is always a time, however, when every effort to protect the public from those who would wilfully or innocently hoax the people results only in misrepresentation of the newspapers.

In its editorial article The Ottawa Journal says:—"Noting the comments of Western newspapers on Alberta's election verdict last week, one thought, inevitably, comes to mind. How came it that despite all the counsel given them by experienced advisers, and by advisers they had formerly trusted, Alberta's electors took a course so strangely and radically different. The Calgary Herald, the Edmonton Journal, the Lethbridge Herald, the Winnipeg Free Press—all counselled against Social Credit. But though they are published by men who are respected in the West, who have been fighting the West's battles for decades, they were turned down, their advice rejected contemptuously. Mr. William Aberhart, largely unknown, without training or experience in business, or in public life or economics, became the Prophet."

"Nor did the newspapers, a unit against Social Credit, stand alone. Every trained business and financial leader in Alberta, every economist, practically everybody who might be expected to know what monetary policy was about, wrote and spoke against Social Credit. But to no avail. The erudite economists of Alberta University, the trusted publishers of newspapers who had Alberta's good at heart, the experienced leaders in her public life—all were able to show that Mr. Aberhart's ideas were fantastic, that his plans were confused and contradictory, that they involved the gravest peril. Yet despite all this, and in the absence of concrete arguments to the contrary, Alberta's electors marched in droves to the polls to endorse Social Credit, to plunge for something they did not understand."

"Many didn't try to understand it. They were faced with a simple proposition, the question of whether or not they wanted \$25 a month, and as most of them, unemployed, or in straitened circumstances, did want it, the answer was easy. The newspapers and the others who tried to show that the \$25 a month was impossible were compelled to enter into complicated arguments to show that they were right, the \$25 a month wrong—and the masses didn't or couldn't understand the arguments; or didn't want to. The thing to do was to try Mr. Aberhart—they had nothing to lose; or thought they had nothing. And, above all, there was that propensity—so human—to adventures."

"The thing seems extraordinary. And yet, going back into history, noting how again and again men have ignored experience, or forgotten bitter lessons, it is perhaps not so strange. 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers.' And it seems a part of the mystery of human behavior that men will not profit from the past, that desire for gain, the passion for something, the propensity to take short cuts, to adventure blindly, are overwhelming instincts, unteachable."

"The greatest tragedies in history hinge around the failure of people to accept wise counsels. In some cases the failure brought bloodshed, in other cases bitter loss, in most cases defeat or delay for great causes. One might cite, from memory alone, scores of examples."

"This, true in the realm of politics, is even more true in economics. The story of inflation—and that, in the last analysis, is what Social Credit amounts to—is a tragic one. From what happened in France during the Revolution to what happened in Germany at the close of the Great War, the tale is the same—a record of disillusionment, of suffering and loss. Yet notwithstanding those lessons, the decades between and since have seen men champion and experiment with 'something for nothing,' bared again and again the futility of seeking wealth through the process of mere paper money. Economic stress, the ebbing tide of prosperity, invariably brought forgetfulness."

"It is something in human nature. The thing that comes so often, and so bafflingly, in continued allegiance to war despite its awful pity, what Stephen Phillips must have had in mind when he made Gadius say to Herod: 'The earth ailed from the first, war, pestilence, Madness and death are not as ills that she Contracted, but are in her bones and blood.'"

"Alberta, rejecting the counsels of her best leaders, will try her new adventure, perhaps with loss. But while we should like to think that the lesson will avail her, that permanent wisdom will follow knowledge, we cannot do so. No proof exists that men, in their present existence, have reached a state of grace denied them through the ages."

## Peter Hepburn Names his Gift Pony "Shirley Temple"

Young Peter Hepburn, adopted son of the premier of the same name, is reported from St. Thomas as a happy boy. He is the proud possessor of a Shetland pony which he promptly named "Shirley Temple." Shirley was acquired by Hon. Duncan Marshall, Minister of Agriculture, while he was in England. She is barely three feet tall, her age is the same as Peter's—three years—and they will grow up together.



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to have this one day a religious event, instead of part of the common propaganda for increased railway travel or other commercial purpose.

How many girls from Timmins were there in the inglorious march of the communists upon Ottawa and return? One girl from Timmins was supposed to have dropped out of the march at North Bay on the downward trip because her walking apparatus was not as practised as her talking equipment. Then there was one girl from Timmins who went by car to Ottawa. Then there was one girl from Timmins who interviewed the government at Ottawa. That there was one girl from Timmins on the weary march from Ottawa to the first available freight train. Following this there was one girl from Timmins who was given a car ride from Prescott to Toronto. The papers told about one girl from Timmins being granted transportation from Toronto to Timmins through kindness of Premier Hepburn. Last week through the thoughtfulness of the mayor of North Bay one girl from Timmins was given transportation from North Bay to Timmins. This would make about a half a dozen girls from Timmins but so far as can be learned even the one girl from Timmins has not yet fully returned to Timmins. This one girl from Timmins is evidently some girl. She may be like the once-famed girl reported from Rouyn and other places as a girl from Timmins who was a teacher at Timmins. It always seemed to turn out that this one girl from Timmins was two other fellows who should have been taught at school.

When appealed to recently by the leaders of the so-called "hunger marchers" for food for these fellows on their return trip from Ottawa, the mayor of an Eastern Ontario town is supposed to have asked the beggars if they would be content with bologna sandwiches. "They would be fine!" was the reply. "All right," said the mayor, "then we'll supply the needed bread."

Judging by all the criticism of the Bennett government in reference to the change of the date this year for Thanksgiving Day, what this country really needs is a national day for general grousing.

"WeH, we can't be worse off than we were!" as the fish said when he jumped from the frying pan into the fire.

Thanksgiving Day was established as a day of thanksgiving—a religious holiday, surely. Now, there is bitter criticism of the Bennett government because the date this year was settled to suit the wishes of all the churches. Even The Globe is trying to make political capital out of the change of date this year of Thanksgiving Day. Once politics is forced into Thanksgiving Day there won't be much thanksgiving left. There are other holidays in the year set aside for sports days and general holidays. It does not seem unreasonable