

The Porcupine Advance

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NEXT IT'S AN OIL TAX

Surely, it is not surprising that those whose minds run to taxing signs, fire escapes and coal chutes, should turn to thoughts of taxing the oil on the streets. At the town council meeting this week Mayor Bartleman suggested that those whose property abutted on streets that were oiled should be assessed for the cost of the work. Mayor Bartleman can bring himself to such a proposition this year as his own residence now abuts on a paved street. There would have been surprise last year if he had suggested such a new tax when his residence was on a street that won local fame for the thoroughness and the frequency with which it was oiled. If all the streets in town are oiled as well as that block on Spruce Street was in recent years when it was honoured with the mayor's residence, property owners will receive pretty fair value for the extra taxation to be placed upon them. There is much of logic and justice in what the mayor said at Monday's council meeting in regard to the oiling of the streets. The unfortunate part is that he did not think of the scheme several years sooner. Monday night he was able to realize that the people of outlying districts of the town do not receive the benefit of the oiling of the streets, because their streets are not oiled like the others. There were some streets almost in the central part of the town that had the same complaint last year and the previous year or two.

If the new tax suggested is imposed, it will, of course, be wrong in principle. It is generally recognized that it is the duty of a town to keep its streets in decent condition without specially taxing any section of the ratepayers. If the streets were in proper condition the oil treatment would not be necessary. In most towns it would be considered unusual to propose a special assessment for repairing the roads, no matter where the mayor resided. However, if the streets in town this year are as well oiled as that one block on Spruce Street has been for several years, house owners along the way will not make undue objection to a few dollars of extra taxation.

RESPONSIBILITY

In an address at Sudbury last week Hon. T. A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources in the Federal Government, ventured the opinion that it was a mistake to believe that the government of Canada had the responsibility of seeing that every man had work to maintain himself. The first business of the individual, he said, was to look after his own future. To carry his argument to its logical conclusion, he might have added that the government of Canada has no particular responsibility to prevent people from starving to death in this country. There is probably as much legal grounds for making the one statement as the other. To say that a government has the right to stand back and see people starve to death would sound harsh and cruel in this day and generation. Yet is it any more to be denounced than the thought of failing to assure people of the opportunity for work that will provide them with the chance to earn their own maintenance?

Hon. Mr. Crerar was in sound position, however, when he gave warning that "if the government policy was to assume the duty of maintaining those who were careless and shiftless about their own well-being, it would mean to a large extent curtailment of the freedom and energies of the individual." Of course, this is not a complete statement of the case. A large number of those out of employment are neither careless or shiftless. The worst that may be said about them is that they are unfortunate. They have been caught in the calamity of the depression, and if it is not the duty of governments to relieve distress and help citizens overtaken by calamity, then most people will be inclined to go one better than the publisher of The Globe and Mail—advocate the elimination of the Dominion Government rather than the doing away with the provincial legislatures.

People have been under the impression that when calamity overtook the people of any section of the country, there was responsibility (at least in moral way) to rally to the relief of those in distress. What greater misfortune could overtake independent and industrious people than to lose the chance to "look after their own future?" That is exactly what unemployment has done—left tens of thousands of people utterly unable to find honest ways and means to maintain themselves. Is not their plight worthy of relief? Can the government of Canada evade the responsibility of giving the necessary relief?

So far as unemployment goes, the question seems to be: "How may the best relief be given in the quickest, the surest and the most helpful way?" The answer to that appears to be: "Simply by providing work." There isn't any question but that direct relief has failed miserably. Direct

relief has prevented actual death by starvation or exposure, but that is about all. As a practical method of relief, it has been as effective as sending nothing but rubber boots and soda biscuits to the victims of a flood, or smoke masks and tomatoes to a fire-stricken area. Canada has spent millions upon millions for direct relief and has nothing to show for it but discontent and lessened morale.

In Canada there are hundreds of public works simply crying out to be done. If the money earmarked to be spent in direct relief were turned to these needed public works, there is reason to believe that effort and courage and enterprise and independence would be revived in this country. In any event there would be immediate relief for the unemployment and the country would have something for its money when it was all over. After all, the long years of relief and relief problems seem to prove that there is no other practical remedy for unemployment except honest work. The opening of work on a large scale at needed enterprises, such as roads, bridges, public buildings, forest conservation and other necessary aids to progress and development, would give the honest and independent a chance at least.

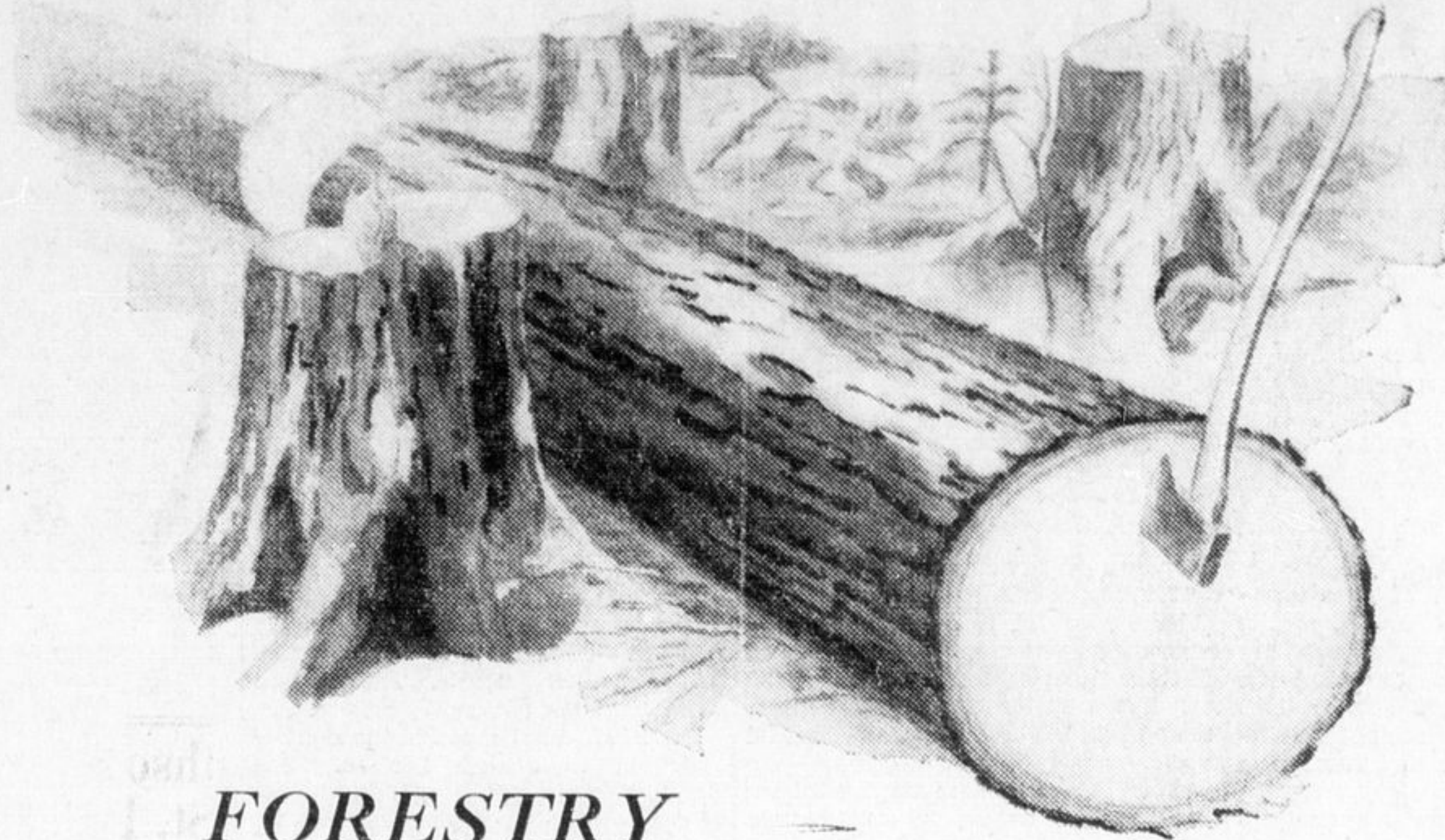
One of the big troubles with big problems like that of unemployment is that there is altogether too much evading of responsibility and too much forgetting that the responsibility is not all on one side. Hon. Mr. Crerar's reference to the fact that the assuming of responsibility by the government means a curtailment of the privileges of those benefitted should not be overlooked. The people in general are too prone to forget this fact. There are glaring examples of its truth ready to hand. Take the case of municipal authority, for example. In recent years there has been a tendency on the part of municipalities to turn all their troubles over to the province. Today, the municipalities of Ontario are not in enviable position. Imagine a solvent municipality having to ask permission from the province to build a sidewalk, or a sewer, or a strip of road, with its own money? Isn't that the situation? Provincial governments have steadily been encroaching on the prerogatives of municipalities until at present self-supporting towns and cities are not allowed much more than a shadow of self government.

Unless democracy is to pass a halt must be called to the idea that either side can get something for nothing. Governments have other responsibilities than simply gathering taxes. The people have other responsibilities than merely to look to the government for everything. That is why The Advance has advocated from the very outset that work—necessary work—is the only remedy for the unemployment evil. Under such a plan both sides would be giving as well as receiving. There would be work in exchange for maintenance. It might be said that the people were paying themselves to work for themselves under such a plan. At least, there would be something to show for their labour. Discipline and restrictions would be necessary, and these should be accepted cheerfully as a matter of course. As soon as both people and governments recognize that there are responsibilities on both sides, and that neither party can get something for nothing in justice—then the problem of the day will be well on the way to solution.

SCIENCE HELPS WORLD

There is so much spoken and written these days about the evil deeds of science that it is well to consider the other part of the picture. It is not an uncommon thing these days to hear people remark on all the evil inventions and perversions of discoveries made by science. Thinking along this line some are inclined to doubt whether or not man's progress in science has been of value to the world. Much of this feeling may be traced to the horrors and sordidness of present-day wars. Criminals in all the nations and all the criminal nations seem to have taken advantage of every step forward by science and every new invention, turning the knowledge gained by the world to the most deplorable purposes. Even in the line of commercial and industrial activities science seems on occasion to have been used for evil ends. It is said that many of the wonders of the modern world—including printing, the steam engine, high explosives, telegraphy—were known to the Chinese people five thousand years ago or so, but were discarded because of the evils that seemed to follow in their train. One Chinaman has been quoted as explaining that all the knowledge, the inventions, the science, did not tend to longer life for men, or make them happier while they did live, so why foster these things when they were so often turned to ill usages. Perhaps, there are some in this modern world who are tempted to believe that the Chinaman's philosophy in this matter had some basis in logic. It is only necessary to give a little consideration to the matter to be assured that despite all the perversions given the work of the scientists, the good they have accomplished far outweighs the evil. Men today do live longer, thanks to science. The horrors of scientific war can not becloud the noble achievements of science in surgery, medicine, nursing, hospitalization. If men are not happier, it is not the fault of science, but of mankind itself. Comforts, conveniences, luxuries, are available on a scale beyond the imagination of the most optimistic of a few years ago. So much has been said about the evil that may be traced to science, that it might be well to emphasize some of the notable

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FORESTRY

Consider the problems of the lumberman who has camps, mill and equipment. His men cut logs all winter. In the spring the river drivers or the logging railway and the steam tug-boat bring them to the mill.

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Toronto Clergyman Reviews the North

Did Not Like Sunday in Quebec Very Much.

East Martlet, where only last August the crudest kind of a shaft had been sunk, was a veritable "spot of gold." Rev. Stanley Greenslade told his congregation in Centennial United Church at Toronto on Sunday night. A plant costing more than \$1,000,000 had been erected, and the one day he was there 1,150 tons of ore had been mined, he said.

Back From North

The minister had just returned from a tour of Northern Ontario and Northwestern Quebec, where he made a survey of the needs and possibilities of the mining of the United Church.

The three Martlets, he said, were producing 2,500 tons of ore every day. Within two and a half years a community of 4,000 had come into being, but there was no protestant church.

Describing his visit there he said: "I wondered what it would be like to stay in a hotel in a mining camp on payday. All night long I listened to Bing Crosby.

works for good of those who devote their efforts and their lives to the true work of science—the work of making life happier, healthier, safer, longer. A recent case in point worthy of special notice is the battle waged by a small group of scientists in effort to find a preventative for silicosis. While the battle was financed chiefly by industry, that does not detract from the devotion given enquiry and experiment by the men who sought to help. The patience, the persistence, the skill, the time, the effort, the study given to finding means and measures to offset an occupational disease show the sacrifices gladly undertaken by science in the interests of humanity. It is believed that Dr. Robson, of Schumacher, Mr. J. J. Denny, of the McIntyre and Dr. Dudley A. Irwin, of Toronto, after a long and arduous course of experiment and investigation have discovered a preventative of silicosis. This much is sure that they will persist until they have perfected their plan to curb silicosis. What these men have done right here in Porcupine is being done in hundreds of places all over the world. It may be that science is sometimes twisted to evil uses, but in the main its work is carried on with the whole-hearted hope of helping humanity.

GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

A local citizen last week, understanding that there was to be a meeting of the Leadership League on Wednesday night, hurried to the town hall to take part in the affair. He found it was a League meeting all right, but the Citizens' League, not The Globe and Mail's Leadership League.

Years ago welfare workers and others used to express a sad astonishment when they encountered people in the isolated areas of Haliburton, Hastings, Peterborough, Muskoka and other

Noranda the Protestant minister said: "We cannot have Sunday school in the afternoon, for the movie houses are open. Those of you who are thinking of the advisability of changing the Sabbath laws here should do some serious thinking; the moral tone goes down where the Sabbath is just a holiday," he warned.

In Schumacher, he said, 60 per cent. of the enrolment in the high school was non-Anglo-Saxon, a teacher had told him. In Timmins, where there had been only one shack in 1914, there were 35,000 people today.

"There is gold in the North Country. The mining industry has been a great stabilizing influence in Ontario during the depression years. Over 13 million dollars of gold was mined in Northwestern Quebec last year. I wonder how many of those who are making handsome dividends out of that country are putting anything back," he commented.

PRESIDENT SITUATION IN THE WORLD MAY LAST MANY YEARS

Windsor Star: Dr. Edouard Benes, former President of Czechoslovakia, and now lecturing at the University of Chicago, predicts the end of slavery and resurgence of democracy in Europe. But, alas, when asked to name a date

he remarked that some cycles in the past have lasted a hundred years. It's going to be tough going for the world, and especially for Europe, if the present cycle of authoritarianism lasts a century. Few of us will be on hand at this rate when the wheel changes. However, we're a bit more optimistic. We're quite convinced that Hitlerism and Mussolinism will come a cropper long before a century rolls 'round. One doesn't have to be highly imaginative to picture the situation in either country were an assassin's bullet, pneumonia or something else to carry either dictator off. The scramble for succession honors would be almost bound to upset the national apple cart.

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