

The Porcupine Advance

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Bonspiel Observations

Both McIntyre rinks blaze with Tam O'Shanters. All Tam O'Shanters bear a number of small pins, each representing an inter-club bonspiel somewhere, but not necessarily a victory.

When the players sweep before the stone they sweep as though the slower of the two would have to pay for drinks all week.

Yesterday, one man swept so fast, became so engrossed with the stone, that he forgot his feet, tripped and fell kerplunk on his posterior, breaking the broomhandle in two pieces.

He raised his legs quickly to let the stone slide by, then he returned to the end of the rink with the broken broom, chucked it into a barrel, and muttered, "Things are getting pretty rough around here."

One rink got snowed in. The four men from Virginia, Minnesota, who set out by car for the McIntyre Bonspiel in Schumacher, a distance of about 1,000 miles, were snowed in somewhere in that long stretch below Lake Superior, before they got to the border. What a pity. A local rink, however, was added to maintain the even 64 competing.

On Tuesday some of the visitors made the trip to Matheson to see the Johns-Manville project which is being erected by the Foundation Company of Ontario. Some have been taken through the local mines. The Chamber of Commerce conducted a group to Iroquois Falls. "We are going to let them see as much of the camp as we can," says E. O. Wallis, secretary of the McIntyre. "This is the first annual bonspiel, and we hope they all enjoy it, and come again," he added.

Best Pianist In Timmins

One of the finest pianists to be heard in town had tea with me in the Fern Cottage the other day.

How long does it take you to learn a piece?

Now wasn't that a foolish question. I should have known better than to ask him that.

"That's hard to say," he answered, "It would depend on what you mean by 'learning'—and on the difficulty of the piece. Anyone can learn the 'Moonlight Sonata,' for instance. Technically it is easy. But it takes a long time to play it well enough for concert work."

Well, how long do you spend on a piece before it is ready for concert presentation?

"Oh," he said, "about a year. Then I like to whip it into shape for another year anyway."

This sounds logical to me. My favorite piece of all pieces is the simplest of all pieces. Chopin's Fretlike No. 7, Opus 28. If I were stuck on a desert isle for the rest of my days. If for some reason I could have but one piece to play. That would be the one.

It is easy. A child could learn it in two days. It is only half a page on paper. The melody is mostly one note at a time. The bass is usually two, sometimes three. That's all. Not the slightest stretch or difficulty—technically.

And I never tire of it. Age cannot wither nor custom stale its infinite variety. That is the truth. Kenneth Ross told me that a friend of his had been playing that piece for over sixty (60) years, and that now, an old man, he still found new colors in it, from time to time, fresh sounds he had not hitherto divined. I've forgotten the guy's name at the moment. Charles Cooke mentions him, too, in Playing the Piano for Pleasure, a left-hand page, somewhere, about half way down.

When Alice Giovannelli says "Learning a piece gives me a great feeling of accomplishment," what she probably means is the thrill of first getting on top of it, technically. Have you never cried aloud: "I've got it! I've got it! By the saints, it's mine now!"

The first hurdle is over—the hardest perhaps—and the piece can be played, or at least gotten through, somehow, before the work to smooth and deepen begins, the real work that is the fun and joy of the amateur.

And when the piece it fit for presentation, what happens? One goes on to another. And what happens to the first? It is left on a shelf to gather dust.

Why? Why is it that a pianist—any instrumentalist, indeed—will learn a piece, perspire and concentrate and practice to learn it, and then let it lie—unenjoyed—to gather dust and moths?

Here in Timmins teachers have told me that they never have time to play, let alone practice. And pupils are the same. We are all the same.

A man will spend ten cents to have his shoes shined—often. He will have his hat cleaned and take great care to set it at the proper angle (Ah, have you ever watched him?). He will wash his car and neck, from time to time, and fix the blinking furnace. But he will let a sonata go to seed, though it be the gem of his possessions.

A girl—teachers and pupils alike—will sit in Jacqueline's for three hours, and pay for it. She will scan Third Avenue for a brooch to suit a suit. She will work all day and spend evening after evening dreaming of the potentialities of marriage, of doing something, of going somewhere. She will even learn a piece of music, and another and another. But she will not take pains to keep them in shape as she does her figure.

We are all like that. I don't know why.

Who was "one of the finest pianists" who had tea with me in the Fern Cottage? George Teitchick, one of two brothers who performed at the Palace theatre. S.S.

In The Days When The Porcupine Was Young

By G. A. Macdonald

No. 131. Another Assessment Row

"Has there ever before been as much discussion and criticism of an assessment in Timmins as there is at the present time?" is a question frequently asked these days.

The answer, of course, is a decided "Yes!" In 1919 there was so much dissatisfaction with the assessment, and, especially, the assessor, that much of the time the air was a murky blue-black. It should be easy to understand how much worse the assessment appeared in 1919, when it is remembered that in those days municipalities were expected to collect income tax for the Province, as well as ordinary taxes for the municipality.

Assessors Seldom Beloved
In one of the Gilbert & Sullivan operas, the policeman's lot is pictured as "not a happy one." With equal, or greater, truth, the opera might have added that few people love an assessor. One Timmins assessor, who was particularly competent, and who won a name for himself for fairness and capability, found the position so wearing on his nerves that he felt impelled to refuse to continue in the responsibility. No matter how fair an assessor may be, he is sure to encounter quarrels and make enemies. But if W. F. Macpherson, the assessor in 1919, was not generally popular, he did enjoy his work. The more people objected, the more he seemed to be pleased. He didn't appear to mind criticism or abuse. "I can hold up my end in that line," he said.

Easy Does It
The previous assessor, E. H. Hill, took the position seriously. He made a very careful assessment, as complete as was practical, and as equitable as was possible. He did not please everybody, but his good work did satisfy most thoughtful citizens. It is true that while he had no hesitation in going after the "big fellows," to the limit, he did sometimes appear to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb" in the cases of the less prosperous. At that time most of the people in Timmins liked that attitude. As an illustration of this, reference may be made to the big business man in town who merely grunted when his own assessment was increased one year by over \$1,000.00, but did a lot of grumbling when he heard of a struggling mine worker having the assessment of his house raised \$100.00. "As

long as we are making money, we can afford to pay taxes," this business man said.

Then There Was a Change
The 1919 assessor worked on different lines to his predecessor. He not only went after the big fellows, but he appeared to harry the smaller ones as well. It is only fair to note, however, that though most assessments were increased, individual taxes did not go up in proportion. Assessor Macpherson foretold that outcome of the matter, but he did not have the patience nor the tact of some other assessors in explaining the matter at the time. As a consequence, there was a general discontent that worried the town council, if it failed to vex the assessor.

Meeting of Ratepayers
The discontent was so widespread in town that the Ratepayers' Association called a special meeting in the town hall on March 9th to discuss the matter. The small hall was more than crowded to capacity for that meeting. Dr. J. A. McInnis, the mayor, and Councillors L. S. Newton and W. De Feu were among those attending.

J. P. Bartleman, president of the association, occupied the chair, and he advised all who felt they had been improperly assessed to appeal to the court of revision. The mayor and councillors present agreed with this, and promised that the council would study the whole matter in the meantime, and that all could be assured of a fair deal. For the convenience of the ratepayers, evening sessions would be arranged if this were possible. In the meantime, a host of grievances were aired at the meeting.

"Singling" Married Men
Citizen after citizen at the meeting brought up cases of apparent injustice in the assessment, especially in regard to the income tax assessments. According to the law, there was an exemption of \$1,500.00 for a "householder in the municipality, or the head of a family." Assessor Macpherson read this clause to mean that the family must be in the municipality, or this exemption did not apply. To many Timmins citizens at that time such a reading of the law was a decided hardship and imposition. There were many good citizens in town who were unable to bring their families here, either because they could not secure housing accommodation, or

because they had children attending high school, and there was no high school here. These men did not object to paying taxes on a fair basis, but they did resent being classed as "single men," for taxation purposes.

Among the many cases presented to the meeting was that of a man who had been in Timmins a few months, and yet was already renting a house and had planned to bring his family here the following month. "The more taxes I have to pay," he said, "the longer it will be before I can move my family here."

Another married man ("Here's my marriage certificate," he said) was assessed \$540.00 for income tax, though he was not making \$1,200.00 a year. Mayor and councillors present advised him to appeal to the court of revision and they would see that he got a fair deal. (He did, and they did) "Come in!" or "Get Out!"

One citizen suggested that the way the law was being twisted to collect taxes did not tend to attract people to Timmins. He thought that the assessor's idea must be to drive all "single" married men back to their families.

"Oh, no!" countered another ratepayer, "the scheme is to force men to bring their families to Timmins." This, immediately, brought up the lack of higher educational facilities here, and in the discussion it developed that children had actually been sent home from the primary schools here on account of the difficulty of securing teachers.

"Too Much for Common Jiggers"
Councillor Len Newton brought this part of the discussion to a close when he said: "When the big experts differ, it is hard for poor common jiggers like myself to give an opinion offhand, but come to the council's court of revision, and you will find that we have studied the case through and you'll all be sure of a square deal."

The "Rough Guess" System
When the property assessment was reached at the meeting, much heat was generated. President Bartleman claimed that Assessor Macpherson had no regular system in making his assessments. "It seems to me that all he has been doing has been making rough guesses," was one of President Bartleman's remarks.

Secretary Arthur Booker favoured a scientific system that placed values on type of construction and footage. "When I asked the assessor for his system," Mr. Booker said, "he replied that he took last year's assessment and stuck it up twenty-five percent."

Council Not Mesmerized
Many cases of apparent improper assessment were placed before the meeting. In each case, the councillors present advised appeal to the court of revision. "No use appealing to the council," said Angus Campbell, of Fifth Avenue. "For Macpherson has them mesmerized."

Councillor Newton took exception to this, explaining that the only reason the council stood by the assessor was because they felt he was doing a good job. "Well, he threatened to have me fined \$100.00 for asking questions!" was Mr. Campbell's parting shot.

This turned the discussion on to the alleged impatience and discourtesy of the assessor. J. Houle summed up the feeling of the meeting when he said: "If the mayor and councillors can take the time and patience to explain things to us, why can't the assessor, a paid official, explain matters civilly?"

"As Quiet as a Lamb"
Mayor Dr. McInnis pointed out that sometimes persons going to see the assessor were responsible for the discourtesy, as they started the trouble by their manner, or language, or both, and the assessor, being Scottish, fired up.

At this, another Scot, W. J. McHugh, spoke up: "Well, I entered into his presence as quiet and as innocent as a little lamb, and I came out no wiser than I went in."

Ninety-Nine Appeals
That year there was the record number of 99 appeals to the court of revision, less than half of them being successful after all. It was not until a new assessor was appointed a couple of years later that the singling of married men stopped, and men in general could discuss assessments without undue heat.

Radio Station Tip-Toes To Popularity

For three years listeners have heard something almost too good to be true. Instead of clattering into your privacy with "It's the biggest... it's the newest... Buy this..."

LEARN

Ballet Or Tap Dancing

Ballet and Tap Dancing classes for students from five years up are being held every Thursday at 4 P.M. in the Broadway Ave. School, South Porcupine.

Special rate for teen-agers.

Under the direction of Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Lane.

Northern Snow

Porcupine snow is lighter and fluffier than any snow in the country, with the possible exception of Banff and points North.

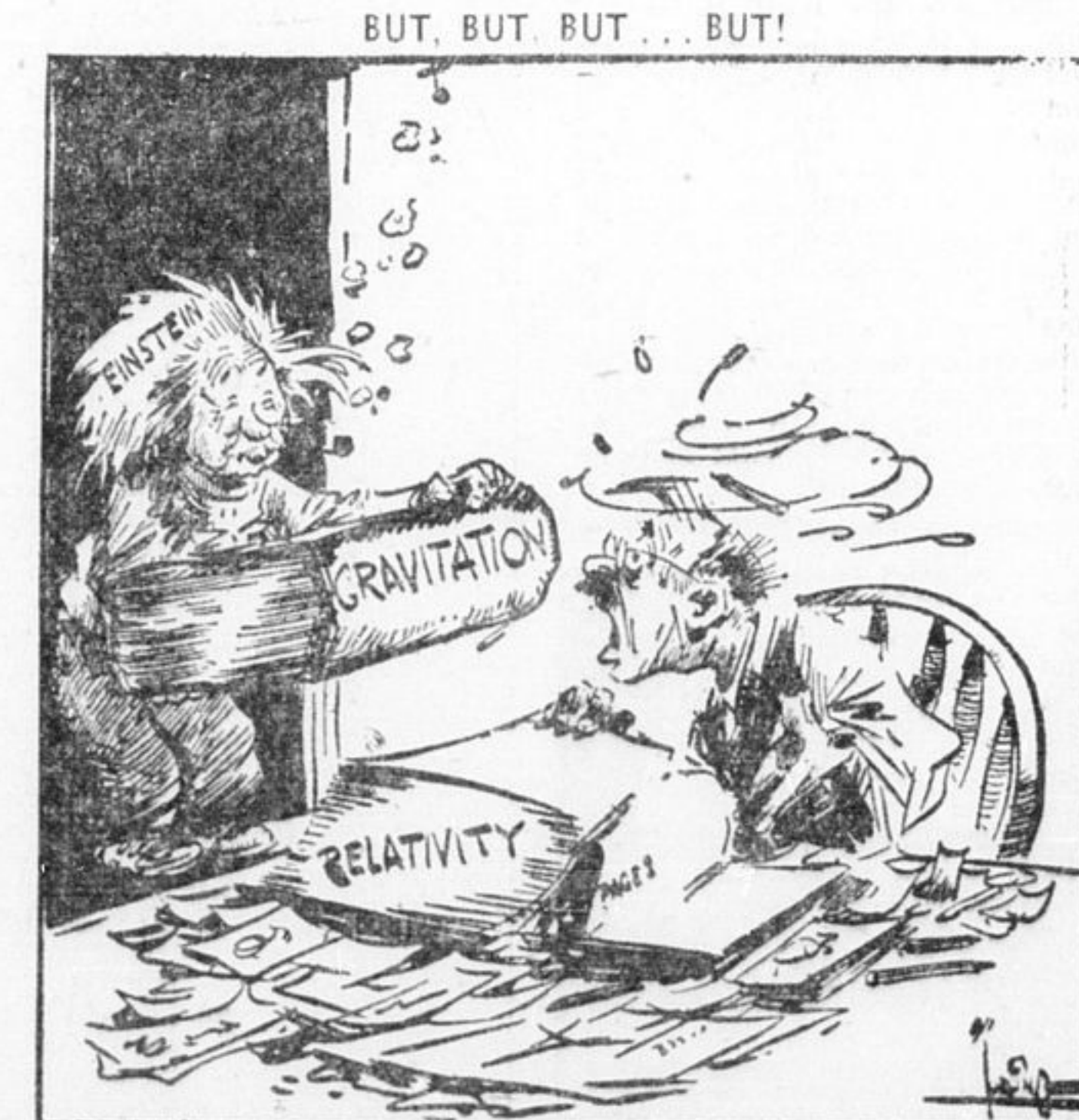
It is never slushy here. It is soft and powder dry. And upon scrutiny a handful sparkles like a thousand tiny sapphires.

Sapphires—baloney. A shovelful of it feels like lead.

Shovelling snow is begun with reluctance and finished with joy. Cannot shovelling snow be compared with hockey and skiing and curling? It is as good as any—as an exercise. And drawing hard breath outside is good.

Snow can be "cut" and removed gently like a piece of cake, if it is deep enough, which seems to be the case these days.

The chest heaves and blood tingles while the wind blows hard about. The toil and sweat are good. And fortunate is he who has found out—before it is too late—that gratifying weariness and indispensable escape from morbid subjectivity into healthy objectivity lies through physical exertion.



ZERO WITHOUT PRINGLE

Jack Pringle, Daily Press Council-labor-chamber reporter, worked for the Port Hope Guide before coming to Timmins. Since he left the Guide's standing has dropped to zero, according to D.P.C.B. report.

No.14 District of the Ontario Provincial Police is now established at 85B Third Ave. over the Broadway Theatre.

WABF tiptoes into your living room. Commercial are whispered almost apologetically, rarely more than a sentence or two, and stripped of adjectives and pressure. No theme song, no hosannas. WABF behaves like a guest in your home.

Not Enough Money
When ordinary folks, like you and me, get mad at what the loudspeaker is spewing into our homes, all we do is turn it off. Ira A. Hirschmann, a dark, curly-topped man of 43, did more.

He went out and started Station WABF, to broadcast, on FM only, good music, presented with tact and courtesy. He didn't have quite enough money but, being the type who can sell hatpins to porcupines, he persuaded a few men with money to join him.

Programs Boss Sales
Commercials, he decided, were a necessary evil if the station was to become self-supporting. But he felt that they should be edited, spaced and delivered in a normal speaking voice. To make sure that the music remained more important than advertising, he gave the program department dominance over the sales people. Theirs is always the last word.

Presented one day with a long high-pressure blurb for a record company that had leased six hours on his station, Hirschmann reduced it to a lean six paragraphs that told the story without frills or offensive insistence. The advertising agency that had prepared it was in a tizzy. But the sponsor, oddly enough, was enthusiastic. He thought it fitted better. "It married the music," he said.

Barkers Fired
WABF announcers are forbidden, under pain of dismissal, to punch the advertising message into the mike. They may not implore, wheedle, or bully the listeners. They are not permitted to use their position, as do disc jockeys, to build up a personality.

WABF's attitude toward advertising has worked out extremely well. Sponsors are actually fighting to buy time and are completely satisfied with the clause in their contract which gives Hirschmann the last say as to what is to go on the air.

(By George Kent in the Saturday Review of Literature.)

Len Masson will speak at the Home and School Association, upon invitation, on January 20th.

DO YOU SUFFER FROM A "WEAK" BACK?

Does sitting in a draft or in a damp chilly room sometimes bring on an aching back? Many people say they get "co'd" in the back—or in the kidneys—so easily. At such times it's good to know about the quick relief of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills.

Remember, both kidneys and liver must filter out impurities from your bloodstream. So if you feel tired, worn-out, headachy—with painful joints and aching back—look to both your kidneys and liver. That's why Canadians have been relying on Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills over half a century.

Give your system a chance to work properly. Always keep Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills handy—especially during damp chilly weather. The name "Dr. Chase" is your assurance.

Clean Rooms BY Day or Week

Very Reasonable Rates
Quiet Atmosphere

The King Edward Hotel

Cor. Spruce St. and Third Ave.
PHONE 324 TIMMINS

DIAMONDS WATCHES
CAREMUS
TIMMINS
37 Third Ave.
JEWELLER - OPTOMETRIST

Letters to the Editor

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Porcupine General Hospital wish to thank you for your many kindnesses to them during the past year.

What you have done has been greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
(Signed) Florence M. Dye
Secy. Treasurer

South Porcupine,
January 17, 1950.



How can I save money?

That's what I asked the Government Annuity representative.

I was trying to balance the family books at the time and told him that, like most home-makers, I had so many places to spend my paychecks, my account was zero at the end of each month.

But
He showed me a simple saving plan to provide an income in the future, that was as practical as a trip to the barber, and a plan which suited my budget.

Before you say—"It's a good idea, but I just can't afford it," talk it over with a CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ANNUITY representative, or write for information.

I'm glad I did!



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HUMPHREY MITCHELL Minister A. MacNAMARA Deputy Minister

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