

THE WAR IN 1940

Willson Woodside's Weekly War Commentary

How does the war stand at the year's end and what is the prospect for 1940? It is a baffling war, and not an easy one to measure. In many ways it strangely resembles the last one and in others it is utterly different. There is, besides the military war which we follow day-by-day in the newspapers and on the radio, a diplomatic war going on, an economic war and a war of morale or "nerves". The emphasis shifts constantly from one to the other, from the naval, as in the "Graf Spee" affair, to the economic as when the British declared all German exports contraband, and to another in the week before Christmas.

The war of morale promises to play a greater and greater part in this struggle. People have lived at high tension for long years already, and the radio throws the home front more than ever into the thick of the fighting. The Nazis, laying down a tremendous propaganda barrage, brought their "new" in the "new" of "nerves". But it appears to have gone against them; they harassed their own people more than ours, so that they went into the real fighting half-exhausted mentally and spiritually. Now it is the Nazi leaders who exhibit the most concern over the home front, allowing only policemen and children who can't read to pick up the British leaflets, and imposing sentences of a year in concentration camp for listening to foreign broadcasts.

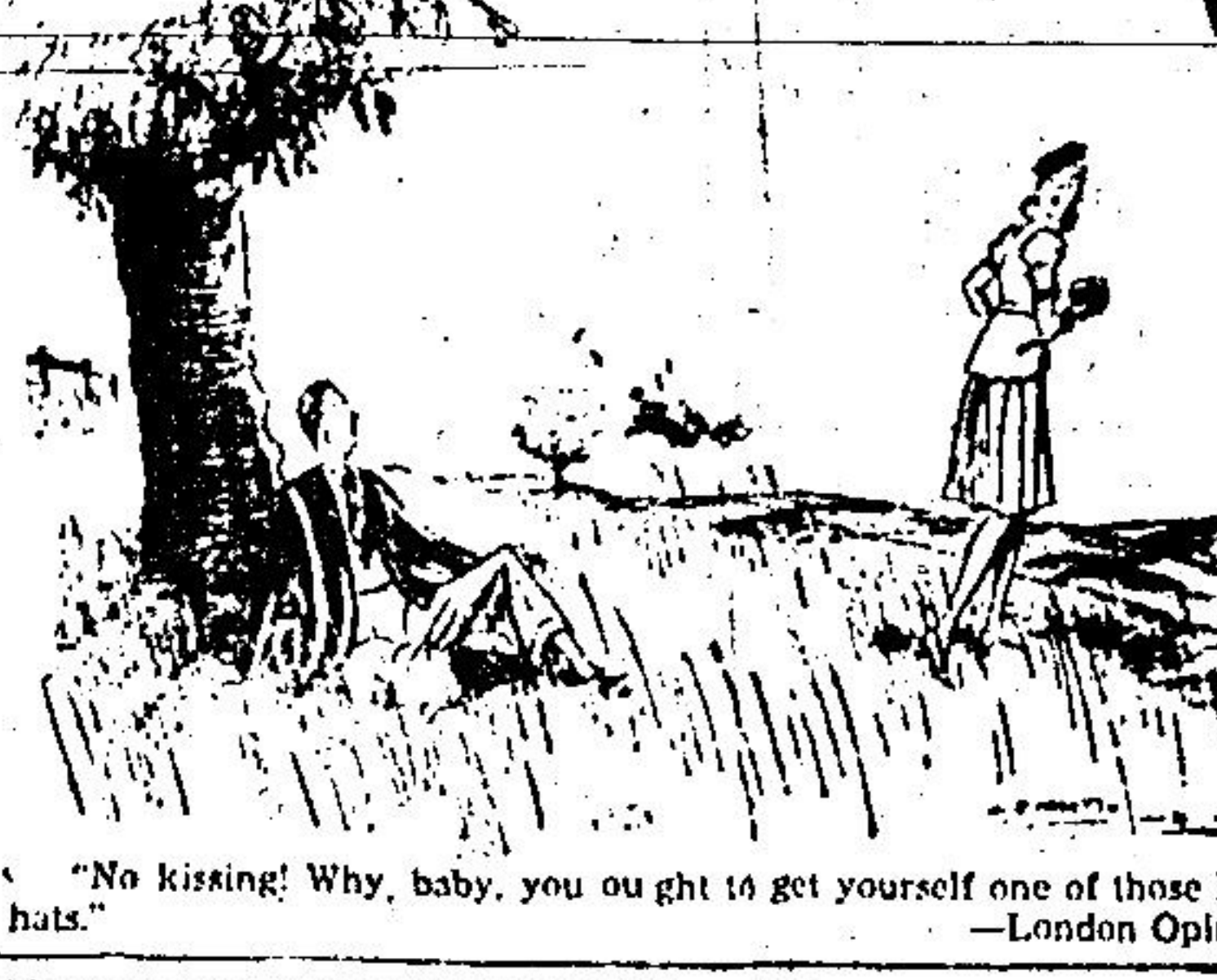
It is just possible that German confidence, never properly restored since the terrible failure of their bid for European domination in 1914-18, may be so undermined by a succession of relatively minor defeats that this strangely unstable people, their best fighting days behind them, may give in without ever launching the "Real" land war for which we have been waiting, just as they yielded their fortified cities to Napoleon without fighting after Jena. That is not the sort of thing one can count on, however, and our leaders do right in summoning our utmost strength to meet the challenge, if it comes. What is the position on the purely military front?

Far better, surely, than we could have hoped. By this time in the last war the Germans had overrun Belgium and Northern France, inflicted over a million casualties on the Allies in the west alone, and thrown back the might of Russia at Tannenberg. After four months of war Hitler's Germany has defeated Poland. The Germans have used up their chance of surprise here. They can gain no Blitzkrieg over our mobilized and waiting armies and our well-defended cities; they can only hammer against the Maginot Line at appalling cost. On the sea their expensive "pick-up battleship" commerce raiders have achieved nothing, their U-boats have been decisively defeated and apparently their mine offensive as well, and their tiny battle fleet dare not venture into the North Sea. Again, the comparison with the last war, when a dozen raiders were lost at the beginning when the depredations of the U-boats became steadily more frightful for three years, and the German High Seas Fleet remained a menace throughout the war, is startling.

There remains the air, and it is here that we were most apprehensive before the campaign began. Unbelievable though it may seem, the Germans which terrorized Europe for years with her gigantic air force has simply failed to take the initiative against us in the air. Now preponderance is slipping out of her hands. The Allies, with their own production booming along undisturbed, the huge aviation industry of the United States open to them, and the Empire Air Scheme which is to be Canada's chief part in the war well under way, are concentrating on securing overwhelming superiority in the air. It is hard to see how a blockaded, long overstrained Germany can regain it. For the Nazis began their economic war, like their war of nerves, prematurely. Years before the cannon began to speak they had clamped Germany into a rigid war economy of sacrifice, launched the Four Year Plan for making substitutes, mobilized the finances of the nation and diverted all its energy and resources towards war. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Germany used up so much of her strength in making arms that she hadn't enough left to use them effectively when the time came. On our side, who doubt but that we shall get steadily stronger for two or three years at least.

Figured Fax

18,000,000 calls were answered by London's wire-teller in 1938.
1,000,000 dollars worth of tonics were used by the people of Brazil every month last year.
30,349 criminals were committed to Canada's 150 penal institutions last year.
100 tons of feed can be put in a cylindrical silo, 30 feet high and 14 feet in diameter.
90 per cent of the fats and proteins in cheese are easily digested.
50 per cent of the milk produced in Canada is separated and the cream sold as butter or butterfat.
7.67 feet is the depth of the Kiel Canal, it is 61.9 miles long and 144 feet wide.
25 per cent of Russia's cereal crop produced by the farmers of the Ukrainian steppes.
1/2 of the earth's atmosphere is compressed into a layer 7 1/2 miles of the earth's surface.
1 billion dollars is spent by Englishmen every year—on pleasure.



OUTLOOK BRIGHT, SAYS INSURANCE HEAD

Improvement is Gaining Momentum Declares President Canadian Life Officers.

Montreal, December 29.—Confidence that life insurance would share in the general business improvement awaiting Canada in 1940 was expressed today by Arthur P. Earle, president of the Canadian Life Insurance Officers' Association, and president of the Montreal Life Insurance Company.

Interviewed on the life insurance accomplishment of the past year and prospects for the next 12 months, Mr. Earle referred also to the steps taken to safeguard the interests of Canadian policyholders, since the outbreak of the war, and gave a brief resume of the present business outlook, with special emphasis on the healthy status of the institution of life insurance in Canada.

The total new business written this year by insurance companies in Canada is estimated to reach \$650,000,000, Mr. Earle announced; total insurance in force about \$8,700,000,000, while the total amount paid to policyholders and beneficiaries exceeded \$150,000,000. These totals, Mr. Earle emphasized, were exclusive of fraternal insurance, and compared most favorably with the corresponding figures for 1938.

"General business conditions throughout Canada are better than was the case a year ago," Mr. Earle told the press. Continuous improvement is in evidence in all directions. Unemployment has lessened considerably through increased industrial activity and through enrollment in military service.

"Canada seems headed for a period of genuine prosperity, and the outlook for the life insurance business in 1940 is distinctly good," said the president of the Life Officers' Association.

Turning to the war, Mr. Earle predicted the steps taken to protect the interests of all Canadian policyholders, civilian and military alike, following the outbreak of hostilities in September. He analyzed the war clause now incorporated in all new policies issued, pointing out that it was the life insurance companies transacting business in the Dominion that they should act uniformly on the basis of the best experience and judgment available.

"After careful consideration," said Mr. Earle, "and with a view to the safeguarding of Canada's enviable insurance structure, a war and aviation clause was adopted, with the following provisions:

"No extra premiums for military or naval service in Canada, excluding aviation. Insured has option of paying required extra premium for service outside Canada, excluding aviation. If extra premium is not paid and death occurs while service outside Canada or within a month after return to Canada, premiums paid will be returned with 3 per cent interest compounded annually. Those who engage in aviation service in Canada have similar extra premium option, but no option is granted to pay extra premium covering aviation hazards while living outside Canada. Extra premium run from \$10 to \$50 annually, \$1,000 of insurance, according to the amount of extra premium. Restrictions apply only to new policies. Old policies carry no restrictions governing military or naval service."

"There was little change in the investment picture during 1939, affecting life insurance companies," continued Mr. Earle, "and it seems likely that interest earnings will be fully maintained at 1938 levels. Loans under the National Housing Act showed a marked increase of 10 per cent in the preceding year. The rate of interest realized by housing institutions on National Housing Act loans is 5 2/3 per cent. The new regulation by which Act Housing Act loans would be let to 100 per cent of the value of the property, instead of 80 per cent, is expected to result in a further increase in the volume of business. A week's telephoning getting of better results for my friends," he replied.

Subscription rates: Anywhere in Canada, \$2.00 a year; in United States, \$2.50 a year, payable in advance. Single copies, 5 cents. Subscribers wishing to discontinue paper at expiration of period paid for are expected to notify this office before date of expiry.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 1940

EDITORIAL

EARTHQUAKE AND WAR

The devastating earthquake in Turkey, with its terrible toll of human life and suffering, made the war in Europe seem but a slight surface tremor in comparison. Entire cities, towns and villages were overturned, burying the inhabitants in the ruins, while thousands were either burned to death or perished from exposure, in the fierce blizzards that followed the upheaval. Nature appeared to be vying with man in a demonstration of power and anger, and before such an exhibition of force mankind might well stand in awe and wonder.

This old planet was subjected to immense upheavals in its making, long before man appeared, compared with which all the earthquakes of history were but as the mere settling of the foundations of a building. Earthquakes are beyond the powers of man either to produce or prevent, but wars are not. The forces of nature are mechanical, but the forces wielded by man against man are wilful. The mechanical powers acquired by the developments of science impose upon the free-will of mankind an awful responsibility. Those powers are placed into the hands of man as a trust, and unless their use is controlled and directed by humanitarian principles they will devastate civilization as sure as the blind forces of nature laid waste the cities and towns of Turkey last week.

"The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it." That saying was uttered by an Englishman, Lord Macaulay, a hundred years ago. It contained the principle upon which Britain, fully conscious of her great power, has sought to build her Empire. While it must be admitted that British politicians have not always used that power wisely, the principle laid down by Macaulay has ruled in the hearts of the British people, and it dominates the policy of the British Commonwealth today. Great Britain possesses immense world power, and were she to use that power as mercilessly as the Germans are using their military might today, Europe would be turned into a shambles and civilization would lie in ruins.

But while civilization may be laid waste by war, it can not be utterly destroyed. History testifies to the truth that a nation which abuses superior power germinates within itself the seeds of its own destruction. After an aggressive nation has brutally subjugated its neighbors to its will, that brutality is eventually turned inward upon itself, as in the case of the decline and fall of the Roman and other empires. Humanity could not persist upon the earth if it were not overruled by this supreme law of retribution, and the British Commonwealth will only last so long as it recognizes and respects that law.

Just as the people of Turkey will rebuild their shattered cities out of the ruins; so mankind will rebuild its civilization after the present upheaval of war is past. Meanwhile we can learn a lesson from the earthquake as a terrible example of uncontrolled force. The scripture tells us that "the Lord was not in the earthquake" nor in the fire that followed it, but in "a still small voice" that rose from out the ruins. That still small voice now speaks to powerful men and nations in the words of Macaulay: "The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it."

HOME REUNION FOR THE QUINTS

Family reunions are always occasions of rejoicing, and the reported forthcoming reunion of the Dionne quintuplets with their parents and their permanent settlement in the home circle is being looked forward to with jubilation. "This is the best New Year's news any family ever received," declared the father as he signed the agreement by which his five daughters were to be released from the foster-parentship of Dr. Dafoe and their nurse and united with the rest of the family.

The signing of this agreement is said to have marked the end of a pathetic and sometimes bitter dispute over the custody of the famous five little girls, who are now approaching their sixth birthdays. Reports have repeatedly leaked out of impending law suits, including a demand for an accounting of money received by Dr. Dafoe for advertising in which the quintuplets appeared, and a libel suit based on Dr. Dafoe's appearance before a New York club, when he is said to have carried a bag labelled "Doctor of Littlers". Regarding the latter, it appears that the doctor was the subject of a practical joke, the humor of which was rather crude.

Every credit is due to Dr. Dafoe for having preserved the lives of the five babes and the mother during the ordeal of so exceptional a birth. By this feat of medical skill he became as famous as the quintuplets themselves, and he was flooded with invitations and with offers of big money for endorsing all kinds of commodities and clothing connected with the raising of children. That he accepted many of these and derived a substantial income from them, is the doctor's own business. Such good fortune has never before fallen to the lot of an obscure and hard-working country doctor, and may never do so again. From all accounts, the Dionne parents have profited immensely by the successful rearing of the children, and they have every reason to be grateful for Dr. Dafoe's skill and constant care. It is fairly certain that the five girls would not have all survived if they had been left solely to the care of the mother, with her household duties and the rest of the family to look after.

Now that the girls have been nurtured into their normal place in the family, they will take their normal place in the family. It is unnatural for them to live in quarantine indefinitely. If they are to develop into normal individuals and not be regarded as freaks for the rest of their days, Dr. Dafoe himself is quoted as stating that the education of the girls would remain incomplete unless they are restored to family life and atmosphere. The Dionne parents will have their hands full when the five famous sisters are added to the dozen other members of their family, but a spacious new home is to be built to accommodate them. Dr. Dafoe is still to act as the personal physician of the quintuplets, in full charge of their health and hygiene, and a trained nurse will also be in attendance. The home-coming of the quintuplets should thus be a joyous occasion, and we all hope that they will live happy ever after.

"THE FLIGHT OF A SONG"

I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year, "Give me a light that I might tread safely into the unknown," and he replied, "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than the known way." These words were written a quarter of a century ago by Minnie L. Haskins, a social science teacher in London. They formed part of a poem included in a little book of verse which was privately printed and had a very limited circulation. Some copies are said to have been sold in aid of an Indian charity.

Not being produced by a regular publisher, with the usual fanfare of notices, in the press, the little book probably was never reviewed by the critics. It was soon forgotten, and even its author has but a vague recollection of the circumstances in which the above quoted lines were written. She might now say, with Longfellow,

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I know not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of a song?

Twenty-five years afterward she found that song in the heart of a King, from whose lips it was breathed into a microphone in Buckingham Palace, and its rhythmic message was carried to the four corners of the earth. The King himself did not know who wrote the song. It is said that he had read the lines in the correspondence columns of the London Times recently, and fitted them into the end of his moving address to his people and fighting men on Christmas Day.

The quotation set the literary world agog. The lines must surely have been written by one of the leading English poets. They reminded poet laureate John Masefield of G. K. Chesterton, but when he looked into Chesterton's works they were not there. Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells admitted they had never seen the lines before. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, compiler of the Oxford Book of English Verse, said he was baffled. The writer of the letter to the Times, Mrs. Allen of Bristol, said she had obtained the quotation from a Christmas card sent to her by a friend. And so the search continued until Mrs. Margaret Greenham, of Banff, Alberta, recognized the lines as those written by her sister. She at once cabled the news to Miss Haskins, who is known to her neighbors in Sussex as "that quiet little woman". Miss Haskins said she had left her living room half way through the King's address and did not hear the quotation until later in the evening on a re-broadcast. Then she turned to her sisters and said: "Oh dear! Those are my words. I am sure!"

There is the romance of a poem which had lingered in obscurity for a quarter of a century and in a moment "burst out into sudden blaze" around the world. Sigh no more, ye neglected poets, over the rejection slips of editors or the capricious favoritism of publishers. Say, with Byron, "Prepare for verse, I'll publish right or wrong!" If it is true poetry, the indifference of editors, publishers or critics can not smother it. Although your lines may never be broadcast by a king, you can take comfort from the words of Milton: Fame is no plant that grows in mortal soil, But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes

And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect they need.

EDITORIAL NOTES

In a total vote of 119,491, Mayor Day had a majority of only 3469 in the Toronto Mayorality contest. He's one fellow who, no doubt, is hoping that his election is for the duration of the war.

An American writer, referring to the scuttling of the Graf Spee, says that the German excuse for the scuttling "degrades the lie". The recent silence of the Liars Club in the United States may be due to their inability to compete with Propaganda Minister Goebbels and the German official news despatches.

Toronto electors on Monday declared against a war term for municipal councils by 4 to 1 and by 3 to 1 against a two-year term. In every place, with the exception of Ottawa, where a plebiscite was held on this question, the voters have declared strongly against the undemocratic proposal of the Premier. By this time surely Mr. Hepburn must realize that the people do not want their right of annual municipal elections interfered with. He would be wise to drop his plan.

Engineer G. G. Reid, whose services were engaged in connection with the sewage disposal project, has put himself in an embarrassing position by authorizing certain changes in specifications. We have not seen the engineer's contract, but members of Council state that it does not give him power to alter specifications without instructions. Though this be the case, he may have let the Town in for some trouble, as the contractors can reasonably claim that they were justified in proceeding when the engineer, as the Town's representative in charge of the work, agreed to the use of a different grade of piping from that specified in the contract.

SOME THOUGHTS

When there is dishonesty, it isn't politics, or anything else in man, but man in politics, or anything else. One who is dishonest in politics will likely be in anything else. Scribes and Pharisees of old have representatives today with not much if any improvement. A sour stomach and fanaticism, seem often to be related.

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NEW INDUSTRY FOR ORILLIA

Mayor Pack of Orillia has announced the conclusion of an agreement with the Vitex Enamel Products Co. of Cowansville, Quebec, which means a new industry for Orillia.

DOMINION DIGEST OF THE WISEST WORDS OF THE WEEK

BY JAMES J. CARLYLE

"In every respect of Canada's war effort, my colleagues and I have taken and will continue to take all possible precautions to see that partisanship, personal influence, or political patronage provide no avenue to promotion, personal advancement or private or corporate profit." — Prime Minister Mackenzie King.

"We spend millions trying to improve the educational and moral standards of our people and there is no reason for allowing them to be impaired or wasted by permitting filthy publications to be circulated in Canada." — Hon. Gordon Conant.

"Out of the present conflict must come honesty and decency, otherwise it is not worthwhile. We can't forget that we forgot 20 years ago, and disaster is upon us. We cannot permit ourselves to forget again." — Dr. R. C. Wallace.

"This is no occasion for vainglory, for conquest, or for imposing our will on other peoples, except as much as it is necessary to preserve the type of civilization for which we stand." — Major General A. G. L. McNaughton.

"If Canada should come to a system of food rationing, the home-makers must try to see the essential nutritional value is provided in some way." — Miss Mary Clarke.

"Quebec is the first of Canada's provinces, first by occupation, first by culture, and first by its support of the Canadian Confederation." — Hon. G. G. Power.

"Whether the war is long or short, there will always be miseries to relieve and social inequalities to mitigate in Canada." — Beverly Lewan, (Reproduction Prohibited, 1939, Educational Features Syndicate)

WEEKLY MEDLEY

By A. MacDONALD

THE WORLD'S first successful steamboat was Robert Fulton's "Clermont". She was built in New York in 1807 and on her first trip made an average speed of nearly 5 miles per hour.

A GOOD grade of soft coal is now being produced from the carbohydrates of farm crops.

TEA PLANTS that grow at high altitudes will produce a better quality of tea than those that grow at lower levels.

LIGHTNING at its greatest speed has a rapidity one-fifth of the speed of light.

IN HOLLAND's part of the marriage ceremony, the bride feeds the bridegroom a mixture of brandy and raisins. This is a very old custom.

PENGUINS actually starve during their moulting season. This is due to the fact that their feathers become loose, making it impossible for them to either dive or swim underwater. Therefore they are unable to catch the fish on which they live.

ACCORDING to a report from Leipzig newspaper has been made from the leaves and stems of the potato plant.

THE BODY of Adolf Hitler is buried in a cemetery in Bucharest, Roumania. The body of the German Chancellor (in whose name there is only one "T") but the body of a JEW—who died in 1932.

IN CUBA real estate brokers collect a commission from both the buyer and seller.

THE FIRST practical workable gas engine is credited to Jean Joseph Etienne LeBlanc of France. It was perfected in the year 1859.

A NEW resin brake rival to silk has been produced. Stockings made of this material will withstand both water and fire.

THE MOON reflects only about 7 per cent of the sunlight that strikes it.

New Insurance Man

Mayor Pack added that the firm was renting the town-owned "Mechanical Rubber" factory building for a period of five years with three five-year options to buy. He did not disclose the amount of rent to be paid. He stated that the firm would also be buying a minimum of \$4,500 worth of electrical power from the town-owned electrical power plant.

This last drew from J. B. Johnston, a former mayor of Orillia, the remark that Orillia's cheap power was the only thing that was bringing the company to Orillia. He stated that the firm was paying \$1.50 in Orillia for power that was costing it \$1.00 in Quebec from a privately owned power plant.

Government Bonds

All Dominion of Canada issues quoted and dealt in.

Royal Securities Corporation

330 Bay Street Toronto



W.M. C. MAGEE Transferred from Winnipeg to Barrie as district manager for the Metropolitan Life.