

The Durham Chronicle

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Whoever is afraid of submitting any question, civil or religious to the test of free discussion, is more in love with his own opinion than with the Truth.—WATSON.

Thursday, March 14, 1929.

THAT HYDRO REFUND

We were rather astonished last week to see the following editorial in the Hanover Post under the heading, "Playing Politics?" regarding the Hydro refund announced in last week's dailies. The Post says:

"There is a suspicion voiced in some quarters that the Ontario Hydro Commission is 'playing politics' in some of their actions. This week, for instance, the daily papers prominently displayed the refunds of over \$100,000 to municipalities in the Georgian Bay system. In addition to the fact that the Hydro is just now trying to have Southampton get on the band wagon, it must be remembered that no particular credit goes to the Hydro Commission for these refunds. They collected this money in excess of what was required—certainly erring on the side of generosity in setting the original rate—and then they come along and say: 'Here's \$100,000 for you,' which they shouldn't have collected in the first place. Hydro is a fine thing without a doubt, but the Provincial Commission could well afford to keep in closer touch with the smaller centres and be more considerate of the local Commission's requests. Stooping to petty politics hardly does them credit."

Surely The Post wrote the article quoted above without thinking! There may be a possibility that the Hydro is playing politics. Of that we cannot say as we are not in very close touch with them. But to say that they are playing politics with no more proof than that they have given us a "rebate" on our hydro rate is hardly fair. This is not the first time that the Hydro Commission has done this thing, nor the second. Last year Durham hydro users were returned one-sixth of their 1927 bills, and on other previous occasions the Hydro has reduced our rate and given rebates as circumstances would permit.

The Post's contention that in giving back to the municipalities the sum of \$100,000 the Hydro has given us "something which they shouldn't have collected in the first place" is not very sound reasoning. The Hydro is supplied at cost, and our rates at the best are only an estimate—and it is reasonable to assume that those who are responsible for the estimate aim to make it high enough. What would The Post say if the Hydro were to come along and say: "Last year we fell down on our estimate and find that we were too low. As a result Hanover owes the sum of seven thousand dollars. Pay up?" Naturally, Hydro rates are estimated high enough to carry the overhead and at such times as it is practicable these surpluses are given back. We know of no other way in which it could be done, but we are not averse to The Post showing us if it has a better plan.

In the case of Durham with its refund of over sixteen percent on 1927 rates, the Hydro Commission will not allow a reduction in rates. Their argument, and it is a good one, is that some time in the future Durham Hydro Commission may need a sum of money for extension or repairs, and in staying with the present rate they will have it. By reducing the rate there is the possibility that if these increased charges do become necessary there would be insufficient money in the local hydro treasury to take care of it and the Commission would have to raise the rates to make it up. The Ontario Hydro Commission knows as well as any that it is a lot easier to give municipalities a refund than to tell them they must pay a deficit.

THE 1930 WARDENSHIP

Who will be the Warden of Grey County in 1930? This may seem rather an unnecessary question in that the Wardenship for 1929 has just been settled, but it will be only a few months before this annual selection will again be before the County Councillors and it might be well to give it a little consideration before the final vote is taken.

Looking over a list of Grey County Wardens which appear in another column, it would appear that the Township of Bentinck is entitled to some consideration. The list enumerates all holders of this office from 1854 to 1929 inclusive, and if it is a correct list then Bentinck Township has not been considered for the highest office in the gift of the county since 1883, slightly over 46 years ago. Basing our opinion on the oft-made statement that the Wardenship is an honor to the municipality he represents more than a personal one, we think it is high time Bentinck was handed the honor and would like to see this done next year.

It would hardly be fair to place the blame for this apparent neglect wholly on the County Councillors. We think ourselves that Bentinck must also take part of the blame, if any there is. Bentinck Township has long been noted for turning out its township officials fast and often and it may be that this has had something to do with passing them up in the selection of a Warden. While the honor belongs rightly to the municipality, the representative of that municipality must have had some experience before he is considered capable of guiding the County Councillors. We would like to see Bentinck's claim recognized next year, but she cannot expect it with a new reeve at the helm.

CANADA'S NEW BUDGET

With the exception that the sales tax has been reduced from three to two per cent, the Robb Budget has made only minor changes in the tariff and is nothing to grow enthusiastic over. Neither is it anything to worry about. To all practical purposes it is the same old thing as in 1928. It is true that the tax on railway and steamship tickets has been abolished, the tax on cables and telegrams has been thrown overboard, and a few minor changes made, but this will not be noticeable to the general run of citizens whose transportation costs are almost nil and who possibly do not send an average of two telegrams a year. Frankly, the general taxpayer would have noticed it more had the budget cut off the present tax on matches or some of the other smaller taxes that he can see and from which he would derive noticed and immediate benefit.

The announcement that next year the sales tax would probably be reduced to one per cent or abolished altogether is a step in the right direction as it is high time some of these things were done

away with. The stamp on cheques is another thing we should have been pleased to have seen scrapped.

There are many of these smaller taxes we would like to see dispensed with, including the Provincial Government's Amusements tax on every ticket costing over 25 cents. Since the war we have been taxed for this, and the other thing until the man who owns a small business is compelled to spend altogether too much time in free bookkeeping for the governments.

ONE-CENT POSTAGE

Citizens of Toronto have asked for a one-cent rate on all drop letters, but their request has been denied by the postal authorities at Ottawa. And why not? Compared with the smaller towns, Toronto and other places where free delivery is in vogue are doing very well. A city dweller, or one living on a rural route in the country has the privilege of free mail delivery. Residents of the smaller towns do not have that privilege, and only a few months ago the postal authorities doubled the rental of post office boxes to them.

This to our mind is unfair. Why should the dwellers in the smaller towns be penalized for the privilege of going to the post office and taking their mail out of a rent-paid box while their brethren in the cities and country have their mail delivered to their doors free of charge? There should be several changes in the postal regulations before the one-cent drop letter postage is adopted.

EARLIER START SUGGESTED

The suggestion of A. P. Mewhinney, the Liberal member from North Bruce that the Ontario Legislature commence its daily session at 7.45 in the morning was not taken very seriously. Anyway, it has not been put in force. The idea came to the North Bruce member when an earlier start was mooted for the public accounts committee, and he afterwards explained to newspapermen that he cannot sleep after half-past five in the morning. The Bruceite may be telling the truth but we were always of the opinion that next to policemen the country's politicians liked their "shut-eye" period best.

Mr. Mewhinney's suggestion made us think of the story of the farmer who remarked that he was always up and about by four o'clock in the morning. His friend, another farmer, avowed that that was not a bad time to get up, but that four o'clock was rather late for him. He was always up not later than two o'clock. The first farmer naturally thought his friend was "spoofing" a bit and one morning when he awoke around three o'clock decided to take a run over to Bill's and catch him in bed. Nearing the house he saw a light in the kitchen, and Bill's wife opened the door. She was up to her elbows in the wash-tub, and to the inquiry, "Is Bill around?" answered: "Well, he was around early this morning but I don't know where you will find him this time of day."

Mr. Mewhinney may not sleep as long as some of us, but we would like to wake up some morning at five-thirty, call at his room and catch him in bed.

ANOTHER NUISANCE?

Is the Starling to become a nuisance similar to the English Sparrow? It would seem so, judging by what those who claim to know tell us. According to a newspaper dispatch last week, these birds, which spend the entire winter here, attack the fruit buds in the spring, and as once they get a start in a community they increase rapidly, there is a poor future outlook for fruit. At present the complaint comes from the Niagara peninsula.

Starlings are also said to be detrimental to other bird life. They remain here all season, and being on the ground in the early spring, the other birds must seek other quarters or fight—and the starlings are good fighters. These birds were released on the continent at New York in 1913, made their first appearance in Canada about 1920 at Port Hope, and now are beginning to spread up into this part of Ontario.

If they are to become as great a pest as the English sparrow, there is little thanks to the man or society who released them and it would seem that even now is too late to hope to get rid of them.

We may pay for this interference with Nature. Had Nature wanted the starlings or the sparrows here, it is quite likely she would have so placed them. Anyway, they're here, and we'll have to make the best of it.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

And isn't it the truth? The man or woman who doesn't know his place is the most hurt when placed in it?

Dresses covered with bells are said to be the coming vogue. Now, who can discover some belles who will be covered with dresses?

There is another revolution going on in Mexico. This is not intended as news. Just another chapter of a continued story.

The breaking up of the Thompson ring seems to be Chicago's next big job, and if she can choose a chief magistrate who is law-abiding and sincere, he can, in a few months, make the Lake Michigan city rather unhealthy for the law-breakers and force them to move on to pastures new.

A Spanish woman named Sofia Hernandez Molpeceres gave birth to quintuplets last week and gains a place in the news pages of the world. A mere nothing. A woman with a name like that is liable to do anything.

An exchange tells us that the pupil of the eye of a poisonous snake is semi-elliptical, like that of a cat and that the non-poisonous snakes have circular pupils. This information will be useful to Chronicle readers. Look 'em in the eye. If it's circular, stand still; if it's semi-elliptical, scratch gravel.

"Ontario Government Extravagant, say Members of Opposition". This is a newspaper heading covering a dispatch from Toronto. Nothing to get excited over here! It's not news. When the opposition members are satisfied with the Government's expenditure and commend them for it, that will be real news and worth at least a column.

General Umberto Nobile, commander of the dirigible *Italia*, lost in the Arctic, has been censured and the responsibility for the disaster placed on his shoulders. The commission was appointed by Premier Mussolini and further censured Gen. Nobile for allowing himself to be saved while his crew perished. Evidently the high morale of the sea is to be injected into the air force.

GREY COUNTY WARDENS

- 1854—Richard Carney, Owen Sound.
- 1855-1857—W. K. Flesher, Artermesia.
- 1858-1860—Geo. Jackson, Bentinck.
- 1861-1862—W. K. Flesher, Artermesia.
- 1863—George Jackson, Bentinck.
- 1864—John McDonald, Sydenham, James Kerr, Euphrasia.
- 1865—W. K. Flesher, Artermesia.
- 1866—Thos. Gamey, Desprey.
- 1867—W. K. Flesher, Artermesia.
- 1868-1870, inclusive—Samuel J. Lane, Owen Sound.
- 1871—James Edge, Glenelg.
- 1872—Samuel J. Lane, Owen Sound.
- 1873—Hugh Reid, Sydenham.
- 1874—James Patterson, Euphrasia.
- 1875—George Jackson, Bentinck.
- 1876—Joseph Rorke, Collingwood.
- 1877—Robert McGee, Melancthon.
- 1878—James Murdock, Egremont.
- 1879—Dr. C. E. Barnhart, Owen Sound.
- 1880—Finlay MacRae, Glenelg.
- 1881—Dr. W. S. Christoe, Artermesia.
- 1882—C. R. Sing, St. Vincent.
- 1883—David McNichol, Bentinck.
- 1884—James Cameron, Holland.
- 1885—John Chisholm, Owen Sound.
- 1886—Victor Lang, Normanby.
- 1887—Nicholas Read, St. Vincent.
- 1888—John Clark, Keppel.
- 1889—R. McNaught, Sarawak.
- 1890—Charles Moffat, Glenelg.
- 1891—Thomas Gilray, Euphrasia.
- 1892—James Cochrane, Derby.
- 1893—Samuel Rodgers, Proton.
- 1894—Joseph Pringle, Sullivan.
- 1895—George Binnie, Glenelg.
- 1896—James Anderson, Sullivan.
- 1897—James Allan, Egremont.
- 1898—M. Richardson, Artermesia.
- 1899—Charles Gordon, Owen Sound.
- 1900—John McDonald, Chatsworth.
- 1901—G. A. Brown, Meaford.
- 1902—Chas. McKinnon, Durham.
- 1903—D. K. Preston, Osprey.
- 1904—Joseph Pringle, Sullivan.
- 1905—John McArthur, Artermesia.
- 1906—J. M. Thompson, Sydenham.
- 1907—Henry Pedwell, Thornbury.
- 1908—Robert J. Ball, Hanover.
- 1909—Robert Agnew, Meaford.
- 1910—Andrew Schenk, Normanby.
- 1911—S. R. McKnight, Collingwood.
- 1912—John Johnston, Keppel.
- 1913—Dr. W. A. Mearns, Hanover.
- 1914—William Brees, Chatsworth.
- 1915—Wm. Calder, Durham.
- 1916—E. A. Cordingly, Shallow Lake.
- 1917—Joseph Goodfellow, Proton.
- 1918—John A. Boyd, Markdale.
- 1919—John McQuaker, Owen Sound.
- 1920—Irwin Morrison, Osprey.
- 1921—William H. Sing, Meaford.
- 1922—Robert Howey, Holland.
- 1923—Emerson Brown, Collingwood.
- 1924—Daniel McTavish, Flesherston.
- 1925—T. R. McKenzie, Artermesia.
- 1926—John T. Miller, Euphrasia.
- 1927—Chas. Holm, Normanby.
- 1928—Nell Calder, Egremont.
- 1929—Hector C. Moody, Dundalk.

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

Miss Violet McClymont of Toronto is visiting at her home here.
 Rev. E. Hayes is attending the sessions of the Orange Grand Lodge of Ontario West at Windsor this week.
 Miss Margaret E. Derby, R.N., Stratford, is visiting with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Derby, here.
 Mrs. Thomas Arkell of Palmerston spent over the week-end with her daughter, Mrs. M. H. Bailey.
 Mr. T. H. McClocklin of Toronto is in town visiting his brother, Mr. E. D. McClocklin, ill in Durham Hospital.
 Mr. and Mrs. A. W. H. Lauder are in New York City this week in attendance at the convention of the Great-West Life Assurance Company.
 Mrs. Gilbert McKechnie left last week for Washington D. C., for the bedside of her sister, Miss Marion Gun, ill with pneumonia at the hospital in that city.
 Messrs. W. R. Watson and R. Whitmore are in Windsor this week, delegates from Durham Lodge to the annual meeting of the Orange Grand Lodge of Ontario West.
 Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Crawford of Regina, Sask., who have been visiting their daughter, Mrs. Skales, Mount Forest, visited last week with Mr. and Mrs. John Morrison and other old Durham friends.
 Mr. John Bryon is a patient in Durham hospital undergoing treatment for an old trouble. It is hoped he will soon be sufficiently improved to return to his home.
 Mrs. Cain of Listowel visited for a few days with her sister, Mrs. Joseph Noble, here, and left this week to visit with relatives at Hanover.
 Miss M. McLean, Lambton street, who has been a patient at Durham Hospital for the past couple of months, is so far recovered that she was able to return to her home on Tuesday.



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BORN
 Aranoff.—In Durham March 2, 1929, to Mr. and Mrs. Aranoff, a son (Alexander Aranoff), (nee Treut Miami Beach, Florida, a born).
 Bell.—In Durham Red pit, March 11, 1929, to A. M. Bell, a son (Alexander Bell).
 Cook.—In Detroit, Mich., 1929, to Mr. and Mrs. Erme

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