

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, May 15, 1930

POOR VISIBILITY

These two words have come into quite common use since commercial flying has sprung into existence, but there are a lot of other things into which they would fit quite nicely. Among them would be the lack of judgment displayed by last year's Council in not insisting that all property owners living on the front street put in the stub sewers last summer when the main sewer was being built and the paving laid.

This neglect is in evidence today at the main corner where the pavement, not yet nearly a year old, it being cut to make sewer connections for the new Bank of Commerce building now being erected. The Bank of Commerce is not to blame for the reason that at the time the sewer was being laid they did not own the property, and but for the disastrous fire of last October might never have secured it.

The Council cannot plead anything but neglect and shortsightedness, for they were warned that it was their duty to insist on every connection being made. They failed to act, however, and the result is that almost before the new pavement is cold the butchering process has begun.

It is all very well to argue that they do these things in the city. They have machinery there to make the necessary repairs. It might be all very well to have to put up with these things in Durham on the outskirts, but to allow any property owner in the main part of the town to pass up the opportunity of having sewer connections made was, to say the least, mighty poor business.

IS IT SLANDER?

A book recently issued and written by Charles Hale Harrison is said to be a slander on the Canadian troops in France and overseas in the last great war. The Canadians have been accused of looting Arras, and the actions of the Canadian soldiers in France generally put to severe criticism. Canadian generals and officers are branded as cowards, and it is hard to pick out one meritorious thing the Canadian Expeditionary Force did in the four years they spent overseas. The London Daily Mail waxes indignant and other newspapers in England and Canada have not hesitated to express their disapproval of the new book.

But why worry? There is an old saying that there never was a good thing made in the world that someone else could not make it worse and sell for less. And so it is with the Canadian troops. The writer has been connected with the army long enough to know that it is not composed wholly of saints; but taken generally you find a pretty good bunch of fellows. We have little doubt that the Canadian troops individually committed indiscretions but their record at the front as reported in the official records of the time place the Canadian troops among the leaders in the big battles against the Central powers. Their work in smashing the Hindenburg line at Passchendaele, the Somme, and hundreds of other engagements, is officially chronicled and cannot be refuted by any of the writings of Charles Hale Harrison or any of the other dyspeptic or liver-troubled writers who have sprung up in the last decade. Before we place any confidence in Mr. Harrison's charges against the Canadian troops at the front, we should like to know what part he himself took in smashing back the Huns.

No, the Canadian troops were not saints. It took a different stamp of man to live four years in the mire and mud of Flanders and successfully combat the German and Austrian armies, acknowledged the most highly trained and efficient in the world. As an answer to Mr. Harrison about the only thing we can think of that they will allow us to print in a family journal is "Pooh!"

FOOLISH BUSINESS

The editor of the Warton Canadian-Echo in the last issue of that paper under the heading of "Sinn Feinism" tells of havng refused advertising for one of Owen Sound's larger stores for no other reason than he wanted to be loyal to his own community and it "would hardly be consistent for us to allow our columns to be used for the seduction of Warton money over to build up the business interests of that town to the detriment of Warton merchants."

All well and good. The sentiment is fine, but it wasn't good business—Warton merchants are in business to make a living and save a little money for their old age if they can. So also should the editor of the Canadian-Echo. Newspapers must make money if they are to keep going, and their advertising columns are all they have to draw from.

We were much impressed with the loyalty of the Canadian-Echo editor to his fellow business associates, so impressed, in fact, that we took the liberty of measuring up the amount of advertising carried by these enterprising business men. The Canadian-Echo

Echo is a 6-column, 8-page, all home print paper, and it is a good one, well edited, newsy, and a credit to the town and the editor. Roughly speaking it puts out in its pages 960 inches of reading matter and advertising each week. Our check-up revealed that last week of the 960 inches of space available the business men of the town used only 93 inches of local advertising, or less than ten per cent. of the space available. Advertising experts say a newspaper must be 50 to 60 per cent advertisements before it is on a sound business basis. We know little of Warton, but would judge that a town of its size that cannot support a good local newspaper with any more than ten per cent advertising has little complaint if that newspaper gets out into the highways and byways and picks it up where it can. We commend the loyalty of the Canadian-Echo but think it is costing it too much money.

The Chronicle has been in the same predicament on previous occasions, has done exactly the same as the Canadian-Echo, and we must say that we are just about "fed up" on this town loyalty stuff as it is usually practised. We are arriving at the opinion that if the local merchants are so dead that they do not care to advertise their wares they have no complaint if some outside firm senses this weakness and uses the space that should be taken up locally. Surely a newspaper Editor is not justified in refusing business from anywhere he can get it, providing it is clean and legitimate, if his town business associates are so penurious or lethargic that they would sooner see him starve than boost their own business.

Frankly, we think the Canadian-Echo was wrong. There will not be even a business man's "thank you" coming to the editor. On the other hand, a few good peppy advertisements from some outside business houses might waken up the local merchants to the fact that they have either got to get out from in under or else go down with the boat.

Getting business today is a proposition that demands action and a lot of these small towns are just beginning to find it out. This may not sound nice to a lot of business men but it is the truth and we challenge them to deny it. There are a good many newspapers throughout the country that have stuck to their guns on the town loyalty cry and refused outside advertising. They are getting fewer each year. If the business men of the smaller towns were as loyal, there would be no need for all the travelling printing solicitors who take the small town printing to the city houses that can be done just as cheaply and well at home. This "Be loyal to your own community" stuff is all right and the proper spirit, but the Chronicle has found that the merchandising houses that spend the most for advertising are the cheapest, and that it's to much to expect a newspaper to turn down business for the protection of a lot of fellow business men who in the end will laugh up their sleeve and send their job printing out of town.

But we are not running the Warton Canadian-Echo. We are not trying to put any of our notions into its head. At that we think time will justify our statements.

FIRE PREVENTION

Durham can sympathize with Fordwich in the conflagration early last Sunday morning when nearly the whole business district was burned. Fires of magnitude in a village like Fordwich are a calamity and while the loss, something like \$40,000, may seem small to those who read of these things every day in the daily press, it is a very serious thing for Fordwich and like places. It is altogether likely it will be a long time before the village recovers from the shock. Buildings are not built today in the smaller centres as they were thirty years ago.

There should be a lesson for other centres in fires of this nature, and those citizens who own their homes and business places should have more interest in seeing that they are amply protected in case a similar occurrence should happen in their own community. Fire protection is a necessity in any community and should be of the best. It is poor policy to do without fire protection for the reason that it costs money. Fires cost a lot of money even with a good brigade, but they cost a lot more if that brigade is not given every assistance by the purchase of sufficient equipment to enable them to combat these things as they occur. No matter how careful we are, fires are bound to happen. Even if the building in which they start is gutted and rendered a total loss, any town of a thousand population or over should have a fire equipment that would prevent a whole front street from being destroyed.

One big fire in any community would almost pay for the purchase of the proper equipment and in our opinion it is a foolish community that does not at least take the matter seriously enough to investigate the details as thoroughly as if the matter were more intimately connected with their own business.

Do not let us say that we cannot afford it until we have given the matter the fullest consideration. Perhaps we cannot afford to be without it.

Miss A. C. Macphail got the last word in her exchange with Hon. E. Lapointe, says one of our exchanges. But why worry? We know of a good many other women who also get the last word—and often the first.

And now Aimee Semple McPherson has been shocked at Paris. That's a horse apiece. Aimee certainly shocked a lot of us a couple of years ago, and how! Who'll win the third throw?

LACK KNOWLEDGE OF OWN HISTORY

Mrs. B. A. Fisher, 81 Years of Age, Says Canadians Cannot Trace Family Tree Nor Do They Know History of Canada.

As a splendid example of the active and sturdy pioneer stock of early Ontario, Mrs. B. A. Fisher, of Toronto, believes that the younger generation should know more of their family history and Canadian history in general. Mrs. Fisher, who is in her 81st year, has a wide knowledge of Canadian history, and can trace back her family history for at least five generations. She is also much travelled. She has been five times across the coast since 1916 and has also been to Alaska recently.

Born in Chatham, Mrs. Fisher can remember the time when the first railway came to the town and recalls the day when she came to London by sleigh before the railroad was built. Her mother and father were both born in London Township, and were carried from the McStay homestead, built by Mrs. Fisher's grandmother. The house, which is between the third and fourth concession, London Township, near Masonville, is still standing.

SUSPICIONS OF FOUL PLAY IN SUPPOSED CAR ACCIDENT

The decision of Hon. Mr. Justice Kelly in the action brought by Mrs. Annie Belbeck against the township of Brant, in which he dismissed the suit for \$10,000 damages for the death of her husband, William Belbeck, whose body was found in Deer Creek on the 14th concession of Brant in August last, late at night, or in the early hours of the morning, and his declaration that Mr. Belbeck was killed before he went over the abutment into the creek, has aroused much interest in the community, and many people are wondering what the next step will be in connection with the case.

There are strong suspicions in some quarters that Belbeck was the victim of foul play, although there was no evidence submitted, either at the inquest which was held soon after the fatality, or at the trial held here this week, which would involve any person. County Crown Attorney J. W. Freeborn, when spoken to regarding the matter stated that still further investigation would be made, in view of the decision of Hon. Mr. Justice Kelly.

It is alleged that there is bad blood between the Belbeck family and another family in that neighborhood, and whether this has anything to do with the matter is a matter for investigation. The medical evidence given at the trial was the influencing factor in the decision dismissing the case, but his positive assertion that the man had been killed whether accidentally or by some person or persons, before he fell into the creek, is the thing to be cleared up. It is admittedly a very difficult case, but no stone will be left unturned in an effort to satisfy the authorities that all the facts have been unearthed.

LAST HAND SET DAILY MOURNS DEATH OF EDITOR

Charles C. Blackader, veteran publisher and editor of the Acadian Recorder, the only handset daily paper on the continent, died at Halifax after an illness of four months. He was 82 years old. He maintained the Recorder, which had been in the possession of his family since 1835 in its original form. He refused to install modern machinery claiming it would throw so many of his old employees out of work. He read every line of proof every day himself and personally checked up on accuracy of the names and initials of every person mentioned in the columns. He wrote a weekly article on the history of Nova Scotia, a feature started by his father, religiously to the last. Before Confederation he was opposed to the union of the provinces and continued his opposition. Dominion Day was never a holiday for the Recorder employees but they celebrated June 21, the Natal day of Halifax, instead. He refused nominations for local and Federal Houses and also declined a senatorship in 1902 and the Lieutenant-Governorship of Nova Scotia. Every morning of his life he rose at six, personally called for the mail at the post office at seven and went directly to his office. This is one generation passed out and a new one installed in its place.

MULCH PAPER

Mulch paper is now being highly recommended by Dominion Experimental Farm authorities for use in the home garden. This is simply heavy black paper especially prepared to withstand weathering. It comes in various widths and is tacked down with wire staples between the rows of vegetables. Naturally this prevents weed growth and the paper absorbs the sun's rays and so heats up the ground. Water too, is collected and runs across the paper to the rows of vegetables where it is most needed. Where this mulch is used, growth is materially hastened, which is an important point with those vegetables such as corn, tomatoes, melons and similar things. Gardeners are advised to at least cover a portion of their vegetable patch with the new mulch, which in addition to the above advantages also eliminates practically all cultivation, an important point where one goes way during part of the summer.

CANADA'S BIGNESS NOT UNDERSTOOD IN OLD LAND

Reminiscing in the Ottawa Journal P. D. Ross gives a story illustrative of the little grasp of the extent of Canada held by people from the Old Land but a few years ago. It runs thus: "The Marquis of Salisbury visited Canada in 1908. When in Ottawa he went to lunch at Sir Robert Borden's house, or rather, to Mr. Robert Borden's house, as the then leader of the Opposition had not yet been knighted. Prior to going into the dining room Mr. Borden was introducing guests to Lord Salisbury. I had just been presented when Mr. Borden was called away for a moment. Mr. C. A. Magrath came along. I said to the Marquis: 'May I introduce Mr. Magrath, M.P., for Medicine Hat?' 'Ah, Medicine Hat?' queried Lord Salisbury, shaking hands, 'it sounds very western. Mr. Magrath.' 'Quite western,' Mr. Magrath returned, 'also there is a good deal of it. The riding is about two-thirds as big as Ireland.' The Marquis looked at Mr. Magrath. 'That is not a joke, is it?' 'Not at all,' replied the other. 'Medicine Hat has enough fertile soil to grow all the wheat, alias flour, that the British Isles use for food.' Mr. Martin Burrell, who had come along, had overheard the dialogue. 'Introduce me, too,' he remarked. 'I represent a constituency nearly as large as England and Scotland put together.'

Mr. Burrell was a member for Yale Caribou in British Columbia. Measure that single riding on the map of that day and you will find it was eight hundred miles long. It has been cut in two since. Lord Salisbury shook hands with Mr. Burrell. Then he turned to us with the question: 'How many parliamentary ridings are there in the Dominion?' 'Two hundred and thirty six.' The Marquis looked reflective for a moment, then, passing his hand over his chin, he remarked dryly: 'Perhaps I had better go home before I lose myself.'

It Was Time to Pray

A preacher at the close of one of his sermons, said: "Let all in the house who are paying their debts stand up." Presently every man, woman and child, with one exception, rose to their feet. The preacher seated them and said: "Now every man not paying his debts stand up." The exception, a careworn, hungry-looking individual, clothed in his last summer's suit, assumed a perpendicular position.

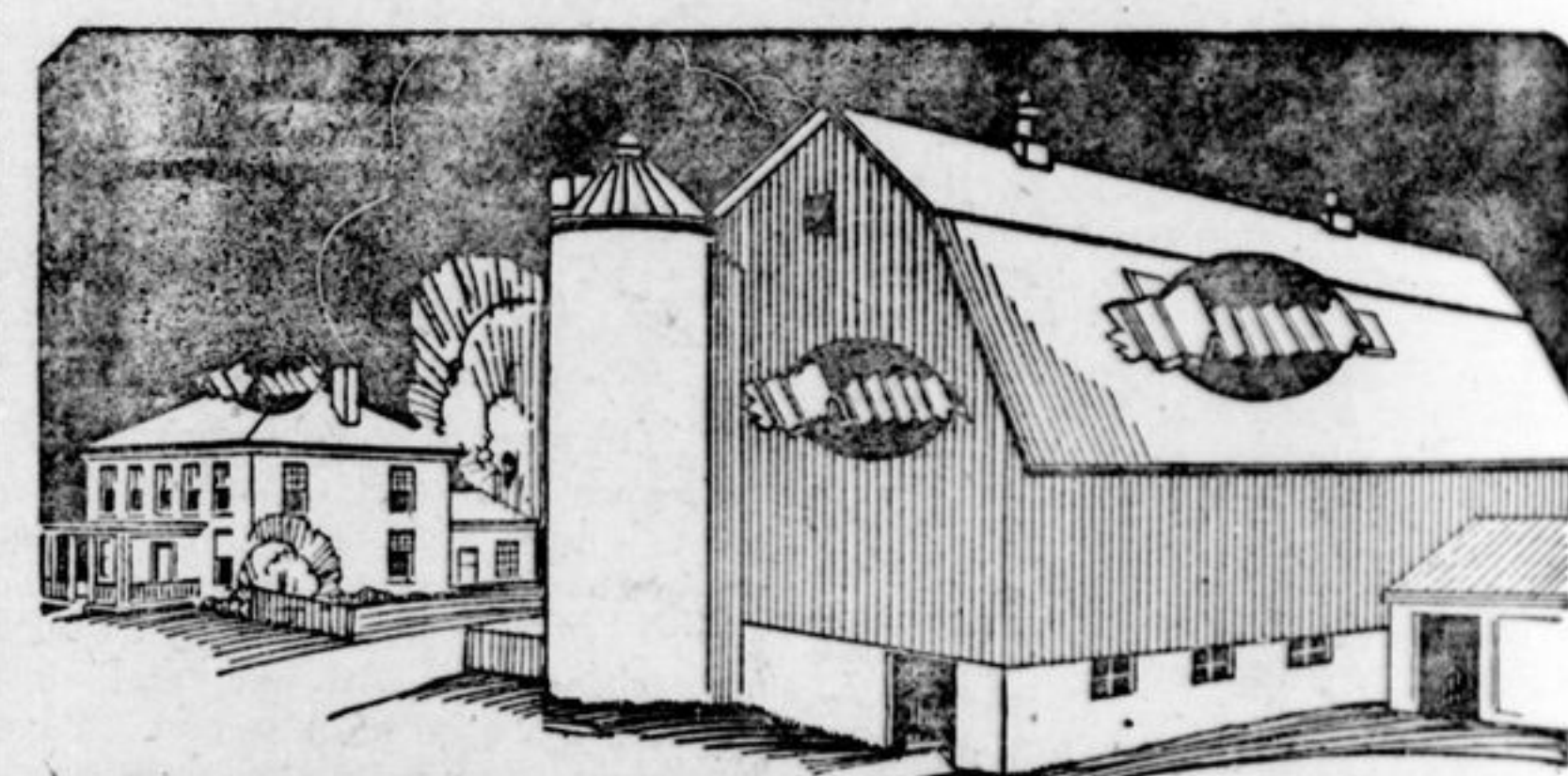
"How is it, my friend," asked the minister, "you are the only man not able to meet his obligations?" "I run a newspaper," he answered, "and the brethren here who stood up are my subscribers, and—"



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