

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, January 21, 1932

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?

A close reader of the daily and weekly press may well ask the question: "Whither are we drifting?" Editorial opinions, the views of the people in letters to the press, and dispatches of correspondents show many differences of opinion, but in all there seems an undercurrent that this is the time to put everything, especially the payments, up to the government.

We notice there is the movement to have the Provincial government pay the whole cost of provincial highways. The government is also expected to pay the whole costs of the Old Age Pensions Act.

Who, pray, is the government? It is the people. The government possesses nothing but what it collects in taxes in one form or another, and anything the government may have to pay, most assuredly will eventually be paid by the people.

The argument put forth in a recent motion which has been mailed to Ontario councils, and which they are asked to endorse, wants the local legislature to pay the whole cost of provincial highways on the ground that "the county has no control whatever over the expenditure." This idea is wrong. No provincial highways will be built in any county whose council requests the province otherwise. This one clause is worth all the cost of provincial highways in any county. That taking over of the whole cost of highways would mean that municipalities would have to pay taxes on highways in other counties in the same proportion, whether or not they received similar consideration in their own.

The idea to have Old Age Pensions payments taken over by the government is advocated because of certain "abuses" that have crept in. If these abuses have crept in when each county is supposed to have an active pensions commission to examine all applications and safeguard the municipality, how much worse will they become if there is only a central commission in Toronto to look after them? We believe the counties are further ahead paying the 20 per cent cost of local pensions than if the government paid it all. No matter which method is followed, the people pay the bill.

We can understand a metropolitan centre, with a heavy pensions roll, starting an idea like this, but cannot see that the same conditions prevail in a rural community. The more rural the community, apparently, the less the number of pensioners. Some communities, for instance, with a small pension list, would be money ahead if they paid the full 100 per cent.

We have seen a lot lately about the advisability of abolishing county councils, which, in some minds, are about as much an asset as a pole cat at a pink tea. It is not our intention to uphold or berate the county councils, but it is a peculiar thing that a lot of those who advocate the doing away of this body will in the next breath "view with alarm the attempt of the government to centralize and usurp the authority of the municipalities."

We want the government to pay for old age pensions, pay all the cost of highways; we want to abolish the county councils, but we view with alarm our contemplated loss of authority.

We have no views to express in the matter. We merely wish to call attention to the diametrically opposed views of different people, many of whom, no doubt, did not think of the old saying: "You cannot eat your cake and have it, too," when they expressed them. We don't know whether county councils are good or bad, but suppose they will average up pretty much the same as the rest of us. We would hate to suggest what should be done if they are abolished, but suppose something similar would have to be substituted, or centralize the authority in Toronto. We certainly could not do away with them and let it go at that. We cannot see, however, how we are going to centralize the payments with the provincial government without submitting to the centralizing of the authority that goes with it.

POVERTY IS NO DISGRACE, BUT—

Watch out for the fellow who snubs his neighbor because he has not been so fortunate in business transactions and whose bank account is low.

We don't hear quite so much about these fellows these days, whose class was composed mostly of the newly rich of a few years ago.

Perhaps they have learned a lot since then and do not now parade their good luck so prominently, or mayhap they were trimmed in the debacle of two years ago and do not own quite so much to swell out about. It took the after-the-war period to doll up some of the citizenry, and those who were fortunate in their investments suddenly found themselves rich and knew not what to do. These were the fellows who, in a good many instances, now complain about the "depression." And there certainly is a depression in mining stocks. If this depression has done nothing more than level up and iron out a lot of the people who became rich, abnoxious and impossible overnight, it has not been without its benefits.

It should take more than a little money to make a man turn up his nose at old friends, but this depends upon the disposition of the man who makes the money. If he is a cad by nature, a little money will make him show it, just as a little success too often turns our heads and causes us to make fools of ourselves.

You can't tell what a man is by the size of his bank book. The man with thousands of dollars on deposit may not be any better than the day laborer who wonders where his next month's rent is to come from. Character and solidity cannot be determined by the size of the bank book any more than an arm full of hymn books and a solemn countenance on Sunday is a guarantee that the same fellow will not cheat you out of your eye teeth on Monday.

OLD-TIME REVIVALS

Dr. Salem G. Bland, D.D., in a recent press article refers to the disappearance of the old-time religious revival. Something less than 50 years ago they were quite a common annual event in each community, but during the past 25 years have become rare. There are always exceptions, of course, but the trouble with most of these revivals, as we saw them, was that the "reviving" did not seem to last very long after the revivalists left town, the greater percentage of the converts soon leaving the straight and narrow for the pathway that was crooked and tricky and beset with thorns. One reason for the revivals of 40-odd years ago may have been because there was not nearly so much going on as now and the residents of that generation had more time to attend these affairs.

The writer can very well remember considerably more than a quarter of a century back, when the good old revival was welcomed to the community as something to go to, and while everybody did not hit what the present-day Billy Sunday designates the "sawdust trail," those who didn't seemed to get satisfaction in watching those who did.

In the good old days about the only amusement the smaller towns got in the summer was when the Wizard Oil, the Kickapoos, and other shows held forth on the town square or common and put on a programme, incidentally selling those who attended a bottle of something or other "guaranteed" to cure everything from the epizootic to ingrowing toenails.

But "them days has gone forever." Nowadays, instead of walking up to the mercy seat at the revival, most of the population is wondering what chances they have of occupying the seat at the head table at the euchre party, or whether they will be able to get a seat at all after "this" dance is over. Just as it was when the writer was a boy, the world is still going to the devil, and although it has been doing this for a good many generations, it is considerable satisfaction to most of us to know that it is a slow process—and a merry one.

The old-time revival is gone; so have a lot of other old-time things; and 25 years from now the young people of today will look back and sigh for the sins of their own offspring, and make comparisons between the rising generation of 1960, which, too, is on the highway to hades, and those good days away back in 1932 when the world was much better, and the young people behaved much more circumspectly. These reminiscences and predictions are about the closest things to perpetual motion that we know.

TRUTH WILL PREVAIL

There is little to be gained by prohibition advocates from Canada to the States making exaggerated statements, or statements that can easily be refuted. There is also little to be gained by those favoring government control claiming something for the system which does not exist. We tried prohibition in Ontario for ten years and it was a failure. At least a vast majority of the people of the province thought so, as proven in two election campaigns. We are now trying out another system, and it is up to the people to judge for themselves. There is no denying the fact that the Liquor Control Act is not perfect. Nothing is. When it is definitely proven that the system now being tried out here is a failure, there will be something else to take its place, but we do not think it will be prohibition.

At the Anti-Saloon League meeting in Wash-

ington on Monday, I. W. Pierce of Montreal was a speaker. He made the startling statement that in the past six years in the province of Quebec the consumption of hard liquor had increased 38 per cent and the consumption of beers and wines 128 per cent.

Official statements of the Quebec Liquor Commission show that the sales of hard liquor in the province have fallen 40 per cent, and on the word of L. B. Cordeau, chairman of the commission, they had noted a sharp decline in the sale of all beverages.

We believe far too many of us lose sight of the fact that there are good temperance people on both sides in this question, some favoring total prohibition as the only remedy, while others, recognizing that it is not possible to do away with liquor entirely, are trying out the government control system. If this fails, then they may go back to prohibition, or may design some other measure.

Personally, we do not believe the liquor business can ever be controlled until we can educate our people to control themselves. In this alone lies the success of temperance, and even then we shall always have those with us who consume too much. There is no use denying there are a good many "drunks" in Ontario; they were here under prohibition, are here yet, and will be with us for all time. That does not mean, though, that generally speaking, the citizens of Ontario are a sober and temperate people—much more so than in the United States, where total prohibition is in force and it is claimed there are more "speakeasies" than there were saloons under the old license system.

A writer on Japan says the women of that country "exist for the sake of their husbands." A wife "waits on him in person, greets him when he comes in the door, arranges his clothing and bath, removes the clothes that he has laid on the floor, brings food to him, and picks up whatever is lying on the floor." Which caused Mrs. Chronicle to utter a snort and remark that the Japanese women have an easy time compared with most of their sisters in Canada.

We have been informed that "Dr. Forbes Godfrey, who died last week in Toronto, went to school here as a young lad, and not a word was said of his death in either Durham papers." Which is not at all extraordinary. We did not know it, and nobody took the trouble to tell us until the paper was out. We cannot keep track of all the people who went to school in Durham some years ago for the very simple reason we do not know. Anything over 30 years back is beyond us. As a community institution, local news of interest should be treated in a community way. As we have said before, a man may own a newspaper plant, but he cannot own the newspaper. That belongs to the community.

The Germans

For every dollar the Germans have paid in reparations, they have borrowed \$1.80. The Germans are a mighty smart race of people.—St. Catharines Standard.

Blasting Our Way

It is worth while to reflect that the new tariff in Great Britain which has been so enthusiastically received by Canada and other Empire countries, may actually mark the beginning of a trend toward lower trade barriers throughout the world.—Woodstock Sentinel Review.

Reckless Statements

Reckless statements in regard to Ontario's finances seem to be the chief stock-in-trade of Mitchell F. Hepburn. It is no wonder that W. E. N. Sinclair, as a member of the Legislature, who knows the facts, is not enthusiastic in co-operating with him.—London Free Press.

Test of Community's Strength

Five cities in the Boston area cannot pay teachers, police or firemen because taxes are not being paid. One point is being well driven home in recent weeks—the strength, stability and credit of any community depends on the ability of its people to pay their taxes.—Stratford Beacon-Herald.

New Cemetery Act

The new Cemetery Act came into force January 1. It provides for the immediate appointment of a commission of three members in each county to see that the rural cemeteries are properly taken care of. It will have power to compel all municipalities to clean up their dilapidated cemeteries.—Simcoe Reformer.

Is Buddhism Losing Ground?

The burning of 20,000 volumes of Buddhist classics, comprising two-thirds of the only complete set of Buddhist classics remaining in China, for lack of space, while regrettable on historical grounds, suggests that Buddhism is losing ground to Christianity in one of its few remaining strongholds—China. It was a bonfire where the books burned included numerous copies that cannot now be replaced.—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

Life of Service

The estate of the late Right Hon. Sir George E. Foster, who was one of Canada's leading statesmen, has just been probated at Ottawa and is valued at \$58,181. Like Sir John A. McDonald, Sir Wilfred Laurier and Hon. W. S. Fielding, Sir George gave no thought to amassing a fortune which, as a great politician, he might easily have done. His whole thoughts were on serving the people, and he has left behind an imperishable memory.—Kingston Whig-Standard.

Odd Kind of Peace

The latest move of Gandhi is to appeal from his prison to the Christians of India to support him in his struggle, which, he says, is "essentially based on peace". The appeal is made to those who are loyal to the "Prince of Peace," but since Gandhi is now turning to the Christian Bible in the interests of his faction, he may be reminded of the passage condemning those who cry peace where there is no peace. If it is peace that Gandhi wants, he can have it for the asking.—Hamilton Spectator.

OTHER PAPERS' OPINIONS

Too Much Borrowing
Most of the towns and cities are trying to get all the money they can from the Government for relief purposes. Of course the towns and cities will have to raise dollar for dollar received. Provided this money is wisely spent, it may be good business, but municipalities are going to be loaded with debentures that are burdensome in the future. The town that can get along with the least borrowing now will be the best town to live in some years hence.—Barrie Advance.

Isn't It Fraud?

A prominent farmer in Carrick got into deep and humiliating mire by a series of thefts from a number of stores in Walkerton, Mildmay and other places. The disgrace is deserved, and should be a warning against embarking on any such pilferings. Yet, is he much worse than people who will go into stores, buy various articles on credit and apparently with considerable deliberation, and much success, evade paying for them? Any of our merchants who sell goods on trust could relate such experiences. Even newspaper publishers have cases that look like premeditated and persistent fraud.—Mt. Forest Confederate.

Criminal Driving

While driving along the O.S.R. north on Tuesday morning Mrs. Wm. Cameron's horse took fright at an approaching truck with flapping tarpaulin and she was thrown into the fence, breaking her collar bone. The truck driver went straight on without a pause, it is reported.

A similar instance of heartless drivers was evidenced on Main street on Monday when a child was knocked down by a passing car and no narrowly escaped being run over that at least one witness thought the rear wheel had run over her legs, however she was picked up and limped away home. But the point is that the driver kept right on although he was seen to glance sideways and must have known that he had knocked the child down. Such drivers are a menace on the roads and should be deprived of their license.—Mount Forest Confederate.

Courtesy

"Life is not so short," said Emerson, "but there is always time enough for courtesy." Sad to tell, we do not always remember this. Some people act as if important business on one hand excused them from practising the gentle art of courtesy. But suppose it should appear that the ministry of a kind word and a smile by the way, is really more important than the business on which we are bent? The world has a longer memory for kindness than it has for the success of our commercial undertakings, and our winning of political honors. Neighbors may remember the light in our eyes when they have forgotten what clothes we wore, and how large the house we lived in. I doubt if any engrossment ever excuses us for the lack of consideration or for missing the chance to speak a freshening word.—Lucknow Sentinel.

Coordinations Necessary

Regina despatches tell that the Saskatchewan government has taken steps to control motor bus and truck traffic in the province. Regulations are being drawn up fixing freight and passenger rates, and also determining such matters as safety devices necessary for operation, insurance of passengers, taxation on traffic, load limits, and so forth. The regulations will be made effective by order in council.

This is all to the good. The motor bus and truck have become a definite and important part of transportation, and are undoubtedly here to stay, this necessitating that, like other systems of transportation, they be brought under control.

What is to be feared, however, is that the motor bus and the truck will never be adequately dealt with unless concerted and something like uniform action is taken by all the provinces. That would be the consequence, for example, of one set of laws in Quebec and another set in Ontario? Or of rigid control and fixed rates in Quebec and lax control and undetermined rates in Ontario? or vice versa? With so much of motor traffic between the two provinces, there would be endless confusion.

What seems to be required is that all the provinces get together and work out rates and regulations that will apply throughout the country as a whole. This might involve a lot of difficulty, but as some such step will have to be taken eventually, it may as well be taken now. Perhaps the Royal Commission on Transportation will have

some practical suggestions to offer.—Alliston Herald.

OVERPRODUCTION

"Friday," said Robinson Crusoe, "I'm sorry, I fear I must lay you off." "What do you mean, master?" "Why, you know there's a big surplus of last year's crop. I don't need you to plant another this year. I've got enough goat-skin clothes to last me a lifetime. My house needs no repairs. I can gather turtle eggs myself. There's an overproduction. When I need you I'll send for you. You needn't wait around here."

"That's all right, master, I'll plant my own crop, build my own hut, and gather all the eggs and nuts I want myself. I'll get along fine."

"Where will you do all this, Friday?" "Here on this island."

"This island belongs to me, you know. I can't allow you to do that when you can't pay me anything I need. I might as well not own it."

"Then I'll build a canoe and fish in the ocean. You don't own that."

"That's all right, provided you don't use any of my trees for the canoe or build it on my land, or use my beach for a landing place, and do your fishing far enough away not to interfere with my riparian rights."

"I never thought of that, master. I can do without a boat, though. I'll swim over to that rock and fish and gather seagull eggs there."

"No, you won't, Friday. The rock is mine. I own riparian rights."

"What shall I do, master?"

"That's your problem, Friday. You are a free man and you know about the rugged individualism maintained here."

"I guess I'll starve, master. May I stay here until I do so, or shall I swim beyond your riparian rights to do so?"

"I've thought of something, Friday. I don't like to carry my garbage down to the seashore each day. You may stay and do that. Then whatever is left of it after my dog and cat have been fed you can eat. You're in luck."

"Thank you, master. That is charity."

"One more thing, Friday. This island is over-populated. Fifty per cent of the people are unemployed. We are undergoing a severe depression and there is no way that I can see to end it. No one but a charlatan would say that he could. So keep a lookout and let no one land here to settle and if any ship comes don't let them land goods of any kind. You must be protected against foreign labor. Conditions are fundamentally sound, though, and prosperity is just around the corner."—Samuel Danziger, American Economic League.

Get These Bargains!

- Ladies' Holeproof Silk Hose, new lace top, all the new colors for \$1.19
- Ladies' Silk and Wool Hose, Special, per pair 49c. These are good quality.
- Ladies' Sweaters and Sweater Coats at greatly reduced prices.
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- Large Size Glass Jugs 25c
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