

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, February 4, 1932

WANT MUNICIPALITIES CONSULTED

Bruce County Council in session last week carried a resolution that the local municipalities should be consulted by the County Pensions Boards when dealing with applications for pensions. The County Council, while admitting that the County Boards have complete authority under the Act, felt that as the municipalities were directly interested they should be consulted, and in the future the Old Age Pensions Board of Bruce County will seek the views of the local Councils.

If the local governing bodies will do their duty, we believe this is a good move, as they, more than anyone else, should know the financial standing of applicants and can furnish information which could be obtained in no other way. If the local municipal councils, however, allow themselves to be influenced by their chances of re-election, or their close acquaintance or friendliness with the applicants, this new department may not work so well.

We believe a better scheme would be for each municipality, urban and rural, to have a local board independent of all councils, with whom the county board could consult. This is not provided for in the Old Age Pensions Act, but we believe if this were placed before the Commission in Toronto it would receive support. No County Board knows better than the Ontario Commission that the old age pensions scheme is being exploited, and we think they would welcome anything of this kind that would furnish them with authentic information.

The trouble would be to get men to act on a body of this kind. With the local councils handling the work, it might be a matter of municipal politics; with an independent board it might be a matter of business. These boards would in all probability be required to work without salary, and no man is anxious to jeopardize his business for the sake of becoming a member of a board from which he receives no remuneration.

There is nothing like a local board to get at the bottom of all information, but on the other hand there is nothing harder than taking a stand against a neighbor and telling the County Pensions Board that this same neighbor, when he applies for a pension, has mis-stated his financial position, and despite his signature on the application, "is of the same effect as if made under oath," is not entitled to pension.

Having members of the local councils on the consultation committee, especially in the smaller municipalities, might work out much the same as having too many relatives working for you. You both expect too much, and the result spells trouble.

Any way one looks at it, the man on the local board is in a hard position, and apparently the easiest way out is to let things stand as they are and blame all the faults of the Act on the central Commission in Toronto.

SPEEDING UP THE WHITE WINGS

A former Walkerton alderman complains because the men doing street work in that town under relief employment are not earning their pay. Like the old sailor swabbing the deck, who boasted that he had been "forty years a sailor and never broke a broom handle," the Walkertonians are not pushing the shovels fast enough to suit the ex-councillor. Our thoughts turn to an old fellow for whom we once worked, and whose motto was: "Pay them good wages and then 'shoot 'em in the collar."

You can't expect fifty-cent results on twenty-five cent pay. Pay the wages, and if a man doesn't come through on the job, get someone who will. It is possible, too, that men on relief work, behind in their grocery bills and rent, and probably only intermittently getting a good meal, have not the stamina they would be possessed of were they on full-time employment, and consequently cannot do the day's work expected of them.

This twenty-five-cent-an-hour pay for intermittent employment, is, in our opinion, not enough for a working man in town with his rent to pay and family to keep. On steady employment, or reasonably steady, under the present conditions, he can get along, but with only a day's work here and there, it is an impossible situation. But, of course, this is all done on the

"economy" scheme, and will make a good talking point for aspirants for office throughout rural Ontario at the next election. Personally we feel we would sooner see our street work done at a fairer wage, but as most of the laboring men themselves will vote for the man who boasts that he "kept the taxes down," they may have themselves to blame to a great extent.

You can't expect much from a man nowadays for twenty-five cents an hour, on itinerant employment, that is.

We don't know what the Walkerton relief wage rate is, but suppose it to be about the same as most other places, and the Walkerton ex-councillor's complaint reminds us of the time when a traveller rented a room in a hotel for a night's sleep, paying therefor twenty-five cents. In the morning he complained because he had had been kept awake all night by rat fights. Looking up the room and observing the price, the clerk asked: "Well, what did you expect for twenty-five cents? A bull fight?" One can't expect too much for twenty-five cents.

So far as we can see the towns have followed the townships in their wage schedule, but we can see no comparison. While we do not say that the scale of a quarter an hour is sufficient for the townships, the farmer engaged in road work usually has his farm and a considerable part of his living. Either he or his son can take over the road work for a few days if they feel so disposed. In a town or village, where the worker is dependent upon his daily labor for his sole support, and everything, even to a half-pint of milk, has to be paid for in cash, it is different. Niggardly pay is not productive of efficient labor, and the individual or community that resorts to starvation wages in times of stress need not expect anything but the same kind of efficiency.

THE CRY FOR ECONOMY

From all points of the compass comes the cry for economy, and it is about time that some retrenchment was made in our national and personal overhead. We believe that quite a lot of the hardships now being felt by the citizens is caused, not so much because of hard times, but because all of us are living on a scale which our earning power does not warrant. When one reads of the immense crowds which attend the theatres, the various ice arenas for hockey matches, and the money spent solely in amusements, a little thought will show that these things, rather than necessary expenditure, contribute more to the so-called depression than any other one circumstance. As we have said before, the average modern man and woman, boy and girl, spends about as much on his own amusement as it cost their parents to raise the whole family.

We simply must have economy, but at the same time we must never lose sight of the fact that the refusal to spend money is not always economy. Economy, in our mind, does not mean that we should do without those things we need; rather we should so train ourselves that we shall do without those things which are not really necessary to our comforts and which might better be classed as luxuries. In days like these we can well do without these, but how many of us purchase the necessities of life ahead of the luxuries. The old joke about the children having to do without shoes because the car needs tires and gasoline, or the radio needs a set of new tubes, has more truth in it than may be generally thought. If you don't believe it, keep your eyes and ears open. We passed the home of one family the other night who have received town relief. They had little to eat, but owned a good radio. Any community nowadays has the family, or families, whose head has no employment and are what is known as "up against it", but the chances are they own a car, whose demands are met before their stomachs.

Nowhere is the cry for economy heard louder than in the administration of our governments, Dominion, Provincial and Municipal. As a result it has become the fashion to reduce the salaries, salaries which in a good many cases are none too high now. Employers of labor are expected to look after their hired help and furnish them with employment even in the face of no profits. Generally speaking they have stood by their colors, the result being that a good many factories might as well be closed down, so far as dividends for the shareholders are concerned.

We believe in economy in all governments and in every line of business, but we believe also that we should be sure it is real economy before we move. What would happen if every employer of labor in this country were to consider his own interests solely? What would be the result if every factory or plant not making money would close down and add its employees to the unemployed? What if every place where men and women are employed would lay off that "odd" help which they could do without? There is no question that the plant might temporarily benefit, but what of the country? What would

happen if each and every employer were to tell its employees that wages were to be reduced 50 per cent? In the present condition of several men for every job, men at present employed would be forced to accept the reduction, not because they would be satisfied, but because they would, especially if married, have no other place to go, and "a half a loaf is better than none."

We believe this should be true, also of our governing bodies, municipal and otherwise. They expect employers to set the example, and should themselves be willing to help. A little money saved here and there may not be the boon expected. It is much better to spend money on public works and have men earn their living than cut off the employment and be forced to keep them anyway. Government or Municipal assistance must be paid for either by furnishing employment or by increased taxes. Figure it out for yourself.

We need economy, but we need it in the right places. The reduction of salaries of municipal officials may save a few dollars in each township, but the savings effected will not amount to anything to the individual ratepayer. The reduction in the pay of men who sit about the council boards may make a big hit with the ratepayers, but if it is going to result in councillors becoming less alert in their running of the township's affairs, it may be a pretty expensive economy in the end.

An expensive man is often cheap in the long run, and a cheap man is generally dear. We believe it would pay us better to reimburse our councillors and others for the work they do. We also believe that in municipal affairs generally, there has been more money wasted in trying to curtail expenses on necessities than has ever been saved. We certainly believe in economy, but in these days it takes a pretty good man to know when something passes out of the necessity class and becomes a luxury.

Well, the first month of 1932 has behaved very well. But February is ahead of us.

Roger W. Babson, the noted economist, predicts better times. All right, Roger, old dear. Do your stuff! Barkis is willing.

Why worry? asks the Listowel Banner. And now we can sit down and worry why so many people worry when there is really nothing to worry about.

An advertisement running through the press at present is headed: "Nurse Tells How to Sleep Sound, Stop Gas." This is a new one on us. Usually all we hear is: "Stop gassing and go to sleep!"

A Detroit proprietor of a clothes pressing establishment says that "a man with his pants off likes to talk." But what of the man whose wife says: "Here, you! It's 1 o'clock. Take those pants off, go to bed, and keep quiet!"

A new preacher in Toronto, on the way to his church for the first time, ran out of gas, and one of our exchanges says it would like to know what a minister would say under such circumstances. We suppose it would be: "For what we are about to think, may the good Lord forgive us."

There is a joke told of a man who told his doctor he had kept his promise when, being ill, the medico had him walking in a month. The man said he had to sell his car to pay the bill. It is a good joke except for one thing. No man was ever foolish enough to sell his car to pay the doctor.

The Toronto Mail and Empire features a news dispatch from Peterboro in which a Bishop in that city showed extreme agitation during a fire at his residence because one of the fireman was scrambling like a monkey along the cornice near the flames. What was so remarkable about this? Isn't it the duty of a bishop to save people from the flames?

Japan's war on China at this distance looks peculiar. The Chinese boycott of Japanese goods seems hardly sufficient reason for bombarding the seacoast towns and endangering the lives of the foreign residents of Shanghai. If Japan does not listen to reason, and refuses to take the advice of the world's powers to lay off, she may find herself in much the same position as Germany. The days of "might is right" have passed.

Test of Sincerity

Gandhi tells India he is willing to sacrifice a million lives to gain liberty. If he gives up his own as the first, it would be a gesture of sincerity.—Midland Free Press.

Cheerful for Pedestrian

Sir Denistoun Burney, British designer, says that he has developed a new auto which can safely turn corners at 70 miles an hour. This will be cheerful news for the already harassed pedestrian.—Branford Expositor.

Benefits of Pasteurization

Milk from a herd of forty-two tubercular cows was supplied for the consumption of London, Ont., but the milk was pasteurized, and there was no danger to the public. Think what might have happened if there were no such thing as pasteurization.—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

OTHER PAPERS' OPINIONS

A Wonderful Portent
If all discouragement in Ontario arising out of the stress of the times has not been dispelled by the response to the provincial loan flotation some pessimists are hopeless. The government asked for 25 million dollars and in three hours got 64 millions. Ontario is rich and the quick and greedy response to the provincial call for money is evidence that the people are not afraid to invest it when a favorable opportunity offers. When business improves, and improve it will, and when farm product prices rise, and rise they will, there is an abundance of money to put industry in motion again and restore a large measure of the prosperity this province enjoyed previous to the fall of 1929.—Alliston Herald.

Some More Jobs Created
It seems that another duty has been thrust upon the county councils of Ontario—that of appointing two members of a cemetery commission for each county, the third to be appointed in each case by the Ontario government. This is to be done in an effort to improve numerous neglected cemeteries that lie all around the countryside, a laudable enough aim, though how it is to be accomplished is not quite apparent yet.

With two more appointments to make, it will be easier than ever for the county councils to find jobs for all the ex-wardens. They are usually hanging around the January sessions, hoping to pick up some of the crumbs that fall from the table, and willing to take jobs on boards, committees or commissions. With Mothers' Allowance Commissions, Old Age Pension Boards, Cemetery Commissions, Suburban Road Commissions, weed inspectors, corn borer discoverers, valuers and other odd jobs, most of the old war horses can be accommodated.

At the present time, however, with every possible economy is being urged, and every effort made to cut down expenses, it seems as if the new cemetery commission might wait for a year or two longer without doing any particular harm. And since it is generally agreed that the townships get things done more economically, the care of old cemeteries might be turned over to them, with some kind of pressure applied if they did not do something.—Fergus News-Record.

Curse of Inaccuracies
Senator Reed of Pennsylvania represented as a "government spokesman" last week discussing war debts, made an extraordinary misstatement. He said:

"These loans were made after the Armistice and represented money from the people of the United States."

Now what are the facts? Well the first and main fact is that these loans were not made after the Armistice. Between April, 1917, when the United States entered the war, and July, 1918, which was nearly four months before the Armistice, Allied loans in the United States totalled \$8,200,000,000. This money was raised in the United States under the Liberty Loan Act, an act which authorized credits up to \$10,000,000,000. Of this amount—the \$8,200,000,000—Britain received approximately \$4,000,000,000, France \$2,800,000,000, Italy \$1,030,000,000 and other smaller Allies the remainder.

Certain other amounts, it is true, were loaned after the Armistice. But they were actually a part of the credits authorized by Congress during the war, and were for the purpose of enabling the Allies to pay for goods al-

ready supplied or ordered. In other words, the money was to fulfill existing contracts—contracts made in the United States.

One of the curses of this whole reparations and war debt controversy is that it has been bedevilled and confused by inaccurate and loose thinking and talking.—Alliston Herald.

TO RELEAD GLASS AFTER 600 YEARS

Find Queer Errors in Priceless Windows in Chapel at Oxford.

Priceless English stained glass, which has not been removed from its setting for over 600 years, is being taken from the windows of Merton College chapel at Oxford to be cleaned and releaded. The work which is expected to take two years, is being carried out in an ancient cellar.

It has been found that during the centuries dust has collected on the inside of the windows to an astonishing extent. The glass expert in charge of the work, after an examination of the leaded panes, has come to the conclusion that several of the windows have not been releaded since they were first erected in 1293.

The difficulties of the task have been accentuated by the carelessness of those who assembled some of the later windows in the transepts. In one case the complete word "Joseph" appears upside down. In the west window there is a figure of St. Andrew with a female head, and one of the figures of the Virgin has, it is believed, the head of a young man. An almost incredible mistake was made in the case of a cherub, who appears with the head of an old man with a beard.

No Chance!
"No, Johnnie, you mustn't have the hammer to play with, dear. You'll hurt your fingers."
"No, I won't mummie. Dorie is going to hold the nails."

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