

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, July 14, 1932

KNOCKING THE EMPIRE CONFERENCE

The Border Cities Star asks for a sound reason why certain newspapers and politicians opposed to the Bennett government should try to discredit the Empire Economic Conference even before it gets started. The Star, which by no stretch of the imagination can be called a Bennett government supporter, thinks it would be fairer to wait a few weeks and give the Conference a reasonable opportunity to work out the various problems. It says in part: "Finding remedies for the economic ills that now confront us is not an easy task for Mr. Bennett, any more than it would be an easy task for Mr. King" and that "the Empire Conference will have hard going even with the best wishes of the entire public to inspire the delegates."

We are afraid a certain section of the Canadian press is not living up to what is expected of it by continued harping about something that has not yet taken place, and the same may be said of some of the politicians, who are apparently more concerned with furthering their own interests than in wishing the Conference success. In our opinion procedure of this nature is not very far removed from that of De Valera in Ireland, who seems more anxious to get in a dig at Britain than to benefit the people of whose government he has been elected the head. Unfortunately, under present conditions, too many of us spend far too much time in wailing and expecting the other fellow to do something for us that we should do for ourselves.

We find this condition not only in Dominion and Provincial affairs, but also in our town and township councils, the members of which, in endeavoring to legislate wisely and advantageously, having to run the gamut of silly and uncalled-for criticism from those who, placed in a similar position, might not do half as well. It is all very well to be able to point out the faults in things, if done with the idea of bettering conditions, but to get into the habit of continued criticism of everything not only destroys our own usefulness, but affects as well the usefulness of those in authority; for no man can do his best when he receives nothing but abuse for honest effort.

"BUSINESS FIRST" IN MOVIES

Charlie Chaplin, movie comedian, says the film industry is a business first, with art a secondary consideration. Mr. Chaplin has also made it clear that he intends to stick to the "silent" pictures, having proved to his own satisfaction that what the public wants is pantomime, an art as old as the stage and just as well adapted to the movies.

The talking films were a great thing for certain theatres, but we doubt very much if their adaptation was a good thing for the industry as a whole. The equipment of a theatre for a talking film costs considerable money, more than the average small town can afford, and rather than take the chance, a good many of the smaller houses have closed. The sudden popularity of the "talkies" combined with recent governmental regulations regarding theatres have chased the moving picture shows from the smaller places. Many of them closed because they recognized the day was coming when the silent pictures would be hard to obtain, with the chance that the price would rise even higher than the talkies. While it is true that some towns have retained their shows and have installed the additional equipment, very few of them are making any money, many are having a hard time to keep going, and others are actually in the hands of the receiver.

Charlie Chaplin may be wise in sticking to the silent pictures. It was the silents that made the movies what they are today; now the talkies have forced these shows to the larger centres for the reason that the added expense increases the overhead beyond the patronage of the smaller towns.

Personally, we like the silent pictures, and will continue to favor them in preference to the distorted conversation of the talkies. We never could get enthusiastic over any we have yet heard, for the simple reason that it is galling to us to watch the entrance of the heroine, usually a petite little miss who should have a petite voice, but instead in her first line roars at you like a bull moose, or lets out a squawk that

sounds like an earthquake in a tinsmith's shop. The talkies will no doubt improve, but they will have to if it is intended that the films appear natural.

DE VALERA STILL AT IT

Conditions in Ireland do not improve, and the president of the Irish Republic, should he continue his present course, will have been about the worst enemy his native land has had in a good many decades. His present conduct is undoing the work of such men as Parnell, T. P. O'Connor and other parliamentarians who spent the greater portion of their lives rectifying and improving the conditions of their fellows. De Valera and his government can hope for little success, with Britain or any other country, by the campaign of discourtesy now being carried on, and every "move" of this kind places them farther down in the list of irresponsibles who think that boorishness, smartalecism and vitriolic utterances are the marks of cleverness.

Some people may criticize Britain for her threatened impost of a 100 per cent tariff on Irish goods, but is this not what De Valera and his government are asking for? They apparently want nothing from Britain, they want no allegiance to the British Crown, they refuse to pay their land tax. What, then, is Britain to do? Does De Valera expect Britain to give up everything, and also treat Ireland as a component part of the Empire?

The latest move comes from Hon. James McNeill, Governor-General of the Irish Free State, and the representative of the King. De Valera and his government have gone out of their way to pour insult after insult on Mr. McNeill for no other reason than he is the representative of the Crown in Ireland. As a result, De Valera has been asked for an apology, failing which the Governor-General asks to be removed from office. What treatment might Canada expect if she should treat the King's representative here as he has been treated in the Irish Free State?

No matter what one's feelings may be, De Valera has acted like a spoiled child, and his sudden elevation to power has evidently gone to his head. A Spanish-Irish-American, he has all the earmarks of those who crossed the American boundary in 1866 to capture Canada. He will likely meet with the same success when the next Irish elections come round.

Watching De Valera's antics in his attempts to "crush" or "humiliate" the British government and everything else British, reminds us of that old fable of Aesop, "The Frog and the Ox." It runs:

An ox, grazing in a swampy meadow, chanced to set his foot among a parcel of young frogs and crushed nearly the whole brood to death. One that escaped ran off to his mother with the dreadful news. "And oh, mother!" said he, "it was a beast—such a big four-footed beast!—that it did." "Big?" quoth the old frog "how big? Was it as big?"—and she puffed herself out to a great degree—"as big as this?" "Oh!" said the little one, "a great deal bigger than that." "Well, was it so big?" and she swelled herself out yet more. "Indeed, mother, but it was; and if you were to burst yourself you would never reach half its size." Provoked at such a disparagement of her powers, the old frog made one more trial, and burst herself, indeed.

How truly the old fable of the frog and the ox fits De Valera and his little bunch of would-be Irish patriots! He and his government have become quite swelled up and will soon burst, providing the irate electorate who see, more than their leader, where his crazy campaign is getting them, do not beat him to it.

ARE WE TOO CRITICAL?

Are Canadians becoming too critical, or, have we allowed ourselves to become so critical of everything we do not understand that we are developing into a nation of fault-finders? From the letters in the press, which criticize everything, seldom praise anything, and even less seldom offer constructive opinions, the only conclusion one can come to is that we criticize too often for the sake of criticism alone.

A letter from a Hamilton correspondent of the Toronto Mail and Empire is unique in that it actually defends one of our commissions, and in the course of his remarks the correspondent says:

"If 'Fair Play' will furnish the Old Age Pensions Board with names of some of those who did, as he says they did to get pensions, he will be doing a duty to his neighbor and his country, and they won't divulge the information. Don't grouch at the authorities, 'Fair Play', but help them. If your information is good they will thank you; if bad or not correct, you will be thanked just the same."

The letter is written along the proper lines.

There are other things in this country besides the Old Age Pensions Commission, and we doubt if any one of them with some people, is run correctly. They know of abuses of nearly everything on the calendar, insinuate crookedness and favoritism, but seldom offer anything but a growl. The letter from Hamilton tells it all when it says it is the duty of everybody to report cases similar to the ones complained of to the proper authorities.

The police force is up against the same thing. There are people who know this, that and the other thing. They fail, however, to get in touch with the authorities, withhold the information if questioned, and complain if the police force does not function. We are still of the opinion expressed in these columns some months ago. If you know of anything that is wrong, for goodness sake tell the proper authorities; either this or shut up. Don't sit around and insinuate the officials are too lazy, crooked, or lacking in intelligence. Perhaps they don't know anything about it. Perhaps, too, an investigation will show that you were mistaken in your conjectures.

An apple tree down at Frederickton, New Brunswick, has 107 grafts. That tree has qualified for the Senate.

Tramps who threw stones at a C.N.R. conductor were given 20 days at Walkerton. It's safer to heave rocks at the politicians.

"Bathing Suit is Not Kind to Angular" says a newspaper heading. It makes no Venus de Milo out of the fat, oscillating kind, either.

A device for testing jelly has been perfected. It is not a bit more perfect than the small boy, a stool, and a well-filled pantry.

A Grand Rapids, Mich., man has used the same pen for 24 years. Users of post office pens should receive encouragement from this.

The British levies against the Irish Free State are regarded as an aid to the Canadian farmer, and especially the farmer of Ontario. It is hardly "cricket" to rejoice over this, but hasn't the Irish Free State government received exactly what it has been asking for?

Honesty sometimes does not pay. A Yorkton, Sask., woman in needy circumstances found a wallet containing more than \$200 and was rewarded by the owner with one dollar, which she refused. The woman may have been needy in this world's goods, but the loser of the wallet would be the better of a few lessons in common decency.

There's nothing new under the sun, said Solomon, and he was a wise old owl. A radio loudspeaker in a pillow has been perfected by a German firm. Durham husbands have had this for years, only it is in the other pillow. It usually says: "Wake up, it's time to go to work," "What time did you go to bed?" and "Where were you last night?"

Wednesday's Toronto Mail and Empire published a photo of the "High Hats" in the Orange parade in that city. Among them is Controller J. G. Ramsden. If George goes to the Soo during Wolf Week and gets picked up at night with his "topper" at the jaunty angle shown in the photo, he may be shanghaied as one of the heavies in the "Sweet Adeline" quartette contest.

Sault Ste. Marie is to have a "Wolf Week." Among the attractions and contests is to be a "Sweet Adeline" singing contest, and the committee announces that already many entries have been received. Durham choristers are preparing.

Where are the songs of yesteryear, Those songs for which old-timers pine? You'll meet them all at Sainte Marie, "Ben Bolt," "Where Are Thou?" "Adeline."

BENNETT POLICY PREDOMINATES

(New York Times)

The British Dominions will have to hurdle the psychological effect of the failure of the 1930 Imperial conference, held in London, which ran aground following a proposal of Prime Minister Bennett offering Britain a preference in the Canadian market, in exchange for a like preference in the British market.

Britain had no tariff walls at that time, and the Bennett proposal was termed "humbug" by Dominion Secretary Thomas. Today, however, the picture is altered. Britain not only divorced her historic free trade policy and followed the Bennett plan of a tariff against all non-Empire countries, but she has embraced a policy which specifies a tariff rate of 20 per cent. against all countries outside the British Commonwealth. Consequently, Britain has set the stage for negotiations along the lines of those suggested by Mr. Bennett in 1930.

The farmer's biggest turnover is his spring ploughing.—Syracuse Post-Standard.

A man is seldom as good as his wife tells others he is, or as bad as she tells him he is.—Brandon Sun.

As if we had not got enough troubles of our own, President Eamon De Valera proposes to bring Ireland's to Ottawa.—Winnipeg Free Post.

It took John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a long time to see the light regarding prohibition, but there is more joy over one sinner that repenteth, and what have you.—Detroit Saturday Night.

PINOCHLE PNEUMATICS THE BEST OF CARD GAMES

So much has been written about golf and bridge and how to play these games successful, it is surprising that no one has ever given consideration to making known to the public the intricacies of the game of pinochle.

This is one of the most captivating games of cards. No one who learns it fails to become an enthusiast. It is popular also, inasmuch as it can be played by two, three or four players, so there is no waiting for or importuning of participants.

Since being introduced here the game has taken a wonderful hold; old euchre, cribbage, hearts and five-hundred players having thrown these games entirely into the discard. In fact a euchre player here is now as scarce and hard to find as a nigger among the eskimos. The popularity of pinochle is not confined to the town. The surrounding rural community has its votaries of the game in considerable numbers. The U. F. O. fraternity is especially well represented in those attending the club room where play is almost continuous during the hours when sleep is not demanded.

Some exciting games are staged when three or four of the old players sit around the table and a game is often won or lost by the playing of one card. If the judgment is right, O.K.; if wrong, the game is forfeited. It is instructive to watch some of the old guard at the game. There is usually a large gallery of ruralites on Saturday nights receiving pointers from the more experienced players from both town and country. Taking part in the games at such times will be found Jerry, the Laird of the Rocky—a canny player—and one, or at times, two U. F. O. representatives in the persons of Slippery or George the Sixth. The town may be represented by L. George, Hoopy-de-hoop, Tingalorum, Kibitzer, Peasey, Squeezer, Mickey or Riley. These are a few of the more steady attendants, though it is not unusual to find Gibraltar, Baldy, Ye Editor and Cam (short for Camel) present. A regular at the afternoon games only is Tyrone and lately the reappearance of Jim, the hypo, has been noticed. These are a few of the more enthusiastic members and it is a noticeable fact that since learning the game of pinochle not one has played any other game.

It would be much easier to make a list of non-players than of those who find pleasure in the game. Among the sportively inclined who have so far resisted the enticement of the game might be mentioned Buckley K., Doctor Tansey, His Worship and His Honor. These, however, will, no doubt, in time be enthusiastic pinochlers.

Visitors to Durham, travellers, tourists and vacationers watch the game wonderingly. It is all Greek to them if they have not learned something of its mysteries and they no doubt go away full of admiration for the town whose inhabitants have found the open sesame to a cheerfulness that dispels the gloom of depression.

Points on playing will be given in later contributions by

KIBITZER.

OTHER PAPERS' OPINIONS

The Abitibi Purchase

Liberal newspapers and members are attempting to make political capital out of the Ontario government's decision to take over the Abitibi power project on "equitable terms" to be agreed on.

The party system compels the opposition to make political capital out of something, but, for ourselves, we do not see that the government had any other course to pursue at this time. We are not particularly concerned with the salvation of the company, as such, but we are concerned with the service that was promised to the north country and to the families of the workmen who are dependent on the jobs the construction provided. No government can ignore its responsibilities to

any section of the population, and even if it means the government stepping in, where private enterprise has been a failure, the responsibilities remain the same.

The Ontario Hydro has assumed obligations of two million dollars to purchase a transmission line over which power from the Abitibi canyon would be provided to consumers in the north country. The parent company of the Abitibi power has contracted with its subsidiary to take a block of the power not taken by the Hydro. The power plant and dam are near completion, but require some \$5,000,000 for further construction.

These three circumstances, with the related circumstances of continuing in employment 1,000 workmen who might otherwise have to be maintained by the taxpayers through relief, placed the government in a position which compelled the decision it took. To leave the situation to the haphazard solution of some other private enterprise might have delayed action and led ultimately to the policy now adopted.

In arriving at "equitable terms" with the Abitibi power company, however, the government should make the best possible agreement, the same hard business agreement that a private company would make. Justice, in these situations, need not be tempered with mercy. Despite the interested propaganda that has been circulated to weaken Ontario's faith in the Hydro, we continue to believe that if the Hydro Commission, as trustees for the government, is allowed to make the agreement, the people of the north country and the people of Ontario will not suffer.

The suggestion of purchase at par is, of course, an absurdity. If it were true, it would be an outrage. A sound business agreement is all that is deserved.—Farmers' Sun.

Large sections of the country near Rome have been devastated by one of the worst invasions of locusts within memory. The swarms appeared simultaneously in several rural municipalities, among which Anzio, Nettuno, Cisterna and the region of the recently reclaimed Pontine Marshes are the most severely affected. Despite immediate energetic defense measures, the crops in these areas have been almost entirely destroyed.

IT WILL PAY YOU

To Take Advantage of These Bargains

Boys' Cotton Sweaters, all sizes	25c
Ankle Socks, assorted colors, per pair	25c
Large Size Grass Mats	39c
7-piece Glass Berry Sets	59c
Half dozen white Cups and Saucers and Plates	96c
Fine Glass Tumblers	6 for 29c
Ladies' White Silk Gloves, long fancy cuff	pair 96c
Full-fashioned Silk Hose, chifon or service weight	pair 79c
Special Talcum Powders, large size tins	15c
23-piece China Tea Sets	\$1.98
97-piece Dinner Sets	\$9.95

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