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NOTES and COMMENTS

Name Order On Ballot

The hunch — and that's all it is — that the candidate whose name appears at the top or bottom of the list has a better chance to be elected than the one near the middle took a bad beating in the June federal election. Some political organizers maintain that if the voter has to read a lot of candidates' names, he or she either starts at the top or bottom. Hence they figure the top or bottom name enjoys an advantage.

In 225 out of the 262 ridings the elector had a choice among three or more candidates. The top name candidate won in 70 cases, the bottom name in 57 and the in-between ones in 90 instances.

It would appear from this experience that the in-between names hold the inside track in an election race insofar as order of names is concerned on the ballot. Generally speaking, position has little to do with a candidate's chances of winning. If he is the most popular, his name stands out no matter where it appears on the ballot.

The Habit of Walking

Nowadays a boy grumbles about walking and even country lads expect a bus at the end of the lane to pick them up for school, whereas their dads and grandads waked a mile or two and thought nothing of it. Some town slickers can scarcely walk down town and in fact everybody, it seems, is giving up the walking habit. Can we remain a strong verile race if we are unable to walk a few miles each day.

A man who prefers to walk a mile instead of using a car, is almost considered a freak today. Friends will pull up at the curb and invite him into the back seat, others will enquire whether his car is broken down. What a difference a few years makes.

Well, we think it is a pity that people do not walk more. It is good for the health, and excellent exercise. One has more time to think when walking, and can enjoy meeting friends, seeing things, that he would never be able to see from a car seat.

As for the youth of today, they have to find some other exercise to take the place of walking, and while it doesn't make much sense, that's the way wind blows. Even their elders will ride miles to the golf course, then walk all over a field and think it fun. Those golfers could walk to the club and back and instead of whacking a ball, just hoe the garden and receive the same exercise. It reminds us that we are all a bit queer.

Oh Those Oyster Stews

"Now, if you're those Oysters dear, we can begin to feed," the walrus affectionately remarked during his well-known outing with the carpenter. It is a sentiment that is seasonable once again; the R's are back on the calendar and the bivalves at the market, with the crop this year reported both numerous and succulent. Hot weather may distress man and beast, but it makes oysters thrive, and not even the most exacting shell-fish could have demanded a hotter summer than this.

Aside from all gustatory questions, the oyster is an extremely accomplished creature. While it may not be able, as some have contended, to read calendars, it possesses the ability, when in shape, to drink four gallons of water an hour and it can also change its sex.

Nor is its life an easy one, even during the summer months, when oyster hunters declare a holiday in order to let the creatures be fruitful and multiply. Oysters, it seems, are considered tasty morsels even by their ocean neighbors. When young they are attacked by sea-squirrels, and as they age they have to fight off crabs, sponges and a particularly insistent creature named Urosalpinx which bores holes in them.

The wise oyster knows how to survive these perils and preserve its charms for stews and fries.

While the oyster stew season is at hand, one would think it would be more popular than ever, with plenty of money floating, well, you know a stew can be gotten up without too much work and expense, as compared with a fowl banquet.

Saga of Dream Cottage

Many months ago a small model house was put on a parking lot in New York City. It was raffled off in a fund-raising campaign for Israel. The winner got another house and the model was used for another drive by the American Women's Voluntary Services.

Alfred Birnbaum, a young Columbia University student of optometry, was among those who paid 50 cents for a chance on the house. Probably he promptly forgot about it. Then one morning his wife was awakened at 2 a.m. to learn the happy news over the telephone: The \$15,000 dream house was theirs.

What could be more wonderful? Just think of it, you pay 50 cents casually on a raffle ticket, go on about your business and wake up to find that tiny investment has bought you the little cottage you've been dreaming of.

But when the rosy glow of good fortune had dimmed a little, a few hard realities began to show through.

The man who owned the parking lot where the dream house stood wanted the cottage off his property as quickly as possible. Meantime he would charge the Birnbaums \$50 a day rental.

They scouted around and discovered it would cost \$1,000 to dismantle the house, maybe another \$300 to cart it away and \$4,500 to put it up again. They couldn't afford any of this expense and had no place to erect the house.

Then Birnbaum learned that his \$15,000 windfall would thrust him into an uncomfortably high income tax bracket. He had no wish to sample that rarefied atmosphere.

After days of contemplating this catalogue of woes, what he did wish was that he could get his 50 cents back and get the little yellow dream house out of his life forever.

But even that was easier said than done. The place began to haunt him. He begged his brother, a lawyer, to find a solution.

Finally a savior turned up. He owned a lot, could pay dismantling, moving and erecting expenses and was willing to give Birnbaum the remarkable sum of \$1,200 for his \$15,000 catch. Birnbaum snapped up the deal as if it were the greatest he would ever make in lifetime.

Now at last he is happily free of his dream cottage. Probably he is guring that the next time somebody waves a raffle ticket in his face he'll make the 50 cents an outright gift.

Now is Time to Protest

It seems fairly certain that a \$5 license fee is being recommended by CBC to the Dominion government. Now is the time to let your M.P. know that you do not approve of \$5 license fees any more than you approve of \$30,000 salaries being paid to its top notch appointees.

Costly Defence

National defence is costing Canada approximately \$700,000 a day, as compared with \$450,000 a day last year. That money could be saved, or diverted to use for promoting the welfare of our citizens, if we had a guarantee of an enduring peace.

Schools in Old Cy's Time

Schools were different in old Cy's time. He says that the kids nowadays are lucky—he had to walk five miles, rain or shine (bare foot). The old school was a one-room affair with about 12 pupils and the teacher was usually as tough as any man in the district. Diplomacy and tact weren't heard of in those days. Punishment was handed out in Joe Louis style—survival of the fittest.

Ball was played with a willow bat made out of the bush; the ball was made from store string with a home-made cover. If it was a prosperous year they may have had a football to kick around—course that was tough feet, very few had boots to wear.

Cy says the first time he wore boots he had to put gravel in them to make his feet feel at home.

Kids in those days were lucky to make the fifth or sixth reader before the old man hauled them home to pull stumps and run a breaker plow.—MacGregor (Man.) Herald

Get Those Glaring Eyes

A detailed survey safety lane reports across Canada list 62 per cent of the checked vehicles with bad headlights, actual road surveys undertaken on behalf of C-A-T indicate more than 80 per cent of the vehicles on Canadian roads with badly glaring headlights. The sorry part of the whole mess is that improper aiming in most cases is causing a hazard which has come to be known as the Number 1 Enemy of the night-driving motorist.

Admittedly a considerable reduction of this hazard could be obtained if motorists would obey a common courtesy rule of the road and dip their headlights when within 500 feet of an approaching vehicle. But it so happens that motorists are humans and accordingly think little of what they are doing to the other fellow with their blinding uncontrolled lights. This high beam weapon is just like giving hundreds of people a death ray gun and telling them to go out on the highways, keep the gun going, but don't hit anybody with the ray.

Oh, sure, there is a law against high lights and lights which are not dipped when necessary. But who is doing anything about enforcing the law?

A check by letter to all the Provincial Police Departments in Canada and to the ministers of all the Departments of Highways indicates very little, in fact in a number of cases nothing, that is being done to enforce the law concerning glaring lights.

The Divining Rod

If you wish to start an argument with some people deny that the divining rod is a boogy, that it will not work, and see what trouble you get into. It is a controversial subject, yet this column believes that the willow stock in the hands of the right persons will react to water below in no uncertain manner. We know men of impeccable reputation who have worked it, yet there may be others for whom the willow stick does not work. Perhaps it is all in temperament, we do not know, but its an interesting subject.

It is a fact that water-witching or dowsing goes far back in man's written records. The Romans' use of sticks is described by Cicero and Tacitus; Munster mentions the divining rod in his "Cosmography" published in the early 16th century. It was used in the Hartz Mountains, in Wales and in England. Early pioneers brought the practice to America. Scientists have closely studied the phenomenon; Webster's dictionary says a water witch "locates" water, not tries to locate. The Britanica is forthright; it says "the art of using a divining rod."

It was a dark, lowering August day years ago. There were rumbles of distant thunder and occasional forks of jagged lightning. A group of farmers and boys were gathered in a field waiting for Old Mose, the water witch. As he came plodding up the road the laughter and talk died away. It was almost like a Biblical scene in its prosaic, elemental simplicity. The farmer showed Mose where he would like to dig a well. Without a word the old man in his tattered clothes, tobacco-stained beard and long hair went at his task. He held the pronged stick in front of his chest, the point slightly up. Back and forth he went slowly, methodically.

Moment by moment the tension increased. You hear men's hard breaths in the tense silence, broken only by distant thunder. Suddenly the point of the stick started downward. Old Mose hesitatingly took a few more steps. One could almost feel him resisting the pull. The bark actually slipped on his willow wand. Then he stopped. Beads of sweat glistened on his face and forehead. He lifted an arm and rubbed it across his eyes. "Dig here," he said to the farmer. "There's water about 12 feet." And he was right. At a little more than that depth, there was a good vein.

What is the magic power? Is there a realm of sub-conscious perception in certain human beings, similar to the instinct of birds and animals? Each year the arguments flare anew. Perhaps in time, when we learn more about atomic power and superpowers, we shall learn the answer to this centuries-old mystery.



TRIMMED ON PHONY TENSPTS?

When a counterfeiting ring goes to work as it did in Ontario and British Columbia last week, it's the busy businessman who takes the beating, financially.

By the time the heat's on and everybody's looking twice at every bill most of the phony banknotes have been unloaded on some unfortunate merchant. So far as we can learn nobody in the Stouffville or Markham settlement has been victimized.

In this case, it's bogus \$10 bills. Police say they are excellent counterfeits. But there's one quick way to check: wet your finger and rub the red serial number. If it smudges, it's a phony.

If you want more evidence, examine it closely for the "planchettes," those tiny circular green spots of paper embedded in all genuine bills. The counterfeits haven't any.

So far most of the bills have been passed at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition, a race track at Niagara Falls, stores in Windsor and Vancouver's Pacific National Exhibition and Montreal.

In all cases, the chief victims were businessmen, whether exhibition concessionaries, store keepers or men like the Toronto drug store-owner who went to bank his weekend receipts and had one \$10 bill rejected.

Under the Criminal Code, all counterfeited money must be reported and forfeited to the police. Whoever has the spurious bill at the time is the loser.

This is offered as one reason why more counterfeit bills have not been reported. People stuck with them are trying to pass them along to someone else, police say.

At midweek, about \$4,000 worth had turned up. However, Vancouver police said at least \$2 millions worth had been circulated and that an international ring was behind it. At midweek six suspected members had been arrested.

The current swindle was far from the biggest to fleece Canadians; but authorities agreed it was the biggest in years.

At one time counterfeiters could count on a reasonable time between passing the first wave of phony bills to the time the alarm went off. Today, with spot news broadcasts, the operating gap has been narrowed considerably. The crooks have to move fast. At the first alarm, their business ends.

This time, the word spread even quicker than usual with the result, say police, that it's doubtful if the ring made expenses. The story is that those distributing the counterfeits paid \$30 for \$100 worth. About \$4,000 worth have turned up. If they succeeded in passing another \$4,000 this could hardly be called a lucrative return on what police say is a considerable investment.

In this case, the swindlers had a pretty good product. The bills had been multilithed and would readily pass cursory examination. In fact, it wasn't until the alarm started that close examination revealed flaws: the King's head was a little too large; the paper lacked that crinkly feeling; the green water mark missing; also the important planchette marking; the red ink that smudges.

However, police warned planchettes aren't an infallible tip-off to counterfeit notes. Actually, say the authorities, there's no hard and fast identifying rule for the layman. In the past, some bogus bills have even had the "planchette" markings.

In at least one case, shortly after the first war, a ring flooded the country with \$5 bills that were too perfect. They were accepted by the bank and circulated until they had to be withdrawn because of age. Only when the serial numbers were being checked was the fraud discovered.

Then a minute examination of the bills uncovered a flaw; but in the genuine notes. The bogus bills were perfect.

The biggest handicap to successful counterfeiting is paper. Crooks can make letter-perfect engravings or use a photographic process. This requires an elaborate plant. Cost is no object when large denomination bills—say \$50 or \$100—are being made.

But it is the manufacture of the paper used in real greenbacks and the measures taken to safeguard it, that really breaks a counterfeiter's heart. Processes are carefully guarded by the banknote companies. To prevent anyone duplicating the process, the formula is divided into two parts, held by two persons in two places. This minimizes bribery or other forms of criminal lure being used to obtain the secret.

For those always on the lookout for false currency, this is your best bet: get to learn the feel of the real stuff. Often an engraving is perfect. Bogus bills may even be

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SCOTCH MINSTREL IS CRITICALLY ILL



Sir Harry Lauder, 79-year-old Scottish vaudeville troupier and composer, is reported seriously ill of coronary thrombosis at Lauder hall, his Lanarkshire estate in Scotland. Lauder, world-famous for his songs in dialect, had been reported planning a "farewell tour" of the United States.

printed with stolen plates. There's no way to detecting a counterfeit through the printing. In fact, unless a note has a glaring flaw, even bankers won't spot a phony that way.

But the paper will give them away every time. In rare cases, thieves have managed to steal a quantity of banknote paper. Then only by checking the serial number can the genuine be told from the counterfeit. However, precautions taken today by Canadian banknote companies and the Bank of Canada just about rule out this possibility.

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