

"THE MORE THINGS APPEAR TO CHANGE, THE MORE THEY REMAIN THE SAME." [ALPHONSE KARR 1808-1890]

As Ontario celebrates its Bicentennial, perhaps it is a time to look back over issues which seem to recur....again & again. Many appear new to each generation yet it is quite humorous to realize (& somewhat frustrating) that we do seem to go in circles. The quotation from Alphonse Karr puts the matter very succinctly. We hope you enjoy the selection of "yesterday's" problems which seem to be with us again today.

THE CANADIAN IDENTITY PROBLEM

CANADIAN PATRIOTISM

As a national celebration, the first of July has very little in it to inspire patriotism or to stir up the popular spirit. In the United States the Declaration of Independence used to be read to every picnic party and at all the festive gatherings which assembled to celebrate the nation's birthday. It became fashionable to laugh at that sort of thing, but the spirit infused into the listeners by the orators and elocutionists of the nation to the south of us saved the republic in the hour of her trial. It would certainly be fitting if in Canada a little more attention were paid to the development of pride in our country and the infusion of a spirit of hope for a glorious national future. ... School children should be taught recitations in which the greatness of Canada is set sweetly forth, and nothing would so weld the people together as one great national song which could be sung by the fishermen in the provinces by the sea, by the "habitant" on his little farm, in the audiences of Ontario, and repeated again and again on the prairies which roll westward to mountain and coast.

July 1888

CYNICISM ABOUT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

One of the most characteristic features of modern popular opinion is a profound and almost universal disbelief in the sincerity of those who take a prominent part in public affairs. The cleanest record will not shield any man from suspicion of self-seeking and a desire to use his influence for personal advancement, and the misfortune is that in nine cases out of ten suspicion is more or less well founded. "What is his little game?" is the question which we instinctively ask ourselves when listening to some brilliant, able and, apparently, devoted champion of some political or social reform. "What does he expect to make out of it?" The possibility—only a slight one perhaps—that he may be really in earnest and acting independently of all personal considerations does not often occur to us.

July 1888

CANADIAN NATIONALISM

Every generation of Canadian nationalist intellectuals seems fated to play the part of Sisyphus. Their permanent task is to push the millstone of Canadian nationalism up a steep mountain, only to find that it rolls back down again to await the labours of the next generation. This means that much of Canadian intellectual history sounds like a broken record. The voices change but the refrain is the same: French-English relations are in crisis, and Canada is a colony dominated by Great Britain or the United States—or both. Only the favoured few—the nationalist intellectuals themselves—are free from that colonial mentality which permanently blinds Canadians to their real status as a colonized people.

Ramsay Cook April 1970

CANADIAN PACIFIC RY.
EVERY TUESDAY
 During MARCH and APRIL
 at 9.00 p.m.
TRAINS FOR
SETTLERS
 WILL LEAVE TORONTO
 With COLONIST SLEEPER ATTACHED
 < FOR >
MANITOBA
 AND THE
 CANADIAN NORTH-WEST

POLITICS & POLITICIANS

POLITICIANS AND FARMERS

It is remarkable how when election time comes around solicitude for the farmer is awakened in the breast of the urban politician. ... He may go along for three or four years without giving a thought to the farmer's struggles and triumphs. Yet when an appeal to the people is made he suddenly arrives at the conclusion that agriculture is the backbone of the country's prosperity. He realizes and publicly declares that the farmer is the most independent and incorruptible man on earth. The question as to whether the farmer is getting a fair deal apparently keeps him awake at nights. The farmer, he tells you, is more or less the sport of fortune, the plaything of the forces of nature, and it is the duty of all Governments to assist him to obtain better rewards for his labours. For, he adds, does not the prosperity of the farmer mean the prosperity of the whole community? Who feeds us, he should like to know? ...

September 1911

TRUDEAU

Pierre Elliot Trudeau is too good to be true. ... He glitters and sparkles and purrs like a new car in a dealer's showroom—or, more accurately, like an experimental Detroit model. ... A brand-new car usually complements the human fallibility of its owner by confessing to balky cigarette lighters, stiff door hinges, rattles, squeaks or various other imperfections. Pierre Elliot Trudeau seems practically bugless. ... The only chink in the armour-plated reputation at the moment seems to be what Douglas Fisher described, a year ago, as "Pierre's invincible arrogance." ... But a trace of intellectual arrogance isn't enough at this stage to reduce Mr. Trudeau's reputation to somewhat human proportions. The only thing that conceivably could do this, that would show the man as a creature of fallible judgement after all, that would reveal a human weakness which all of us could share, would be the desire within this paragon to become Prime Minister of Canada.

Peter Desbarats March 1968

YOUR INCOME TAX RETURN

INCOME TAX

And speaking of taxes, have you figured out your income tax? Can you figure out your income tax? It does not appear that one in a hundred know what they have to

pay on and what they do not have to pay on. As yet I have met no one with a working knowledge of the thing. One gentleman writes in and makes the positive statement that he does not have to pay on an income derived from Canadian corporations because the tax has already been paid at the fountainhead. Has it been paid—who knows? Does anybody know? The gentlemen who write pamphlets about taxes refer to such a thing vaguely, but not specifically. There seems to be but one thing to do. Make a stab at the amount, being very careful that you over-pay. If you under-pay, you go to jail. Or if you do not go to jail, you are fined. Or perhaps you get both the fine and a jail term. But then, if one over-pays, is he going to get that over-payment back? And if he does get some back, how is he to know that it is the proper amount?

April 1921

WOMEN'S RIGHTS???

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN A FANTASTIC IDEA

The statement that the question [of equal pay for men and women for equal work] is a moral one is rather fantastic. It might as well be argued that all inequalities of reward are immoral—in which case nature itself and the whole universe is immoral. In the days before the employment of women became so general there were many inequalities in the payment of men, and in the callings in which men still exclusively figure, equal pay for equal work by no means prevails. ... Since the general view of what constitutes a moral question is very nebulous, it might easily be argued that it is immoral to pay a woman who has nothing to buy but her own food and clothes as much as the man who supports his wife and family and educates the latter into useful and productive members of the community.

December 1911

WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE

Unless the women of England are built on lines very different to our own, this bauble of universal suffrage is hardly worth the bother. As a new thing, with the polish still on it, "votes for women" is for the moment interesting, but in the long run it fails to hold the attention of those for whom it is designed. The average woman does not care a "whoop" about a vote. ... Mah Jongg, the social whirl, housekeeping, clothes and babies are more in their line, and it is well that it is so. ... Our women as a whole are not interested in what Miss Agnes MacPhail, our sole woman M.P., says in the House of Commons, but they are interested in what she wears. Imagine if you can, a member of the Press Gallery devoting space to Billy King's neck wear. ... Those women who have tried public office realize sooner or later that what they have undertaken is better suited to men, whose environment from the beginning of things has been such as to fit them more easily into the maelstrom of public endeavour.

May 1924

MISS AGNES MACPHAIL, M.P.

While nearly everyone familiar with the leading figures in the public life in Canada is aware of the fact that Miss Agnes MacPhail, M.P., is pert, shallow, and ill-informed, there is no doubt that she has an aptitude for publicity that would have delighted the late P. T. Barnum. ... We have no prejudice against Miss MacPhail because of her sex, although she might very well stand as a living illustration to prove the arguments of those who are skeptical of the results of permitting women to take an equal share with men in the responsibilities of government. If Miss MacPhail has ever made an enlightened contribution to the discussion of any major issue it is not on record. But it must be admitted that there are plenty of masculine persons in politics who are equally pretentious and shallow—though they do not command publicity to the same extent.

April 1927



Business men are solving the problem of delivering all kinds of merchandise with the Ford Model T Delivery Car. It is proving the quickest and Most Economical for all general purposes.

AND WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE RADIO WAS THE ANSWER??!

DON'T GET A DIVORCE



Few women want to go out because they hate their homes. It is because they need a change. Those wives who are in the home all day find the walls boring at night and they crave a glimpse of the outside world—but on the other hand, husbands after a hard day at the office are tired and wish to stay at home.

COMPROMISE
 Come to the nearest R. S. Williams store, select a Rogers or Majestic radio and have it sent home tomorrow, and from then on bring the outside world into your home and enjoy the comforts of your easy chair too.

Get a Rogers-Majestic Radio

R. S. Williams Co.
 F. A. TRESTRAIL
 145 Yonge St.

Established Since 1849

MARRIAGE

... The consensus of opinion among our leaders is that marriage is somewhat on the decline owing to the fact that a greater percentage of disappointments are now met with in matrimony than in previous generations. While it seems very much like Hum-bug for us to pass judgement upon the secret and inner life of past generations, of which, as a matter of fact, we know actually nothing, still, I believe the general opinion to be true, I am persuaded that matrimony does yield more disappointments and failures than ever before. ... Is the husband of today as "Homelike" in his tastes and pursuits as was his father or grandfather? Is the wife of today as wrapped up in her home life as was her mother or grandmother? Decidedly no ... with a weakened domesticity and a constantly lessening percentage of time spent within the home, does it not follow naturally that married happiness should be less general than it once was?

April 1894

SMOKERS BEWARE

PROHIBITION OF CIGARETTES

Prohibition being the order of the day ... organizations which make it their business to look after the notes in other people's eyes are seeking new fields to conquer. No case has ever been made out against cigarettes, except that certain people find pleasure in the use of them; but this is an all-sufficient reason for prohibiting them with certain people who do not smoke. When the campaign gets under way we shall no doubt get plenty of literature on the subject, showing that cigarettes are the main cause of burglary, wife-beating, cholera, infantile paralysis and other social and physical evils. We shall be asked to abolish the cigarette in the interest of the Home. Girls are already being warned against consorting with young men who smoke them, because they are the sign-manual of criminality.

February 1919