

THE ACADIAN

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Editorial

Our pulpits are our work clothes. Each of us live some kind of a sermon every day.

INDUSTRIES FOR WOLFVILLE

Wolfville will never realize the position for which nature has so richly fitted her to occupy if its citizens are satisfied with present attainments. The reputation of being the prettiest and most popular residential district in the Maritimes and the centre of attraction to tourist visitors to the "Land of Evangeline", together with our unsurpassed educational advantages, afford attractions of which our people may well be proud.

These advantages may be materially augmented, however, by the establishment of such industrial institutions as will in no way detract from the general prospect and for which our position so well qualifies. The most valuable asset of any community is its population of producers, who earn a good wage and spend it in support of the well being of their families. An industry which employs a score or more of well paid workmen, each of whom is the head of a family and supports a home, is of great value to the business institutions of a town and is well worth working for.

It is said that Wolfville people have subscribed a sum not less than fifty thousand dollars towards the funds of Acadia University, which is certainly a most creditable showing. Would it be possible to secure a like amount for the establishment of such industries as would make a valuable addition to the town and prove a wise and profitable investment for every citizen interested in its prosperity? At present there are such industries in contemplation and others might be attracted that would prove equally valuable if gone after. THE ACADIAN offers the suggestion with the hope that it may receive due and careful consideration.

THE COST OF GOVERNMENT

While the people of Nova Scotia are saying through their governments that they cannot afford to provide prison farms and more sane provision for the care of the feeble-minded and delinquent population, they are permitting a criminal waste of public funds that would provide adequately for these needs. It is said that the annual session of our legislature at Halifax costs the province the very considerable sum of one hundred thousand dollars and who will say that the return is in any way proportionate to the outlay. This is only one item of our governmental expenses the total of which would reach a very large amount.

In these days when we are hearing so much about the reorganization of business institutions and individual interests it ought to be possible to find some means of rearranging our governmental system on a common sense basis that would not only save a large proportion of the revenue of the province now wasted for much needed and wise public undertakings but at the same time ensure the replacement of the present antiquated and inefficient methods of conducting provincial and municipal affairs by an up-to-date and practical system of government. The appearance of a Moses who will lead us out of the present wilderness of public waste and inefficiency should be hailed with satisfaction by all Nova Scotians who have faith in the resources and possibilities of our fair province.

OUR NATIONAL GAME IN DANGER

Clean sport in these provinces has received a hard knock this season through the manner in which the Canadian national game of hockey has been conducted. Not only have the qualifications of amateur players been in question in many instances, but the integrity of those who have the oversight of the rules of the game have in some cases been under discussion. All kinds of methods have been resorted to in order to win a game, one of the latest being rough means to intimidate the referee. At Dartmouth last Friday night the referee in a strenuously contested game was set upon by spectators who were not pleased with the decisions handed out. In order to save the situation, which is certainly disgraceful in the extreme, the rink owners and the M. P. B. A. A. U. of C. are offering rewards for the conviction of the offenders, which it is hoped may be instrumental in securing for the culprits the punishment which they so richly deserve.

In the meantime what is more needed is the cultivation of a better spirit than has been in evidence among the votaries of the sport. When public sentiment is such as to set the seal of its disapproval upon anything dishonorable or dishonest in the conduct of public sport, a better condition of affairs will prevail, and not until then.

SAFETY FIRST

The terribly sad accident which occurred at Annapolis last week, through which a resident of that town in the prime of young manhood met with a sudden and painful death, is another evidence of the danger which threatens an every hand as a result of the prevalence of the smoking habit. When we note the indiscriminate use of the lighted match under all conditions we often wonder that more conflagrations do not result. More of the bad fires, often attended by severe loss of life, which have occurred in recent years, are due to the carelessness of smokers than the public realize. The smouldering cigarette furnished an especial menace, used as it is frequently by all classes and conditions since the war. In the interest not only of the young manhood and womanhood of the land, but regarded as well from a purely economic standpoint a campaign against this evil would be most fitting at the present time. Regarded either in the interest of the nation or the individual the slogan "SAFETY FIRST" applies here equally as well as in other instances.

IN THE LITERARY WORLD

The Late John Frederick Herbin and His Poetry

Quietly as he had lived John Frederick Herbin slipped from life, a life that he loved for all that it gave him, not in great possessions nor in the great riches that in the world count as attainment but for the knowledge that he had of the essential things, love and friends and the consciousness of having done his part well in the community in which he lived. It does not seem a very great record but after all, it is a good record.

and faith and confidence. To those who knew him there is a certainty that in his retrospective moments, Mr. Herbin could have had no vain regrets for wasted opportunities, and few there are of whom this may be said. A dreamer and a bit of an idealist and yet a man of practical ideas, Mr. Herbin who might have wandered along the high roads and in the byways following the call of the fingers, chose to follow life as he saw it, and while there are those who predicted a career for him as a writer of songs and poems, yet he made his decision and was content. He knew the pleasure of success

as a writer when he published his first poems, a little volume, The Marshlands, which met with an instant appreciation from the critics. Since it was written the Acadian cult has become a fashion and others have followed in the path first trodden by John Frederick Herbin who wrote of the country to which he belonged, whose tragedy has never forgotten, and whose story he knew from family legend and tradition. Familiar as well with every foot of country in Nova Scotia over which the Acadian homes had been scattered, over which the bewitched peasants had walked on the way to the writing of his, he had gathered a wealth of story tradition, of fact and fancy regarding the occupancy of the Acadian lands that gave the basis for his later stories and histories of the Grand Pre country. A many-sided man with varied interests, a close student and with a deep love for life in the open Mr. Herbin was a delightful companion whether in his home where in the intensity of a discussion his wife would laughingly remind him of her English ancestor's tradition, or in that her ancestors later occupied the farms originally allotted to the Acadian family of which Mr. Herbin was a descendant, but of this, one cannot be sure, whether telling of the legends that cluster about Blomidon or discussing the merits of cricket, or of this or that fishing pool, or the value of certain policies in regard to town politics, for he was an ardent citizen, eager for all that would benefit his town. He would not talk of his poems, however, but in them one finds the finest expression of both the man and the poet. Take for instance An Acadian at Grand Pre:

Today, alone of all my scattered race,
I see again the beauty in our land,
Made fair and fruitful by a banished
Herb:
Made sweet of tongue, now with no
abiding place,
And Nature has remembered, for a
trace
Of calm Acadian life and holds command.
Where undisturbed the rustling willow
stands,
And the curved grass, telling the
breeze's pace,
Before the marsh of power the weak
must bend,
And yet forgive; the savage/strong
will smite.
The glossing words of reason and of
song,
To red of hate and virtue to defend,
Shall never set the bitter deed aright,
Not satisfy the ages with the wrong.

And The Returned Acadian which is perhaps one of the best, if not the best of these sonnets:
Along my father's dykes I roam again,
Among the willows by the river's side,
These miles of green I know from hill
to tide,
And every creek and river's ruddy
stain,
Neglected long and shunned, our dead
have lain.
Here where a people's dearest hope
has died,
Alone of all their children scattered
wide,
I scan the sad memorials that remain:
The dykes wave with the grass, but
not for me;
The oxen stir not when this stranger
calls;
From these new homes upon the green
hill side,
Where speech is strange and a new
people free,
No voice cries out in welcome; for these
halls
Give food and shelter, where I may
not hide.

While Mr. Herbin felt deeply the tragedy that resulted in the final deportation of the Acadians and has expressed in his writings his feelings, he was free from bitterness and was eager for all information that would lead to a clearer understanding of the many differences that brought about the expulsion of the Acadians. Inasmuch as he was the sole representative of his people who had returned to the home lands in the Grand Pre and Gasperaux areas, he watched with interest the gradual exploitation of the country through tourist indulgence, and was genuinely delighted in dealing with writers and historians who looked upon his country through his eyes, who knew where mistakes had been made, where misunderstandings have arisen, where self-interest predominated and where sincere efforts had been made on behalf of the Acadian farmers and their families.

Among the many lovely pictures that Mr. Herbin has given in his sonnets which reveal the beauty and the characteristics of the Grand Pre region as do no other writings, is one, The Night-Mower, which portrays a feature of life on the salt hay marshes where the grass can only be cut at night or in the damp weather as the heat of the day hardens it against the scythe. This poem has been the subject of comment by writers unfamiliar with the conditions:
"In the dew-fall of an autumn night,
A solitary mower marks his way
With hissing scythe-in the breeze,
Savored hay,
Long ere the dawn is flooding into light,
From restless doubting now unveils
my sight:
I shame to hear the certain swing
and play
Of the strong toiler's arm whose
night is day,
Treading the hours through in faithful
night,
Ever he glides with form invisible;
His ringing scythe oft filling the dark
plain.
The moving murmur of the coming
tide
Stirs the broad night, now full and
palpable,
For wholesome pride and faith are
mine again,
Near the night-mower by the river-
side."
These are but a glimpse from out the wealth of pictures that Mr. Herbin has presented of Grand Pre and its natural life. The little volume, The Marshlands, is rich in many others and in it alone, its author has made for himself a place among the Canadian writers of verse. Of this volume Mr. W. P. Dole said that never in any one volume had he encountered as many simple lines of beauty; and in his opinion the sonnet, Seining, was worthy of a place among the great writers of this style of verse.

The broadening flats go glimmering to the sea,
And the great net that struggled with the tide
Hangs dark and motionless, for the winds have died,
On high the circling gulls cry ceaselessly,
A horse goes slowly sinking to the knee
In the reed earth, dragging with dart and glide

The mud boat after on the trackless, wide
Shore level to the seine's day fishery,
Again, beneath the stars down by the seas,
Dark, sobbing tide-waves slip through span on span
Of net, quick bared and curling like a wing,
Night labor now companioned by the breeze,
The glowing lantern glides to where

for man
The harvest of the sea is garnering,
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