

The Evening Times-Star

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., SEPTEMBER 18, 1926

THE CIVIC INVESTIGATION.

Mayor White's motion that Dr. Horace L. Brittain, of the Citizens' Research Institute of Canada, be invited to come to Saint John to meet the Council in conference on or about October 15, with a view of having him make a survey of civic administration and civic affairs, was adopted unanimously at yesterday's City Hall meeting, and it will be assumed that the conference with Doctor Brittain will mean that he will be set to work and given authority to explore thoroughly every feature of our civic administration, particularly those having to do with assessment and taxation and the organization and working methods of the various civic departments.

Mayor White, in the course of his address leading up to his resolution to invite Doctor Brittain to come here, dealt with some of the difficulties at present confronting the Council. These difficulties appear formidable, and their existence and character are well recognized by those who have given close attention to civic affairs; but, unfortunately, the great mass of the taxpayers do not yet fully understand to what extent the present weight of taxation is increased by interest charges on past expenditures coupled with the rapidly increasing cost of education, including that in connection with the Vocational School which was built after the project had been submitted to a direct vote of the taxpayers. Saint John has a very large proportion of voters who, through apathy or disgust, refuse to go to the polls, and yet who loudly bewail civic conditions which they personally have made no effort to improve.

It may be that the city is paying too large a percentage of the county taxes. That point should be settled definitely by the coming investigation. Our tax charges must be met, and they should be reduced steadily, although the improvement in sinking fund conditions of late years justifies more complicity with respect to the civic debt than could be felt ten or fifteen years ago.

We must find out whether the present relations existing between the Common Council and the School Board are justifiable and whether it is wise to continue to submit the citizens to direct taxation by a non-elected body, particularly when the volume of such taxation is controllable by the Legislature, whose members are necessarily somewhat remote from the problems confronting the average taxpayer here.

His Worship says that he has nothing to defend. The citizens clearly understand that, because he has as yet hardly got well settled in the saddle. But they look to him not to defend but to give vigorous leadership in the prevailing circumstances and to employ all his recognized ability and energy in the effort to create more favorable living conditions and a more rapid growth.

While it is true that the sovereign remedy for heavy taxation is an increase in industries and in population, it ought not to be taken for granted that we must merely submit to existing difficulties and await some distant day when the load of taxation will be spread over a greater number of taxpayers. For one thing, increased population will necessarily mean more expenditures in some directions, more schools, more paved streets, extensions to water and fire protection services—in fact most of the expenditures usual when a family becomes larger. The citizens will expect the investigation to answer, among other questions, one that is very frequently asked here, and in most other cities: "Are we getting a proper return for the money we actually expend from year to year?" The answer to this question will involve a complete analysis of all the departments with respect both to personnel and methods. No such investigation is necessary because of the belief that dishonesty exists or that the present auditors do not know what is going on. It is necessary nevertheless in order to determine how far methods may be improved and economies effected.

some very easy comparisons, that the selected folk today are taxed to the last cent, whereas those in many other walks of life, either through weakness at City Hall or through deliberate evasion, are escaping their just share of the burden. The Council can deal with this aspect of the situation without in any way postponing or interfering with the general investigation which is contemplated and which should be pushed vigorously to early completion.

LOVE STORIES.

Apart from the reflections induced by the weary and disillusioned cynicism of the inmates of the Saint John County Hospital who, when asked for a "real good love story," added "for that is the only way you could get it anyway," the reported objection to love stories by the hospital authorities gives one furiously to think of the popular, and more or less modern, misuse of terms, particularly when applied to literature. It must be allowed that perhaps a few of the erotic thrillers, misnamed "love stories" might induce in certain emotional patients febrile conditions—though most of such trash has as much kick as 20-20, two per cent. water and these are not real, good love stories. The number of stories devoid of love interest which will find acceptance by editors, publishers and the reading public is very limited indeed. Fiction must possess verisimilitude. The rest is the imaginative art of the author appealing to and stimulating the imagination of the reader. All social intercourse is based on the relationship of the sexes. That is not to say that sex in its stark form dominates all human activity, but it is the invisible foundation thereof and permeates all, often imperceptibly, and therefore love interest must enter in some degree into almost every story in order that the narrative be probable. The mere presence of love interest, however, even in considerable proportions, does not make a story a love story. Stories that by dominant interest would be classed as Adventure, Mystery, Character or Humorous necessarily contain an element of Love. Even the "eternal triangle" plot which has of late been written and rewritten in a thousand thousand permutations and settings is held by literary purists to be more truly Character than Love. The real love story plot in skeleton demands sacrifice on the part of one or two other of the principal characters, add a necessary dash of atmosphere, characterization and suspense and there is a love story. The essential ingredient is sacrifice and the predominant seasoning should be suspense and not the often too pungent spice of character. In actual fact a real good love story is the rarest thing in literature and, largely because its simplicity demands the most artistic treatment, it is generally a masterpiece. Wherefore, if the patient in the County Hospital, whose only way to get love anyway is through the medium of fiction—only hopes the future will cause her to modify her philosophy—received what she asked for, the hospital authorities need have little anxiety over her temperature unless her condition be such as to render the reading of Stock Market quotations dangerous. In that case one imagines that bromide, not books, would be the prescription.

Out of the mouths of babes—

Two Canterbury kiddies sent The Telegraph-Journal some September apple blossoms, expressing the hope that they would be appreciated "since they are so tardy." The expression is extremely felicitous and, moreover, it invites an extended application. At last it is apparent why we should love the office boy.

Odds and Ends

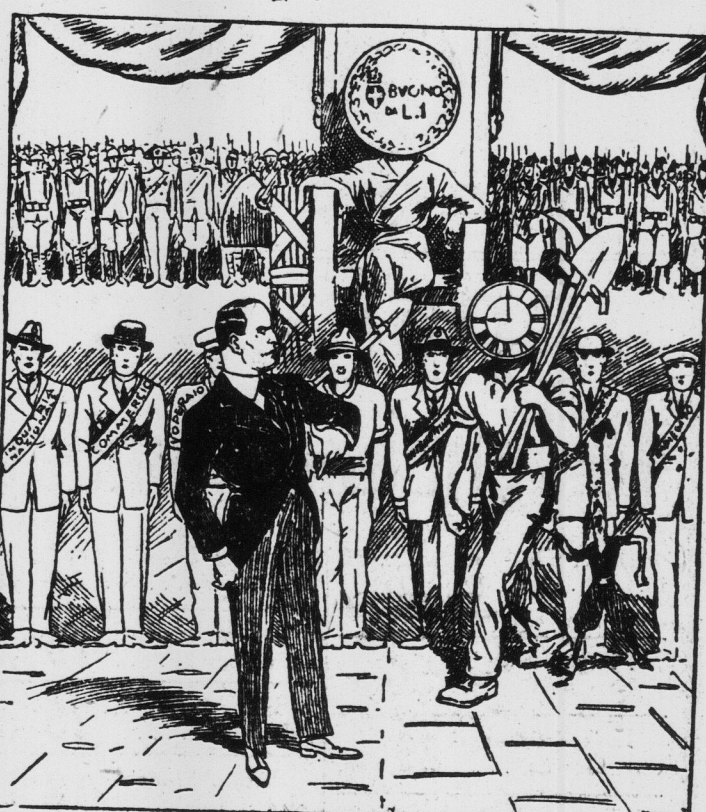
A Prize Letter

(The Bookman in Manitoba Free Press) T. P.'s Weekly gives a guinea-prize every issue for the most interesting letter sent in. And I think that shortness and simplicity of composition tell as much as the subject matter, which must concern some article in the Weekly. Here is the letter to win the prize in the latest issue to reach me: "My Lady's Eyes" interested me considerably. When studying medieval poetry some years ago, I made note of the numerous references to ladies' eyes, being struck by the fact that the medieval poet seemed to consider grey eyes as the most worthy of praise. Troubadour, Trouvere, and Early English alike—all of them grey eyes were the eyes worthy to be sung. I know no reason for this, unless the fashion began with the troubadours, who thought grey eyes a relief from the dark eyes of the average maidens of Provence; or were they inspired by the Song of Solomon: 'Thou art fair, thou hast dove's eyes?' That is a model letter and an informing one.

Where Things Are Up-to-Date.

(Pearsons) An Englishman took an American to see Hamlet. "You are behind the times," commented the American. "Why, I saw Hamlet in New York for years ago!"

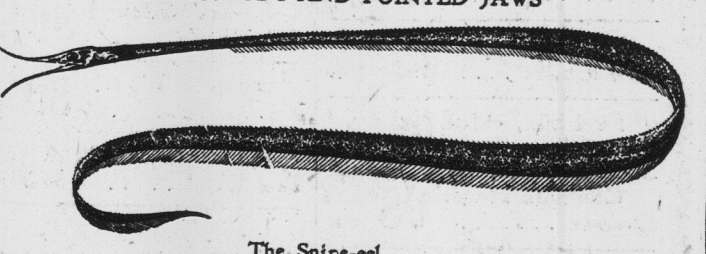
Calling Up The Reserves



Summoning the "Ninth Hour" to Defend the Italian Line. (The working day in Italy has been extended by order of Premier Mussolini, from eight hours to nine). —From Il 420, Florence.

Queer Quirks of Nature

SLENDER BODY AND POINTED JAWS



By AUSTIN H. CLARK  
A number of them. Most of them were found clinging to the netting with which their small but numerous teeth had become entangled. The snipe-eels are all small, the one shown, which was captured in the Hawaiian Islands, being only six and three-quarter inches long. It is the only one of its kind ever found. Their curious mouth with the widely diverging jaws, seems quite unsuited to capture anything. If they did catch anything it would seem that they would have some difficulty in swallowing it through their long and thread-like neck. Yet where they live there are undoubtedly plenty of them.



Just Fun

"SEND money immediately. I'm broke," wired the son at college. "So's your old man," was the reply.  
JENNINGS—You don't seem to get on well with your wife, and yet you sit still around.  
Billings—Yes, but it ever so grumble there's no place like home.  
PEOPLE who live in glass houses had better lay off the Charleston.  
If you have a goat you must christen and pet him.  
Butt watch him with care.  
Don't let anyone get him.  
THE man worth \$5,000 worries because it isn't six instead of being glad it isn't four.  
A FELLER never feels bluer, nor more like life ain't worth livin', than when he finds his best friend, just isn't.  
"WHEN I first fell off the roof," where I was, but as soon as I hit the sidewalk I found out.  
"WHEN that boy of mine was a baby he always cried for the moon," said a Saint John dad. "Now that he is grown up he wants the earth."  
"IS THE dentist in?"  
"No, he's filling a cavity."  
"You mean—"  
"He's out to lunch."  
THE luckiest fleas in the world were on the Ark. A dog apiece.  
IF YOU'RE looking for something to kick about, get a football.  
A RIGHTEOUS town is defined as one in which a druggist doesn't know what you mean when you wink at him.

as Sin's own headquarters. They can tell tales here, of whole skyscrapers in New York being d-d-destroyed to notorious traffic of all varieties and of Babylonian revels compared to which the dreams of the stage manager of the Folies Bergere are—say—thin soup. Hence, when a Frenchman leaves for America, nowadays, his neighbors raise one or both eyebrows and whisper that they always knew So-and-So was a gay dog.  
"HIS MAJESTY."  
LEQUETO, France—Living here in a tiny villa is a handsome boy whose life is a delusion of grandeur compared to which that of Mussolini is a pitiable thing. He is little "King" Otto of Hungary. To him Austria-Hungary is still intact and glorious, in his mind there is a great army waiting for him, palaces, wealth, glory and the affection of a prosperous nation. And it is only a matter of weeks, or months at most, until he will return to his kingdom where a throne and a magnificent welcome await him. So does Otto believe—and wholly because his mother, the Empress Zita, never ceases to guard him from the facts, the hard, unhappy, unrelenting facts. For she believes that someday the old glory will return and then she can take her son back to the throne she has never ceased to cherish for him. In the meantime, she and her family live in ill-concealed poverty near Paris. But Otto is always "Majesty," and lives happily enough in a world which ceased to exist eight years ago.

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POEMS I LOVE

GRAY'S "ELEGY."

"IN 'HAMLET' and in this famous elegy one will find perhaps more well-known lines than in any other single play or poem. Indeed, so commonplace have certain phrases become that they now seem platitudinous; but think of the ecstasy of reading them for the first time! And as one never tires of the sun, moon and stars, the world will never weary of these beautiful lines. They are of the eternal verities. There is space for only a portion of the stanzas.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness, and to me.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell cover'd deep,  
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The hoar old elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth  
Awaits alike the inevitable hour:  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray:  
Along the sequestered vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth  
A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;  
Alf Science frowned not on his humble birth,  
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;  
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:  
For that his eyes did not see the world's end,  
Heaven did his heart to the world's end extend.

For that his heart was never weary of  
To see the world's end, Heaven did his heart extend:  
For that his heart was never weary of  
To see the world's end, Heaven did his heart extend.

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He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,  
He gained from heaven, 'twas all he wished, a friend.  
No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,  
The bosom of his Father, and his God.)

DINNER STORIES

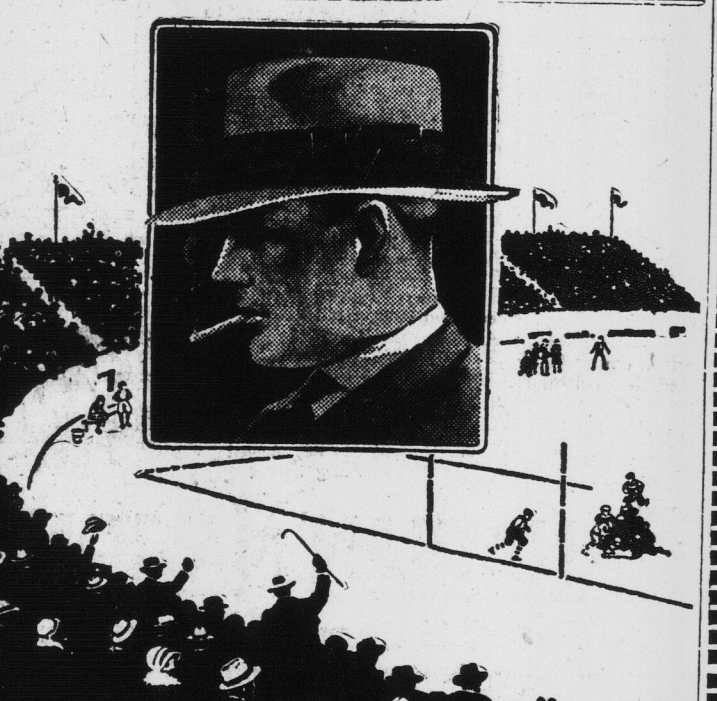
TWO Columbus business men were conversing about a business rival. They were pointing out the qualities that gave him the knack of making money.  
"Few men show such keen business instinct," one remarked.  
"Is he so full of it?" the other asked.  
"Full of it," was the reply. "Why he even refers to his better-half as his 30 per cent. preferred."

A SCOTSMAN told a good anjing story the other evening. One day in a stream for some time, and eventually inquired: "Had any luck?" "Yes," replied the fisher. "I took thirty-one trout out of here yesterday." "That's interesting," said the inquirer. "By the way, do you know who I am? I am the senior magistrate in this district, and this stream happens to be on my estate." "Ah! Do you know who I am?" responded the angler. "I am the champion liar in the district."

A SHIPWRECKED mariner had just arrived on the cannibal island of Pahomoo. He was making some rather nervous inquiries.  
"Was the last missionary you had here a good man?" he asked.  
"Pretty good," replied the chief, picking his teeth reflectively, "but the last time I saw him, he was stewed."

JAPAN PROTECTS INDUSTRY

(Reutsche Zeitung, Berlin)  
At the present moment, in the absence of any agreement, Japan is able to maintain a system of prohibitions against the German dye export trade, which she is unable to apply to other exporting countries such as Switzerland and the United States on account of the trade agreements existing between herself and them. The chief obstacle to the conclusion of an agreement of the dye industry against the German dyes in order to develop her own dye industry, which was built up during the war.



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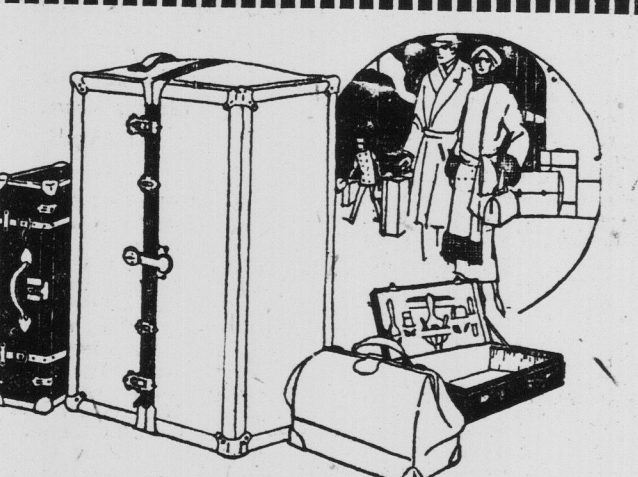
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