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Not easily fenced

THE premier fell back on the words of an old song to say "don't fence me in" when queried on the date of the next election. For Mr. Bennett this was hyperbole; he is too agile to be fenced in this connection. One of the joys of the premier is the privilege of keeping his opponents guessing, and the present head of the Socred party wouldn't be human if he didn't make the most of this time-honored prerogative.

Everyone assumes that a provincial election will be scheduled for this year, and Mr. Bennett's recent budget did nothing to dim such expectation. Rather the opposite, perhaps. There is knowledge also that governments seldom wait until forced to an election in their last year of office. The political weather may not then be of their choosing.

Looked at objectively the Socred regime does not seem in danger whether an election be held this year or next. The Liberals and Conservatives are at a low ebb and have to work their way back from ground level up; the socialism of the CCF has limited appeal in a burgeoning and prosperous province. The electorate can be unpredictable, however. Mr. Bennett may prefer to play safe while the going is good.

There is a hint that 1960 will be the year, in the premier's statement that the homeowner grant will be the chief issue. Actually this is some-what puzzling since on balance the grant wins general favor. Mr. Strachan has recanted his first impetuous objection and a policy not contested by political opponents can scarcely be an issue.

However if this grant is to be the main plank in the Socred election campaign hay would have to be made while the sun shone, hence a 1960 poll. By 1961 the increase in the homeowner grant would be stale, unless of course he has in mind a further increase a year hence. Even then it would not be an "issue," since opposition groups—aware of which side the bread is buttered on—would not oppose it on the hustings. Voters like a handout, whether or not they recognize it as some of their own money being given back to them.

—The Victoria Colonist.

Rise or decline?

Isn't it paying a sort of compliment to the Communist Party in America to assert that with each loss of membership, the party becomes more menacing than ever? At its national convention last December, reports placed the hard-core membership of the party at between 6,000 and 10,000 persons—as contrasted with a membership of 64,000 in 1945. Surely this is an indication that American Communists have been a miserable failure, and that even Mr. Khrushchev's visit has failed to pump new life into a slavishly alien party. Yet a recent headline proclaimed: "Hoover Sees Greater U.S. Red Peril."

This is a theme that J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director, has reiterated many times: the smaller the party, the greater the menace.

In his testimony to the House in 1958, the Associated Press reported, Mr. Hoover advised that "the scuttling of the Daily Worker, far from being a sign that the Communist Party in America is collapsing, indicates that it is firmly under control of the Soviet Union." And now, in 1960, Mr. Hoover warns the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee that, in the wake of Mr. Khrushchev's visit, the dwindling party is "more powerful, more unified, and even more of a menace to our republic."

To be sure, mere size does not tell the whole story. Party statistics do not include muddle-headed fellow travelers, and in some countries a handful of Communists have indeed been able to seize power. But in those instances—notably in Russia in 1917—the whole social fabric was disintegrating and the Communists had a fertile field to exploit. The United States has never been more prosperous; the dreary domestic Reds have never been more discredited. It would be refreshing if Mr. Hoover for once were to hail the reduction of Communist membership as proof of how a free society, in Jefferson's words, can successfully tolerate error "so long as reason is free to combat it."

—Washington Post and Times Herald.

Limits on junk mail

By putting limits according to bulk on the varieties of unaddressed advertising mail which postmen will be authorized to deliver, the Canadian post office department has made an encouraging start on the job of ridding the country of what is commonly described as junk mail.

Thousands of householders and no doubt every postal employee in Canada will be grateful to the department for doing this. Junk mail is a nuisance to almost everyone and much more than a nuisance to the men who have to walk their routes lugging bags bulging with unwanted advertising material which they know is going to be thrown away for the most part.

The services provided by the post office were never intended for this sort of purpose. If advertisers wish to stuff the mailboxes of the land with announcements and samples of their wares there is probably no way of stopping them, though perhaps a law could be devised to accomplish such a clean-up. If they believe that kind of promotion does them good it is up to them to hire their own deliverers and not to clutter up the legitimate mails.

The new regulations forbid the handling by the post office of samples of goods and restrict acceptable advertising material to envelopes or sheets folded to a size which will go through the regulation-size mail slot. This will get rid of items which mailmen have had to leave to litter up porches and lobbies because they would not fit into mailboxes. As a beginning it is well worth the while and may, it is to be hoped, lead to the second step; elimination of all unaddressed material from the mails.

—The Victoria Colonist.

These 'enormous' profits

It is fashionable to call the consumer the forgotten man in modern strike settlements. He seems to have company. In the United States steel strike much was made of the enormous profits made by the industry. The biggest operator, the U.S. Steel Corporation, has announced a net income of $253,075,686 in 1959—truly enormous, if you say it fast.

However, it worked out at $4.24 a share. Of this—after the plowing-back and other outlays to take care of expansion—the shareholder gets a $3 dividend, on stock currently selling around $93. In short, his "enormous" profit on his investment is just under 3.23 per cent—considerably less than he could get on government bonds.

Yet curiously this true yardstick, like the man who furnishes it, is seldom heard of around the bargaining table. The shareholder joins the consumer in oblivion. Perhaps the shareholders, too, should have a union.

—The Toronto Globe and Mail.

The 'British-Americans'

A project for a new American newspaper in London has called attention to the fact that the "American colony" in and about that capital is growing. What Paris has for ages been, what Rome more recently has become, now London can aspire to—if "aspire" be the right word: a magnet for American expatriates.

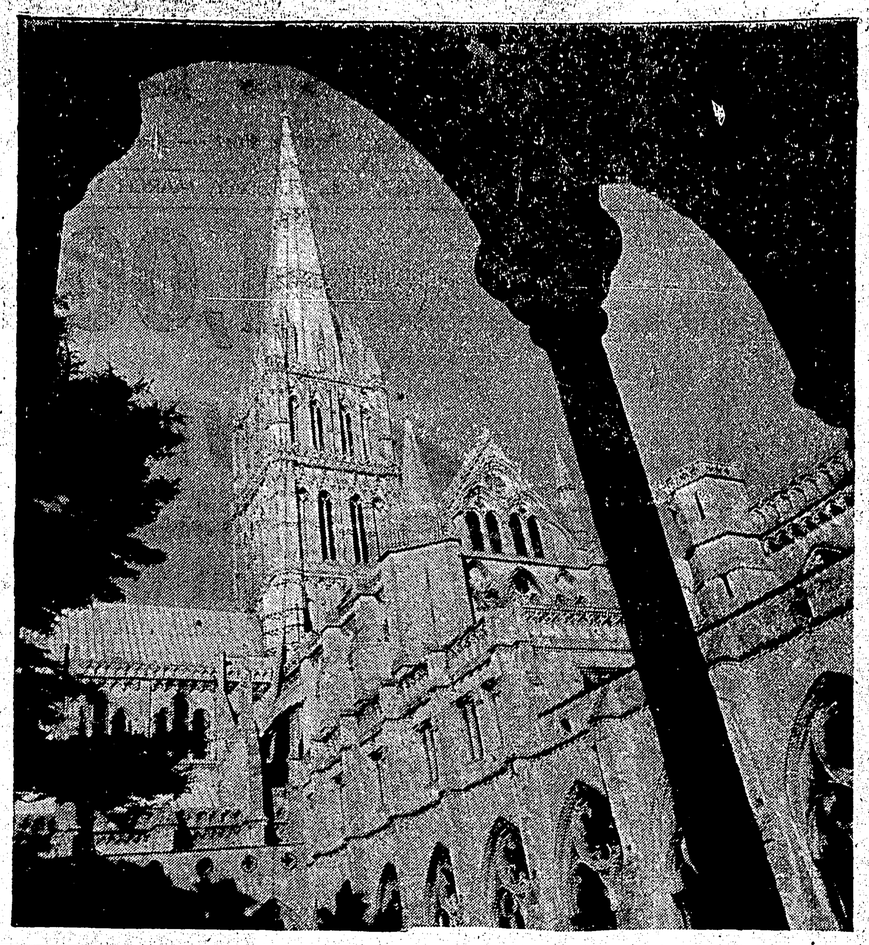
The Sunday Times, of London, noting this development points out that there are now 30,000 American adults living in Britain where there were only 15,000 before World War II. Add 100,000 American servicemen whose presence may be less voluntary, but a surprising number of whom learn to like the British way of life. Tourists are six or seven times as numerous as in prewar days, at about 400,000 a year.

Of course many an American tourist returns from Britain or any other country with the feeling that the best part of the trip is "getting home again." But Americans who choose to stay on in Britain are numerous enough to prompt an inquiry into their reasons.

Some of them like Britain because it is a more adult country than their homeland—that is, it is governed more by grown-up than by teen-age tastes. Others approve of the manners of British children, and indeed of the manners of their own children after they are "exposed" to British ways for a time. One notable American male interviewed on the subject said he liked Britain because it is a "man's country." He felt America was "woman ridden." Which is not quite what Henry van Dyke meant when he wrote, "London is a man's town, there's power in the air; and Paris is a woman's town with flowers in her hair," because, after all, van Dyke added that it was "home again, home again, America for me."

Americans don't think too highly of British musical comedy but they thrive on the opera, the ballet. And American parents aren't entirely put out by the fact that in school their children have to work hard to match the standards set by British pupils. Two nice things appear from the Sunday Times investigation. One is that the Americans interviewed like to be in Britain. The other is that the British seem to like to have them, and even have a pet name for them, the "British-Americans."

—The Christian Science Monitor.



THE SPIRE FROM THE CLOISTERS, SALISBURY CATHEDRAL—The main part of Salisbury Cathedral was completed in 1258 which makes the building unique, since the fabric is all of one period. Thus Salisbury Cathedral is the finest example of early English architecture in the country. —British Travel Assn. photo.

OTTAWA REPORT

By FRANK HOWARD, M.P.

There are a number of reasons why drugs are of such a high cost and a number of factors which contribute to their cost. Some of these factors are those which any business concern reflects in its price of the commodity which it produces. For instance, such things as expenditures on research, advertising, selling, distribution, and promotion are all paid for by the consumer for he is the only person from whom corporations eventually get their money.

However, in the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry expenditures on these matters are far in excess of what it is in other industries. Let's look at research costs. The industry claims that it spends millions of dollars each year on researching new drugs and new uses for established drugs. But, these heavy expenditures cannot be completely justified. In 1956 the american drug manufacturers held a convention. One of the speakers, Mr. Chet Shaw, Director of the Health News Institute said:

"We've done a lot of talking about an estimated $100,000,000 (for research) but we'd be hard put to document it. What if someone questioned it — someone whose voice we couldn't afford to ignore?"

Another heavy expenditure is in the field of advertising. The greatest volume of advertising is directed toward the medical profession. This is necessary in the ethical drug industry for the doctor is the only person who can prescribe many drugs. Therefore, he is the person to whom most of the advertising is directed. This advertising takes many forms. One of them is the use of "gimmicks" to keep the name of a particular brand name drug before the doctor. These "gimmicks" consist of letter openers, paper weights, pictures, matches, recordings, etc. There is quite extensive use made of slick-papered brochures most of which contain only scanty reference to the clinical value of a drug. Advertising and promotional material is prepared by highly specialized advertising departments and is rarely seen by medical men before it is mailed. An estimate made in New York is that doctors there receive between 4,000 and 5,000 pieces of such literature each year.

Free samples is another cost item which is borne by the consumer. Doctors are virtually swamped with free samples of drugs from drug manufacturers. Ask your own doctor how many free samples he gets each year and the amount will stagger you.

These are some of the factors which influence and raise the price of drugs. Most of them are unnecessarily high and some of them have dangerous and detrimental effects, because the emphasis is placed on promotion, not on the clinical value.

The Packsack of Gregory Clark

In the upstairs back of a jumbled second-hand store, a friend of mine found a walnut bedroom suite that caught his fancy, though it was dusty and somewhat shabby. He took a business associate who is a furniture manufacturer to have a look at it.

"Buy it," said the expert. "If you don't, I will. There is just enough wrong with it to make it a work of art."

This strikes me as a very interesting definition. Do products that achieve perfection fall as works of art? It could be. Here we are surrounded with what is intended to be perfection, in our motor car design, in our latest buildings, in our clothes, in everything we consume or employ in our wonderful century. We are tireless in our struggle for perfection. We change our style of car, of architecture, of household appliances every new season. But we are curiously drawn, despite it all, to some old piece of furniture, some old building standing apart and alone, or even some modern production that has that little strange something wrong with it that makes it a work of art.

In the Vatican museum in Rome, I saw some of the masterpieces of Benvenuto Cellini. They were indescribably beautiful. But in every one of them, to my eye, there was just some little thing wrong.

Trading stamps

From The Viking (Alta.) News

There is quite a hulabaloo, especially in the cities, about trading stamps and one of the large supermarket concerns in Edmonton and Calgary has been charged under the criminal code as being illegal to give these stamps with purchases of goods. This practice has been going on in the U.S. for some time past and has now come to Canada.

However, this is not really something new. For years, in a well known brand of coffee carton, there has been a coupon entitling to prizes for a certain number of these coupons. In packages of cereal there is generally a prize of some kind; in packages of soap substitutes you will find towels or china of some sort. Even in popcorn boxes there are little trinkets. One could go on mentioning a lot more. There seems to be little or no difference in any of these schemes, so why make an issue of the green stamp?

About the time a man has cured himself of swearing, it's time to make up another income tax report.

Letterbox

TRAFFIC PROBLEM

The Editor,
The Daily News:

It is a very unfortunate and shocking thing to have so many accidents to small children, within such a short period of time, as we have experienced in our city. However it is a wonder that there are not many more.

The motorists are constantly reminded to drive carefully, and the pedestrians are asked to look both ways when crossing the street, and never cross against the lights. **BUT WHAT ARE WE DOING FOR OUR CHILDREN?**

I have been taught that it is proper to walk on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic (will someone please correct me if I am wrong). I notice children walking to King Edward School along our street some facing the traffic, some on the opposite side of the road, and some in the middle. There is a sharp curve at the top of the street and when a car comes around it the children scatter in all directions. It would appear that the children are not certain which side of the road is correct.

Another thing that surprises me is how many mothers allow their pre-school children to play on the road all day in face of danger. A motorist needs all his wits about him to contend with this problem. Many of us have experienced the shock of having children run out in front of the car in all parts of the city, and in some cases have had to sound the horn a few times before the children would clear the road. **ARE THE CHILDREN AT FAULT OR THE PARENTS?**

Mrs. G. R. Sahlen,
Prince Rupert.

gems of thought

Matrimony should never be entered into without a full recognition of its enduring obligations on both sides.
—Mary Baker Eddy.

The secret of happy marriage is simple: just keep on being as polite to each other as you are to your best friends.
—Robert Quillen.

It is necessary to be almost a genius to make a good husband —Balzac.

The ideal wife is one who knows when her husband wants to be forced to do something against his will.
—Sydney J. Harris.

Those who marry to escape something usually find something else.—George Ade.

The happiness of married life depends upon making small sacrifices with readiness and cheerfulness.
—John Selden.

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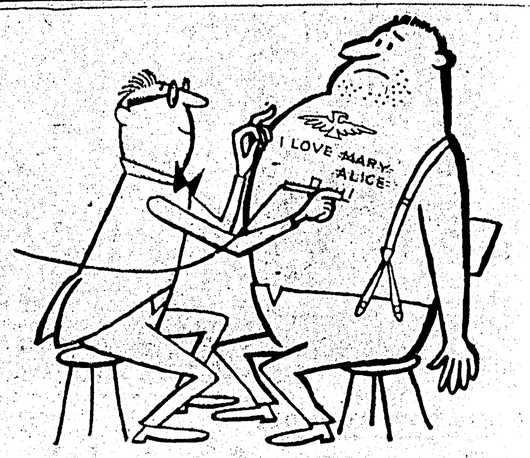


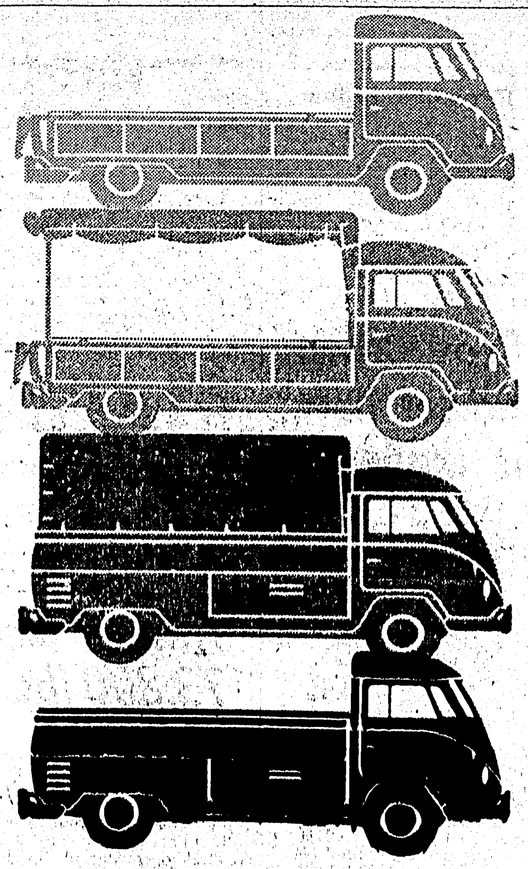
BE RIGHT WHEN YOU WRITE

Make sure that the addresses on your letters and parcels include these 5 points:

- Full name of person to whom your mail is addressed.
- Correct street address, rural route numbe or post office box number.
- City, town or village.
- Province, state (or equivalent) and country.
- Your name and return address in upper left corner.

Remember, Postal Zoning operates in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec. When writing to these cities be sure to include the Postal Zone Number.

CANADA POST OFFICE



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