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Flying Saucer Inquiry

WITH a somewhat lack-lustre session anticipated at Ottawa, the report that the Department of Transport is authorized to investigate flying-saucers flashes out like a gem among dross.

At last the extraordinary subject has reached a stage where high officials no longer scoff whenever it is mentioned. To quote the engineer in charge of the government's project at Ottawa: "There is a high degree of probability that flying-saucers do exist and are interplanetary."

While the experiment is in every sense a long shot in the dark, there are thousands of citizens—ourselves included—who will await results with definite expectancy.

Scepticism concerning flying-saucers brings to mind events of the 17th century when the brilliant mathematician, Galileo, was branded a heretic because he was bold enough to think that the earth was merely a satellite of the sun.

The attitude that our world is the centre of the universe still persists to a far greater extent than we generally realize. We are enormously important to ourselves, and it is thus quite difficult to appreciate that there may be other civilizations several hundred jumps ahead of us which have been exploring the universe for centuries. If they are not making landings on this earth, perhaps it is because they know more about our evolution than we know ourselves.

One day we will certainly understand more of the mystery than we do now, either to see it vanish as a foolishness or to have it lead us along even more remote avenues of exploration. Whatever the success or failure of the stratosphere station at Ottawa, few will begrudge this small attempt to probe a great secret.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

A haircut in Ottawa costs 35 cents. On the Pacific coast the charge is a dollar, and that includes Prince Rupert. But under sometimes unusual circumstances, 65 cents is worth thinking of more than once.

Worry kills more people than work. But then, more people worry!

BILL HIMSELF!

Bill Boss served the Canadian Press in Korea, and now he is shifted for the first time to Moscow, it being his first experience in the Russian capital. He will certainly use his eyes, ears and tongue, but it need not mean they will manage to all get by a nuisance commonly known as the curtain.

Maybe our health standards are improving today because we cannot afford to become ill. Presnack.

Reporting a hanging, in view of the latest read in British Columbia, have been neither brief nor lacking in detail. Do the general run of individuals—both

sexes, all ages and classes—hesitate to cover every word of the story? You bet they do not.

FULL OF IT

The Province prints a four-column front page story in which a staff member describes a visit here of the SS Rupert City in January 1909. He describes passengers complaining of cold, the Rupert City ice-sheathed, and the harbor of Prince Rupert being full of ice.

Maybe so, but we dislike calling anyone a liar. However, we arrived in Prince Rupert in 1909 and never beheld any ice whatever. The month of arrival in 1909 was May instead of January, and plenty of weather changes can occur in three or four months. And here, just let us remark we've been here ever since—44 years—beheld the harbor—one of the finest on earth every day, and never the slightest skin of anyone complaining of any novelty as new as that.

GET IT IN NECK

A sinister possibility, this Christmas, comes to menace the season, if British Columbians eat de-sexed American turkeys. A drug called estrogen is being inserted in the necks of roosters. This causes sterility, as well as the fowl's growth. Sizing it all up, the situation could degenerate into a sorrowful prospect. No longer could Yuletide joys be real.

IT PAYS

No parent or friend ever errs in thinking its wisdom to encourage young folks in starting a library. It will be small, but that's to be expected, in beginning. This is young Canada's Book Week, and it can apply just as handily to seniors, as to all others. The printed word has a priceless value. And all librarians realize how easy it is to give children a love of good reading.

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As I See It



by
Elmore Philpott

The Old Ottawa

TODAY I took my back-bench seat in the House of Commons.

Naturally, I have been in Ottawa a good many times before. But today I have been thinking of my first visit to the capital of Canada; and about the vast changes in this city, this country—and this world—since those days of March 1915.

IN THE SPRING of 1915 the word passed around the University of Toronto that a colonel from Ottawa was enlisting a field artillery battery. That is how I came to belong to the 25th Battery of Ottawa.

We were half university students and half real hard-boiled loggers and other rough-and-ready he-men from the north country. At first the mixture was like oil and water. But when the students taught the lumberjacks the hard way that the students were not all pantywaists or sissies, and when the loggers taught the students that a fellow could be a wonderful guy and a real friend, even if he never finished grade school, we got on fine together.

I SHALL never forget our first day in uniform. We had a red-haired farrier, or blacksmith, corporal. It was raining cats and dogs in Ottawa that day, and the farrier corporal was a sensible fellow. He came down to the drill hall carrying a civilian umbrella.

I shall never forget, first the eyes, and later the language of our quartermaster-sergeant when he spied the farrier corporal under the umbrella.

The tiny little, black-eyed bantam of a man, who wore an enormous handlebar moustache and jingling spurs, let loose a string of choice army cuss words that were so hot they almost dried up the rain.

THAT army of 1915 was a free and easy affair. About 20 of us boys slept in a sort of army storehouse. But the government gave us a living allowance too. We had to buy our own meals.

I remember our favorite eating house was a high class boarding house we nicknamed "Liberty Hall." The rate was 25 cents per meal, and we could and literally did get all we could eat for that sum! Often we would eat three pieces of pie apiece, to top off the real banquet the kind lady provided for one quarter each.

WE WERE reviewed on the lawn of the Parliament Buildings by old Sir Sam Hughes, who was then Minister of Militia. Sam stopped and talked for quite a while with my best pal—Wendy Mendizabal, from Bolivia. The Ottawa papers, next day, described Wendy (most inaccurately) as a "South American millionaire."

That night, maybe fired by the sight of the Parliament Buildings, we went to attend a session of the House. But I was let down. For my then hero—Sir Wilfrid Laurier—was sound asleep at his desk. I seem to recall he had his feet up too.

In those days Ottawa had several live theatres—now she has no professional theatre. It is just not true that the world has "gone ahead" in all things since 1914.

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

On the same day on which the new Russian ambassador presented his credentials at Government House, the Chicago Tribune published an interview by its Ottawa correspondent with Igor Gouzenko and thus revived vivid memories of the Soviet spy ring which formerly operated here.

Was it coincidence that the bones of the old spy case were rattled by the fanatically anti-Communist Tribune on the same day on which diplomatic relationships between the two countries were getting off on a new footing? Or was it by design?

The coincidence theory is the one most commonly held here in Parliament Hill circles. Almost everyone subscribes to it—with the noteworthy exception, however, of the Soviet Ambassador himself.

The Ambassador is definitely suspicious. He points out that his appointment to present his credentials was arranged a fortnight in advance and was fairly common knowledge along Diplomatic Row. That made it easy for any person—or for any newspaper—to lay plans to intercept a sour note into the otherwise agreeable nature of the occasion.

The incident was very disappointing to the Ambassador. His mission here is obviously to cultivate Canadian friendship. And front-page headlines reviving memories of the Soviet spy ring which once had its headquarters and nerve centre here don't contribute the most helpful sort of atmosphere for close friendship. They rather suggest an attitude of caution.

If the Gouzenko interview had been published only by the Chicago Tribune the new Ambassador wouldn't have been too disturbed. But once it appeared in the Tribune, the Canadian newspapers picked it up. The account of the Ambassador presenting his credentials to the Governor-General occupied a single paragraph on an inside page in most

newspapers. The Gouzenko interview took up more than two columns and appeared generally on the front page under scare headlines.

It wasn't too encouraging a start for the Ambassador's Canadian mission.

Dmitri Chukhavin, the new Russian Ambassador, is definitely a friend-making type. He has a background of diplomatic service in Washington, Yugoslavia before Tito's day, and Albania. He is inclined to be round, has a ready smile, and an easy manner. Given sufficient time, he is likely to become a highly popular member of the Capital's diplomatic corps. He ranks as a senior Soviet diplomat.

VANCOUVER (CP)—Airport officials have taken steps to rid the landing field of flights of ducks which plague pilots every year. Wild crops of oats growing along the runways are being plowed under and replaced with grass.



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