

The Daily Mail

A Daily Paper For Every Home

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THE AIRPORT OF DREAMS

The "Airport of Dreams," that mythical stopping place for flying planes which has been often suggested but never shown any concrete evidence of materialization, is once again to the fore, and this time it is to be hoped that swift decision will be made and action taken.

At a recent meeting of the York County Council a committee was appointed to act in conjunction with the Fredericton City Council in endeavoring to make a landing field available here at the earliest possible date.

The importance of providing this city with a flying field is greater at the present time than ever before. For plans are now afoot to provide Canada, at an early date, with a transcontinental commercial aviation service, and if a port is not available here New Brunswick's capital will not be included on the initial routes. Once the system is placed in operation, allowing for a period of experimentation, the placing of a new field on the main arteries of transport would involve complicated adjustments of schedule and might not readily meet the approval of Federal directors of the service.

In addition to this, the imminent threat of another world conflict, enhances the importance of having an airport near or in the capital. While the possibility of enemy forces attacking New Brunswick may seem remote and hard to conceive by the average person, students of the international situation and of militaristic trends have recently pointed out that, in the event of a world conflict, Canada might be the first prey of a nation striking at the Empire and, in the event of the foe being a European nation, the Atlantic Seaboard would be the enemy's first objective. If, within the next few years, we should be called upon to defend this city, the task would be an utterly hopeless one if there were no place available as a base for aircraft.

Disregarding the possibility of an airport's use in wartime and even the potential advantages to be gained by direct contact with transcontinental flying service, an immediate advantage worthwhile the investment would be the accelerated mail and freight service with other parts of the Dominion and with the United States. Today a letter from Boston arrives in Fredericton so little ahead of a letter sent by regular post, that the difference in time is scarcely worth the additional postage required. This is due to the fact that it can come only as far as Saint John by airmail and must wait there for rail connections to reach its destination.

The interest shown by the County Council in the project is highly commendable, and shows that those living in rural areas in addition to city residents realize the benefits that would accrue to the county as a whole were it carried to completion.

THE REALM OF SOLITUDE

It is a strange world which Lincoln Ellsworth brings to us doers of daily chores and readers of daily newspapers. Flying southward from the edge of the Antarctic over an immense unknown region he has seen no bare land, no mountains. It was he who mapped from the air the Sentinel and Eternity ranges. We see him on a water ship as well as an airship. He and his men dodge rocks and a colony of icebergs as nonchalantly as

we poor pedestrians dodge the continual charge of automobiles. The waves stage a riot, the winds are malicious. Take-off postponed. Call it a day.

To us stay-at-home Antarctica has the terror and charm of the unknown. It belongs to the ice age. Compared with it the Arctic regions are populous, human, civilized. Antarctica is inhospitable, uninhabited, an immemorial haunt of solitude. There the emperor penguin is the flower of civilization, almost human, more than justifying Anatole France. The Ancient Mariner knew no such loneliness.

There the old navigators long sought "the third world." They were right in seeking Southward. It is curious to remember in this full tide of Antarctic discovery that early medieval geographers put both Asia and Africa in the Northern Hemisphere. In the sense of its solemnity and inhumanity Antarctica is a third world. Dante and Virgil saw the four holy stars, "unseen before save by the first folk," Adam and Eve. From the dark backward and abyss of time Antarctica remained unseen. Centuries of search still leave it largely an undiscovered country. In the last few years it has given up many of its secrets.

In the midst of the cruelty and the fear of war, it is consoling to human dignity to think of those who have exposed or lost their lives to add to the sum of knowledge. Sitting by the fire, one thinks with admiration and a sort of awe of Ellsworth, riding the air over that mighty waste of snow and ice. Why does he do it? Nansen told us: "Man wants to know; and when he does not want to know he ceases to be man."

SAFETY IN THE AIR

The average reader of the newspapers last year, noting a number of terrible disasters to airplanes, might reasonably have assumed 1938 was a bad year in aviation. Actually, the industry set up a new high record for safety.

This is not said ironically. The domestic airlines flew 478,500,000 passenger miles or 19,140,000 miles per passenger fatality. A person that could expect to travel over 19,000,000 miles in any kind of a conveyance before being killed might well think it was a fairly safe method of travel.

The business is growing rapidly. Despite the repressed conditions, the number of passengers carried increased 15 per cent over 1937 and air mail carried increased about the same amount. Average speed of domestic transport planes increased six miles per hour, to 182 miles. For the first time on record, women made up more than 30 per cent of the number of passengers carried. Considering that women normally have less need to travel for business purposes they evidently use the planes proportionally quite as much as men.

Aviation will probably never grow to the size of the automobile industry. Wright flew the first plane in the same year Ford started to make automobiles and Ford has turned out more cars in one day than the leading airplane engine maker produced in 10 years.

But aviation is growing, nevertheless. Aviation transportation companies have not made much money carrying passengers. If it were not for the mail, they could not go on at all. But they are building bigger planes with more passenger capacity and thus reducing the cost. With increased safety each year and greater volume, the growth will be accelerated.

ILL WIND BLOWS FORGER INTO JAIL

CHICAGO, January 16—An ill wind blew a check out of George Tiemann's pocket and blew George right into jail.

Tiemann is 76 and has a long record as a forger. He has confessed to passing worthless checks for a total of \$200.

The wind that swirled the paper away from George dropped it right at the feet of Policeman Cornelius Koelkant, who picked it up. Although Tiemann denied ever having seen the check, the policeman did not believe him and hustled him to the station. When he was searched, 15 more checks were discovered in his pockets.

All were printed with the name of

PHONE HEAD DIES; RAN FIRST SWITCHBOARD

HAMILTON, Ontario, January 16—A link with the beginnings of modern communication here was snapped with the death of K. J. Dunstan, former vice president of the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, and first man in the British Empire to operate a switchboard.

It was in March, 1878, that Dr. Dunstan, then 19, and a native of Hamilton, sat down here to operate the first telephone exchange in the Empire. He had been an office boy for Hugh C. Baker, a broker, who had installed a telegraph set in his own home, with wires leading to the homes of two friends, T. C. Mewburn, father of Major General, the Hon. S. C. Mewburn, and Charles D. Cory.

Over these lines, by private code, the man played chess. The three men had phones installed and, in August, 1877, played chess by phone, the first commercial use of the telephone in Canada.

Mr. Baker had organized the Hamilton District Telephone Company, but was so impressed with Dr. Bell's invention of the telephone that he gave subscribers the option of having telegraph signal boxes or telephones in their home.

Most chose the telegraph, but enough chose the phones to warrant establishment of an exchange. Dunstan, Mr. Baker's office boy, was placed in charge. There was only one other exchange in the world at that time, it having been opened at New Haven a month earlier.

A chain grocery, Tiemann also has a letter, supposedly written by the company, stating that the enclosed check was in settlement for a personal injury suit. He said he had used his letter in identifying himself to bartenders who cashed the checks. Three of the victims identified him and signed complaints.

Britain is spending \$750,000 on playgrounds for schools.

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THE CRUELLEST JOKE

It was nearing Christmas time, and a Scotsman's family of youngsters sat round the fire wishing for the good things that Santa Claus might send them. The father listened for a time, and then said that he would go for a walk. Shortly afterwards the family was startled by a loud pistol shot, and the father entered, looking very grave. "What was it?" everyone exclaimed.

"Well, children," said the father in solemn tones, "I grieve to say that Santa Claus has just shot himself."

SPOILT PICNIC

A bank inspector visited a branch in a small country town and was surprised to find nobody on duty. He went behind the counter, checked up the money, took down ledgers, but still nobody came near him. Up he crept to the manager's office, peered through the glass door and spied the manager, teller and two clerks in shirt sleeves having a game of cards. He determined to give them a scare and sounded the burglar alarm. The racket from the bell had scarcely died down when the barman from across the road arrived with four mugs of beer on a tray!

WAY OUT

Policeman: "Anything the matter, sir?" Henpecked: "I've been waiting here over one hour for my wife. Don't you thing you might order me to move on, officer?"

CONCRETE

Two laborers were talking. "Say, Bill," said one, "you had more schooling than I had. What's the difference between abstract and concrete?" Bill scratched his head. "Well, Joe, he said slowly, "if my wife promises to make a cake, it's abstract. When she makes it, it's concrete?"

THE COURTEOUS RETORT

A Romany family had just cleared away from near the vicar's home and left a dead donkey partly covered. The vicar wrote to the Council about the donkey. They responded by sending a clerk to say that it was the vicar's duty to bury the dead.

The vicar replied that he knew that, but he just wanted to let the relatives know.

More than 19,000 runners participated in Russia's recent cross-country contests.

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As I See It

Daily Foreign News Comment By H. M. Paint.

ROME PARLEY—AND BARCELONA

Except for Mussolini's rumored willingness to aid in finding a home for the Jews, the Rome parley has come to a barren end. Duce's reported willingness to found a new Zion for the distressed Italian Hebrews in Ethiopia is regarded by the Jews of Italy with something approaching horror. To be exiled to that, "distressful land," to be shot by hostile Amaharic Copts as Jews, and spear-while shaken down by the deft colonial administrators as anti-Fascists, is no attractive prospect. It is reported that the Italian Jews sent a delegation to the British Prime Minister in Rome asking him not to sanction this new Babylonian exile.

The British delegation admits that the talks, "did not go too well", that "there is quite a good-sized gap" between Britain and Italy over Mediterranean questions. However, it is said, "No formal agreements had been contemplated"—"Mr. Chamberlain was on an exploratory visit"—"He has explored and is now fully cognizant of the Italian viewpoint". From this aspect, "the Conference might almost be called a success."

This is sheer comedy. Mr. Chamberlain is unlikely to have learned anything that the Earl of Perth, the British Ambassador at Rome was unable to tell him. He was unlikely to learn anything that the present Italian anxiety to take Tarragona and Barcelona and close the Pyrenean Catalanian passes against France, will not inform him of, or the increased Italian activity in Spain.

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