

adian potatoes had been shut out for a while as it was reported they had the foot and mouth or some other infectious disease?

A society of ladies in Montreal last week went on a potato strike. Like the people who were after Paul, they refused to eat potatoes by day or by night till the dealers came down from their high horse. The ladies believe that the dealers are holding up potatoes, even allowing them to waste, in order to keep up prices. They believe a boycott will make potatoes tumble. A boycott in this case is not only legitimate but commendable.

The "Canadian Fisherman" pays Sir Sam Hughes, the ex-minister of militia, a handsome compliment. The paper says that though it was not exactly in his line Sir Sam did more for the fisheries of Canada than any other man. It is to be hoped that the mercenary Gadsby, who sends cannot articles to the liberal papers, and is ready to do a similar kindness for the conservative press, on conditions—has had his attention called to the article.

An alderman appeared before the Montreal City council and asked a rather striking question or two. He declared that forty years ago milk, in Montreal, was the same price as now, whereas butter was three times the price now it was then. He wanted to know how this came about. The council, struck by his statements, wanted also to know, and are going to investigate, which, these days, is the only proper course to pursue, or proper or improper, is the course most in fashion. Why, even Sydney is going to investigate. Sydney wants to know the reason why milk is to be increased to 12 cents a quart.

"High cost of living!" What a popular topic it is. Editors, politicians in opposition, trades union leaders, etc., without number, are rolling it as a sweet morsel under their tongues. The cost of living is a universal topic at present. Food is dear, not only in belligerent, but in neutral countries. More fuss is being kicked up about the cost of food in Canada than in any other country, possibly. There is little to cry over in Canada when we compare prices with those prevailing in some countries. Take Britain, for instance, the price of potatoes there is only \$1.35 a bushel; one egg costs six cents, and it is predicted that before Christmas each egg will be worth ten cents. Let us live and be thankful.

The announcement that a Conservative Association in Toronto, or thereabouts, had called upon the government to remove all duties on food stuffs, a thing which liberal papers from the Globe down had been demanding for months, was loudly acclaimed by several of the liberal papers. Well, the association's action is worthy of being acclaimed on account of the contempt of its strategy. If the federal government would do as asked it would shatter a weapon now employed against it. How? A removal of the duty would not have the slightest effect on the high food prices, on the prices of foods entering most noticeably into every day use, such as butter, eggs, milk, potatoes, flour, &c., and if it did not lessen the prices of those the liberal papers would be condemned for raising false hopes.

It is pleasing to note that the North Sydney Herald is not one of those papers which believes, having once uttered an opinion, that it is bound to stick to it. A few weeks ago it expressed the opinion that the action of certain independent employees in sending a delegation to Halifax to interview Premier Murray on the question of increased wages, sealed the doom of the P. W. A. and the P. W. A. The Record pointed out that the doom of the P. W. A. had been sealed long ago, and now the N. S. Herald more than admits that there is no sign of decay about the P. W. A., as hear this. The first paragraph is in bold letters as headlines:

"Old Parent Labor Organization, Jumps Into Breach Against High Cost of Living and Puts it up to Borden."

"Ever alert for the benefit of the workingman, Nova Scotia's old and reliable labor organization, the P. W. A., have tackled the government on the high cost of living, and at a recent meeting of that body, addressed the following letter to Premier Borden, who seems to have such a fondness for creating commissions of one kind or another."

What bothers one is, had the P. W. A. told Moffatt to put it up to Murray instead of Borden would the N. S. Herald be as enthusiastic?

Mr. Verville, the labor M. P. so-called, has been giving his views on the high cost of living. He holds that cold storage is chiefly responsible for high food prices. I cannot fully follow Verville for the reason, that articles of food are high which never see the inside of a C. S. plant. Why is wheat flour so high? Flour is independent of cold storage, and so are sugar, molasses, dry goods, boots and shoes, &c. What is a "cold storage"? As I understand, it is a building where Tom, Dick and Harry, individually or in co-operation, can store eggs, butter, &c., to keep them at a temperature which will keep them from decay or injury. Mr. Verville implies that cold storage should be controlled. But that would be nigh impossible, because, besides the hundreds of public cold storages there are in the dominion, there are thousands of private ones. Many farmers have storages—more or less cold, with a tendency to the cold side—of their own. I heard the other day of a farmer in Picton County who had an astounding large crop of potatoes in his storage—in this case his big cellar—and not a bushel of them would he sell. He is waiting for higher prices. Further, it is said that if they—the potato growers—all don't do it the most do. Now, if public cold storages are to be investigated, why not the private ones? If A is not allowed to keep 500 bushels of potatoes in a public storage until they can fetch a higher price, why should B be allowed to keep as many bushels, with a similar object, in his cellar? Some one of the papers "friendly" to the farmers may enlighten us as to why potatoes in public storage should be investigated, while those in private ones are exempt. If these papers cannot help us to live they might obligingly help us to learn.

I have been told that for every ton of coal hoisted from the North Stope, Springhill, in which fire broke out two weeks ago, several tons of water were pumped. This information led to a train of reflection. The first thought was that our knowledge as to the causes of mine fires, their origin and continuation,