

## BRITISH START GREAT WAR ON PROFITEERING

Nine Hundred Local Tribunals to  
Hear Complaints

ACT HAS HAD EFFECT

Slump in Prices Already—Some  
Critics Say Act Not Adequate,  
But Authorities Get Action  
Under it

London, Sept. 26.—Great Britain is embarking today on a great scheme for reducing the high cost of living, which will show how much truth there is in the popular outcry against profiteering. Local tribunals to which anyone may make complaints of unreasonable charges for most articles of common use are about to begin sitting. It is too early yet to tell whether they will be effective in checking the trader's greed or whether there will turn out to be too much greed to check, but the Evening News, which has been distinguished by the violence of its denunciations of shopkeepers, asserts that already there has been a marked slump in the prices of certain articles. Many of the London tribunals, nevertheless, have so far had no complaints made to them.

The act setting up these local courts, was rushed through parliament at the end of the session, and the manner of its introduction caused many accusations that it had been contrived more with a political than a practical end in view. A committee of the House of Commons was sitting to investigate the whole question of profiteering when the govern-



ment, without warning, cut the ground from under its feet by producing a plan to deal with the evil by this system of local tribunals, supplemented by larger bodies to investigate charges made against wholesale traders.

Critics of the government charged it with acting in a panic in order to throw a sop to the Labor party, and the working classes, and of deliberately putting forward ill-digested measures of doubtful efficacy in order to satisfy the popular clamor. The truth of these assertions will now be tested by the actual results achieved by the tribunals.

900 Local Tribunals.  
Nearly nine hundred local tribunals have been appointed, and they will report monthly to the profiteering department of the Board of Trade particulars of complaints registered and of the proceedings taken.

The moral effect of the act already has caused prices to drop not merely in food-stuffs, but in clothing, eight guineas, for instance, now being charged for a suit, which formerly cost twelve. Women's clothes have also been reduced in price. One alleged flaw in the act is that it does not affect charges for laundry, furni-

ture removal, property repairs, or matters like clothes cleaning.

Doctors announce an increase of 50 per cent. in fees. Their action does not seem to be resented, as it is recognized that the professional class has been most hardly hit by the inflation of prices. Sir Auckland Geddes held out no hope to the deputation of commercial motor-manufacturers today that the government would impose a special tariff on foreign commercial motors and agricultural tractors.

The manufacturers declared that American competition would seriously damage the motor industry of the country. The president of the Board of Trade said that he could not understand the demand for a special tariff to afford home industry a special measure of protection. At the present moment, he added, there was in this country a much greater measure of protection than was ever dreamt of before the war.

In the case of private cars the existing duty added to the freight charges, cost of packing, insurance, and loss on exchange, meant, in the case of America, he said, an actual rate of protection of over 88 per cent, while for the case of exchange, high freights, insurance, etc., gave a protection to the industry of at least 45 per cent.

The government, he said, could not agree to impose an additional 83 per cent. on American lorries. It was unthinkable.

Dealing with the possibility of competition from America, Sir Auckland said that, for some time they had little to fear from such competition. "Unless America takes more goods from us," he said, "there is not likely to be any flood of imports from America. Exchange is against that for one thing."

Commenting on the deputation's request the Daily Chronicle says: "The request seems to us little less than impudent. All the world knows British makers can sell as many cars as they can make at a handsome, not actually an exorbitant, profit. Such attempts show the dangers awaiting any ministry rash enough to accept the policy of protection."

## ARE READY TO DAM THE STRAITS OF BELLE ISLE

(Continued from page 9.)

Dr. Pelletier, the agent general for the Province of Quebec in London, and L. A. Cannon, M. L. A. of Quebec, have been in Ottawa discussing the project with officials of the government; and a concrete proposal will be laid before the cabinet at an early date. The above named gentlemen, who are of undoubted standing, assert that they are making the move at the instance of English capitalists, who are prepared to go on with the project as soon as the consent of the governments immediately concerned is secured. The legend on the map which Messrs. Pelletier and Cannon exhibit contains the following:

"The water which flows out of the Gulf Stream now is of about the same or lighter gravity than the Arctic current, so that the Arctic Current courses along Labrador and Newfoundland, whereas the water of the Gulf Stream, being so much more saline and heavier would press the Arctic water away from those shores."

The scheme has been placed before Lord Morris and Sir Edgar Bowring, high commissioner for Newfoundland and Great Britain, who are naturally appreciative of its possibilities. They are enormous, climatically, and if the expectations of its advocates are fulfilled, would revolutionize a large part of the world's trade routes. The scheme proposed to the Dominion government includes the building of a railroad along the northern shore of the St. Lawrence river to Labrador, running out over the dam across the strait, connecting Newfoundland with the mainland of Canada and the United States and shortening by half the present ocean voyage to Europe. It would open for navigation all the year around many ports on the Atlantic seaboard, and would make the St. Lawrence river navigable throughout the year as far up as Quebec and possibly Montreal.

At present the Gulf Stream affects the Nova Scotia coast only to a small extent, approaching the southern coast at about the 48th parallel; but the cold Arctic current, coming down from the north through Baffins Bay and Davis Strait, pours through the Straits of Belle Isle into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, creates fogs, mists, carries the huge bergs into the path of the Atlantic liners, causing wrecks such as that of the Titanic; sweeps along the coast of the maritime provinces and makes the climate there and in the New England States almost unendurable for a great part of the year, and is finally shunted off by Cape Cod.

The promoters of this dam project claim that it would similarly shunt off the current from entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and throw it out into the Atlantic where it would affect only the whales and other denizens of the deep, who do not seem to mind it anyhow. We should then have the benefit of the Gulf Stream without any entangling alliances with the Arctic current, and our climate would be completely changed. Canadian and New England seaboard cities would have the advantage of ice-free ports; ice and snow would be seen only in the movies; and semi-tropical products could be grown in Canada and New England.

But would all this ensue from the building of this nine mile dam? Dr. Dawson, chief hydrographer of Canada, seems to doubt it. He published a report more than ten years ago on the currents in Belle Isle Strait, in which he established the fact that the Arctic current does not sweep down through the Straits and into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but

strikes off towards the north-east; and that the tides in the strait are regular, flowing east and west at the rate of two or three knots per hour each way. There is no great constant volume of water coming into the Gulf from the north. He claims, moreover, that the reason we do not get any benefit from the sea is that our prevailing winds are outward off the land, while those of Europe are inward. The idea, therefore, that the damming of the straits would revolutionize the climate and open the St. Lawrence for constant navigation will have to be further supported before it can be accepted.

The railroad project and the making of a great trans-Atlantic port on the northern part of Newfoundland is another matter, and much more feasible; and the building of this dam or causeway across the strait might be justified by that alone.

At all events, these men of standing in Canada and England are apparently willing to take a chance, and they are not asking for a dollar of government aid in the building of their dam. All they want is the necessary permission to go ahead with it. If they could make the St. Lawrence open all the year around, they would not require any government subsidy or bonus; the business men of Canada would be willing to contribute so as to make them rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and to erect on the heights at Quebec a statue in their honor symbolical of Enterprise Warming the World.

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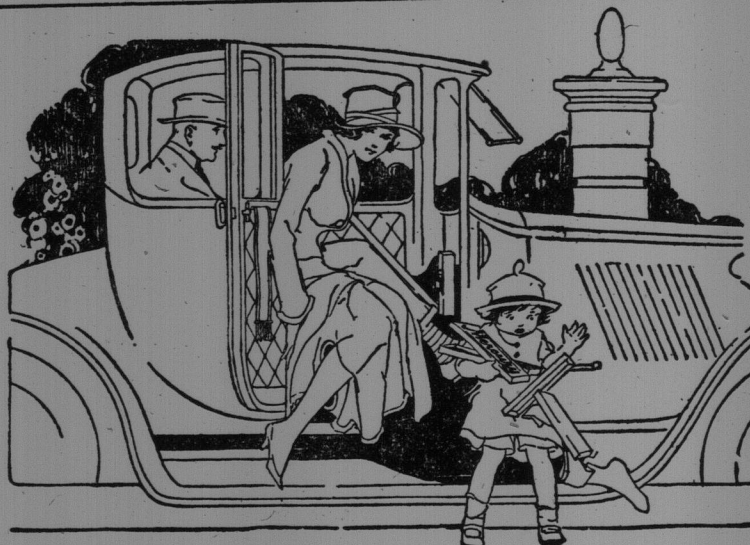
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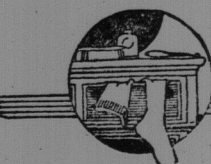
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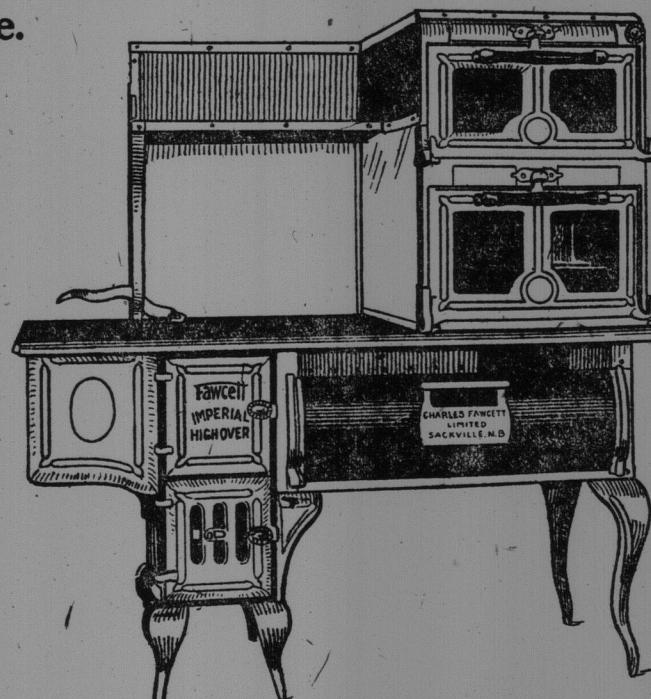
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