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Semi-Weekly Telegraph
and The News

ST. JOHN, N. B., DECEMBER 10, 1910.

MR. KIPLING IN POLITICS

Mr. Rudyard Kipling, made, at Brighton the other day, what is described by a London journal as "an engaging defence of the hereditary principle in British affairs." He recalled the place of heredity in the old Anglo-Saxon constitution and in the civil life of England; and then he said:

"They knew that the sop of a picked man, if he is any good at all, is often very valuable equipment with the results of his father's experience and observations which he has absorbed unconsciously in his youth, precisely as the son of a Thames pilot picks up marks and soundings."

In essence, the House of Lords is what it was from the first—a body of democratic aristocrats, chosen after trial and observation out of an aristocratic democracy to guard the permanent life of the nation—that inner political life of the race which is very little affected by legislation."

This is begging the question with a vengeance. By choosing the House of Lords on the hereditary plan there is no escape from a certain percentage of useless and feeble members thereof; and, according to Lord Rosebery and some other well informed judges of the upper chamber, this percentage in the present House of Lords has been exceedingly great. The strongest leaders among the peers have already abandoned the plea that a man should sit in the House of Lords because he is the son of his father, and without respect at all to his own fitness. Mr. Kipling comes late to the defence of ideas already deserted by the leading men of his own party.

His logic is astonishing, as is often the case when a poet gets into politics. He assumes, to begin with, that the Lords are "picked men." There is no ground for any assumption of that sort, and many proofs on the other hand that it is untrue. Again he says that the House of Lords is now as it always was, "a body of democratic aristocrats, chosen after trial and observation out of an aristocratic democracy." Do the people of England believe it? Evidently not. And since they do not, Mr. Kipling fights in vain in support of his prejudices and those of a minority who are of his opinion. As an opponent of the present government and all its works it seems impossible for Mr. Kipling to set it into his head that Great Britain cannot have representative government so long as the Conservative House of Lords can nullify measures after measure passed by a Liberal House of Commons. His weakness is that of many on his own side of politics, who believe the present arrangement is all right, but who would be horrified if they were told that it would be all right if a Liberal House of Lords should have power to nullify measure after measure sent up by a Conservative House of Commons attempting to give effect to the views of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and Mr. Balfour, and Lord Milner, and many another by whose lightest word Mr. Kipling and his friends are ready to swear. Even with some poets and true patriots like Mr. Kipling it makes all the difference in the world when the shoe is on the other foot.

MAYOR FRINK'S VIEWS

Mayor Frink was unable to attend Monday's meeting of the Board of Trade, having a Council meeting on his hands, but he addressed to President Estabrook a letter in regard to harbor matters which deserves the careful attention of every taxpayer, and, not only that, but the sympathetic and energetic attention of the Board of Trade.

The Mayor points out that as the Dominion government is now engaged in wharf building on the West Side, has already built one wharf and is about to build others, there is a divided ownership and control

of water frontage and harbor facilities which is undesirable, and which must give renewed power to arguments in favor of a harbor commission for the West Side at least. The Mayor repeats to the Board of Trade the statement he made at the last meeting of the Council, namely, that the time has arrived when the city should make advances to the Dominion government, through the Minister of Public Works, asking the Federal authorities to buy the West Side deep water terminals at cost, that the Federal government should proceed with development there and should administer the property. The Mayor well says that the Council would then have more time to devote to purely civic affairs, and he points out also that, as the questions of transportation which are involved are national in character, it would be well to have them dealt with by Federal officials qualified by training for such work. The Mayor does not forget to propose that the money received from the Federal government for the harbor property should be applied to the reduction of the general debt of the city, a most important point from which public attention never should be diverted.

When a harbor commission was proposed a year or two ago it was suggested that the revenue from the property was then too small to pay the necessary interest charges unless the wharves dues were considerably increased, and that any such increase might militate against the port in the eyes of the shipping interests. The revenues from harbor property are rapidly increasing, and some readjustment of the charges is also possible. It might now be possible to derive income enough to pay interest on bonds covering a fair price for the property which the city has created. The question is a large one, and of grave importance. It may be hoped that the Board of Trade will give it close attention. So also, should the whole body of citizens.

THE BOARD OF TRADE

Mr. T. H. Estabrook has been a progressive, energetic, and efficient president of the Board of Trade and during his term of office that body has gained in size and, what is better, in force. It is a matter for public congratulation that Mr. Estabrook has been re-elected. His address of Monday presented several highly important subjects for the board's consideration, notably street betterment, the Atlantic mail subsidy, the question of subventions for a shipbuilding plant, and the necessity for an enlightened immigration policy for New Brunswick. Nova Scotia has such a policy in operation. All of these questions touch St. John near the heart. They have to do with its expansion as a port and its improvement as a place of residence and for investment. If they are happily solved Greater St. John will come the sooner, and Better St. John, as well. Earnest members of the Board of Trade will be quick to recognize the merit of Mr. Estabrook's remarks, and to see the need for giving them fruitful attention.

THE MARKET REPORT

Aldermen Jones, Hayes, and Wigmore have shown a commendable measure of courage in their report on conditions in the country market, and, though their opinions and recommendations are more moderate than the evidence warranted, the Council, by straightforward and decisive action on the report, may well end the disgraceful state of affairs revealed by the investigation.

Ald. Potts and Vanwart, Director Wisely and the market clerk ought to be removed from all official contact with the market at once, and the committee see this and say it. The Council will surely be independent and plucky enough to act with vigor now that the committee has given a healthy lead, and if the Council's action should be somewhat more radical than the report itself the public would be the better satisfied. The long and short of it is that the market must be cleaned out. The men responsible are known. They should go—all of them.

Director Wisely is, as he has long been, a weak official, ready to save himself trouble by doing or neglecting to do this thing or that at the suggestion, direct or indirect, of men who held his official life in their hands. It is to the shame of such men that he has been allowed, if not encouraged or directed, to conduct his business as he has done.

A motion to clean out the market, and to retire Ald. Vanwart and Potts from all connection with it in any capacity, ought to go through the Council without respectable opposition. A clear-cut resolution to this effect should be presented at the next meeting, and every member's vote should be recorded. All attempts to confuse the issue should be suppressed. The aldermen who want decent conditions ought to be ready to vote for them. The honor and reputation of the Council are in the balance. The public interest is at stake. Also, it is to be remembered that, ever since the investigation was begun, men who were being exposed by the evidence have been bluffing and threatening, have been asserting that the Council would not dare to take any such action as the evidence seemed to render necessary. After the next Council meeting we shall know what all this talk amounted to.

THE "TARIFF COMMISSION" SCHEME

The suggestion of President Felt that the tariff be based on the difference in cost of production in America and other countries, comes in for much criticism from different sources. A writer in the current number of the Atlantic Monthly shows the novelty of the plan, and attempts to prove that, so far from being a true principle of protection and a solution of the tariff question as it has been hailed it is worthless. There can be no doubt of its novelty. When protection was first introduced it was for the benefit of infant industries. This new principle, completely abandons that idea, and takes in its place the conditions of living

in the United States will remain permanently higher than in other countries; the tariff commission will ascertain the difference of cost that they may regulate the tariff accordingly.

The effect of protection has been to increase the cost of living, and now the tariff is to be applied to make sure that the increase will be permanent. There will be some advantages in a tariff so regulated. We shall now hear nothing more of the foolish theory that the foreigner pays the tax, and the consumer will know exactly how much he is contributing for the luxury of having a certain article manufactured in his own country.

The higher the expenses of an American producer, the greater the excess of the expenses incurred by him over those incurred by a foreign competitor, the higher the duty. If the difference is not so great the duty is to be high; if the difference is small the duty is to be low. Automatically the duty goes up in proportion as the American cost is large. If the article is tea in South Carolina, for example, ascertain how much more expensive it is to grow the tea and prepare the leaves than in Ceylon, and put on a duty high enough to offset. If it is hemp in Kentucky, ascertain how much more expensive it is to grow it there than in Russia, and equalize conditions with a high duty. Make the duty high enough—and on this principle you must make the duty high enough—and anything in the world can be produced, no matter how unsuited the conditions are for efficient and economical production.

Senator Aldrich would not shrink at giving universal and unlimited protection. In a speech in Congress last year he said: "If it costs ten cents to produce a razor in Germany and twenty cents in the United States, it will require 100 per cent duty to equalize the conditions in the two countries." As far as I am concerned I shall have no hesitancy in voting for a duty which will equalize conditions. If it was necessary to equalize the conditions and to give the American producer a fair chance for competition, other things being equal, of course, I would vote for 300 per cent as quickly as I would for 30 per cent."

The thing taken for granted here runs counter to the universal teachings of economists, that is, that the production of a thing within a country is in itself advantageous. In a country with the great natural advantages of the United States the industries will be of necessity diversified. But whether an aided industry is a benefit or not depends entirely upon its capacity of becoming ultimately legitimate and profitable. That is, it depends upon its ultimate capacity of standing alone. The true aim of protection is to make itself unnecessary. The best form of protection is a direct bonus such as Canada has given to her steel industries. Then there is no doubt as to the purpose or the amount. But when protection turns capital and labor into directions and industries that are not self-sustaining and do not hope to become self-sustaining, the result is wasted capital and labor, and the people of the country are compelled to be satisfied with fewer products than they could otherwise have afforded had they been permitted to purchase these where they could get them cheapest. In that case, protection, instead of improving the industries of a country, multiplies the leeches upon industry.

The protectionist has reason to complain today like the ancient Psalmist: "How are they increased that trouble me!" The general hostile interest of the people in the tariff, the abundant discussion of every phase of the subject, have rendered it impossible for tariffs to be levied in the fashion of the balmy days of old upon the suggestion of each knoit of manufacturers engaged upon any particular branch. So now in the last ditch of the position they rally about the labor cost of production, and this is keenly criticized. The indications are for some sort of compromise all round. The country will never see again the extreme, unreasonable and wholly unjustifiable rates of former days.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND THE FACTS

One of the reasons why the Lloyd-George budget is difficult to fight in Great Britain is that the business of the country has been reviving rapidly during the last few years. In that revival there is to be found, doubtless, one of Mr. Balfour's reasons for abandoning protection as a slogan in the present campaign. Lord Welby, as the Toronto Globe notes, has been collecting some figures showing how far Mr. Chamberlain was from the mark when he engaged in his doleful prophecies in 1903 about the approaching stagnation and ruin of British trade. Lord Welby shows that Mr. Chamberlain is neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, the Globe says:

The exports in 1902, the year preceding Mr. Chamberlain's jeremiads, were £283,000,000. Lord Welby says they will exceed £420,000,000 for 1910, or almost fifty per cent. of an increase. During this period the population has increased about seven or eight per cent. The increase in prices might account for some small part of the total, but the volume of exports has increased far more rapidly than the producing population. In this graphic way Lord Welby quotes Mr. Chamberlain's prophecy in detail and indicates the actual conditions:

"Cotton will go," said Mr. Chamberlain. Exports in 1902, £72,000,000. Exports in 1909, £93,000,000. (Thirty per cent. increase.)

"Wool is threatened," said Mr. Chamberlain. Exports in 1902, £23,000,000. Exports in 1909, £31,000,000. (Thirty-five per cent. increase.)

"Your iron trade is going," said Mr. Chamberlain. Exports in 1902, £29,000,000. Exports in 1909, £38,000,000. (Thirty-one per cent. increase.)

"I may add," writes Lord Welby, "that at the present rate of progress the increase in 1910 will greatly exceed these percentages. I cite official facts. Do they prove that our

trade is stagnant, that our chief industries are 'going,' and does practical experience in 1909-10 confirm the prophecies and conclusions of Mr. Chamberlain in 1903?"

In the face of these figures, which indicate that the motherland's trade is amazingly buoyant, there was shrewd judgment in Mr. Balfour's decision to put the Home Rule bogey to the front and place protection among the reserves till a more convenient season.

THE SCIENTIST AND IMMORTALITY

The beginnings of things evade us; their end evades us also. We see only the middle, and the most keen-eyed historian can tell only of the little he sees and knows—and that is little indeed. Pinned out upon the garish world stage from the boom of night, for better or for worse—with more or less of self-consciousness—we perform our part and then go back whence we came. Night swallows us up and reclaims it own. Some what like this we might express the pessimistic conclusion of that aged inventor, Thomas A. Edison, in an interview a day or two ago. "I am not an atheist," he said, "never have been, never said I was. I believe in a supreme intelligence; but I have grave doubts as to whether you and I and all the other good folks of this earth are going to be around from our graves to go to some beautiful, shining place up aloft. I don't see it, can't understand it, and neither do those ministers of fashionable churches; they don't say what they think. They tell me I am going straight to hell. Maybe I am, but I'll take my chances with the fashionable ministers, and if there be such a spot as heaven I'll get there first—yes, even before Dr. Aked."

Edison knows nothing about it, and he doesn't profess to know. Probably he does not intend to give offence to any whose faith is greater than his own, or of a different sort. In the full clutch of circumstances he has played the man, at least, and all his great genius has been devoted to bringing about, in his own way, that reign of felicity which in the opinion of many is to be postponed until a future life. Edison has acted as if time is the only little bit of eternity that belongs to man, and he has filled that time with the most phenomenal activity. So if night swallows him up and reclaims her own, power short of Omnipotence can take away the work he has done. That work has brought about moral and social transformations, rapid, wonderful and beneficent, in the mechanical and physical world. It has also advanced the kingdom of man into the unimagined territory of trade, commerce and industry—a mission quite worth while. He has built up the industrial side of Christianity.

The question of the future has ever been a favorite one with the scientist. He has always been ready, modestly and eagerly to advance his opinion on the subject, and of all subjects it is the one on which his opinion is sure to be of least value. The continued work of peering and botanizing, weighing, testing, measuring and proving, renders his opinion utterly worthless upon a question where the first essential for vision is the absence of those very qualities which give authority and distinction in science. The question is not one of testimony, to be judged on the established principles of evidence. The only evidence open to science, if evidence it may be called, is found by an analysis of the enormous and unavailing mass of "Spiritism," "Occultism," "Telepathy" and such like. That evidence, cautious men will be very reluctant to admit. It is so contaminated by fraud, charlatanism, credulity and hysterics that one's natural inclination is to pass it by on the other side as far as the width of the road will allow.

On the other hand the scientist will hesitate about accepting the evidence of religion. The joys of heaven have been painted in forms most attractive and colors most ravishing, the picture of hell with its lurid torments has been drawn by the hand of the world's most transcendent geniuses. It is true that the results have been meagre upon men's conduct. Neither has it been convincing to the intellect in spite of the dogmatic certainty of the preacher and the eagerness of the theologian to go into particulars. The great multitude, even when they assent to the truth of the doctrine, live as though it were non-existent, while even many of the most orthodox concede that the exploitation of a material heaven and a material hell has been a mistake. The average man, even when he is convinced that some sort of future life is assured for all, has concluded to wait until that life is reached before beginning any very strenuous effort to determine its character.

But all that Christianity has done in the interests of civilization—curbing the strong, strengthening the weak, binding together the nations through a common sympathy—all this is as nothing compared with the great consolation it has offered to humanity. It is a remarkable fact that those who have withstood evil in the great crises of history have done so under two inspirations; one, the firm belief in the actual spiritual presence of the Saviour and the bright memory of His words and deeds; the other, a hope, a faith, a looking forward to a time after death when they shall enter more fully into a just and righteous life. And while men will always receive with languid indifference the gospel of a deliverance from hell, they will always listen with deepening gratification and enthusiasm to the Prophet who in the fulness of time proclaimed as good news, the coming of the kingdom of heaven to earth as a reign of righteousness, mercy and truth. Men are finding life, rich, glorious and satisfying in spending it to bring about the highest good of all, and this attitude enables them to maintain a calm and cheerful mood in the presence of death, being persuaded that in whatever form they may survive they will continue to serve the highest ends of existence to which life's work was devoted.

WHO'S AFRAID?

The other day when some correspondence in connection with single tax and some variations thereof was published by Mayor Frink, alarm was expressed in some quarters lest St. John, casting about for some lever of civic betterment, should lay hold upon taxation reform. We were told by some timid bystanders that while the principle applied in Vancouver was all very well for rapidly growing communities it never would do in the world for a place like St. John. That is wrong, for two reasons. One is that St. John is also a growing community, and the other is that two and two make four here as well as on the Pacific Coast.

Perhaps one reason why the Common Council shies at the mention of taxation is because the subject is so generally misunderstood by the average citizen, and also because a certain element in the community which now escapes a portion of its just taxation is ever ready to fight anything suggesting honest readjustment.

Yet it must be thought that examination of the subject can do no harm, and it must be said also that the Common Council, whose greatest concern should be for the advancement of the city in point of comfort and material expansion, will be expected presently to devote intelligent attention to this problem. The present scheme of taxation in St. John is bad, and the manner in which it is worked out is worse. For the purpose of showing that an examination of the question is not necessarily destructive of property, and does not inherently involve the grinding down of one class of citizens by another, we venture to quote something from the editorial columns of the Montreal Witness, a highly respectable and forceful journal whose respect for property, vested rights, the widow and the orphan, and the principles of equity are beyond cavil:

"In discussing the need of increased revenue for Montreal, we must not forget that the best way to increase revenue is to increase the value of city property by increasing the city's industries and the city's population. It may sound a little paradoxical, but we believe the straight way to reach a higher revenue is by lowering taxation. We would not lower taxation on the value of land. In a very large number of cases we would increase it. That is on those properties which are keeping the city back by waiting for neighboring improvements to give them a value, for which their owners neither toil nor spin. These should be taxed as high as their neighbors who are contributing to the city's activities. On the other hand we would reduce the taxation on improvements. This is the way it was done in the progressive city of Vancouver—a city which today would not exchange places with Montreal by a good deal, so pleased is it with itself. Vancouver began by reducing the taxation on improvements by half. We want, said its wise men, to encourage improvements that will add new value to our properties, and the worst way to do that is to tax people for making them. This worked so much to the advantage of the city that they halved it again, and they were so well pleased with the result that they exempted improvements altogether."

"This is hard on land speculators—at least was thought to be hard on them. But their property increased so fast in value that they soon fell in. Vancouver indeed could hardly follow any policy that the land speculators did not like. For no one ever needs any one from Vancouver that is not dabbling in land and pleased with his luck. The result of the new system was more than was expected. It not only put town lots into the hands of those who were ready to improve them, but it created industry in a way that made the city of Vancouver as it is today. It took the same course its business would find. Prince Rupert, the prospective rival, adopted the new principle from the first. Vancouver's civic treasury soon grew full to running over, and it became the owner of the public buildings and made them cheap or free to the people."

"Montreal is increasing numerically at a rate which astonishes us who live in it, and who are not noting what is going on elsewhere. When we compare our growth, still more when we compare our public conditions, with those which are developing in other cities, we find less cause for pride. If, however, now that we are using our means honestly and efficiently, we want to have money enough to do all we want to do, the first principle that we should adopt should be 'hands off improvements.' If we do not want to take a sudden plunge, and sudden plunges are seldom wise, let us follow the progress of Vancouver and begin by halving the burden on improvements, and make it good by valuing vacant land somewhat nearer to what its owners value it at. When we begin the process, we shall soon find cause to carry it, as the cities of the west are doing, to completion, by the total abolition of any tax on those elements of property which the proprietors contribute to the general good by the laying of the whole burden on that element of property whose value the owners derive from the general enterprise about them."

Isn't it time to disturb the dry bones of St. John's taxation and assessment?

THE MEN WHO MAKE CANADA

Sometimes a row not only clears the air but brings out something worth while. Just now, as a result of a tempest in the Empire Club of Toronto, much attention is being devoted to this sentence from an address there by Mr. Arthur Hawkes: "The man who is building up Canada is the man coming down the Saskatchewan with a yoke of cattle and a load of wheat, getting off his wagon and walking to keep himself warm; wondering if the frozen ground may break his wagon axle; not those of us who sit up nights figuring how much toll we can take of that load of wheat before it gets to Liverpool."

First as to the row. Some days ago Bishop Du Moulin in an address before the Empire Club made an attack upon some of the radical and democratic tendencies of present day British politics. This gentleman asserted that if he were dealing with the Suffragettes he would either turn the base on them or put them to rout by taking some thousands of rats from the sewers and letting them loose where the timonious ladies did congregate. It will be observed that the bishop is a man of delicate wit, and it is to be regretted that he gives way to irritation over some of the absurd though picturesque facts to be encountered in his day and generation. Not only did the Suffragettes draw down his wrath, but he devoted some attention to the Labor members of the House of Commons. He lamented the degeneracy of parliamentary government in Great Britain,

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saying that because of the upcoming of the Labor members the House was no longer an assembly of cultured gentlemen who exchanged classical quotations. Presumably the bishop regretted the absence from Parliament of some inspired orator who would talk about turning sewer rats loose among women.

At a subsequent meeting Mr. Arthur Hawkes cited Mr. Balfour's recent praise of the Labor members, and reminded his audience that in its most aristocratic days the House of Commons was not a particularly admirable model of good manners. Mr. Hawkes spoke strongly in support of the sane democratic tendencies of our time, and expressed regret that the bishop should have taken up so reactionary a position.

Curiously enough, the president of the Empire Club has since expressed his intention to apologize to Bishop Du Moulin because of some things Mr. Hawkes said; but if he does so it is probable that the club members will insist that it be done in his individual capacity only. He does not propose, apparently, to apologize to anyone for any of the things said by the bishop, though one apology would seem to involve necessity for the other.

The bishop spoke for special privilege; and while special privilege is still strong in Great Britain, and in some of the other parts of the Empire, even in Canada, it is being driven to the last trenches. In every part of the Empire the tendency is more toward true democratic institutions. The bishop's opinions will astonish and offend a much greater number of Canadians than will be disposed to resent anything said by his critic. The feudal days are not coming back. A bishop who cannot look manhood suffrage in the face is living in another century.

NOTE AND COMMENT

If the Council decides to place the market management in the hands of a special committee instead of the safety board, it would, of course, be understood that none of the aldermen whose names were mentioned during the recent investigation would have anything to do with the new committee. The way to reform the market is to reform it.

It clears the sight sometimes to look backward. Here is an illuminating glance at previous "desperate crises" in Britain, from the Manitoba Free Press:

Some of the Conservative orators and journalists in Great Britain can see nothing but the utter collapse and ruin of their country in the success of the Liberals in the approaching campaign. Every generation in Great Britain has its political crisis which is regarded as presaging Great Britain's downfall. Nor is this practice confined to opponents of progress. Macaulay, in a well-known passage, quotes the words written more than two hundred years ago by Mr. Secretary Vernon to a friend: "I believe there was not one man in the House that did not think the nation ruined." And yet Macaulay himself wrote, after a general election in which the Conservatives swept the country: "If we nothing better us but a frantic conflict between extreme opinions, a short period of oppression, then a con-

Uncle Walt
The Poet Philosopher

I've made a million bad mistakes, I've made a million foolish breaks, in this wide world of wonders; and I expect to make some more before I reach that happy shore where no one ever blunders. And I shall not apologize, or squint the bryng from my eyes, or make long explanations; the breaks I made in other days are made—their ghosts I shall not raise, to swell men's tribulations. Of all the useless things men do, the blameless is to stand and view the past with grief and wailing; the future like a sunlit sea, is waiting still for you and me, so let us both go sailing. The future, like a minstrel gay, is singing of a pleasant way, of scenes and days beguiling; the future, like a star-eyed maid (mixed metaphors, I am afraid) is beckoning and smiling. The man who marks the future's curves, and frets about the past, deserves the kicks that he'll be given; he likes to make a friend of woe, and so, wherever he may go, by woe he will be driven.

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WALT MASON.

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