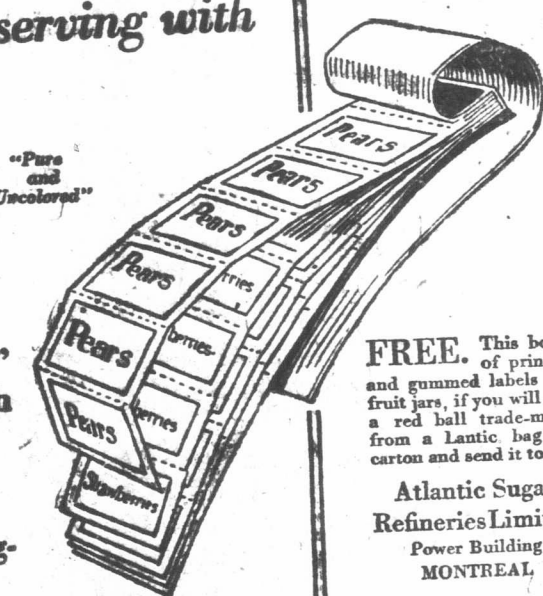


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Carvell's Strong Plea

(Continued from first page)

potatoes coming from any other part of the continent. If potatoes were made free into the United States, of course our potatoes would all go to the United States and none of them direct to Cuba; they would be exported to the United States and then, when they were properly in that country they would be sold to Cuba or wherever the buyers chose to send them. The result would be that all the potatoes going to Cuba, as well as to the United States, would go free of duty, and that would mean, on the figures I have given, about \$500,000 of extra money in the pockets of the people of New Brunswick.

MR. MORPHY: What advantage does the hon. gentleman find in shipping potatoes to Boston? Is there an increased price to any extent, and what is it?

MR. CARVELL: There is an

increased price and an increased market. Last year potatoes reached an exorbitant, outrageous price.

MR. MORPHY: But in an average year?

MR. CARVELL: I do not take last year as a guide, because when farmers are getting \$6 or \$7 a barrel for potatoes they have no cause to complain of tariff regulations or regulations of any other kind. I am dismissing from my argument, and I am trying to discuss the matter under ordinary conditions.

MR. WRIGHT: What is the difference in quantity and value between the potatoes exported from Canada to the United States and the potatoes from the United States into Canada?

MR. CARVELL: It is very great. Take the year ended March, 1917, and the first five months of this year. During that

period we imported from the United States 1,000,000 bushels, and we exported to the United States, about 2,800,000 bushels. You would have to add to that, if you want to get a real understanding of what the difference would be in case the duty were removed, the quantity of potatoes which we sent to Cuba and which would amount to 1,150,000 bushels. I am speaking in round figures.

Therefore, the quantity of our export to the United States would be four times the quantity of our imports.

MR. WRIGHT: That would be for last year, not for an average year.

MR. CARVELL: I am taking last and the first five months of this year. Prior to 1916 very few of these were sent to the United States, because after passing of the Underwood tariff, under which potatoes were practically free, there was only a ten per cent ad valorem duty—certain very shrewd Yankees who live about forty or fifty miles from my home conceived the idea of throwing mud at the Canadian potatoes by claiming that they were afflicted with a disease known as powdery scab, but just the ordinary scab that we have seen on potatoes ever since we were children.

But these gentlemen scared their Government and our Government and everybody else, and I think I am safe in saying that it cost this Government almost \$100,000 to fight the disease. Regulations and a rigid inspection were put in force and it was almost impossible for us to ship our potatoes across the line. But last year, when the United States wanted our potatoes, they did not bother very much about the powdery scab or about the regulations and inspection. They wanted our potatoes and were glad to get them.

So last year would be the first in a great many years when trade flowed freely without any unnatural barriers. I admit that the valuation is very, very far in excess of what the same volume of business would amount to in an ordinary year.

Coming back to the question put by the Minister of Agriculture, I stated that according to the reports furnished by the Department practically a million bushels of potatoes were imported in the two years I have been discussing. We exported in the same period to the United States about 2,800,000 bushels, and to Cuba 1,500,000 bushels. Altogether we exported practically 4,000,000 bushels. So far as I know, the regulations regarding powdery scab and inspection and all that sort of thing are not being adhered to at the present time, and trade flows as freely as it naturally can, except for the duty. The United States customs authorities fix an arbitrary figure in arriving at the valuation. As I understand it, they do not take the invoice price on each carload of potatoes, but place an arbitrary figure upon potatoes from a certain area. At the present time that arbitrary figure for the Maritime Provinces is \$3 a barrel. Actually our farmers are only getting \$2 a barrel. The result is that under their method of assessing the duty is increased by fifty percent. With that exception, trade is flowing as it naturally would under ordinary conditions.

Mr. Morphy: What justification is there for them doing that?

Mr. Carvell: I am not complaining. It is a regulation of the United States Government, and I suppose they have their own reason for it. I do not mean for a moment to say that they are doing it to be unneighbourly, or anything of that kind.

Mr. Morphy: What does our Government do in return?

Mr. Carvell: I do not know. I only happen to know this because a few days ago I received a letter from an organization in New Brunswick, known as the New Brunswick Potato Exchange, who are really the greatest potato dealers in Canada, pointing this

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out to me, and wanting to know if something could not be done to remedy it. The result of this method of determining the duty by the United States is that we pay a good deal more than we really should.

I would not attempt to say what the surplus in the United States will be this year, but I know that it will be very large. As regards Canada, I have been told by gentlemen interested in the business that, without the Maritime Provinces at all, the surplus in Canada will be six or seven million bushels. If that be true, it is perfectly safe to say that we shall have a surplus in Canada of at least 10,000,000 bushels, because in the maritime province alone I think we shall have a surplus of about 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 bushels. So if I am right in the information I have received—and if I am not the minister can correct me—the sur-

plus this year will be easily 10,000,000 bushels. In other years, when there has been a shortage of potatoes in Quebec and Ontario we have been able to ship out potatoes there, but when there is no shortage in Quebec and Ontario, we have no market for our potatoes except the United States. Let me give the House an illustration of what that means. In the spring of 1915, there were, I think I am safe in saying, from half a million to a million bushels of potatoes sold in New Brunswick at 15 cents a bushel, and tens of thousands of bushels were thrown on the dump because there was not stock enough to eat them up. The reason for this condition was that there was no demand for potatoes in Quebec and Ontario, and we were debarred by the regulations from sending our potatoes to the United States. The House can readily see the importance of having the United States market open to us. If the provinces of Quebec and Ontario want potatoes, we have them for them, but if they do not want them, unless we sell them to the United States or Cuba, we have absolutely no market and are exactly in the same position we were in the spring of 1915.

Mr. Morphy: Do the farmers of New Brunswick make potatoes their sole production?

Mr. Carvell: I am sorry to say that they do, to a greater extent than they ought to. I know for a



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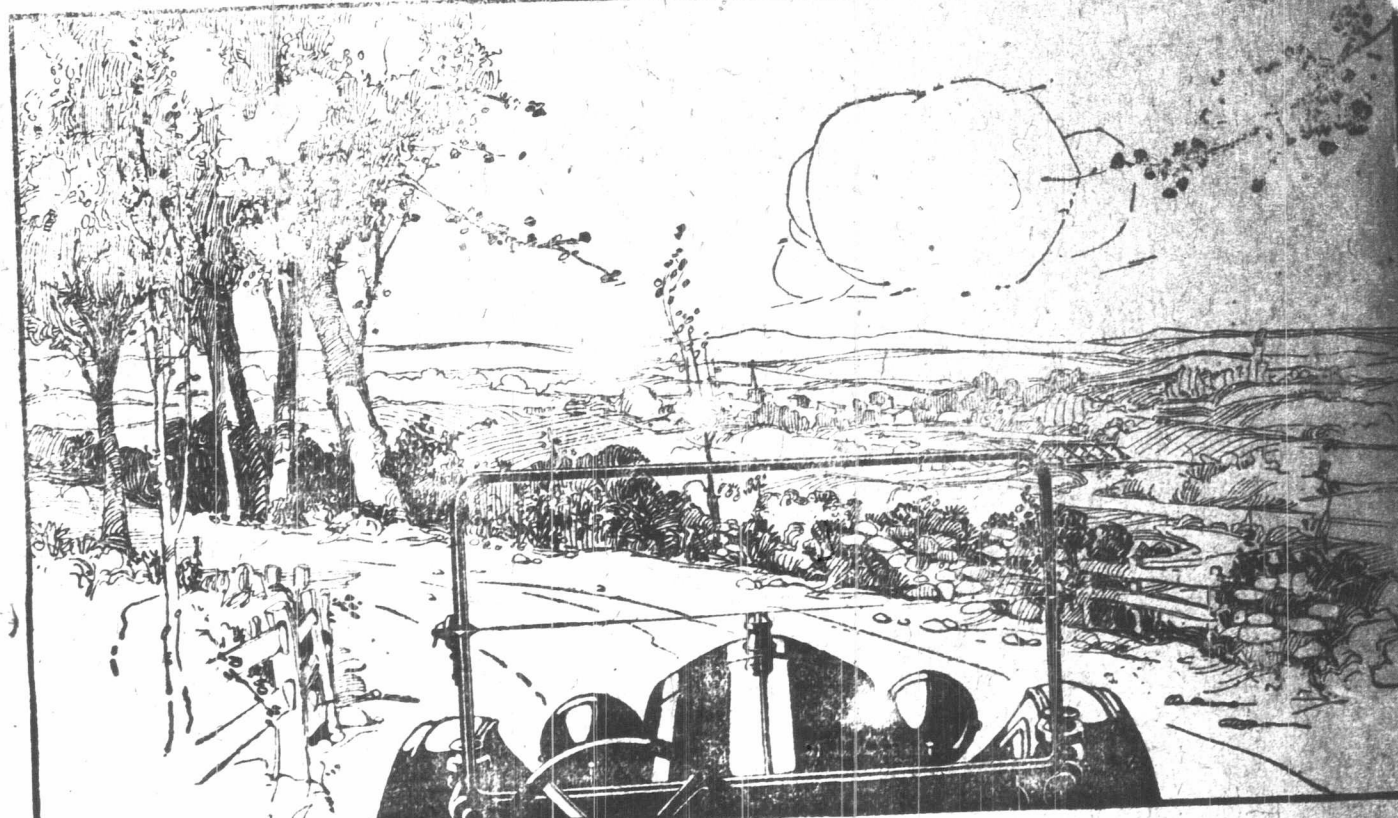
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