

# The Evening Times-Star

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., MAY 12, 1925.

## "NO ACTION."

A suggestion was made by His Worship Mayor Potts, at yesterday's City Hall meeting, that it would be well if the city would secure legislation to enable it to go into the business of selling the necessities of life at such times as dealers in these necessities might be charging excessive rates. "No action was taken."

Any such legislation is out of reach. The House is not in session now, and by the time another session comes this proposal may well have been forgotten unless, indeed, some extraordinary action on the part of those dealing in necessities should keep it alive, which seems unlikely enough.

It will be found, on reflection, that citizens generally would regard with a singular lack of enthusiasm the proposal that the Mayor and Commissioners should engage in trade in competition with their fellow-citizens, or should attempt to fix prices by employing civic money and talent to enter into competition with taxpayers. "The necessities of life" is in these days a phrase covering a wide range of buying and selling, and the line of adventure proposed by the Mayor is one of more than dubious wisdom. The articles of food are many, but to these must be added boots and shoes, clothing, fuel, medical attendance, housing and a multitude of other things. Some citizens, extending His Worship's line of thought, might even go so far as to include auctioneering. At all events, if the city as such were to engage in one line of trade, in order to avoid discrimination and to cover the whole field, it might be logically necessary to set up cut-rate competition in a hundred lines and to employ capital and staff on a wide scale.

If any taxpayer is growing fabulously rich by grinding the faces of the poor in the handling of any particular line of necessities, the fact seems to have escaped general observation, and if any such instance were pointed out, it indeed it has mysteriously escaped the notice of men in similar lines, no doubt public announcement of the facts would speedily bring about sufficient competition to produce the desired effect.

The men at City Hall already have a great deal on their hands. In addition to conducting their various departments, they are supposed to be on the alert in promoting or assisting movements to better our transportation conditions, to secure new industries, to reduce taxation, and to increase trade. Properly regarded it is a programme sufficient to enlist all of their intelligence and to absorb all of their energy. They will not be driven into trade—not before the next civic election anyhow.

## NOVA SCOTIA'S DEMANDS.

While the Opposition in the Nova Scotia Legislature voted against the Armstrong resolution asking that the province be given liberty to make its own tariff and spending arrangements with countries other than Canada, the Opposition leaders evidently wished to make it plain that they are by no means content with existing conditions. They offered an amendment calling for inquiry into the present fiscal policy of Canada as necessary in the interests of the farmers, fishermen, miners, lumbermen, manufacturers and other producers of Nova Scotia, and it was suggested also that the proposed inquiry should consider the effect of such fiscal changes both upon the cost of living and the cost of production. Thus in a sense both parties in Nova Scotia are agreed that so far as their province is concerned the present fiscal policy of the Dominion will not do.

The Manitoba Free Press is mildly shocked by the Nova Scotia disturbance and by the Armstrong proposals. It says this scheme of regional tariffs is "of course quite impractical, and Confederation could not survive the further divisive force embodied in such tariffs." But the very fact that such a proposal is made seriously by the Prime Minister of Nova Scotia, apparently with the backing of the province, is regarded by the Free Press as "sufficiently to awaken everybody to the seriousness of the tariff issue."

In the judgment of the Free Press Confederation would be disrupted by giving Nova Scotia the fiscal independence it is asking for, and would be disrupted just as surely by carrying into effect a higher tariff than the present one, which course it obviously believes would alienate the West as well as the Maritime Provinces. It thinks upon fuller consideration Nova Scotia will see "that its position is impractical, unless its intention is to break up Confederation."

Premier Armstrong distinctly said that he contemplated nothing like secession, but this spokesman for the West tells him that if Nova Scotia had regional tariff it would necessarily have the same liberty for the Maritime Provinces, for Ontario and Quebec and the Prairie Provinces, and perhaps

## Odds and Ends

"You never know what you'll find among the odds and ends."—From "Notes by a Wanderer."

### Cheers!

(D. B. M. in Manitoba Free Press.) The Conservatives had cheered lustily when Mr. Meighen had said the Liberal government was ruining the country. The Liberals now cheer out cheer after cheer as Mr. King tries to show the Conservatives had ruined the country.

Any kind of ruin is loudly cheered—in parliament. The members appear to get great pleasure out of ruin. If the country could get as many cheers out of it as the politicians the whole Dominion would be vibrating with the shouting.

Mr. King and Mr. Meighen are both well appearing men and college graduates and they sit here 15 feet across from each other and drawing exactly opposite deductions from the same set of figures, proceed to talk the country cross-eyed. Mr. Meighen had taken the financial cut out of the bag and talked it right down the bottom of the bag. Mr. King took the same cut at the bottom of the well and talked it right up to the top of the well.

Mr. King threatens the opposition that if it doesn't behave and allow business to proceed, he will rapidly will order a general election. This seems to suit everybody. Tremendous cheers.

Twelve members are to speak for Mr. King. Midnight comes with two score members elocuted in their seats and one talking. He is a Gingerie, without much grunge. Songs and cheers and sounds of merriment come from the various rooms along the corridors at 8 a.m. Members have planned a Wild Irish Rose on Annie Laurie and are now sounding the depths of Loch Lomond. It is a big night for the boys on the Swaine River. Harry Laurier is coming in now. He is a dandy. He is being made to be carried back to Old Virginia. At 3.30 a.m. we look into the eyes of Mr. Meighen. Mr. Shaw of Calgary is talking to a largely vacant world. Far off down a corridor voices are sending forth the words of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

They are not singing about Mr. Shaw. At 8.45 Mr. Harry Leader is coming in now. He is a dandy. He is being made to be carried back to Old Virginia. At 3.30 a.m. we look into the eyes of Mr. Meighen. Mr. Shaw of Calgary is talking to a largely vacant world. Far off down a corridor voices are sending forth the words of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

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## RUM BLOCKADE TO CIRCLE U. S.

Coast Guard Head to Ask for Millions to Dry Up Country.

Atlantic Campaign to be Followed by Activity on Pacific and Lakes.

WASHINGTON, May 12.—A liquor-tight ring of coast guard ships around the entire American coastline is the possibility hanging on the degree of success attained by the fleet now conducting the elaborate blockade of Rum Row. This was disclosed today by Rear Admiral F. C. Billard, commandant of the coast guard.

If the Atlantic mobilization against the whisky smugglers proves their strategy effective, Congress probably will be asked to authorize a plan the details of which have been carefully worked out by Admiral Billard, for a similar blockade of every seashore point of liquor entry.

Coast guard officials are confident that the traps and schooners anchored off Long Island can soon be worn out. They also believe that extension of the same tactics to the rest of the Atlantic, as well as the Pacific and great lakes' shore lines, is feasible.

In discussing Premier Armstrong's resolution for provincial control of the tariff for Nova Scotia, Mr. O'Hearn, attorney general for the province, complained that justice was not done to the Maritime Provinces in the Immigration literature published by the Dominion Government. The Halifax Chronicle complains that there has been unfair discrimination in favor of the western provinces. It says that in the maps prepared some time ago

the Dominion was invariably depicted at such an inclination to the meridians and parallels that Nova Scotia and her sister provinces appeared to be within easy hailing distance of the North Pole, while Manitoba and the other western provinces, although even their southern boundary of 49 degrees north is many miles north of our farthest northern limit—our southern boundary being hundreds of miles south of theirs—were pictured in seemingly sub-tropical positions.

The Chronicle says that there has been improvement in this respect, but that too much attention is still paid to interior Canada, and it objects to the policy of enticing people away from the Maritime Provinces to the West. There is still room in the Maritime Provinces for a much larger population, and there are no doubt some immigrants who would prefer the maritime to the prairie environment.

Apartments to Let. See the want ad page.

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"But," went on the recipient, "the bird was a wee bit high, and as we couldn't eat it, we had to throw it away."

"Worse and worse," said his friend. "Bribery and corruption."

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