

The Evening Times and Star

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COMPARATIVE PRICES

The last volume issued by the Department of Labor under the very able Minister, who gave distinction to that office during the Liberal government, is a study of the comparative prices of food products in Canadian and American cities during the past five years. It is a sort of a by-product from the work in connection with the extended study of wholesale prices in Canada during twenty years. That report roused immediate and widespread attention as a result of the light which it threw on many aspects of the economic situation, such as the effects of price changes, the cost of living and the causes of changes in the general price level. This present study of comparative prices is hardly less important.

In discussing the cost of living and the influences making for the marked and rapid increase, the distinction is not often made between what is fundamental, pervasive and controlling and what is accidental, sporadic, and subordinate. In the question of increased prices today, there are a few central matters of fact, which must be assigned to their right place if we are to have any chance of thinking straight through the problem. The first of these matters of fact relates to the degree in which the increase has taken place. This is of itself, a difficult matter to determine. What is a fair measure of the present advance of general prices? How determine a normal level? This is difficult to do when the price of a few definite articles is considered, it is an extremely complicated problem when we consider the whole question. Before the general rise in prices there was an equally remarkable fall. A little over a decade ago the air was full of warnings of low prices as it now is of complaints of high prices. This should not be overlooked in considering the subject.

Price is the relation between other things and gold. During seven years before 1900 the average United States production of gold per capita was 74 cents, and since 1900 it has been 120 cents, an increase of 62 per cent. The money in circulation in the former period was \$23.82 per capita, in the latter period, \$29.57—a gain of more than 24 per cent. Economists of all schools realize that the more gold there is in circulation, the higher must be the price of commodities measured by those standards. It is very evident that the prices, that is, the amount of gold it is necessary to pay for things cannot, be independent of the amount of gold available in the world. There is no more reason that an ounce of gold should always have the same purchasing power, no matter how much gold there may be in the market, than that a bale of cotton should always have the same purchasing power, no matter how much cotton there is in the market. The amount of gold has increased everywhere (but in the pockets of the people) at an unprecedented rate during the past twelve years. This is the central fact in the situation today. Owing to the freedom with which gold flows from one country to another, this circumstance affects prices throughout the civilized world. The world wide rise in prices is due primarily to the great increase of the world's stock of gold.

It is possible that if we could reach all the prices, we would find that the increase in prices bears a very close proportion to the increase in the gold supply of the nations. It is very doubtful if the increase in the cost of living has been met by an equal increase in wages. Wages in many leading industries are more than double what they were fifty years ago, but rents are much higher and the standard of living has been raised so that there is today more industrial discontent than there was at the earlier period. The question has been further complicated in this country by the influence of tariffs, trusts and retail combinations, which have in restraint of trade. As if the evil of the increased cost of living were not enough, we let loose whole hordes of foxes to spoil the vines and complicate the problem.

"NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN"

Recently there was quoted a saying of Charles A. Dana to the effect: "When a dog bites a man, that's not news; when a man bites a dog, that's news." One is reminded that no good thing can be original today. This is a variant of an apothegm which appears in the classical literatures in more than one form. Plutarch says that the son of Ariston, when certain diviners announced as a portent the fact that a snake had coiled itself around the bolt of a door, replied: "It doesn't seem so to me, but if the bolt had coiled itself around the snake, that would be a portent." Clement of Alexandria attributes the same remark to Dio-genes, and Cicero recounts it without naming the author. Clement says that Bion the Borysthenite remarked: "What wonder if the mouse, not finding anything to eat has eaten the meal rack? For this would be the thing worthy of note, if the meal sack had eaten the mouse." Augustine quotes Cato, when consulted by a man whose boots had been eaten by mice, as replying that there might have been real reason for wonder if the reverse had been the case.

Nothing is more foolish than the reproach of plagiarism. The writer cannot find all the material for his art within himself. He is entitled to lay his hands upon whatever material he finds newsworthy for his work. Shakespeare well knew this and all great writers before and since. Even Dante took his material for the "Divina Commedia" from St. Peter

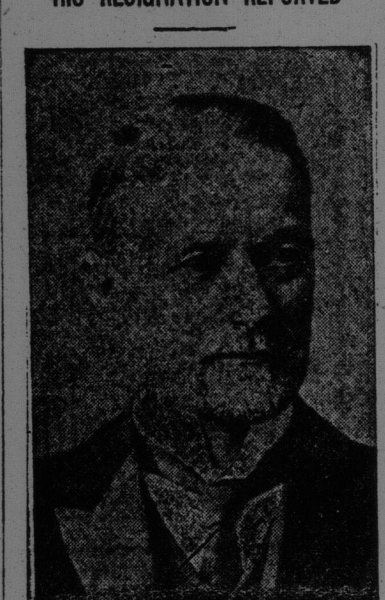
Damian and he erected a magnificent temple on the superstructure of the earlier saint.

There is an ancient fable in which the spider conversing with the bee makes it a reproach against the latter that she has to collect material from a thousand flowers for the construction of her honeycomb, and the preparation of her honey; whereas I, says the spider triumphantly, "draw the original threads of my whole web out of my own body." But the spider does not produce honey.

The winter run and bustle at Sand Point may be said to have already begun. The first export freight for the steamer has arrived. The outlook for a busy winter is bright.

London despatches say that A. Bonar Law is "floor leader" of the Unionist party and that the leadership is virtually transferred to Lord Lansdowne "who would be undoubtedly called to form a ministry should the Liberals be ousted in the near future, which is not probable."

HIS RESIGNATION REPORTED



This is W. T. R. Preston, Canada's veteran trade commissioner, who, it is reported, has just resigned.

LEAGUE OF ENGLISH SPEAKING NATIONS

Dr. J. A. Macdonald Develops a New Line of Thought—Canada's Part in It

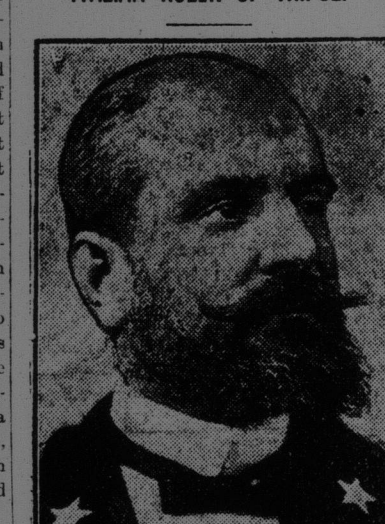
Toronto, Nov. 13.—A vision of a league of all the English speaking nations and the development and growth of a world empire of free nations into which nations shall enter was described on Saturday evening to the student members of the Literary and Scientific society at Victoria college by Dr. J. A. Macdonald, who spoke on the Place of Canada in the English-Speaking Race. It was this conception, Dr. Macdonald said, which more than anything was now binding the parts of the British Empire together, and which was to make the generations to come more loyal to the flag than any who had gone before.

"And Canada," the speaker said, "of all the nations of the world has the chance of making this league of the English speaking people potential in the world. It is for Canada to illustrate to the world more clearly than has ever been done what democracy really means."

Dr. Macdonald further pointed out that because Canada lay so close to the United States and because there was so much in common between them, it was Canada's part to be a bond between the greatest empire of the world and the world's greatest republic.

As for the possibility of war between the great European nations, Dr. Macdonald said their preparation for war was a farce. The money lenders of Berlin and London parties would say as they did only recently, "Thus far and no farther." "Canada," he said, "was more of a democracy than ever before, and by democracy he meant not simply that the power was with the people, but that also there rested with the people the obligation to ascertain what were the laws of life. The true democracy in the future empire would mean that the common man in the country should have a man's chance to make a man of himself." It would mean equality of opportunity for every one.

ITALIAN RULER OF TRIPOLI



Vice-Admiral Borea D'Olimi, the new governor of Tripoli, latest despatches report Italian reverses at Tripoli, and it is said that Turkey has recaptured its forts. General Canali, on account of the massacre of Arabs, has been superseded as commander-in-chief by General Fruzani, now due in Tripoli.



SQUARING THINGS

(Pittsburgh Sun.)

It is true I've forgotten the day sweet heart;

We were married just ten years ago;

Perhaps you are right—and yet for my part

I can scarcely believe it is so!

Day glides into day in the endless bliss

That you have brought me, my dear,

So I heed not the flight of time, and this

Seems to me but our very first year!

And I have forgotten your flowers today!

I am sorry, dear heart; it is true,

But my wife has wandered so sweetly astray!

I've been dreaming, my darling, of you!

And so, without gifts of beauty or pelf,

I stand, a culprit, dear wife;

I can offer only my heart and myself

And the pledge of the same for life!

There! I am forgiven, and all is well;

Our joy in the day looks naught;

For joy is a thing that the shops don't sell.

And with love alone it is bought!

I am glad 'tis thus in this costly age,

With its prices so high above,

All I can afford, on my present wage,

To give you, my own, is love!

IN LIGHTER VEIN



POXY.

Ha—How shall I express my sentiments toward you?

She—On paper, please. Then there can be no chance of your wringing out of it.



STUNG.

Client—I just received your bill for getting me off with a fine in that case last week.

Lawyer—Well?

Client—I've changed my mind. I'd rather go to jail!



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