

The New Taxes

The great need of the country at the present time is a revision of the tariff which will reduce the high cost of living. The Drayton budget increases the high cost of living. The Government makes a virtue of the fact that it is introducing direct taxation. There would be something in the claim if direct taxes were being substituted for indirect taxes. Here the direct taxes are piled on top of the indirect taxes, and the consumer pays it all. A man goes into a store and buys a suit of clothes made of English cloth. The cloth has paid a high customs duty, made higher by the fact that the customs authorities insist upon valuing the pound sterling at \$4.86, whereas in the last few months the value has fluctuated between \$4.20 and \$4.30, that is to say, the custom tax has been levied on \$4.86 where the real cost of the article was only \$4.25 on the average. Now, if the suit made of that cloth costs more than \$45, the customer is taxed again. So the cost of living is increased on the necessities of life. The consumer is dissatisfied. The retailer is dissatisfied.

The taxes are complicated and the collection will be troublesome and expensive. They are taxes on business and production, and their tendency will be to lessen business and production. The retail merchant is forced into the position of a tax-collector, and instead of being paid for his labor, he will be put to additional expense, besides losing business.

Meanwhile, the profiteers escape, the excess profits tax is reduced. No attempt is made to tax the huge fortunes accumulated during the war, and every year it will become more difficult to make an inventory of such fortunes and compel them to contribute to the public revenue. By passing the conscription law Parliament declared that every man's life was at the service of the State. Surely if that is right, it is even more certain that every man's