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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1912.

IRELAND UNDER A SEPARATE TARIFF.

In discussing Home Rule for Ireland, public interest has been centered for the most part on the sentimental side of the question. The financial proposals of the Bill are a fitting subject for careful investigation. The objections which have been noted are worth considering. A memorandum dealing with this phase of the question has been issued by the Tariff Commission, a private organization in Great Britain.

The memorandum exhibits the present economic position of Ireland and submits much reliable data upon which conclusions can be formed.

Irish industry covers a far wider range than is generally supposed. The memorandum referred to gives a list of thirty-five different industries besides agriculture.

Comparing the census figures of 1841 with those of 1901 it is found that in most of these manufacturing industries there was a great falling off under "Free Trade."

The number of persons employed in these industries has been much greater proportionately than the decline in the population. The population fell from 8,175,000 in 1841 to 4,442,000 in 1901, or 46 per cent., while the number of work-people employed in manufacturing industries fell from 888,000 to 339,000 or 62 per cent.

There still exist many important Irish industries, such as linen manufacturing, brewing, engineering, bleaching and dyeing, milling, woolen and worsted manufacturing, flax scutching, woodworking, distilling, mineral water manufacturing, and bacon curing. There is also, of course, the Irish ship-building industry, which is such an important factor in the prosperity of Belfast.

There are in Ireland, therefore, all the materials for much greater industrial activity.

The memorandum insists that, whilst agriculture must always remain the main industry of the country, "the regeneration of the rural life of Ireland which is now in progress must provide opportunities for restoring former industries and increasing the variety and range of their output."

That result, it is maintained, might easily be attained by a reversal of the fiscal policy which is responsible for so much of the decline of Irish agriculture and industry, and the adoption of a sane and sensible tariff system, which would give direct encouragement to Irish industries as well as to those of the rest of the United Kingdom.

Evidence placed before the Tariff Commission goes to show that the Irish export trade in linens has been greatly hampered in European and other countries by heavy duties. The same complaint is made regarding exports of cottons, poplins, woollens, machinery, paper, etc.

For such grievances there can be no redress so long as the bargaining power of a tariff is lacking. Great Britain is, of course, Ireland's best customer, taking \$22,500,000 of her products annually, while all other countries combined take only 21,800,000 worth.

Ireland, therefore, is largely dependent upon the market of Great Britain for the disposal of her products, while Great Britain, on the other hand, is dependent on Ireland for a large proportion of her foodstuffs, such as cattle and beef, pork and bacon, potatoes, butter, eggs and poultry, as well as linen goods, rope and cordage.

The two countries being thus commercially interdependent, the object of wise statesmanship ought surely to be to draw them more closely together for mutual advantage rather than to encourage the forces of disintegration.

To give a tariff preference to Irish products in the British markets would do more to reanimate and stimulate Irish industries than anything else which the wit of man could devise.

Coming now to the fiscal provisions of the Home Rule Bill, it is claimed by the Tariff Commission memorandum that they are fraught with grave dangers, and are so complicated that they will almost certainly prove unworkable.

Under Clause 15 of the Bill the Irish Parliament would have power to vary by way of "addition, reduction, or discontinuance" any customs duty upon an article included in the imperial tariff.

But an elaborate system of drawbacks is applied with the apparent object of placing the British exporter on the same footing in the Irish market as his Irish competitor, and vice versa. Should, therefore, the Irish Parliament exercise its power to bring into force a scale of duties differing from those prevailing in Great Britain, an intricate re-organization of the customs arrangements will be necessary both at British and Irish ports.

For instance, should the Irish excise duty on whiskey be reduced to 11s. per gallon, while the British duty remained at 14s. 9d. per gallon, the Irish merchant sending whiskey to England would claim a drawback of 11s. at the Irish port and would pay an import duty of 14s. 9d. on arrival at the English port, while on the exportation of Scotch whiskey to Ireland the Scotch spirit merchant would claim 14s. 9d. as drawback and pay an Irish import duty equal to the Irish excise duty, namely, 11s. per gallon. Similar arrangements would apply to beer, wine, cocoa, sugar, tea, and tobacco, as soon as the Irish Parliament varied the duties on any of these articles.

The memorandum states on this point that "the difficulties of the Government of Ireland Bill would seem to arise from the effort to safeguard the 'Free Trade' system while in fact setting up a tariff system in different parts of the United Kingdom."

There is a touch of grim humor in these provisions to give Ireland a tariff when we reflect that they have been framed by a Government to whom Protection is a nightmare. A writer in the Protectionist makes the following caustic comment:

"The power with which the Irish Parliament is to be endowed to increase to any extent all excise duties, the rates of Customs duties on beer and spirits, and, with a limitation of 10 per cent., those on other taxed commodities, is ministerially defended as enabling the poorer classes to benefit by remissions on tea, sugar, etc. But nothing is said about the fact that this introduces a differential Customs rate operating against English, Scotch and Welsh, who, under the Bill, will have to provide large annual subsidies for the maintenance of purely Irish services. Not only so, but an increase of Customs duty on spirits and beer would operate as a protective impost, tending to drive English and Scotch distillers and brewers out of the Irish market."

Protests in the British press against these tariff provisions have not been confined to Unionist journals. The London Spectator, which in season and out of season supports "Free Trade," has been moved to protest against the possibility of handicapping English trade under the provisions of the Bill. It points out this result may follow by the indirect method of reducing the excise duty on tobacco by half, thus enabling Irish manufacturers or merchants to retail tobacco in England through

the post office, "at prices which would completely undersell the English traders. This journal also points out that there is nothing in the Bill to prevent the system of bounties which prevailed under the ante 1890 Irish Parliament. "Part of the joke," it adds, "would be to see the poor English 'Free Trade' pig squealing under the treatment meted out to him by Protectionists."

The objection to the establishment of a tariff system in different parts of the United Kingdom must appear to many who are in favor of the principle of Home Rule. In any event England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland are a unit of the Empire. The system proposed is totally at variance with the Imperial Idea of Federation. Separate tariffs for the different Provinces of the Dominion would not be considered for a moment. The system would be absolutely unworkable. Before the Union of South Africa, the four States, Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State had tariffs and it is on record that the greatest confusion prevailed. When they came together in the Union separate tariffs were abolished. Mr. Bonar Law put the objection to a separate tariff system for Ireland in a nutshell in stating that "every ship coming from Ireland to the United Kingdom will have to be examined. The differentiation between individual units of a kingdom separated only by a few miles of sea will not tend to secure that larger measure of unity for the Empire of which Ireland is a part."

THE RESPONSE OF THE WEST.

To the confusion of the "wider market" propagandists, instances are constantly being recorded in the press of benefits derived from the defeat of Reciprocity. It will be difficult for advocates of the Pact to make much headway, for instance, against the facts set forth in the following paragraph from the Welland Telegraph:

"A cheque received at the Customs office, Port Colborne, a few days ago, covering a single Customs entry amounted to \$4,513. That was the duty on a shipment of American wheat from Duluth for the Maple Leaf Milling Company. Since the rate of duty is 12 1/2 cents it will be seen that the shipment was of considerable size. While this paragraph is being written the big steamer Mathewson is unloading a cargo of 292,000 bushels of Duluth wheat at the Government elevator, Port Colborne. But this sort of thing is of regular occurrence. American wheat is being unloaded at Port Colborne every day. The wharves of Duluth are thick with Canadian boats. These beautiful facts should be conveyed at once to the Toronto Globe, as it might help to assuage the grief of the Reciprocity organ's troubled breast."

Take again the case of the city of Moose Jaw. Under Reciprocity, wheat from this section of Saskatchewan would have been shipped into the United States to be ground in the mills at Minneapolis and elsewhere. The money and labor spent thereon would have been of no benefit to the Canadian people. Minneapolis milling interests have not been slow to realize that if Canadian wheat cannot be brought to them they must go to the west. They are starting an establishment at Moose Jaw and Canada gets the business.

This same city is also assured of extensive elevator facilities for which there would have been no demand if Canadian grain had been sent across the border to American elevators. A recent report states that a large automobile and tractor industry in the United States is about to open a branch in Moose Jaw and that during the past year a meat-packing plant has greatly developed.

What is true of Port Colborne and of Moose Jaw is true of many cities and towns in Canada's great and growing West. Sir Wilfrid Laurier professes to have a great regard for Western Canada, yet we find no allusion to these interesting facts in any of his speeches. "The people do not want it as I offered it, therefore, it behoves the present Government to find another remedy," is a fitting remark from the Liberal Leader over the beer of Reciprocity. In the prompt construction of the Hudson Bay Railway as another Canadian outlet for Western grain, in the rapid development of the national ports, in the reforms inaugurated by the Grain Commission and in many other ways the present Government are meeting the needs of the situation.

THE MUSHROOM SEASON.

The present season is reported to be a poor one for mushrooms, but a warning is nevertheless timely in view of reports from abroad showing the danger to life in not distinguishing the poisonous varieties. A news despatch from Paris, quoted in the Bangor News, states that poisonous mushrooms are proving almost as fatal in France this year as an epidemic of the plague. This undoubtedly is an exaggeration, but the figures given are sufficiently impressive.

No fewer than thirteen deaths were registered in one day of persons who had eaten what they supposed were edible mushrooms. Near Bethune practically an entire family died after having partaken of the poisonous fungi and two others were reported to be in a serious condition. Near Nezelere a man and three children died and the lives of his wife and a friend were despaired of, in the vicinity of Saint Die, the chief of customs and his wife and five children were poisoned by a meal of mushrooms. Two of the children died and the remaining members of the family were in critical condition. It is stated in the despatch that deaths from the same cause have been recorded daily during the past fortnight.

Edible mushrooms do grow to waste at this season of the year would form a grateful addition to the food supply of almost any community, but the peril from two or three species, which unhappily are quite common, renders the use of this food supply dangerous, except to those who have made a careful study of them or have been taught to make a trustworthy distinction.

Current Comment

Tribute to Wilson. (Providence Journal.)

It is not too much to say, indeed, that in these few brief weeks Governor Wilson has given a new tone to our public life. He has never lost his temper, never departed from principles to personalities, never assumed inflexibility, never disputed the right of any man to differ with him. Even in defeat there would be no bitterness for such a man.

A Handy Weapon. (Hamilton Spectator.)

When the millennium arrives, it is fit that man's nature will be changed at the same time, and a sword would need to be beaten into something less capable of harm than pruning-hooks. History furnishes startling evidence of the mischief done by such-like implements when a rural mob got "hot up."

Where it Comes In. (Syracuse Standard.)

The cost of living fluctuates more rapidly than the income of the man who works for a wage or salary, and that is where the burden of the cost of living comes in.

Wheat, For Instance. (Winnipeg Telegram.)

The notion that one can sell at a profit to a neighbor that which he is trying his best to get rid of himself is one which will not stand analysis.

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CLERGYMAN AND WIFE HAVE NARROW ESCAPE

Waterborough, Q. C., Oct. 5.—Walter Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Rolands were driving along the highway road the other evening their horse became frightened at a white cow by the roadside and bolted, throwing the occupants of the carriage out in a juring time both quite badly, smashing the carriage and harness; and it was by a miracle that one or both were not even more seriously injured or killed.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Gale are receiving congratulations on the arrival to their home of two small strangers; they are both baby girls.

David Mott is very ill at his home here. Mrs. David Mott is also in failing health at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Edith Wasson.

Dr. John Mott, of St. John, came up on a morning train yesterday and left for the city last evening. He was visiting his brother, D. Mott.

Quite a snow flurry is reported as having fallen at Chipman on Sunday night last.

C. Whitfield Smith, of the firm of C. T. White, Apple River, N. S., is spending a few days at the home of his mother, Mrs. G. N. Smith.

Hanta Smith, of Los Angeles, Cal., is visiting his brother, George Smith. Harvesting is greatly delayed by the continued wet weather.

SUSPICIOUS STORY TOLD IN SACKVILLE

(Sackville Tribune.)

A remarkable natural occurrence is reported from near Middle Sackville, which happened during one of the recent numerous freshets. At a place called Leg Lake canal, on one of the many streams in this part of the country, the canal was crossed by a bridge used jointly by the owners of the surrounding marshes. One of the owners, who had to travel a quarter of a mile out of his way to get across the stream, decided to build a bridge on his own property and he had the stringers in their place and the floor of the bridge partly laid, when a heavy rain set in. The old bridge, a quarter of a mile further down the stream was swept away and the new one was carried down and landed precisely on the abutments of the old structure, just as neatly as an engineer could have built it. It was difficult to convince some of the residents that this had occurred until they had visited the site and had seen for themselves.

WELL KNOWN PRINTER GETS APPOINTMENT

(Ottawa, Oct. 7.—D. P. Reynolds for many years night foreman of the Ottawa Citizen's composing room, has been appointed travelling immigration inspector by the Dominion Government. Mr. Reynolds has long been prominent in lacrosse circles and has been throughout Canada as a referee. He replaces the late inspector Herbert, who was murdered by an immigrant at Windsor a few months ago.

BIG POTATO CROP

(Moncton Times.)

An estimated yield of 2,000 barrels of potatoes from 25 acres would be considered a good crop in any season, but considering the nature of the summer just ended, it seems more than ordinarily good. This is what has been raised on the farm at Burton, Sunbury County, owned by the Burton Land Development Company. The potatoes in question were planted between the trees of an orchard and the tops die before the tubers have chance to ripen. By persistent spraying, however, with Bordeaux mixture, the tops in this case are quite green yet. The tubers have been already dug about a remarkable absence of the small potatoes which are usually observed, one of them containing no fewer than thirty-two tubers of good merchantable size. The estimated yield in this case is nearly 114 barrels to the acre, and shows what can be done in this province by the intelligent use of advanced agricultural methods.

OUR TURN NOW!

(Charlottetown Examiner.)

Premier Matheson says that the West has great opportunities of doing the fullest advantage has been taken. On the other hand we have greater opportunities than the West; but these we have so far failed to appreciate or realize.

The Premier says, further, that while it is pleasant and beneficial to take a trip to the West, occasionally, he returns in the full belief that as a place in which to live comfortably and to prosper honestly and reasonably, by adopting the right methods to those areas, Prince Edward Island has no superior.

Like many another islander who has seen a Premier Matheson come back appreciating the natural advantages and beauties of this "fair Isle of the West," as he never fails to be called, and determined to do what he can towards the development of its farms, and inshore fisheries, and industries, to work up an interest in its unutilized attractions for tourists, and to place it upon the high road to a greater prosperity "than has been."

In this patriotic he will, we feel sure, have the co-operation and support of all patriotic islanders.

WEST INDIAN SERVICE TENDERS.

Ottawa, Oct. 7.—The Department of Trade and Commerce has extended to Dec. 15th the time for receiving tenders for the steamship service between Canada and West Indies and Canada and Jamaica.

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