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THE LONDON ADVERTISER COMPANY,
LIMITED.
London, Ont., Friday, July 23.

WHY NOT A STRIKE AGAINST INCREASES?

And still the financial experts prophesy an early turn to lower prices, with railway wages and rates about to climb in the United States and our precious Board of Commerce raising the price of sugar several cents again. The living cost in Canada, reported at Ottawa, is the highest ever for the past month. How long is this thing going to be blamed on the war? The increase in the last six months beats all records. And remember, living costs were going up rapidly before the war ever was.

Strikes and higher wages may perhaps not be so much the cause of rising prices as vice versa, but one thing is clear, that they do not help to bring prices down, but contribute something to higher costs. Mr. Tom Moore and other labor leaders have lately been emphasizing this obvious point and insisting that strikes should henceforth aim not so much at higher wages as at lower prices. It is curious that the workman in any other trade should sit by complacently and acquiesce while railway workers jack up their pay and therewith the railway rates as well. Is it not his cue to counterstrike against a move that threatens to fleece the whole citizen body in the interest of one trade and one body of owners who may make higher wages a pretext for yet higher profits; or at least strike against an attempt of the railway owners to take the increase of wages out in higher rates on traffic? If workmen endure this or approve it, they practically make themselves a party to a general strike, not in the interest of the mass, but against the public weal, all to fatten the pocketbooks of railway workers and owners at the expense of the laboring community.

HIS UMP.

There is one hard-working laborer in our midst who is even more neglected than the school teacher, more long enduring than ministers, more abused than the politician. He is one whom no one ever praises. His hours of labor are so short that he cannot possibly strike for less, but his work is like the sojourn of the three Hebrew children in the burning, fiery furnace. No one was ever more "roasted."

He is the baseball umpire, the man in the iron mask. He is not old, he is not young. He hardly has a face, except to be punched now and then, or gashed by an empty beer-bottle; half the time he is covered with his cage; you note only his voice. He seems like a shadow in the game, an abstraction, a personification of judgment. You never hear of an umpire retiring or dying. He hardly exists palpably enough to be said ever to vanish. No doubt he eats, drinks (in moderation) and sleeps, but to the public he only appears, in a shadowy fashion and speaks the words of fate. To the mind of any bleacher he simply can't see at all. He only speaks.

Never he receives a presentation, an ovation or a write-up. There is no interest taken in his private life. Probably he draws a salary, but whoever heard of an umpire's strike? The glorious fellowship of the arbiters, if such there be, either never wants more or gets it by just a nod. Perhaps, like the fates, they are serene above blame or want, and never miss the praise that is not bestowed.

LONDON'S BANKS.

Evidence of Sound Prosperity and Progress.

There is no more certain evidence of the sound prosperity and progress of London than in its banks. Where banks are prosperous the community is sure to be. The banks are at the bottom, they are the foundation of true business prosperity, and in this view of it, it is well that every few years they should put their heads together and size up the whole situation. Of course this should be wisely done.

London a few years ago had a few banks. The Bank of Montreal, the Merchants Bank, the Bank of British North America, the Federal Bank, the Molsons Bank and the Bank of Commerce. Subsequently came the Bank of Toronto, the Imperial Bank, the Dominion Bank, the Home Bank, the Royal Bank and the Bank of Nova Scotia. These added many more.

Originally the banks clustered around the office and customs house. They were all in buildings, especially the Merchants Bank. They are beginning to add to London's best architecture. The Bank of Commerce and the Royal Bank are first class. The market branch of the Bank of Montreal is very neat. The Bank of Toronto is a creditable building and the new office of the Bank of Montreal on the corner of Dundas and Wellington streets promises to be a gem. When bankers build good buildings like these, buildings substantial and pleasant to look at, they show their faith in the city in which they erect them, and add to the satisfaction of life. Good buildings are themselves an education and a means of constant pleasure.

The conclusion to be drawn from it all is that London's business foundation is being securely laid and constantly enlarged and strengthened. There could be no better assurance of London's future than the growth of its

banks, and London's growth means the growth of Western Ontario.

HYDRO RADIALS.

[Letter of A. T. Drummond, L.L.D.]

The Financial Post publishes a letter sent to the attorney-general a few days ago dealing with hydro-electric development. It is from A. T. Drummond, L.L.D., who has taken an active interest in the question.

He points out that development for light, heat and power for farm and manufacturing purposes is very desirable. He thinks these interests vastly more important for our prosperity than hydro radicals, and that the expansion of these in Ontario will absorb all the power in this province for some years to come.

He says the Ontario Government can readily estimate how these roads would, if built, entail a cost of between \$150,000,000 and \$250,000,000. Mr. Drummond shows that electric railways in the United States did not pay even before the end of the war. "The commission would find it impossible at any price to float with New York bankers bonds for these projected roads unless with the direct guarantee of the Ontario Government to provide the interest and principal."

After this he points out the danger and injury of defalcation to the municipality and country should it occur. The following is a significant sentence: "Every Canadian banker knows that the Ontario Government's guarantee alone will float their bonds, and that in the event of deficits that the Government will have to meet them, as the municipalities, in most—perhaps all—cases repudiate responsibility, and allege that they were led into the loss through the representations of the Government's hydro-electric commission, which alone owns, built, operates, and entirely controls these railways."

The letter is such a good contribution to this most important question that we publish it in two parts. It supports the position taken by the Ontario Government. The first thing always to do is ascertain the facts. Neither the Government nor the people yet know the facts: The first portion of Mr. Drummond's letter is as follows:

"Many arguments against the acquisition of the lines have been placed before the cabinet. In a letter addressed to the attorney-general a few days ago, A. T. Drummond, L.L.D., who has taken an active interest in this question, summarized them as follows:

"(1) Development of hydro-electric power for light, heat and farm and manufacturing purposes is to be encouraged, provided that the cost of the power developed is kept within definite limits. No comparative investigation into both the capital and operating cost of the commission with those of the large private companies has ever been made by the Legislature, and its need is imperative.

"(2) The industrial expansion in Ontario has been during and since the war, and still continues, so large that all the hydro-electric power to be developed during the next few years will be needed for our manufacturing plants, which, with the increasing requirements of the export trade, added to those of the home trade, are growing largely both in size and number. Their needs are vastly more important for our prosperity than electric railway lines which are not a necessity, and will only give accommodation to local travel and local freight, and in nearly every case would be directly competitive with the existing steam lines. The rare districts densely populated and where pleasure travel can be secured from the large cities, interurban electric railways, although built at a moderate cost per mile, have in the past failed to pay (see Canadian railway statistics annually published at Ottawa), and thus the enormous estimated cost of these projected hydro-electric railways—from three to five times what the steam lines in Ontario originally cost—will have the additional heavy load to bear annually of several millions of dollars of interest and sinking fund, and of the always needed renewals year by year.

"(4) Many hundreds of miles of railway lines have been surveyed by the hydro-electric commission in all parts of Eastern and Southwestern Ontario—the early estimate was for 1,600 miles of intended road—the latest railways brought before the people for a vote being set down as costing about \$134,000, \$132,000 and \$195,000 per mile, respectively. The Ontario Government can readily estimate how these roads would, if built, entail a cost of between \$150,000,000 and \$250,000,000, and can, by laying them out on the map of Ontario, see that in most cases they will be directly competitive with the steam roads—in one case paralleling three other railways, and in another case two, and that sometimes they will be built into districts where the population is thin, and the prospects of traffic, to a railway expert, poor.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

There seems no final way of stopping the border run traffic except by the prohibition of manufacture and importation in Ontario. The referendum will direct our various Governments, by decisive voice of the people, to carry out this measure.

SEEMS SO.

[Galt Reporter.]

If only our production of foodstuffs could show from year to year the increases the automobile industry exhibits! Is it better to ride than to eat?

JUST WAITING THE CHANCE.

[Hamilton Spectator.]

There need be no fruit go to waste on the trees if the growers will issue the right kind of an invitation to city folks.

GRATITUDE DUE.

[Kitchener Telegraph.]

Those born benefactors can thank their Creator; then there are those, says a cruel exchange, who can thank the reporter at their marriage.

A NOVEL METHOD.

[Hamilton Times.]

Germany signs agreements and then insists that she cannot carry them out.

CANADA'S NEW PARTY.

[Springfield Republican.]

The national party in Canada is the old Conservative party with a graft of Liberalism. Just now it does not appear to be in a strong position in the country, though it had a safe majority in parliament. With the formation throughout Western Canada and Ontario of new class parties—chiefly labor and the farmers—a new political habit of thought is gaining the ascendancy. A new party which aims vaguely at national welfare, but which has not shown itself able to combat the high cost of living and other causes of discontent, is at a disadvantage in comparison with energetic new organizations holding out the immediate promise of immediate economic or other advantages to a group.

NO ROOM FOR BIGOTRY.

[Bay City Times-Tribune.]

The man who, believing in one faith, refuses to grant the same right to a neighbor is so narrow-minded that he not only injures himself, but he does the state harm. No state can be built up on religious or other prejudices.

THE MIDDLE TEMPLE MURDER

A Detective Story by J. S. Fletcher.

Copyright 1920, Fred A. Knopf.

Copyright, 1920, by the Public Ledger Company.

Spargo made no answer. They entered the office, to be shown into a room where were already assembled Mr. Myer, a gentleman who turned out to be the chairman of the company, and the officials of whom Rathbury had spoken. And in another moment Spargo heard the chairman explaining that the company possessed duplicate keys to all safes, and that the proper authorities, having been received from the proper authorities, those present would now proceed to the safe recently tenanted by the late John Marbury, and take from it the property which he himself had deposited there, a small leather box which they would afterward bring to that room and cause to be opened in each other's presence.

It seemed to Spargo that there was an unending unloading of bolts and bars before he and his fellow-processionists came to the safe so recently rented by the late John Marbury, now undoubtedly deceased. And at first sight it seemed ludicrous to him, as so small an affair that it seemed ludicrous to imagine that it could contain anything of any importance. In fact, it looked to be no more than a plain wooden locker, one among many in a small room, the steel door swung slowly back and there, in the lock, in his school days, he had kept his personal belongings and the jam tarts, sausage rolls and hardbake smuggled in from the neighborhood of the safe, he had painted upon it, the paint was scarcely dry. But when the wooden door—the front door, as it were, of this temple of mystery—had been solemnly opened by the chairman, a formidable door of steel was revealed, and expectation still leaped in the bosoms of the beholders.

"The duplicate key, Mr. Myer, if you please," commanded the chairman, "The duplicate key."

Myer, who was fully as solemn as his principal, produced a curious-looking key; the chairman lifted his hand as if he were about to christen a battleship; the steel door swung slowly back and there, in a two-foot square cavity, lay the leather box. It struck Spargo as they filed back to the secretary's room that the procession became more funeral-like than ever. First walked the chairman abreast with the high official who had brought the necessary authorization from the all-powerful quarter; then came Myer, carrying the box; followed by two other gentlemen, charged with watching official and police interests; Rathbury and Spargo brought up the rear. He whispered something of his notions to the detective; Rathbury nodded a comprehensive understanding.

"Let's hope we're going to see something," he said.

In the secretary's room a man waited who touched his forehead respectfully as the heads of the procession entered.

Myer set the box on the table; the man made a musical jingle of keys; the other members of the procession followed him. As we naturally possess no key to this box," announced the chairman in grave tones, "it becomes our duty to employ professional assistance in opening it. Johnson, my friend, will be in charge of the matter. He is a man of the keys stepped forward with alacrity. He examined the lock of the box with a knowing eye; it was easy to see that he was anxious to find out while he was considered matters, Spargo looked at the box. It was pretty much what it had been described to him as being; a small, square box of old cowhide, very strongly made and painted black, and furnished with a handle projecting from the lid, and having the appearance of having been hidden away somewhere for many a long day.

There was a click, a spring; Johnson stepped back.

"That's it, if you please, sir," he said.

The chairman motioned to the high official. "If you would be good enough to open the box, sir," he said.

As the high official laid his hand on the lid the other men gathered around with craning necks and expectant eyes. The lid was lifted; somebody sighed deeply. And Spargo pushed his own head and eyes nearer.

The box was empty!

Empty, as anything that can be empty is empty, thought Spargo; the box was literally nothing.

They were all staring into the interior of a plain, time-worn little receptacle, lined with old-fashioned chintz stuff, such as our Mid-Victorian forefathers were familiar with, and containing—nothing.

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed the chairman. "This is—dear me!—why, there is nothing in the box."

"That," remarked the high official, drily, "appears to be obvious."

The chairman looked at the secretary.

"I understood the box was valuable, Mr. Myer," he said, with the half-smile of a man who considers himself to have been robbed of an exceptionally fine treat.

"Valuable?"

Myer coughed.

"I can only repeat what I have already said, Sir Benjamin," he answered. "The—er—late Mr. Marbury spoke of the deposit as being of great value to him; he never permitted it out of his hand until he placed it in the safe. He appeared to regard it as of the greatest value."

"But we understood from the evidence of Mr. Crieder, given to the Watchman newspaper, that it was full of papers and—and other articles," said the chairman. "Crieder, saw papers in it about an hour before it was brought here."

Myer spread out his hands.

"I can only repeat what I have said, Sir Benjamin," he answered. "I know nothing more."

"But why should a man deposit an empty box?" began the chairman.

"The high official interposed.

"That the box is empty is certain," he observed. "Did you ever handle it yourself Mr. Myer?"

Myer smiled in a superior fashion.

"I have already observed, sir, that from the time the deceased entered this room until the moment he placed the box in the safe which he rented, the box was never out of his hands," he replied.

Then there was silence. At last the high official turned to the chairman.

"Very well," he said. "We've made the inquiry. Rathbury, take the box away with you and lock it up at the Yard."

Spargo went out with Rathbury and the box; and saw excellent, if mystifying, material for the article which had already become the daily feature of his paper.

CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Aylmore is Questioned.

It seemed to Spargo as he sat listening to the proceedings at the adjourned inquest next day that the whole story of what was now world-famous as the Middle Temple murder case was being re-told before him for the thousandth time. There was not a detail of the story with which he had not become familiar to fullness. The first proceedings before the coroner had been of a merely formal nature; these were thorough and exhaustive; the representative of the crown and twelve good and true of the city of London were there to bear and to find out and to arrive at a conclusion as to how the man known as John Marbury came by his death. And although he knew all about it, Spargo found himself tabulating the evidence in a professional manner, and noting how each successive witness contributed, as it were, a chapter to the story. The story itself ran quite easily, naturally, consecutively—you could make it in sections. And Spargo, sitting merely to listen, made them:

First—The Temple porter and Constable Driscoll proved the finding of the body.

Second—The police surgeon testified as to the cause of death; the man had been struck down from behind by a blow, a terrible blow, from some heavy instrument, and had died immediately.

Third—The police and the mortuary officials proved that when the body was examined nothing was found on the body but the now famous scrap of grey paper.

Fourth—Rathbury proved that by means of the dead man's new, fashionable cloth cap, bought at Fiske's well-known shop in the West End, he had traced Marbury to the Anglo-Orient Hotel in the Waterloo district.

Fifth—Mr. and Mrs. Walters gave evidence of the arrival of Marbury at the Anglo-Orient Hotel, and of his going to his room in the West End.

Sixth—The purser of the S. S. Wambarino proved that Marbury sailed from Melbourne to Southampton on that ship, excited no remark, behaved himself like any other well-regulated passenger, and left the Wambarino at Southampton early in the morning of what was to be the last day of his life in just the ordinary manner.

To Be Continued.

Poetry and Jest

RAINS TODAY IN FLANDERS.

[Eleanor Cochran Reed in New York Times.]

'Tis sweet to lie and listen to the rain
Swish through the trees.
A thousand thousand leaves
Wake like a harp beneath the swift,
sure touch,
The silver fingers of the falling rain.
How like a song it sounds,
Some high sweet lullaby,
With notes unnumbered as the endless
leaves.

A thousand tones stirred from a thousand
and strings.
All blended in the singing of the rain.
Ah, after the wild thunder and the storm,
The burst of lightning and the forked
flame,
The roaring torrent and the crashing
sky,
'Tis sweet to lie and listen to the rain!

How strangely near seems boyhood's
a far-off day.
Now that I lie here dead, a nation's
man,
Full grown!
How strangely real comes back the boy
I was.

How closely press his old forgotten
dreams!
Can you not see him leave the rain-
drenched world
To slumber upon the magic attic stairs?
There, sprawled for hours upon the
dusty floor,
He filled his soul with old, forgotten
tales.

Of lore of bloody combat, stirring deeds
Of knights who fought the monsters
of the world.
At last the endless music of the rain
Marbury's name had deposited there, a
small leather box which they would afterward
bring to that room and cause to be opened in each
other's presence.

He slept—forgetting all the tales of
all
Even so I rest it now upon my arm.
Giving myself to pleasant dreams—with
my spirit, bear it on from day to day,
Unfettered as the breeze that stirs at
morn.

As eagle out above the vast upborne—
sure-voyaged as the planet on its
way.

THE SPARK FROM HEAVEN.
[Charles Twining.]

Give me that thought, so may I live my
while.
The cheap vicissitudes of life disdain.
And little reck me what is great and
small!
The thought that does such healing
power contain
As I may need, whatever hap befall;
The thought that can beguile
My spirit, bear it on from day to day,
Unfettered as the breeze that stirs at
morn.

As eagle out above the vast upborne—
sure-voyaged as the planet on its
way.

When chickens come home to roost,
mother knows the movie shows are
out.

THE ONE TO TELL.
[Charles Twining.]

'You've got indignation; that's what's
the matter with you,' said the doctor.
'Oh, that's what it is, then?' in-
quired the patient.
'That's it. You've been eating a lot
of meat, I suppose.'

'I have, yes.'
'Well, now you're paying for it.'
'Would you mind telling my butcher
that, doctor?'

CHIVALRY IN ARKANSAS.
[Chicago News.]

People who go to the movies—
that when you broke into the shop

you took a package of goods of little
value and left the till, which was full
of money, untouched. How was that?
Prisoner—Don't you reproach me for
that mistake. My wife has already
shamed me enough for being such a
fool.

FOUR-LEAF CLOVER.
[Ella Higginson.]

I know a place where the sun is like
gold.
And the cherry blossoms burst with
gold.
And underneath is the loveliest nook.
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

One leaf is for hope and one is for
faith.
And one is for love, you know.
And God put another in for luck.
If you search, you will find where they
grow.

But you must have hope and you must
have faith.
You must love and be strong—and so.
If you work, if you wait, you will find
the place where the four-leaf clovers grow.

THIS MORNING.
[Magistrate (to prisoner)—You say
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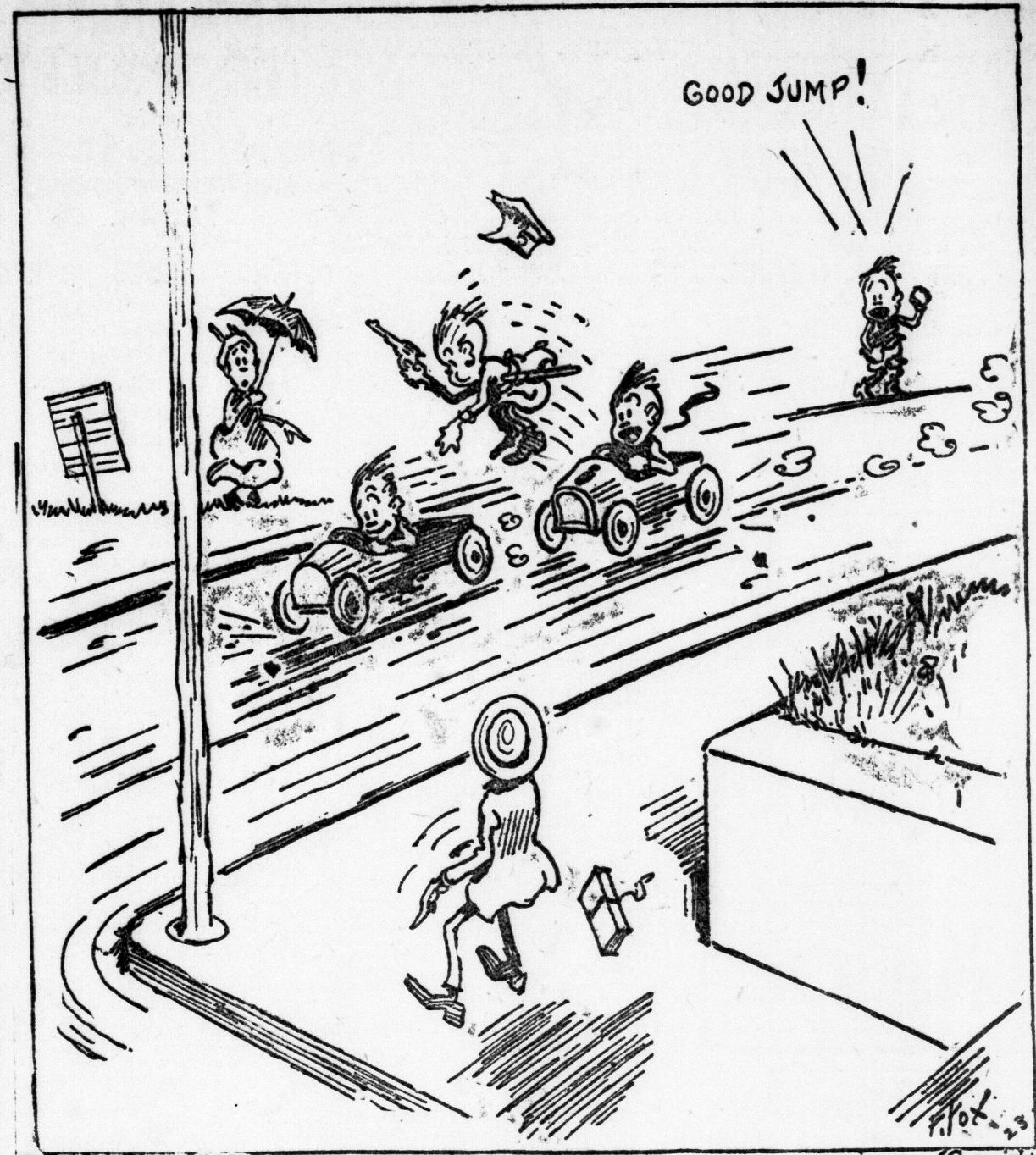
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A NEW GAME HAS BEEN INVENTED ON OUR BLOCK CALLED "POLICEMAN AND AUTOMOBILE THIEF"



By FONTAINE FOX

(Copyright.)

and that includes nearly everybody—
should be interested in the following
advertisement in the Wayne (Ark.)
Progress:

If the lady who stuck her gun on
my seat at the movies last night will
call she may have the gun. If the
gun won't come, she can have the
pans, too.

DAWN IN A GARDEN.
[Herbert Harper in Reedy's Mirror.]

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