

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., MAY 22, 1919

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A KING'S COUNTY PROBLEM

We are sometimes told that the country districts have no social problems such as are found in cities and towns, but consider for a moment this case from Kings county.

A few years ago there lived in a rather remote district, on a farm, a man and wife and eight children, the latter ranging from infancy to the age of twelve or thirteen. Neither parent was of vigorous mentality. Indeed they were both described as weak in mind. Note now the family record—

Two of the girls and one of the boys committed an offence that resulted in the girls being sent to the home for delinquent girls in Truro, and the boy to the Boys' Industrial Home in St. John. Another boy was sent, for another offence, to the Boys' Industrial Home.

Both boys escaped and are still at large.

The father has since died.

There was not enough property on the farm to pay the debts.

The farm itself, it is said, would not realize more than the amount of the mortgage.

The mother, has left the four smaller children, three girls and a boy, ranging from five to ten years, with a neighbor and has gone to work with another family.

The neighbor says he cannot keep the children any longer, and no other door is open to them.

None of the children in this large family has received any proper schooling.

An appeal has been made to the Children's Aid Society of St. John to take the four small children, but its field is confined to the city and county of St. John. There is a municipal home in Kings county, where these children should be placed until foster homes could be found for them—if they are mentally fit to be placed in foster homes.

That that is not all. The county of Kings, and every county, should give more attention to social conditions within its bounds. How many families are bringing up children without proper care or education, to become delinquents or charges upon the community? Health inspection, compulsory school attendance and an extension of real social service into every section of the community are safeguards that must be provided if we are to lessen the cost of reformatory and sheltering institutions kept up at public expense.

But meanwhile there are plenty of people in Kings county who know about the family described in this article. What are they going to do for those homeless and helpless little ones?

THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL.

At last there is the assurance that St. John is to have adequate public hospital accommodation.

The most gratifying news given out by Dr. Addy yesterday was that a gentleman had offered to contribute \$22,500 for a maternity wing for the hospital. This has long been needed, and has been described by Dr. Melvin, now provincial health officer, as the greatest need of all in connection with hospital service in St. John. Now that one man of wealth has set the example we may hope others will follow his lead. Montreal hospitals are great because rich men have heavily endowed them, and the same is true of hospitals in most cities on this continent.

The erection of a nurses' home will make larger the accommodation for patients in the main hospital and the better arrangement with the federal government, which grants \$22,500 per year for the care of sick mariners will improve the financial situation to some extent. The citizens therefore have every reason to regard the outlook with great satisfaction. Especially will the Ladies' Hospital Aid Association be gratified at the new turn in hospital affairs.

THE TARIFF QUESTION.

Some of those who are interested in maintaining a high tariff in Canada have expressed the opinion that the United States will increase its tariff, which, by the way, is not as high as that of Canada. President Wilson's message to congress does not offer any encouragement to tariff boosters. In the course of his message the president made the following reference to the tariff:—

"There is fortunately no occasion for undertaking in the immediate future any general revision of our system of import duties. No serious danger of foreign competition now threatens American industries. Our country has emerged from the war less disturbed and less weakened than any of the European countries which are our competitors in manufacture. Their industrial establishments have been subjected to greater strain than ours, their labor force to more serious disorganization and this is clearly not the time to seek an organized advantage. The work of reconstruction will, I am afraid, tax the capacity and the resources of their people for years to come. So far from there being any danger or need of accentuated foreign competition, it is likely that the conditions of the next few years will greatly facilitate the marketing of American manufactures abroad. Less of all should we depart from the policy adopted in the tariff act of 1913 of permitting the free entry into the United States of

the raw materials needed to supplement and enrich our own abundant supplies."

If congress agrees with the president such changes as will save the country from dependence on other countries for certain supplies, as in the case of dyestuffs of which Germany had a monopoly before the war, and will give the government power to retaliate if another country should adopt tariff legislation regarded as inimical to American interests.

So far as Canada is concerned, the tariff will be the chief bone of contention in the next election. That is quite clear from the tenor of discussion, and from the activity of the manufacturers on one hand and the farmers on the other.

CONDITIONS IN ENGLAND

The following interesting paragraph is from the Montreal Herald:—

"In the third week of last month the British treasury paid donations to over 4 million persons who are unemployed. To further alleviate hardship arising out of military service discharged officers and men who joined up on or after August 4th, 1914, are to be granted state assistance if they wish to be re-started in business. The scheme is open to any discharged person, whether married or single, and the maximum grant is not to exceed one hundred pounds for a period of one year. Periodical grants are made to meet rent, rates, taxes, insurance premiums, school fees, interest and instalments on loans or mortgages. Grants in lump sums may be made to buy stock in trade, or shop fittings. What is called the King's Fund has been making grants since last September. Over ten thousand of these grants have been made, ranging from a few pounds to one hundred and fifty pounds."

While there will be a general disposition to approve of the most generous treatment of discharged officers and men of the army, there is another side to the story of the payment of unemployed persons. A London correspondent recently wrote:—

"The unemployment pay is earning almost universal condemnation in Great Britain, even from the union leaders. In the list of occupations represented by girls and men out of work are thousands for whom jobs are daily crying. Domestic servants are almost impossible to obtain, yet there are scores of thousands of out-of-workers who declare themselves as former domestics. While many laundry women and girls are doing nothing and receiving the unemployment pay, a rather good job has transpired at the expense of several cabinet ministers, including the premier. The Fulham Laundry has closed its doors because it cannot get labor—and the ministers have to get their washing done elsewhere."

The same correspondent gives an interesting illustration of the fortunate position of some of those who work. He writes:—

"The plethora of money under which many of the workers labor is amusingly illustrated at times. The other day a workman, moving to his employment, dropped a bundle of pound notes from his pocket and the wind carried them away. He recovered all but thirteen. For the bank holiday of Easter Monday on Hampstead Heath some of the workers traveled to the Heath by taxi."

Of course such illustrations are exceptional, and the great majority of workers have little or no surplus in these days of high cost of living, while there is doubtless a real problem in relation to unemployment, but that problem will not be solved by providing pay without work. Such a course encourages the shiftless and saps the recipients of unearned pay of a proper spirit of independence. Mothers' allowances, and a proper care of those who through no fault of their own are compelled to seek relief, are on quite a different basis. Unemployment pay for everybody, regardless of merit, would soon pauperize a community."

Toronto Globe—"The projected air flights across the Atlantic have revived in the columns of The London Times a discussion as to the first steam vessel to cross, but that honor was decided long ago in favor of a Canadian vessel, the Royal William, and the facts are recorded in a tablet in the Parliamentary Library at Ottawa. The Royal William, designed and built in Quebec, crossed the Atlantic to London in 1833, and was the first to do so the whole way under her own steam."

Mayor Hayes has issued a call for a meeting to discuss the matter of vocational training for St. John. It is a vital subject and has been in the air too long. Now is the time to get down to practical work. This province will get a share of the coming federal grant and St. John should be in a position to take advantage of it. A vocational training board should be appointed without delay.

The strike situation in Winnipeg appears to have improved to a considerable extent, although the danger of a serious collision is by no means over.

His Estimate.

"How is neighbor Flubdub's son making out as an artist?" "Doing fine. He has just finished his first picture, which he tells me he values at \$2,000."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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Playing Possum.



To the Dreg

A young man with a reputation for wit, while passing along a crowded thoroughfare, accompanied by several friends, espied a sign—"Fine oysters, fifty cents a dozen."

"Here's a chance for a lark, boys," he said, and approaching the clerk he asked for "One cent's worth of oysters."

"With or without?" sharply inquired the owner of the fish shop, who had overheard.

"Be—with or without what?" stammered the would-be funny one.

"Pearls!" roared the dealer in shell-fish, and the discomfited joker rejoined his friends.

Daughter—Marry that old Mr. Ropley! Why, I'd die first!

Mother—Nonsense, child! You'd outlive him forty years at least.

"How long should a man keep his arm around a girl, do you think?" asked the sweet young thing.

"Until he hears his wrist watch strike," retorted the young man in blank.

"Why, wrist watches don't strike, do they?" "Of course not."

"My grandfather could have had all this land around here for a song."

"I don't blame him," replied the indignant vocalist. "He showed wisdom

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Daughter—Marry that old Mr. Ropley! Why, I'd die first!

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"Until he hears his wrist watch strike," retorted the young man in blank.

"Why, wrist watches don't strike, do they?" "Of course not."

"My grandfather could have had all this land around here for a song."

"I don't blame him," replied the indignant vocalist. "He showed wisdom

in going without the land rather than take a chance on the musical critics."

Looked So.

Mr. Flatbush—Who was that calling on the cook so late last night?

Mrs. Flatbush—Oh, that was our milkman.

"And who was that calling on her so early this morning?"

"Oh, that was the night watchman."

"Well, dear, don't you think she's got her dates mixed?"

May (indignantly)—I don't care; I think Harry Easterleigh is downright mean.

Marie—Why, May?

May—Well, he wrote me from Egypt saying he had shot a crocodile seven feet long, and when he shoots another he will have a pair of slippers made for me. I'll never speak to him again.

"Socially as well as historically, the war has brought many changes," said Senator Chamberlain at a dinner in Washington. "The man who was boss at home quite often was the private at the front. In fact, things have been knocked topsy-turvy. At a ball the other night I overheard one lovely young matron remark to an officer with whom she had just danced for the third time: 'Do you know, captain, I can't get it out of my head that we have met before.' 'I don't doubt it in the least, madam,' replied the officer courteously."

"I was your milkman for the last three years."

A New Incentive.

"Be a good boy," said Uncle John, "and maybe when you grow up you can be president."

"And rule the whole world?" answered Willie enthusiastically. "Cool you bet I'll be good."—Boston Transcript.

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