

MR. HALFYARD DISCUSSES THE VEXED QUESTION OF THE PRICE OF FISH

Shows the Big Part Played
by the F.P.U. in Causing
a Rise.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

A Delusion, a Sham, a Snare,
and a Means of
Waste.

Whist numbers were selling for \$5.50. They reasoned that Mr. Coaker seemed to have a knowledge of what the price should be, and that he had not been far off in the advice he had given to the men of the North. They followed the advice of the Advocate and got the \$6.00, whilst numbers in their localities only received \$5.50. Does this not prove that the F.P.U. has done good. Still you come in here and say that it was not a factor in the prices obtained by the fishermen.

Do you mean to say that in the past our fishermen received fair value commensurate with what the merchants got in the foreign markets?

Mr. Hickman yesterday was too modest or he would have told that he himself in conjunction with the President of the F.P.U., had quite a lot to do with the price obtained by our fishermen, and I take this opportunity of giving Mr. Hickman this meed of praise that is due him. Many of the Water Street concerns were reluctant to buy our fish. But Mr. Hickman was a man who understood the conditions and factors that go to make the price and he knew what he could give for fish. He gave it and benefited, and the fishermen of the country North, South, East and West. Union men and non-union men benefited by it.

Unfounded Accusations

It is enough to make one's blood boil with indignation when we hear the accusations made against the organization that the fishermen hold so dearly to their hearts. It is a matter of business with them. What do they care what Mr. Coaker is or does, or anyone else does, if they do not derive a benefit from the organization? In past years they had to take their fish from wharf to wharf and finally accept the price that the merchants were prepared to give. They had no one to consult for information or advice. Now they can get satisfaction.

Fishermen however, are reasonable men, and if they really believe that a man only can give \$6.00, they are satisfied; but if they have any idea that fish is worth \$6.50, they are dissatisfied.

Now what was the condition of things that formerly prevailed with regard to the price of fish?

Perhaps in the Spring fish would open at \$6.00 or \$6.50.

That would be all very well. Then about the tenth of August some circulars would be sent out saying that fish had dropped fifty cents or a dollar a quintal.

The fishermen got scared and sold all their fish, and then up went the price again. That condition has not prevailed during the last three years.

No, through the organization of the F.P.U. the fishermen know when to

hold their fish and when to sell it. Of course the foreign markets may have something to do with it; but formerly the law of supply and demand was no criterion of what the fishermen obtained for his fish, and at present it is only partly so.

Supposing the fish merchants meet in the early summer and decide that \$4.20 shall be given for Labrador fish, is it not the merchant that makes the price.

Then on the other hand if the fishermen refuse that price and demand \$4.70, who make the price then? The fishermen.

That the F.P.U. is a factor with regard to the price that fishermen obtain for their fish no one can satisfactorily contradict.

I speak of this because a false impression may get abroad that the F.P.U. is of no use with regard to the price obtained by the fishermen and for the products of the fishery.

I know of cases where fishermen have obtained five dollars a ton more for their oil because of the organization and because the head of the organization resides at St. John's where the oil is sold.

Work of Unions

It is the work of Unions all over the world to obtain for their members the best recompense for their labor, and because we are doing this we are described as men of no brains and as collage.

It is impossible to say how much good has been done by the F.P.U. for the advancement of fishermen. It helps to bind them together and to break down the old prejudices that existed. It helps them to work squarely and honestly together and to obtain the best price for their fish. That is the very foundation on which the existence of the Union is based. That is the reason why we were sent here.

Look at the sealing agreements that were made some time ago. They were agreed to by the merchants, but there is no legislation that the fishermen will obtain the advantages of these agreements. The improvements were obtained by agreement, but there should be a law to make these improvements compulsory.

The work of the Union to the present time has been among the men of the North, but the idea is spreading to the West and all over the Island, and soon those who are holding seats in districts where the Union is not yet established will have to fall in line with the organization and give their support, or else they will lose their seats.

Mend Not Mar

If the Union has any defects, do not try to kill it. I do not know any defects that it has, but I may be blind to them just as non-members opposite are blind to their faults, for that is only human nature; but if it has them, we shall do our best to remedy them when they are pointed out to us. We are prepared to accept honest criticism, for we do not think we or any other organization can possibly be above suspicion, like Caesar's wife.

All I shall say about the price of fish with regard to the question of supply and demand, is that the prices in the foreign markets in the past have not been the whole and sole basis of the price which was obtained by the fishermen.

To the Editor!

IF I WERE PREMIER.

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir.—If I were Premier to-day my very first action would be to fill the two departmental offices by men "elected by the people" I would appoint Mr. Currie, Minister of Agriculture and Minister, and Hon. C. H. Emerson, Minister of Justice; both are good men and clean politicians and (as far as any of Morris's followers) are in fairly safe seats.

My next action would be to buy a ticket to Hong Kong for J. C. Crosbie, see him safely off and ask him not to come back for about 50 years.

Next—if I were Sir Edward—I would reorganize the Customs and Postal Departments, weed out the useless officials and appoint only good practical men to fill the jobs and only one man were one is required.

I would also make some of my followers do some work in the House. Give Sir Edward his due, he is a hard working man and seems to have to bear the burden of it all; he should be

surrounded by a few good men who can get up on their feet and talk back at the Opposition, (he sorely needs assistance this winter to combat the fierce fire he is under from the invincible Coaker and his band of seven honest politicians).

There are other things I would do if I were Premier but space will not permit me to say more now, but one thing if I were Sir Edward I would not do above all others that is I would not cross swords with Coaker for he is bound to come off with the worst of it. When Coaker rises to his feet to talk, if I were Sir Edward I would crawl into some hole and "pull the hole in after me" there I would stay until Mr. Coaker—the man who has done more for the good of the common people this winter than he (Sir Edward) has done in his boasted 30 years—had done speaking.

—CLEAN POLITICS.
St. John's, Feb. 25, '14.

TRY A WANT ADVT.
IN THE DAILY MAIL.

IF I WERE PREMIER.

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir.—You ask me what I would do if I were Premier; well, I would stop doing so many hundred good things, I notice that he has commenced on the second already and his first two are truly very remarkable.

First, the new loan of \$2,000,000.00 more to try (?) and complete his branch railways, and second, raising the taxes to the extent of \$700,000.00 on rum, tobacco, etc., etc. The third is also a very remarkable good thing—cigars have not been included—and I suppose the reason for this is because Hon's. M.P.C. and J.C. and many others of his Cabinet smoke nothing else.

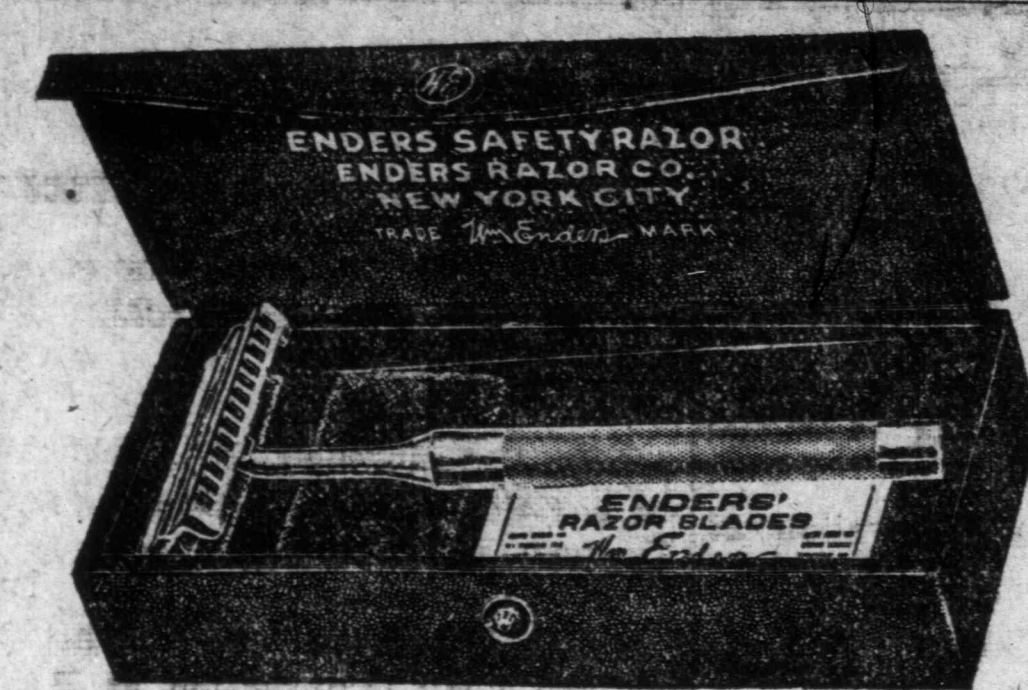
If I were Premier and had the prayers (?) of the people such as are being doled out to him to-day I'd throw up the sponge and say:

How I have fooled "my people"—
Gee, what they have stood!
And now I'll leave my country
For my country's good.

—WATCHMAN.

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IF I WERE PREMIER.

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir.—If I were Premier instead of the Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Morris, one of the first things that I should do would be the erection of bait depots in all of the principal fishery settlements in the Island.

I would also put a motor ferry at White Point or raise the ferryman's salary at that place.

The next thing would be the sending of Mr. Cashin to the Wadhams Islands to take a few lessons with the "ignorant illiterates of the North."

I would put a bellbuoy on the "Muddy Shag," a dangerous rock off Musgrave Harbor and one on which the "Riseover" was wrecked in 1911; erect a breakwater at Deadman's Bay and thus provide a harbor of refuge on the straight shore, for coasting and fishing schooners, Seldom-Come-By being the only safe harbor in the run of the fishing boats until Westleyville is reached.

If I were Premier I would invite all the outport lads to visit St. John's to view the flocks of sheep grazing among the two bladed grass on the Southside Hills.

I think if I were Sir Edward I'd feel very uncomfortable when listening to Mr. W. F. Coaker and would be surprised to find Coaker possessing such a knowledge of the things that are essential to fishermen and country.

I would get some of the outport people to tell me when wild fruit should be gathered, and whether it would be advisable to pick blackberries for puddings or not.

And finally if I wanted anything to read I would look for it in the columns of The Daily Mail where I would be sure to find something interesting and instructive.

—SIXTEEN.
Carmanville, Feb. 17, '14.

CIVIC REFORM

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir.—With all due respect to the two respectable and valuable citizens, Messrs. Gosling and Harris, whose letters appeared in the Evening Telegram last week on behalf of the Citizens' Committee, but surely they must allow other men to have an opinion also. We agree with many of their suggestions, but they are not taken in the right spirit, because their attempt is to take the municipal affairs out of the hands of a free people and run matters at their own sweet pleasure as a clique and class party.

Mr. Gosling is wrong when he says that those who are opposed to their movement are in a small minority. He should reverse that and say that the large majority are opposed to their movement. Why did not this class of people offer themselves in the last Municipal elections, the people would take them at their word. And why don't they do so now in the approaching elections, or offer their assistance to the present Council, and to those who will be the people's choice at the next elections. It would be more of an honourable proceeding than the course they are now pursuing. They cannot manage the condition of affairs better without taxing the people. They are not coming forward with half a million dollars to their back to accomplish all they speak of.

Why Not Support Him?

If Mayor Ellis is deserving of all the good qualities that Mr. Harris

speaks of, then he can do his work better where he is than he can by being a toole in the hands of a few. The people appreciate Mayor Ellis's value and they intend to keep him there, because those of the so-called Citizens' Committee that may be appointed by the Government cannot give their time and attention to the city affairs as Mayor Ellis has been giving. He is a practical man in every way and should be assisted and encouraged by the people in general, and if they have any suggestions to make to better conditions they would be gladly accepted and appreciated by him and the general public.

We all want the improvements that Mr. Harris speaks of and we are getting them, and we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that we have more city improvements within the last three years than we had from any of their predecessors.

Concerning the dust that Mr. Harris speaks of, surely we must all admit that there has been a wonderful improvement within the last few years. We have Reid's sprinkling cars running over their line, and sprinklers in every direction, Sundays as well as week days.

Bayonet Point

Many names that are signed to that petition are at the point of the bayonet. Mr. Harris says that the petitions are open at the banks, offices wharves, factories, etc. In many of those places the men are asked to sign the petition by some one of influence, and the men will sign, not with a free will, but to keep their jobs.

I was told that on one premises the men were called out of the stores by the wharf boss and asked to sign the petition in the presence of one of the firm. Is that not at the point of the bayonet that the men are signing, and I presume other firms are doing likewise.

Surely the Prime Minister, who claims to be the people's great leader will never accept such a petition that is forced upon the people; and I am sure the great leader of the Union Party, who is representing the working people of the country will never consent to this clique and class movement in trying to take out of the vast majority of citizens their franchise and freedom.

—TRUTH.

Feb. 28, 1914.

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St. John's, Newfoundland.

Next to the question of the fishery comes the question of agriculture and I am glad to avail of the opportunity of referring to the agricultural policy of the Government.

I happened to be Secretary of the Agricultural Society at Catalina, and at the end of 1912 we had to make out our Report. In this report I stated that agriculture was increasing in that place, but only to a small extent. The hon. member for St. Mary's wants us to believe that the agricultural policy has been such a great movement that since its coming into force land was cleared for the first time.

Not Due to Government

In my report I did not say that the improvement in agriculture was in any way the result of the Government's policy, for people at Catalina have cleared land once in a while when they had the opportunity. Land was cleared there before the policy was brought into force, and it only weakens the arguments of my friend opposite to say that the clearing of land at Catalina was due to the policy of the Government.

To listen to the members opposite one would be led to believe that no land was cleared before the present Government came into power and that the people all over the Island were

living in a wilderness, but I venture to say that not one acre of land has been cleared during the time the agricultural policy has been in force more than was cleared before that time.

Why Fault Is Found

We do not find fault with the Government for the grant of \$40,000 for agriculture, but we do find fault with the allocation of that amount among different societies when it is plain that no good can result from it.

Each society could do a great deal of good if it had the necessary money, but the amount which each receives is so small that it is impossible for them to do anything.

What is the opinion of the different people as gathered from the reports? The idea is that much better results would be obtained if a bonus were given for the clearing of land.

It would be far better to give money for that purpose than to give it in prizes for fancy work that perhaps was done by the winner's great grandmother. Is fancy work any criterion of the advancement of agriculture in the Colony? Yet if you will look at the prize lists at the exhibitions you will see that money was wasted in that way.

Through the courtesy of my hon. friend, Mr. Downey, I have in my

hands a paper in which the Trinity exhibition is referred to, and I find that one-third of the prize money was awarded for fancy work. I shall read some of the prizes that were awarded to prove this contention. (Hon. member reads list of prizes). I look upon an expenditure of money in that way for the advancement of agriculture as simply ridiculous. If the Government wishes to improve fancy work and knitting, they should do so under the right heading and not take the prizes from the grant for agriculture.

Become a Joke

I speak of this matter because throughout the country the exhibitions are looked upon as a joke, and I hope that, although the law is now in force, it is not too late for the Government to see that their whole agricultural policy is so ridiculous and unwise that they will discontinue it and inaugurate some policy that will benefit the people of the Colony.

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