

How Borden Government Hands It Out to Profiteers

How the Cost of Living is Boosted by a High Protected Tariff-- Food Prices Soar to Famine Standards Under Tory Rule-- Finance Minister White Asks People to Save Money so It Can be Spent on Spavined Horses and Other Superfluties.

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, Jan. 4.—When the householder sits down to his Christmas dinner he naturally reflects on the message of the Yuletide season—peace on earth, good will to men. He asks himself what the Borden government is doing to implement the glad tidings. What about this peace on earth if all the pieces go to the profiteers? How about good will to men if the Borden government shows it only to a favored few?

The Christmas table, groaning with good cheer, also groans with object lessons of what a high tariff government can do to put a crimp in a land flowing with milk and honey and bring food prices up to famine standards.

Turkeys Away Up.

Take the central feature of the Christmas feast the turkey. When father carves into it with generous knife he can hardly fail to remember that the joyous bird cost 50c. a pound. The farmer who brought the bird up, fed it, watched it, wrapped its toes up on frosty nights, brought it through the dangers of infancy safe to a succulent adolescence—the farmer didn't get 50c. a pound—not by a blamed sight. He got perhaps half that. But the middleman got all that was coming to him, and more. People speak slightly of the middle ages and its oppressions, but were they any worse than the Middleman's Age, in which we now live, move and have our being? All these things run through father's mind as he dishes out the precious stuff to his hungry family. How quickly they empty their plates! It's like eating money! Father would like to do it with a better heart, but he really can't, considering what turkey costs.

If the Borden government stays in another year and its friends, the profiteers are allowed to have their way, turkeys will be worth their weight in gold next Christmas. After that, no more turkey. Sheep's head, scrag of mutton, shank bones—and even that junk runs into money.

No Relish to It.

Yes, it's a sad Christmas for father. He eats his turkey with no sort of relish. And the more he looks into it the less he relishes it.

For instance the golden bird has been larded, as is the good old custom, with bacon strips—and father realizes that bacon costs forty cents a pound. Some of the Borden government's best friends are in the bacon business. They pay 12c. a pound war price—the peace price is around 7c.—and sell the finished product for 40c. This spread of 28c. doesn't go to the farmer, who had all the trouble of raising the hog, but to the profiteer. The price of it! Father can remember when bacon was 15c. a pound, and it was the staple of every breakfast table. Now it is a luxury to be enjoyed only by the rich—and then sparingly.

Turkey at 50c. a pound, larded with bacon at 40c. a pound, certainly makes turkey a bird of paradise—that is to say, it is too rich for mere mortals.

White Wants the Money.

Father is about to help himself to an ample section of the breast, with the liver wing on the side, when suddenly he remembers Sir Thos. White's advice to save his money and give it to him to spend on spavined chargers, sham shoes, Camp Borden and other superfluties. Save and serve—that's how father recalls Sir Thomas' words. So he serves himself to the part that goes over the fence last. That's about as much as he can afford. Fifty cents a pound—wouldn't it choke you?

Thus father muses as his eye falls on the morsel. Oh, well, hang it all, here goes. And father digs into the stuffing which swells the proud bird's bosom. But his hand pauses. What is stuffing, anyway? What but bread and potatoes? And what has happened to bread and potatoes under the Borden regime? Well, bread went up to 18c. the large loaf, weight none too ample, while potatoes sold at \$2.50 a bushel.

The Millers to Blame.

Father is not disposed to blame the bakers who had to shade their price anyway as soon as the housewives began baking on their own account, but he does blame the millers, another little group of Borden favorites, who juggle the price of flour. The price of flour has no reason to be what it is. This year's wheat crop was an aver-

age one, while last year's crop was phenomenal. Some of last year's wheat is coming to market yet. Let wheat be a dollar and a half if it likes. It doesn't justify \$10 flour.

Just here father reflects that the price of bread will always be the first spot to get sore, because bread and milk are the staple foods of the poor man's growing family.

Thank heaven the price of bread tends to seek the normal again, but not through any remedy the Borden government applied. Boycott and home baking did the trick. The poor people realized that a government which had one report on the cost of living printed in two bulky volumes and four other reports from as many royal commissions pigeon-holed for future reference, would do nothing in a hurry, nothing, that is to say, to curb the profiteers who are their chief support.

Fat Orders-in-Council.

Indeed, deputation after deputation has gone to Ottawa asking for bread, but the best the Borden government could do was to give them an order-in-council. The order-in-council aims to keep the question in the air—the probe has, so to speak, four layers of asbestos between it and any appreciable results. After the municipality has investigated and the Minister of Labor has reported on it, the attorney general may prosecute—if he likes. If he likes—there's the rub. However, by that time the people won't care. All their money gone, they die of starvation—also if they like.

If they don't like they can escape the high cost of living in Canada by enlisting for service somewhere in France. Even this is not wholly an

escape, because what with Sudbury nickel coming back to find a billet in Canadian soldiers' bodies and millions of dollars being thrown away on Camp Borden, Ross rifles and other superfluous or useless equipment, the Borden government has made the cost of dying almost as high as the cost of living.

In short, the taxpayer gets it whatever way he goes.

Even the Cranberry Sauce.

Nor has father much joy in the cranberry sauce, though it is the cheapest thing on the table. He knows that if cranberry sauce was eaten oftener—and it should be for cranberries are a very healthy fruit, that cranberries would then be classed as a necessary of life and protected to the limit by the Borden government's 40 per cent. tariff. He is rather pleased to think that cranberries have dodged the baleful eye of the Borden government and that if the worst comes to the worst he can recourse to cranberries as a cheap and wholesome diet.

Cheap? Well, not cheap exactly—there's the sugar. Cranberries take a lot of sugar, and not so long ago sugar struck the level of possible profit at 9c. a pound. Nine cents a pound, and none to say the refiners nay, though the Borden government, by popular consent, assumed all sorts of arbitrary power to control prices at the beginning of the war.

Needless to say, none of these powers have been exercised.

Eggs and Butter.

Moreover father's pleasure in the plum pudding is tainted when he thinks of the butter that went into it at 55c. a pound and the eggs at \$1 a dozen. Eggs a dollar a dozen, and 35,000 cases.

(Continued on page three.)

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THE SUSSEX MAYORALTY.

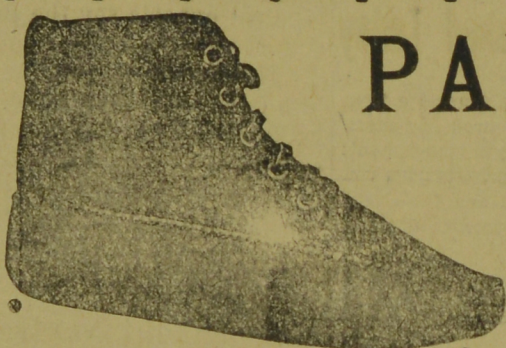
Mr. J. D. McKenna, editor of the Kings County Record, was elected mayor of Sussex on Tuesday in a three cornered contest. Mr. McKenna polled 137 votes, Mr. Seth Jones 130, and Mr. G. Hazen Adair 130.

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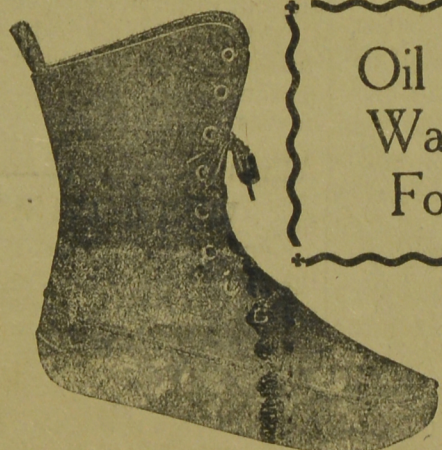
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