

Graham Harry

Fiscal Ballads



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FOREWORD

I'm only a common workin'-man,
With a eye to my vittles an' beer,
But afore I puts my money on Joe,
There's a thing or two as I'd like to know,
Which 'e 'asn't a-made quite clear.

I admit as it sounds attractive-like
For to shut them furriners out,
But every Board School nipper knows
As there's things wot only a furriner grows
As we couldn't well do without.

There's sugar, an' rice, an' cocoa-nibs,
There's cawfy an' tea as well,
As we never could raise, suppose we tried,
And we 'as to buy 'em somewheres outside,
And the furriners 'as to sell.

But they don't give nothin' for nothink —
Which you can't dispute the fac' —

An' we're sending 'em hevery bit as much
Of our cotton-goods, an' our coal, an' such,
As 'll pay the beggars back.

An' the less we buys o' them furrin goods,
The less of our own's returned;
Which it's plain to see as the more they take,
The more our firms 'as a chance to make,
An' the 'igher the wages earned.

For it's British Labour as pays the price
O' them goods as crosses the sea,
An' suppose as the furrin imports fail,
It's the case of a empty dinner-pail
For the workin'-man like me.

Let the furriner send 'is foodstuffs in —
Lor' bless you, I ain't afraid!
For the more we markets with other lands,
The more employment for British 'ands,
An' the better for British trade!

I 'asn't no love for the German man,
Nor yet for the 'eathen Turk,
But I ain't a fool as 'll shut the door
In the face of even a blooming Boer,
If the beggar can give me work.

For it's work I wants, an' it's wages too,

An' I'm lookin' afore I leap;
I won't go chucking a job away,
On the chance of a possible rise o' pay,
While food's to be 'ad so cheap.

I'm only a workin' artisan,
But the truth I'd like to know;
I ain't for takin' no risks, myself,
Of a empty grate an' a empty shelf —
No, thanks, sir, not for Joe!

'E says as 'e'll 'sweep the Country!
And 'e'll do it too, maybe;
If the workin'-men don't 'ave a care,
They'll find as there ain't no Country there,
When 'e's swep' it – into the sea!

PROTECTION

I've got the dumpophobia bad,
As is easy for to see;
(When a little lad I was bit by a mad
Manufacturin' man, maybe!)
An' I simply goes clean off my chump
If anyone 'appens to mention 'dump.'

For it's 'Out wi' they furriner folks!' sez I;
Will we take it 'lying down,'
When they dumps cheap goods (as we wants to buy)
Into every British town?
(Tho' per'aps it's a thing as they wouldn't do
If we 'adn't a-given 'em orders to!)

But there's good times coming, an' thanks to Joe,
When the Hempire 'll stand on 'er own;
We'll be quit o' the food them furriners grow,
An' rely on ourselves alone.
For us, an' the Colonies too, I lay,
Can grow it as good an' better'n they!

We're a British race, an' we'll soon depend
On the produc's o' British soil;
No more of our 'ard-earned wage we'll spend

Upon cheap American oil;
Them dazzlin' lamps is a big mistake,
While there's tallow candles o' British make!

We've the finest coal in the 'ole wide earth,
Which we used for to sell abroad;
But now as we knows 'ow much it's worth,
We'll save it, an' 'old it, an' 'oard.
(Tho' the pitmen 'll 'ave a word to say
When the mines shuts down an' they're turned away!)

No more o' the Roosian's corn we'll touch,
Nor the South American wheat;
An' we'll gladly pay, if it's twice as much,
To 'ave *British* loaves to eat!
(For the English working-man, these days,
'E must learn for to live on Colonial maize.)

If there's less to eat it'll taste more sweet,
When the Britishers all combine;
We'll 'ave tinned an' frozen Noo Zealand meat,
Washed down with Australian wine!
(Which it ain't so terrible bad to drink,
If you fancies honions mixed with ink.)

No more o' your Roosian sable cloaks
For the gentry, nor Paris 'ats;
They're buying their bunnets at Sevenoaks,
An' the trimmin's is 'Ounsditch cats;

An' that furrin' jewelry's just a sham,
They can sell you as good in Birming'*am*.

Them Italian organs 'll 'ave to go,
An' the ice-cream barrers as well,
When we're buying a 'alfpenny glass o' snow
From some smart Canadian swell.
An' no more o' your music from Germanee,
When our motto is 'Bands acrost the sea!'

When the furriner's foodstuffs out we shuts,
We'll still 'ave the run of our teeth
On the cocoa we makes off o' cocoanuts
As they grows upon 'Ampstead 'Eath!
An' o' British pluck we can surely brag,
When we're smoking the 'omegrown Irish shag!

We're a-buyin' our food too cheap, sez Joe
(If you listens to 'is advice);
The cost o' the loaf's too small, an' so
'E's a-trying to raise the price!

* * * * *

This 'ere Pertection's a splendid plan —
But it's werry 'ard lines on the workin'-man!

RETALIATION

I've 'ad a quarrel with 'Eney Slade,
'Oo keeps our only village inn;
'E said as 'is shoes was badly made,
An' I said as 'is 'alf-an'-'alf was thin.
'No more o' *your* boots I'll buy,' sez 'e,
'An' no more o' *your* beer,' sez I, 'for me!'

Nex' time as 'is shoes was out o' repair,
'E took 'em to Lunnon, 'Eney did;
An' wot wi' the bill an' the railway fare,
Why, it cost 'im werry near 'alf a quid.
If 'e'd stayed at 'ome an' give *me* the job,

'E wouldn't 'a paid but a couple o' bob!
Now, tinkering boots is a thirsty trade,
Which them as 'as tried it won't deny,
But I wouldn't get beer orf o' 'Eney Slade,
An' there wasn't no other's as I could buy;
An' so, for a month very near, I think,
I was starving a'most for the lack of a drink.

But at last to a comperimize we come,
An' 'e said as my boots was right enough,
An' I told 'im – arter I'd tasted some —

As 'is beer wasn't really 'alf bad stuff;
So we both shakes 'ands on the village green,
An' we seed what a couple o' fools we'd been.

But there wasn't no good come out o' the fight,
An' we're both worse off than we was before;
Tho' I sits in 'is private bar of a night,
An' 'e gives me 'is shoes to mend once more;
For Slade's lost 'is temper, an' eight bob clear,
An' I'll *never* catch up wi' that three weeks' beer!

Now if England quarrels with Roosia, say,
Or them aggrannoying United States,
She can tax their imports, an' make 'em pay
More 'eavier dooties an' 'igher rates;
But suppose as we taxes the goods they sell,
It's likely as they'll tax ours as well.

An' o' manufactured goods, an' such,
We're sendin' three times as much as they;
So I can't see as 'ow we'll be gaining much,
With a three times 'eavier tax to pay.
(It's a game as two can play, you see,
An' they'll be a-suffering less than we!)

For the balance o' goods as they sells to us
Is the corn, an' the grain, an' the foods we eat;
An' it's likely the working class 'll cuss
If we levies a tax on the furrin wheat,

Which 'll merely fall on the poor man's 'ead,
By a-raising the price of 'is loaf o' bread.

This Retaliation's a tom-fool game;
If we taxes the furriner's barley 'ere,
We shall only be 'aving ourselves to blame
When we 'as to pay more for our dinner-beer!
Free Food is the best for British Trade,
– An' for you, an' for me, an' for 'Enery Slade!

THE COLONIES

I've been 'earing, round the pubs,
As the British Lion's cubs
Is a gettin' out of 'and, and stubborn-'earted;
For the Colonies, they say,
Is a driftin' right away,
From the Motherland wot seed 'em safely started.
But it's only Little Englanders, Protectionists, an' such,
Keeps a-'owling an' a-crying as the Empire's 'out o' touch.'

There was Canada, I know;
Kipling said as she 'ad snow,
Which (o' course) was met with angry contradictions;
Then Haustralia come next,
An' one Guv'nor found a text
To remind 'em of their ancestors' convictions.
It's unfortunite, but still we must admit it for a fact,
As we Englishmen is hev'rvwhere notorious for tact.

But wotever folks may shout
An' make grievances about,
There's uncommon little grounds as they can go on;
For the strength o' Hempire lies
More in sentimental ties

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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