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## FISCAL BALLADS

### FISCAL BALLADS

BY

#### HARRY GRAHAM

('COL. D. STREAMER')

#### AUTHOR OF

"BALLADS OF THE BOER WAR," "RUTHLESS RHYMES FOR HEARTLESS HOMES," "PERVERTED PROVERBS," "MISREPRESENTATIVE MEN," ETC., ETC.

LONDON EDWARD ARNOLD 41 & 43 MADDOX STREET, BOND STREET, W. 1905

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TO

P.L.

Beneath your roof I chanced to write
These Ballads of the Fiscal Fight,
 A somewhat scant selection;
So do not deem me indiscreet
If I should 'dump' them at your feet,
 And ask for your Protection!
Whate'er you be, or Fair or Free,
Be still, as ever, fair—to me!

#### NOTE

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### **CONTENTS**

	PAGE
FOREWORD	1
PROTECTION	4
RETALIATION	8
THE COLONIES	12
PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT	17
BRITISH TRADE	22
CONTROVERSIAL ENTERTAINMENT	28
'STATISTICS'	33
'CONTROVERSIAL METHODS'	39
A MESSAGE FROM BROADMOOR	42
THE TURNING TIDE	45
ENVOI	49

# FISCAL BALLADS

#### **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, [1]

[2]

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;

[3]

[4]

[5]

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 'Enery 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, 'Enery 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' 'Enery Slade, An' there wasn't no other's as I could buy;

[6]

[7]

[8]

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 unfortunit, 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 [10]

[11]

[12]

[13]

Than in any 'business interests' an' so on; An' there's feelings of affection an' o' kindness as is worth Twice as much as all them there 'commercial interests' on earth.

An' our Colonies 'll stand By the good ole Motherland, Tho' she may per'aps at times be rather trying; For they knows as well as we

As them countries where the British flag's a-flying. An' with kindly eyes they looks acrost (wot poets calls) the foam To that distant little island as they still considers "ome."

An' they'll stick, if they are wise,

That there's nowheres 'alf so free

To them sentimental ties-

Never mind if they can't value 'em in dollars;

For they're independent blokes,

An' they wouldn't stand no yokes,

Nor they doesn't 'old with wearin' chains an' collars. (Even dawgs an' such 'll love you more, I've not the slightest doubt, If you turns 'em loose, an' keeps 'em free, an' lets 'em run about.)

If them Colonies did drift, For theirselves they'd 'ave to shift-It's a case o' 'stand alone' or 'annexation'; Tho' their lads is sterling stuff, Still, they're 'ardly big enough

For to 'old their own agin' some furrin nation; An' their armies o' militia-men is hexcellent—but small, While o' navies to defend their coasts they 'asn't none at all!

Yes, they knows, as well as we, As it's Hengland rules the sea,-(Tho' per'aps it ain't for me to go and say it!)— An' it's Henglishmen as pays For the Navy, nowadays,-

(Any'ow it ain't Canadians as pay it!)— So they gives to us the priv'lege of defendin' of 'em 'ere, If we lets 'em run their own concerns an' doesn't interfere.

We've a market, as they knows, For the produce wot they grows, Which commercially's a quite sufficient fetter; An' so long as they can trade At the present prices paid,

Why, they don't want nothink easier nor better. An' a preference won't make 'em no more loyal than before, For they've proved their bloomin' loyalty a 'undred times and more.

If we likes to pay 'em 'igh For their foodstuffs as we buy, Well, it's natural as 'ow they must applaud it; But they wants no preference At the Motherland's expense, If she ain't in no position to afford it;

An' they knows, as well as we do, 'ow that any bounties paid Must be 'ard on British workin'-men, an' bad for British trade.

For they showed us, in the war, They was loyal to the core, An' they're ready for to 'elp us when we flounders; An' tho' 'ere and there, per'aps, There's some discontented chaps,

As 'll grumble, like them there Alaskan Bounders; Still, they're British to the backbone when the dawgs o' war is loosed, An' they'll stick by Mother England till the cows comes 'ome to roost!

[15]

[16]

[14]

[17]

An' we doted on one another; I was genuine fond o' my Uncle Fred, And o' Cousin Jim I've a-often said 'E was more like my own born brother; An' a feeling of 'earty affection I 'ad For Kate, wot 'ad married my eldest lad.

Now, my Uncle Fred keeps the 'Dumpshire Arms,'
An' Jim's in the grocery trade;
While Kate 'as a little front-window shop,
Where she sells stone-bottles o' ginger-pop
An' sweets as is all 'ome-made;
And I earns enough for my board an' booze,
A-makin' an' mendin' o' boots an' shoes.

Last winter it were, when times was bad,
That Jim 'ad a 'appy thought;
'Ow fine it'd be if we'd all agree
On a kind of a mutual trade, sez 'e,
For our things as we sold an' bought;
We'd 'elp one another (which sounded nice),
An' be getting our goods at a lower price.

I'd tinker the boots o' the family cheap,
An' get 'ome on my uncle's beer,
Nor I wouldn't be 'avin' to strain my means
A-buying expensive pertaters an' greens
Orf o' Cousin Jim, no fear!
An' for luxuries, such as the missus eats,
I could get 'em 'alf-price orf o' Katie's sweets.

But it didn't work. For my Uncle Fred
'E treated me crool unfair;
I sold 'im some shoes, starvation price,
But I 'adn't a-tasted 'is beer but twice
When 'e said as I'd drunk my share!
Then I mended a couple o' pairs o' Kate's—
But sweets is a thing as the missus 'ates.

Tho' for Cousin Jimmy I took an' made
A set o' new 'eels and soles,
I was paying for greens at a 'igher rate
Than 'e charged to my Uncle Fred, or to Kate,
An' 'is cheeses was full of 'oles!
('E was getting 'is liquor 'alf-price, no doubt,
While I'ad to bally well go without!)

Now, I 'aven't spoke to my Uncle Fred
For nigh on six months or more,
An' I've ceased to 'ave dealings with Cousin Jim
(For at 'eart I'd a-often suspected 'im),
An' I never won't darken 'is door;
An' I've 'ad quite enough o' that rubbish o' Kate's,
Wot was always the kind of a woman I 'ates.

Yes, family ties is a splendid thing
If it's *sentiment* keeps 'em there;
When it comes to a question o' gold and gain,
They turns at once to a hirksome chain,
Such as nobody wants to wear;
When matters of money appears on the floor,
Them family feelings walks out at the door!

If England's a-going to 'aggle an' fight
For Colonial Preference,
If the love of 'er sons for the Motherland
Is a kind of a feeling as only can stand
On a basis o' shillings an' pence,
That sort o' foundation won't last overlong,
An' there's something, I lay, must be 'opelessly wrong.

When the Colonies 'eld out their 'ands to us, It wasn't for British gold; But who 'll vouch for the love o' the Britisher-born, When 'e bargains 'is honour for tariffs on corn, [18]

[19]

[20]

An' 'is loyalty's bartered an' sold? (A 'appy 'armonious fam'ly we'll make, A-arguing who shall 'ave most o' the cake!)

We shall 'ave them Australian Governments
A-striking for better terms,
An' there's sure to be plenty o' grumbling when
The Canadian manufacturing men
Is competing wi' Henglish firms;
An' each separate part o' the Hempire 'll feel
As the others is 'aving the best o' the deal.

From which, if you follows my meaning through, There's a obvious moral to draw:
Let's consider the Motherland's future, afore
We allows 'er to risk being Mother no more,
An' becoming the Mother-in-law!
For if loyalty's paid for, it ain't worth a thought,
An' affection's a fraud if it 'as to be bought.

[21]

#### **BRITISH TRADE**

[22]

Oh, why was I born a English lad,
In a island all shut in by sea?
Wot a much better chance I might 'ave 'ad
If I'd only been 'made in Germanee'!
Oh, why was I thus unwilling 'urled
On the blooming 'dust-'eap o' the world.'

No doubt as the German artisan
Don't get very much in the matter o' pay;
But 'e works on the seven-days-weekly plan,
With a haverage thirteen hours a day.
An' 'e 'asn't no time for to sit an' think,
Nor money enough to take to drink!

Then give me a permanent German job, With nothink at all but work to do; With weekly wages o' sixteen bob, For to keep myself an' the missus too; A-makin' them gimcrack German toys For poor little English gals an' boys.

To my London 'ome I'll say good-bye, For I 'asn't no use for a open port, Where the workin' wage is a deal too 'igh, An' the workin' hours is far too short; Where a workin'-man 'as time to sleep, An' food's to be 'ad so rotten cheap.

A German factory's more my taste,
With none o' them lazy English ways,
Where there ain't no money or time to waste
On ridic'lous 'beanos' an' 'olidays;
An' the workin' classes can just contrive
To earn sufficient to keep alive.

When I slaves all day at a German trade,
A-makin' them goods as they dumps down 'ere,
When I'm overworked an' I'm underpaid,
Till I feels as weak as that German beer,
I'll think o' my English 'ome maybe,
Where everythink (but the drinks) is free!

When I gets back 'ome of a Sunday night,
With a supper o' nice black bread to eat,
I'll 'ave such a 'ealthy appetite,
I never won't need no butcher's meat;
For 'unger, o' course, is the finest sauce,
When you're swollerin' sausages made of 'orse!

[24]

[23]

An' I begs to state, when I comes 'ome late,
With a 'ungry kind of a look in my eye,
If I 'as to wait, with a hempty plate,
Till the blooming cat's-meat-man comes by,
I'll think wi' scorn o' the old 'dust-'eap,'
Where mutton an' beef's to be bought so cheap.

For we don't know nothink o' 'orse-flesh 'ere, But Joe 'e'll learn us to eat it, when 'Is tariff makes British meat too dear For the pockets o' British workin' men; An' they're 'aving their Little Marys lined With a diet o' maize an' bacon rind!

When the price goes up of our meat and bread, By a grand Imperial scheme o' Joe's, We'll get cheap sugar and tea instead, An' we'll buy no food orf o' Britain's foes; For we'll 'ave no need o' the furriner's crops When we're living on sweets washed down wi' slops!

There's lessons to learn from German trade, In spite o' this foolish fiscal fuss; Tho' their peoples ain't no better paid, Nor near as well orf for food as us; For, wotever the German workman's lot, 'E knows 'ow to use wot brains 'e's got!

An' if *our* employers 'd only learn
A few o' they furrin commercial ways,
To make the business their first concern,
An' not be so set upon 'olidays,
They wouldn't be always a-'urrying orf,
For the sake of a afternoon at gorf!

With the wants o' the trade they'd keep in touch, An' 'd sometimes stay at the orfice late; If their business methods ain't up to much, They, at any rate, could be up-to-date! For there isn't no need of a fiscal fence, If you've henergy coupled wi' common-sense!

We English ain't a-doing our best,
An' that's the reason we loses ground;
It's time as we took more interest,
An' the chance 'as come to buck-up all round.
No need for to put it in doggerel rhymes,
To see as we're right be'ind the times.

For it's Heducation we wants, that's all,
To make us the country we ought to be.
If we rides for a fall at a tariff wall,
We'll very soon find ourselves at sea.
(Which the simile's somewot mixed, you'll say,
But the meanin's clear as the open day!)

Then 'ere's a 'ealth to the Motherland, For all as they says she's goin' to pot; Ole England's 'wooden walls' 'll stand When the fiscal fences is all forgot! An' she'll 'old 'er own, by land or sea, So long as 'er sons an' 'er trade is free! [25]

[26]

[27]

### CONTROVERSIAL ENTERTAINMENT

[28]

On Saturdays I often goes An' spends a evenin' in the pit At one of them vari'ty shows, An' makes a 'appy night of it; But since this fiscal row begun, I've 'ad to look elsewheres for fun.

I'm partial to a music-'all,
But when last week I chanced to go,
I 'eard some low-necked blighter bawl
A Jingo song in praise o' Joe;
'No more will England,' sez this crank,
'Trade with the German an' the Yank!'

At furrin countries, o'er the sea,
A lot o' silly jeers 'e 'urled;
Thinks I, where would ole England be
Without the market o' the world?
We'd make a living, I suppose,
A washin' of each other's clo's!

Nex' come the cinematograph,
An' Joe, I needn't say, was there;
A picture of 'is upper 'alf,
A-settin' smilin' in a chair.
(There's no photographer in town
Would dare to 'take 'im lying down!')

Then a play-actress come along, A saucy bunnet on 'er 'ead; She didn't sing no fiscal song, She spoke a fiscal pome instead. 'These is,' she 'astened to explain, 'The words o' Joseph Chamberlain!'

I 'eard that Yankee lady's rhyme,
An' then I took my coat an' 'at;
I've read some drivel in my time,
But nothink quite so bad as that.
(She was a Himport, I suppose,
Dumped down by foes o' poor ole Joe's!)

I took the kids to Drury Lane,
An' 'eard a lion comic sing
A song as told us once again
To keep 'Protecting' hev'rything.
Thinks I, 'ullo! but if that's so,
Can't we protect ourselves from Joe?

I ain't bad-tempered, 'Eaven knows;
A peaceful life is wot I'd choose;
If people likes this scheme o' Joe's,
They're more than welcome to their views;
They loves dear food, I've not a doubt,
An' any'ow that's their look-out.

But when I seeks the gall'ry door
At one of them there public shows,
I doesn't pay a bob or more
To 'ear about this plan o' Joe's;
I simply wants to get away
From controversies of the day.

We 'as enough o' argument
At 'ome, on 'bus-top, tube, or train;
An' most on us 'll be content
If 'entertainments' entertain;
But Joe's as bad as the perlice,
'E won't give no one any peace.

An' seems to me, as plain as day, It's actors' business to amuse; If they can't no'ow keep away From giving us their fiscal views, Why should the public be denied A chance to 'ear the other side?

I 'opes it won't be very long Afore George Robey lets us 'ear [29]

[30]

[31]

A really fust-class fiscal song Wrote by the Dook o' Devonsheer; While on the biograph we sees Them comic cuts o' F.C.G.'s.

If Ruddy Kipling would but write A Free Trade ballad, or a glee, Which Arthur Roberts could recite, Or Dunville sing with Mr. Tree, I'd pay my money at the door, Nor wouldn't ask for nothin' more.

But while the music-'alls descend To nothing but Protection 'turns,' There's other better ways to spend The little money that I earns. I only asks to see fair-play, An', failin' that, I'll stop away.

### 'STATISTICS'

I likes my glass of 'arf-an'-'arf,
Nor needn't make no bones about it;
But still I ain't the bloke to chaff
Them fellers as can do without it;
I pities 'em, but I respex
Toteetallers o' heither sex.

I used to be the same myself,
Would never touch a thing but water,
Nor 'ave no bottles on my shelf
Containin' wot they didn't oughter.
(O' water now I 'ates the sight,
Except to wash in, Sunday night).

An' wot cured me o' temperance
Was neither tracts nor indigestion,
But simply that I read, by chance,
Some dry statistics on the question,
Which proved to me, beyond a doubt,
That lamps as wasn't oiled went out!

In them dark moments o' the war—
Of Nineteen 'Undred now I'm writing—
My country raised a mounted corps,
As seed a deal o' gallant fighting;
An' nigh a third of all that lot
Was touched by fever, shell or shot.

Of the toteetallers as went,
Wot boasted o' their sober 'abits,
As much as *thirty-five per cent*.
Took fever bad, an' died like rabbits;
While, out o' them as liquored free,
We didn't lose but twenty-three!

When them statistics first I 'eard, Nobody could 'a hacted quicker; I 'urried to the 'George the Third,' An' simply dosed myself wi' liquor. (Since then a many 'armless orgies I've 'ad wi' them there Royal Georges.)

An' only yesterday I 'ears
The state o' things as 'ad existed:
O' them *toteetal* volunteers
There wasn't only *three* enlisted!
When *one* fell sick, an' orf 'e went,
'E made that Thirty-five per cent.!

[33]

[32]

[34]

[35]

Yes, figures proves you hanythink,
To suit your private way o' thinking,
They proves the blessedness o' drink,
Or else they proves the curse o' drinking;
An', if you manages 'em right,
They proves a'most that black is white!

They proves that British Industries
Is being ruined by the 'dumper';
They proves this year (as ever is)
To be wot people calls a 'bumper.'
An' when on exports they begin,
Lor! wot a muddle they gets in!

They proves as 'ow the iron trade
Is prosperous (or else declining);
That more (or less) was never made
By them as is engaged in mining.
(We gets a varied mental meal
Served up to us on plates o' steel!)

They proves, without the slightest doubt, Our manufacturies is growin';
They proves we're being quite cut out, Or else that our 'ome trade's a-goin'.
(In which, per'aps, they ain't so wrong—It is a-goin', goin' strong!)

But there's some undisputed fac's—
An' even figures won't gainsay it:
One is, if you puts on a tax,
Someone or other 'as to pay it.
('We'll tax the poor man's corn,' says Joe;
'But touch 'is bread? Oh dear me, no!')

If England needs our pounds an' pence, An' taxes of our food to raise 'em, It don't require much common-sense To see as the consumer pays 'em; The thing I'm anxious for to learn Is wot does 'e get in return?

When prices they goes up a bit,
The rich exchequer of the nation
Is bound in honour to remit
Somethink by way o' compensation.
(Tho', all the same, I'd like to see
The bloke as talks of *tea* to *me*!)

An' that's a ticklish game to win;
We'll stay exactly where we are if
Them blooming furrin goods comes in,
In spite of our protective tariff!
'Ha! but we'll keep 'em out,' sez you.
Then where's our promised revenoo?

If that's the price as must be paid
To forward Joe's Imperial mission;
If we must bolster up our trade,
An' not allow no competition,
By taxing them as 'as to buy,
'Gawd 'elp our British trade!' sez I.

[36]

[37]

[38]

#### 'CONTROVERSIAL METHODS'

It doesn't matter if I goes
Inside our local Workman's Club
To 'ave a game o' dominoes,
Or drops into the nearest pub;
In 'arf a moment in 'll walk

[39]

Some bloke as starts a fiscal talk.

An' if I ever tries, per'aps,
To criticise this scheme o' Joe's,
There's always some excited chaps
As leads from arguments to blows.
An' then we throws the things about,
Till someone calls the chucker-out.

They states that England's gone to pot,
That ev'ry trade is lost to 'er;
An' if I dares to say it's not,
They calls me 'Little Englander'!
(On one I 'ad to use my fist:
'E said I was a 'hoptimist.')

Nor yet it ain't no furrin foes
As thus belittles Britain's fame;
It's partisans o' good old Joe's
As brings discredit on 'er name,
By shouting out to ev'ryone
That little England's day is done.

One night Jim Adams sez to me,
'Ole England's rotten to the core!'
An' when 'e finds I don't agree,
'E ups an' calls me a pro-Boer!
(I 'ad a word or two with 'im;
'E's still in 'orspital, is Jim!)

If them so-called Imperialists
Is blokes as runs their country down,
Upon 'er ruined state insists,
An' tries to blacken 'er renown,
Then I for one 'ud much prefer
To be a 'Little Englander.'

If wot their politicians styles
The 'patriotic' point of view
Is saying that these British Isles
'As lost their trade an' credit too,
I ain't a patriot no more:
I'm just a hoptimist pro-Boer!

I'm not the sort o' chap as blames
Them folks as don't agree wi' me,
But when they calls me silly names
Because my fiscal views is Free,
It don't require no further flaws
To see the weakness o' their cause.

### A MESSAGE FROM BROADMOOR

Altho' my brain is sound and well, An' mentally I've nothing wrong, They've locked me in a padded cell, An' watches me the 'ole day long; 'Ow did I get in such a fix? 'Twas all along o' politics.

I'd studied Joe's Protection plan,
An' thought I'd see what I could do
To benefit my fellow-man
By practisin' 'is 'opeful view
That Exports is the all in all,
And Himports should be nil—or small.

So, when I stayed with Uncle Bill (My visit ain't improved 'is manners), I managed, when I left, to fill

[40]

[41]

[42]

My pockets with 'is best 'Avannahs; The cigarettes I left be'ind Was quite the cheapest I could find.

Yet Uncle Bill 'e couldn't see
That since 'is Exports far exceeded
'Is Himports—thanks, o' course, to me—
That was exactly what he needed
To make 'im prosperous again;
'E merely said I was insane!

'E couldn't understand, wot's more, ('E was a Cobdenite, an' still is), Why, when I traded at the door 'Is hovercoat for Weary Willie's, 'E, not the tramp, 'ad been the gainer; And yet—could anythink be plainer?

One day a foreign merchant fleet Was anchored orf a British pier; The cargo, mostly Russian wheat, Designed for himportation 'ere; True to my principles, that night I blew it up with dynamite.

\* \* \* \* \*

The jury was a set o' twelve
Old fossils o' the Asquith school;
The judge was one they ought to shelve;
My counsel was a bloomin' fool;
'E talked o' my 'disordered brain,'
An' never mentioned Chamberlain!

So now they've sent me to a spot Congenial to my fiscal notions, Which, as I needn't say, is not The same as Devonsheer's or Goschen's. But I'm not mad, I must insist: I'm merely a Protectionist!

#### THE TURNING TIDE

Jim 'Icks was a Tory, ten years back;
An' 'e cheered at each Tory win.
An' 'e'd stand an' argue as white was black,
For to 'elp them Tories in.
But times (an' parties) is changed since then,
An' 'e's wishful to 'elp 'em out agen.

'Rat!' sez you? Maybe that's true.
Nor 'e ain't the only one
As 'eard wot them Tories *said* they'd do,
An' as seed wot them Tories *done*;
An' 'e don't feel noways bound, don't Jim,
To blokes as 'as broke their word with 'im.

'E nursed 'is party a many a year,
An' 'e swollered their party tricks.
Just draw up a cheer to the fire, an' 'ear
Wot they promised the likes of 'Icks.
An' I'll tell you arterwards, if I can,
Wot the Tories *done* for the workin'-man.

\* \* \* \* \*

Chamberlain, 'e was the fust to speak,— An', o' course, 'e spoke cocksure,— Of a pension of 'arf a crown a week For the old, 'ard-workin' poor.

[44]

[43]

[45]

(An' many a cap was raised to Joe, When 'e made that promise, ten year ago.)

Balfour nex' to the 'ustings comes, With a scheme for to 'elp improve Them dwellin'-'ouses in crowded slums, Where there warn't no room to move. (An' many a 'ope was kep' alive By the thought o' that promise o' '95.)

Then come a plan for to keep away
Them furriners orf our shores;
We 'asn't no use for the likes o' they,
Wi' the crowds at our poor-'ouse doors.
(But our English workmen is still denied,
An' our English waiters can wait—outside!)

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten year ago, that were. To-day
Such schemes is a trifle flat.
'Twas Election-time, as I needn't say,
When they promised the likes o' that.
An' our Unemployed in their thousands swarm,
An' our Poor Law waits for the pledged Reform.

Ten year ago, that were; an' yet
We're a-watchin', with 'opeless eye,
Our slum-choked women-folk starve an' sweat,
An' our stunted children die.
An' late an' early, early an' late,
The old men waits at the work'us gate.

I wouldn't be 'ard on them Tory chaps— No doubt as they done their best; But I can't 'elp thinkin' some'ow, per'aps, They'd be none the worst of a rest. That 'undred majority makes 'em slow, Let alone all the trouble they've 'ad with Joe.

It's easy to sneer when you once begins,
An' it's easy to badger an' blame;
When the 'ins' is 'outs,' and the 'outs' is 'ins,'
Very like they'll be just the same!
No better, per'aps, but at least no wuss;
An' they can't very well do *less* for us!

Wot can this Guv'ment show to-day But them promises throwed aside? An' a country's confidence washed away On the ebb of a Tory tide?

Ten long years since they fust began! Ten good years for to plot an' plan! An' wot 'a they done for the workin'-man?

ENVOI [49]

Protectionist! (if you exist)
Whose sympathies I can't enlist,
Be sparing of your curses!
Ah, don't abuse my Fiscal VIEWS,
But, out of pity for the Muse,
Look only at my VERSES!

Free Trader, too, I beg of you, Whatever else you think or do, My lack of skill excuse. Ah! [47]

[48]

No doubt my VERSE could not be worse, And weak the rhymes that I rehearse; But, then, how sound my VIEWS are!

(Thus may I strengthen—or convert, And no one's feelings need be hurt!)

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