

# Tariff Increases Foreseen

*Sociology*

Though the tariff hearings now going on before the House Ways and Means Committee were allegedly called for the purpose of giving the farmers a chance to present arguments on behalf of raising the tariff on farm products, Eastern manufacturing interests have presented so many scientific and technical arguments in behalf of raising tariffs also on certain textiles, metal goods, bricks and cement, it is virtually certain at this time that upward revision on these latter items will take place.

In fact, it may be said that these Eastern manufacturing interests have presented much more convincing data than have the farmers. The agricultural interests, with the exception of certain professional leaders, have contented themselves with general statements, and have reiterated the old argument that it is well known that the

farmer buys in a protected market and sells in a free market.

However, the agricultural items are slated for general revision upward, though the increases may not be so large as those asked.

All fruits and vegetables are expected to receive more protection; the sugar tariff will be given a boost; likewise probably milk and milk products, meat, vegetable oils. It is believed unlikely that the tariff on wool will be raised. Hides are doubtful.

Certain opposition to increasing duties on some of the farm products has been presented to the committee. For example, clothing manufacturers opposed more tariff on wool; paper manufacturers do not want higher duties on casein; manufacturers of shoes look with disfavor on increases on hides; soap manufacturers declare that higher duties on palm and coconut

oils will raise the cost of soap and laundering by some fifty per cent.

The whole range of economic thought, always opened up when the tariff is under discussion, has furnished the basis for many arguments.

Indirect protectionists have advanced the theory that the people of the United States can be made to eat more apples and peaches if tropical fruits, like bananas, are kept out.

*Science News-Letter, February 23, 1929*

The corner stone of the new Department of Agriculture building was laid by Secretary of Agriculture W. M. Jardine, in January.

A Pittsburgh blacksmith has found a novel use for radio: it keeps the horses quiet while he works with a new shoe.

## Babylonians Were Weather Men

*Meteorology*

The reputation of the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia as the earliest and greatest students of the stars is called in question by Prof. Eckhard Unger of the University of Berlin, who states that they paid a great deal more attention to meteorology than they did to astronomy. They even laid out their compass according to the winds rather than according to the stars, he declares.

The Babylonian temples and city streets were not oriented on a north-south and east-west system, as most human works have always been, he states. The cardinal points of the Babylonian compass were the "quarters" of ours: northwest, northeast, southeast and southwest. These directions agreed with the prevailing winds. The northwest wind brought clear, dry, bracing weather, and was known as the "favorable wind." The northeast wind was called the "mountain wind" because it blew chill from the Asiatic mountains. The southeast wind, blowing up from the Gulf of Persia, brought damp and drizzly weather; the Babylonians did not like it and called it the "cloud wind." The wind they most dreaded, however, came from the southwest, from out of the desert, bringing burning sandstorms. They called this the "storm wind."

When they laid out their cities on

the rivers, Prof. Unger says, they did not adapt the street directions to the direction of the stream, but rigidly stuck to their wind-compass, facing their walls to the four cardinal points as they conceived them and the corners of the city to the cardinal points as we know them. They even carried their meteorological notions into the heavens, and divided the moon into quarters which they named after the earthly winds.

*Science News-Letter, February 23, 1929*

## More Mental Doctors

*Psychiatry*

A great shortage of physicians who are familiar with psychiatry exists in the United States, according to recent testimony of Dr. William A. White, superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Federal Hospital for the Insane, before the House Committee on Appropriations.

The number of physicians in the country, Dr. White said, approximated 149,000, of which only 2,000 were thoroughly familiar with the treatment of mental diseases.

Against this figure, he puts the fact that "there are 800,000 beds in all the hospitals of the country. Four hundred thousand, or one-half of these, are in mental-disease hospitals."

*Science News-Letter, February 23, 1929*

## Pet Squirrel A Mouser

*Zoology*

A golden-mantled ground squirrel, tamed by rangers at the Dunraven Pass Station in Yellowstone National Park last season, not only made an excellent pet but also took upon himself the duties of mouser. At first considerable local comment was caused by the fact that the squirrel, known as Chippie, had caught a mouse; but Ernest Thompson Seton, well-known naturalist, states that this species of squirrel, which is really a rodent, is in the habit of catching field mice. Therefore the step to catching a mouse indoors was not such a long one for Chippie.

Chippie made a great hit with the Dunraven rangers. "Chippie has proven quite a bit of company to me," said one of them. "He will come when I call him if he is within hearing distance. He shows no fear of me at all unless I make a very sudden movement.

"He is as jealous as he can be and will not allow me to feed another squirrel at all. He will chase them out of my hand, then sit up there and chatter at them to let them know their place."

*Science News-Letter, February 23, 1929*

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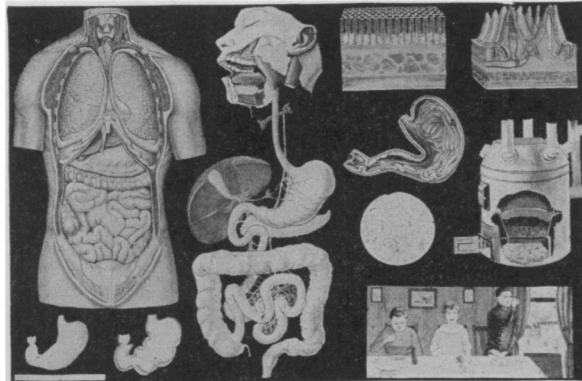
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## A Sanitary Tragedy

*Hygiene*

Quotation from *Science Progress*  
(Vol. XXIII, p. 143):

E. A. Seagar reports a very unhappy circumstance in the *Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, March 1, 1928, namely the entry of malaria into Barbados. Hitherto the disease seems to have been entirely absent there, and the case is similar to that of the entry of malaria into Mauritius in 1866. One would have thought that the local authorities would have taken more care regarding the entry of dangerous mosquitoes, but we suppose that the same thing that happened there has happened in most British possessions, where mosquitoes are apparently allowed their freedom without let or hindrance. Thirty years have now elapsed since the mosquito theory of malaria was fully established, and yet we hear that the insects abound in most British colonies as much as they do in many other places. The authorities always seem to think that the disease malaria does not cost them anything. It generally doubles the death-rate or more, as well as being an enormous tax on agriculture. Really, it is time to ask whether the British nation would not do well to hand over all

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tropical colonies to the United States, who certainly show some intelligent interest in this matter. Now, in future, the Barbados Government will be forced to pay considerable sums in consequence of this new plague which has been allowed to enter the colony, and apparently it is scarcely possible to eliminate the disease altogether in future after entry. I have always maintained that antimalaria sanitation is the principal test of efficiency in any local government.