

# HOW TO PREVENT THE COMING OF PLAGUE

## After "Standpaters" Listened to It They Had Other Problems Fired at Them by Congressman — One Man's Argument.

By ARNOLD McWHEEN.  
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)  
Washington, Nov. 19.—Hearings before the ways and means committee of the house on the tariff schedules preparatory to a general revision of the tariff at an extra session of the next congress were begun recently. The beginning is without any special significance.

Sereno E. Payne, chairman of the committee, John D. Eastell of Pittsburgh, and other members are representatives of the "stand-pat" element in congress, and have become active, with a view to forestalling any effort in behalf of material changes in the schedule in order to prevent comprehensive action rather than to encourage it.

The general policy of tariff revision was settled by recent election, but the character of revision has yet to be determined. It is obviously the thought of Payne, Eastell and others that by getting their own views and conclusions first before the public that the revision will be along the lines they suggest. It is not yet certain that the stand-pat element, which is really the reactionary element, and is helped by Speaker Cannon, is to be the next congress. Therefore, it cannot be certain that the character of revision which these men favor is what the country wants or what congress will decide upon.

As absurd undertakings, so far as the plans of the committee are concerned, their undertaking is an absurdity. They intend to hold hearings until December 4. In three weeks they expect to obtain all necessary information to enable them to decide the most intricate problems in connection with tariff revision, and to report to congress. The effect upon labor and the relative benefits to be derived by both capital and labor from the proposed legislation.

They will decide just what duties are necessary to equate the cost of production in this country and every other country on the face of the globe; determine whether industries have reached the limit of their development; which of them should be fostered further, and which of them can rely upon their own strength.

They will solve some of the most intricate economic questions with which the business men of the nation have to deal, and they will do all this by holding a few hours each day to hearing men who are interested in the maintenance of the present tariff duties.

To illustrate how little the committee will really know when it gets through, it is only necessary to call attention to the fact that it is proposed to dispose of the whole iron and steel schedules in one day.

At the hearings today most of the men who appeared before the committee argued either in favor of the increased duties or the maintenance of the present rates.

Some Want Higher Duties.  
"Schedule A" of the Dingley tariff, which includes more than 100 articles under the heading of "chemicals, oils and paints," was taken up today and few of the interests affected want any reduction. There were even a few requests for increases in the present rates of duty. A strong advocate for lower tariff rates was Albert Plaut, who drafted the schedule for medicinal chemicals for the Wilson bill.

"The duties on medicinal chemicals," he said, "are mostly prohibitive. The duties are practically the same as the tariff of 1883. What was good for the trade then is not good now. There are few manufacturers of medicinal chemicals in this country today than there were 25 years ago, and these control the home market.

# PORTRAY LOCAL MEN ON STAGE

## Spanish War Veterans Plan Minstrel Show With Many Bright Hits.

The big minstrel show which the Spanish War Veterans are to present at the Hellig theatre two nights, December 18 and 19, is being moulded into a fine performance. Every member of the minstrel company and scores of ex-soldiers about town are working enthusiastically for the success of the benefit entertainment.

A number of song hits new to Portland audiences will be introduced by the clever comedians and singers taking part. The first part has been arranged and cast as follows:  
Interlocutor, Jay H. Upton.  
Harry Lane, M. Marks Jr.; Dr. J. Whitcomb Brougher, Fred Jones; Jonathan Bourne, Theo. Rosenquist, and men with tambos.  
Charlie Fulton, Larry Larimore; George Chamberlain, Lincoln Hart; Seneca Fouts, by himself, and men with bones.

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# NEVER HEARD OF SHERMAN, SO NOT YET UNDER UNCLE SAM'S WING

## Charles Johan Backstrom, a native of Sweden, made a failure of his effort to become an American citizen before Judge Gantenbein in the circuit court yesterday.

Charles Johan Backstrom, a native of Sweden, made a failure of his effort to become an American citizen before Judge Gantenbein in the circuit court yesterday. He betrayed a lack of knowledge that was phenomenal. He could not tell where the laws of the state or of the United States are made, and his ideas of government were hazy. He had heard that Taft and Bryan were running for president, but Sherman and Kern were strange names to him. He said he was uncertain whether his mother is living or dead. He had written only one letter to her in 18 years. He will be given another chance to qualify as a citizen next month, if he feels that he is well enough posted by that time. Fifteen candidates for citizenship were admitted. Five of them were Swedes, four Germans, three Canadians, two Englishmen and one from Roumania. From Sweden came Muns Munson, John Oscar Lindstrom, Peter Anton Johnson, Seth Nicholas Lind and Charles Swanson; from Germany Niels Nielsen, Christian Bonde, Otto Rudolf Martin and William Restling; from Canada, Elphinstone John Nunn, Paulinus McDonald and Henry Frost Cutting; from England, Walter Parrish and Percy Anrie, and from Roumania, Louis Sebillier.

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That this country is in danger of a visitation of the plague—the black death of the Middle Ages, which swept through Europe and carried off 25,000,000 people—that the disease is spread by rats through the agency of the rat flea, and that precautions taken now may avert a calamity which, if it happens, will be the worst in the history of the country, is the substance of an article by C. F. Connolly in last week's Collier's. The writer says: "The disease has been mistaken for influenza, pneumonia, bronchitis, pleurisy, typhoid, yellow fever, appendicitis, diphtheria and a dozen other diseases, according as it may display its fluctuating symptoms. It is most insidious and the most tenacious of all epidemic diseases. Its death rate in San Francisco was always the same—a little over 50 per cent. In China and India it is 90 per cent. You can take all the known diseases and thoroughly infect a city with them, and you can get rid of them in a comparatively short time, but there are authorities who say that plague, once established, is never gotten rid of."

Its Approach.  
"Its approach is masked in many forms, and one of the distinctive features of its past history is the public apathy and indifference to its first grip. It lies dormant for years, only to break out with a violence doubly intensified. The great London epidemic of 1664 and 1665 took ten years to develop. As to the means by which the disease is spread, Mr. Connolly says: "One of the ancient discoveries in relation to the plague in man was always preceded by an epidemic in rats. The rats, losing their timidity of man, came out of their hiding places, their eyes bleary, and were seen to stagger and fall dead on the floors of houses." In 1894, during the Chinese plague in San Francisco, eighty-seven dead rats were found in the walls of a Chinese restaurant, and yet it is only since 1900 that it has been demonstrated by Kitazato, a Japanese physician, a pupil of Koch, that the plague-infected rat carries the germ of the disease, which is transferred from the rat to man by means of a rat flea and its bite.

"When a rat is suffering from plague, his blood is thick with the bacillus pestis—the technical name of the germ—and while the flea is sucking the blood of the rat it fills its stomach with these germs. They are so minute that thousands of them may exist in the flea and may be transferred to a human through the soil from the flea emitted at the time of its bite.

"The sick rat dies by and by—for its blood is only malignant with the poison in the last stages of the disease—and when its body begins to chill, the flea, which cherishes the warm thing and shuns the cold, leaves it and is liable to get on to the first living thing it comes to—as a rule, it is a man. It is not necessary that the flea bite the man; its blood may only be crushed into his skin. The plague germ is intensely virulent and will pass through the skin, especially if there be the slightest irritation or scratching, as, for instance, from the pricker of the flea.

"It is the history of the disease that when a human case exists in a place, it means that the disease has existed for some time among the rats, it is a singular fact that the milder cases usually occur in the early stages of an epidemic, or in those first little ebullitions which may for years occur prior to the final eruption which sweeps over a city, and these cases may attract no attention.

"Two human cases last fall went from San Francisco, unsuspected, to a city in Oregon, were taken sick there, returned to San Francisco in the con-

"The writer cites extensive experiments which go to show that the flea is almost a necessary part of the conditions for the transmission of the plague. It is a moral certainty, proved by the experience of Australian cities and latterly by that of San Francisco that the extermination of rats means the extermination of the plague. San Francisco is being built on concrete foundations to make it rat-proof. Of the 4,228 stables in the city 96 per cent have already been rendered rat-proof. As it is in stables that rats thrive most, this is a long step toward the extinction of the plague.

Thorough sanitation, a general cleaning up and a determined and relentless war on rats make up the price that this nation will have to pay for immunity from a sweep of the black death.

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