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James Harris Patton

OUR TARIFF

Why Levied and Why Continued

AND THE

COBDEN CLUB

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OUR TARIFF.
WHY LEVIED AND WHY CONTINUED.

THE REASONS WHY
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WISH TO PAY BETTER
WAGES THAN ARE PAID IN EUROPE;

ALSO

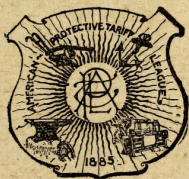
A SKETCH OF THE COBDEN CLUB.

BY

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No.



6.

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PREFACE.

THIS booklet was written to bring before the minds of intelligent Americans—whether employers or employed—the reasons why the tariff or tax was imposed upon foreign products or property, in order to obtain funds for defraying the expenses of the National Government. That mode of raising this *special* revenue being less burdensome to the people; and also to show the beneficial influence of such tariff upon our mechanical industries, and through their extension and success, the benefits that accrue to our own workpeople.

- I. It is shown why our tariff was imposed—because that when we became a nation, it was necessary to bear the expenses of two *separate* governments.
- II. That while the term *protection* may be misinterpreted and so used as to mislead, our tariff of to-day is pre-eminently designed *to equalize the cost of production*; that is, to counterbalance the low wages paid workpeople in Europe.
- III. That *property* in the form of imported merchandise ought to bear a proportionate share of the expenses of government, as well as *property* in the form of real estate, and that a tax levied upon the *former*, benefits the

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people of the entire Union—rich and poor; the employer and the employed.

- IV. That our present tariff has in view two objects equally important: one, to so adjust its rates as to induce capitalists to invest in manufacturing; the other, to aid our own workpeople by furnishing them employment at remunerative wages.
- V. It is shown that from 85 to 90 per cent of the cost of American manufacturing, is paid for the labor of those employed, while in Europe—in consequence of low wages—only about 30 to 35 per cent of such cost goes into the hands of the employés.
- VI. A brief history is also given of the *avowed* purpose, and of the efforts made at different times—from 1815 to the Cobden Club of to-day—by British manufacturers and merchants, aided by their American allies, to break down the mechanical industries of the United States.

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OUR TARIFF.

I.

THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

The present government of the United States took a national form under its constitution when George Washington was inaugurated President in 1789. Immediately questions arose in respect to the manner of conducting the affairs of the young nation thus called into existence; only one of these we now propose to notice—that in relation to defraying its expenses. There were now, instead of thirteen, two distinct governments to be supported by taxation—the national and that of the separate States—there were, likewise, two distinct classes of property that could be made subjects of this taxation; the one coming into the Union in the form of importations of merchandise from foreign countries, the other the land or real estate. As the States had conceded the control of foreign affairs to congress alone, it was fitting and in consequence so arranged as to defray the expenses of the national government by means of a tariff or tax levied upon these importations, while the expenses of the State governments were to be met by one levied upon the land or real estate. (*Hist. American People*, pp. 573, 576.) This was the general theory on the subject, the details being left for future adjustment as time and experience dictated. It is strange that this historical fact is so little recognized by the mass of ordinary intelligent men,

and indeed of all those who have not sufficiently studied the subject. Great numbers, taking their cue from certain writers and speakers, seem to think that somehow this tariff or tax on foreign goods or merchandise was imposed in the interest of the American manufacturer, rather than to supply funds for defraying the expenses of the National government, and thus benefiting the people at large.

The Forms of Application.—This system has supplied ample funds for these expenses, except only when untoward causes increased the liabilities of the National government. Then in order to obtain revenue, it became necessary to avail itself of an internal tax, while the States meet a deficiency when it occurs by simply increasing the rate of taxation in proportion to their needs. The latter system having only one object in view—to raise the necessary funds—is comparatively simple, but the former, having several ends to attain, is in consequence very complex. For illustration: we import manufactured goods, and often of classes we make ourselves, so that it becomes essential to adjust the tax or tariff on these importations in such manner as to raise the desired revenue, and at the same time not injure the industries of our own workpeople. It seems the fairest mode of adjusting the difficulty would be in so arranging the rate of this tax—called *tariff* when applied to imported property—as to equalize the cost of production of the various classes of these manufactured articles when laid in our market.

The Three Theories.—In this discussion three theories present themselves: *First*, “free trade,” according to which no duties at all are to be levied on imported foreign merchandise or property; the *second*, “exclusively for public purposes” or “for revenue only;” The latter’s *primary object* being to impose on these importations such rates of duty as to secure the most money for the United States treasury. In addition, the effects produced by these rates of duty upon those industries of the people that come in

competition with similar ones of Europe, are deemed only of *secondary importance*, which idea the advocates of this theory have sometimes expressed by the term "Incidental protection," or more recently by the apologetic phrase, "it is not proposed to injure any domestic industries." These two theories we shall treat as nearly one and the same, since when put in operation they have produced similar results. That they are intimately connected in their influence is well understood by their respective advocates, who are both consistent when they virtually sustain each other in every election that may have a bearing directly on our mechanical industries or indirectly on the financial measures of the government.

The *third* theory, for want of a more correct definition, is briefly called "Protection," but which is more clearly defined when designated as a measure to "*equalize the cost of production.*" The application of this theory is designed for articles manufactured in Europe which are similar to those made in the United States—that is, to so levy the tax or duty as to secure the *requisite amount* of revenue, while at the same time making that feature *secondary* to the policy of encouraging our mechanical industries, and, what is infinitely more important, affording employment to the people who work for wages—estimated by political economists to be *three-fourths* of our adult population. So many of our farmers owning the land that they cultivate, makes this ratio less in the United States than in Europe.

Effects Produced.—It may not be without profit to show concisely the different effects produced by carrying out in practice the theories of free trade and for revenue only. Practically, there is very little difference in relation to the influence of these two systems upon our mechanical industries, as in that respect they both are injurious, but not quite in the same degree. The *first*, on account of the low wages paid abroad, unless we put ours down to the same level, would effectually prevent competition of any kind in the production of articles of the same class manufactured in

both countries. The *second*, in its application, accomplishes a similar result in crippling most of our mechanical industries, the wages paid our workpeople, meanwhile, becoming very nearly the same as that paid in Europe. The explanation of this difference in wages under the two systems is found in the small amount of duty levied—for experiment proves that with us the comparatively *low*, not the *high*, tariff on high priced goods produces the most revenue, as the former becomes a temptation to increase importations of common articles, which in turn overwhelm the home productions. In addition, the *second* theory places the National government in the attitude of a heartless tax-gatherer, in contrast with the *third*, which places it as the friend of the masses—those who work for wages—in so legislating as to afford them an opportunity of obtaining by means of their own labor a self-respecting and comfortable support.

The Summary.—The results of the two systems, “free trade” and for “revenue only” or “exclusively,” as found by experiment in the United States, thus sum up. Free Trade: no revenue from imports; the National government supported by funds derived from internal taxation; wages on a par with those paid in Europe. For revenue only or exclusively: an abundance of revenue, owing to a low tariff but very large importations, mechanical industries crippled if not ruined; the workpeople without remunerative employment, and a large portion of the population bankrupt. Now for the proof of this statement. *First*, we never enjoyed but once the pure unalloyed blessing of free trade. That was during the six years (1783–1789) immediately preceding the formation and adoption of the U. S. constitution and the inauguration of George Washington as President. Says Bolles in his History of the Finances of the United States (II. p. 437): “From 1783 to 1789 the trade of the thirteen old States was *perfectly free* to the whole world. The result was that Great Britain filled every section of our country with her manufactures of wool, cotton, linen, leather, iron, glass, and all other articles used here; and in

four years she swept from the country every dollar, and every piece of gold." Again; the only instance when we fairly put in practice the theory for revenue only, was toward the close of the gradually lowering process of the rates of duty in the famous Compromise tariff adopted in Nullification times, 1833, and which reached its netheration in a horizontal tariff of 20 per cent upon every article of imported merchandise. This was perhaps the most injudicious tariff ever framed, as it entirely ignored the almost innumerable differences that ever exist in the cost of production of the various manufactured articles; especially is this the case in the United States. It is in proportion equally absurd to apply the horizontal principle in lowering the rates of an existing tariff.

The Result.—Under the influence of this unique compromise measure (March 3, 1833), began the gradual withdrawal of almost the entire capital invested in the manufacture of articles that came in competition with those made abroad. The result was that nearly the whole Nation stood idle and went in debt for that class of goods which the people once made for themselves; meanwhile the principle for "revenue only" was working out legitimate effects. The United States treasury was becoming richer and richer—had forty million dollars surplus—and the people themselves poorer and poorer, till finally the majority of the latter became bankrupt, the business of the country culminating in the financial crash of 1837, all things considered, the most tremendous in our history.

The Competitors.—In the case of free trade the American manufacturer enters into competition with the foreigner, the latter having an immense advantage in the low wages he pays; in the case of for "revenue only" or "exclusively," he and his workpeople enter into a sort of competition with the United States treasury, with the latter sure to win in the accumulation of money drawn from import duties, not because they are *high*, but because they are *low*,

thus filling the vaults of the treasury to the detriment of the labor and capital of the people themselves, meanwhile making the latter less independent of foreign manufacturers. Strictly speaking, both these theories in this application are in direct opposition to our boasted doctrine, that "the people constitute the State," and, consistently, the government is only their agent; but, on the contrary, we have seen the latter in this mode of raising revenue sacrificing the individual interests of the people.

Facts Worth Remembering.—Let it be borne in mind that the funds derived from the tariff are appropriated to defray the expenses of the National government, and in that respect every citizen—the employed as well as the employer—is benefited; and, moreover, this money is obtained from the well-to-do and the rich, the latter being able and willing to purchase the high-priced goods that pay correspondingly high duties. It is therefore a gross and willful misrepresentation to say that the tariff is only for the advantage of the manufacturer, when the benefit derived from it accrues to all the people of every class and condition. It has been argued by certain advocates of free trade and for revenue only or exclusively, that our recent overproduction in manufactured articles could be disposed of to other nations if we adopted free trade or nearly so, and thus the whole civilized world would be thrown open as a market for our surplus of mechanical products. At first sight this appears plausible, and indeed might be applicable until we had disposed of our present surplus. But what of the future? Under the influence of a system that did not equalize the cost of production by means of import duties, we could not again create a surplus of manufactured articles, as our industries would be so crippled by the necessarily low rate of wages. Had the latter during the last twenty-five years been nearly as low as that paid in our great free trade rival, England, the result would have been, instead of an overproduction of manufactured goods, there would have been a deficiency. The money surplus that the United States

treasury now holds—be it remembered—was derived on principles entirely different from those on which the forty millions previously alluded to were obtained. That of to-day is the outcome of the unprecedented industrial success and general progress of the country for the last twenty-six years, and which enabled those who chose to purchase foreign high-priced goods to pay a correspondingly high duty, which found its way into the common treasury of the Nation, while the income from internal revenue was also in proportion to the vast production of the articles thus taxed. Meanwhile the laboring class had plenty of work and at fair wages, and capital sufficient to carry on our different industries was invested and at a profit.

II.

PROTECTION FOR THE WORKPEOPLE.

The political economists of the for-revenue-only school continue to urge there is no necessity for a tariff to protect "infant manufactures," and often exclaim that long ere this they ought to have passed the period of infancy. These gentlemen seem to be unaware that the demand for a tariff to-day is based on different grounds than that of the period to which reference is made. In addition to making a certain class of property pay its share of the National expenses, there is also necessity at this time for a tariff to *equalize the cost of production*, and thus protect our workpeople in receiving fair and remunerative wages, in contradistinction to those familiarly known as *starvation* in Europe. No one of our mechanical industries that has been developed fully needs on that ground a tariff for its protection; but, notwithstanding, *living wages* must be paid or we cannot obtain the workmen, and of course, some such arrangement is necessary, or our industries that compete with those of Europe must either cease or our employés receive the same amount for their labor that is paid on the other side of the Atlantic. At the present time the tariff is levied in *behalf* of our workpeople, and seeks to secure them a comfortable living if they are industrious, economical, and, more than all, temperate in their habits. This policy accomplishes another end in which the whole people are interested and benefited, inasmuch as the \$800,000,000 of foreign property that annually comes into the country in the form of merchandise pays, by means of a tax or tariff, its share of the expenses of the General government.

A Change of Base.—Thus the ground is shifted; at first

the *primary* object was to encourage our own manufacturers and train our people to do for ourselves that which we had hitherto employed manufacturers in Europe to do for us, but now we have with but few exceptions acquired the requisite skill; but another element crops out—we want to *stand by our own workpeople*, and as a humane and patriotic measure advance their interests, and not subject them to the disadvantage of having their wages lowered to the standard paid in Europe.

Political Equality.—The Americans in a political sense are on an equality with each other, the vote of the employé being of itself as influential as that of the employer. On this principle we repudiate class legislation. Our statesmen are bound by this unwritten law to so legislate as to promote the interests of the greatest number, and, also, not to infringe upon those of the smallest. We have seen that about three fourths of our adult population work for wages, and in giving them a living chance, we benefit them as well as the capitalist who invests his money, and also the farmer who owns his own farm and who raises the food that both classes require. This policy recognizes the principle that “the people constitute the State,” which notable fact our friends of the for-revenue-only school seem to overlook when they introduce measures that would lower the wages of much the larger class, and also indirectly injure the interests of the other.

The Effect of Common Schools.—The most striking contrast between the advantages the American workmen have, when compared, for instance, with those of the British Isles, is in the former's surroundings and comforts, and in his family, as all his children are freely taught in the public schools. These in the North have been in existence and patronized for generations, and thus the native born adults of that section, under this influence, appreciate an education that prepares them to perform their duties as citizens. Seldom, perhaps never, do we find persons thus educated

willingly become paupers, as is so often the case in England. If we wish, therefore, to induce a willingness on the part of our workpeople to become such, we must abolish our public schools and bring wages to the requisite low point.

It is worthy of note that owing to this same influence, our natives, those whose parents, and frequently grandparents, have been native Americans, differ in their characteristics from those of other antecedents. They may be poor, but there is no cringing in their natures; they have self-respect, though they may not be as well off as their neighbors. Observe a group of children of such parentage in our country schools, and while there are many discrepancies in point of wealth between their parents, yet they meet on an equality, and there is scarcely any, if at all, a perceptible feeling of caste among them. The farmers nearly all own their farms and cultivate them by their own labor, and are the more respected because they are industrious and temperate.

An Englishman's View.—Owing to these schools our workpeople are more than usually intelligent, when compared with the workpeople of Europe. Observant foreigners have commented on this characteristic of the *native born* American mechanic. Says an English writer and manufacturer, the late Mr. Alfred Field, of Birmingham, England, "the greater intelligence, versatility, and adaptiveness of the American workmen, their freedom from rules of trade, their readiness, not merely to adapt but profusely suggest new ideas, patterns, and improvements, enables them to supplant the products of British manufacture." Again, "It is this superiority of the American workingmen that causes their productions to supersede ours. . . . That just in proportion as an article offers an opportunity by altering its shape, lightening it, making it look stylish, or introducing machinery into some of the processes of its manufacture, or by some direct action leaving out unnecessary work, *in short by putting brains into it, just in this proportion the American article supersedes the English.*" The reason that American workmen "*put brains into their work*" is be-

cause they are more self-respecting and independent, better educated, and are taught to think for themselves. Their only prejudices are in favor of the usefulness of the object in hand; they exercise their reason as well as their hands, hence they become skillful workmen, and are more apt to notice improvements, while suggestions with them soon become subjects of experiment, and, if successful, a permanent advantage. This superior excellence is due to their having been taught in our public schools; while the latter are striving more and more to give elementary instruction in mechanics, so that the children, in addition to their ordinary book learning, may have as far as possible trained hands and eyes, and thus be better able to fill their sphere in life, whether they work in factories or otherwise. This requiring a certain amount of education among those who work in factories has the tendency to make that class of labor more respectable than it is even at present.

Interest and Duty.—It is under all circumstances for the interest as well as the duty of the man who works for a living to vote intelligently and in such manner as to secure as fair wages as he can; yet it is strange that multitudes of the workingmen of the United States give their suffrage for that political organization which by its crude legislation has been—of course not designedly—an obstacle, to-day as well as previous to the civil war, to the development of the resources of the country and our mechanical industries. The latter's great progress was brought about before that period by the *energy of the people themselves* in spite of this misguided interference; the difficulty seems to have been the lack of comprehensive views of statesmanship on the part of the leaders of that day.

III.

ADVANTAGES TO BE TRANSFERRED.

With a free and open competition in the markets of their own land and in those of the outside world, the American manufacturer need not fear, if the cost of production could be equalized. It is often urged by the opponents of a tariff thus adjusted that our successful inventions of labor-saving machinery should enable us to have free trade or nearly so, and these gentlemen even argue that our more intelligent workmen can thus be able to compete with the low wages paid in Europe. What advantage can the American people gain by this? Let us look at what this statement means when stripped of its plausible humanitarian theory. Here it is assumed that free trade would confer upon the American people a vast benefit. We may in due deference ask in what respect? Is it because the \$800,000,000 worth of merchandise, on an average, annually imported is to come into the country without paying duty or tax, and the revenue derived from this source be thus sacrificed, while the funds for the current expenses of the National government must be otherwise provided? Why shall not this class of mercantile property pay tax and aid in supporting the government as well as real estate? Meanwhile, instead of aiding to supply their own wants, our skilled mechanics and workpeople generally are to stand idle or work for wages equally low as those paid in Europe. And all this in order to put in practice the theory of certain professors of political economy and self-constituted experts.

It is acknowledged that our inventions of machinery or improvements upon that which is foreign, enables us to accomplish by its means much more than could be done by

hand labor. Here is an advantage legitimately due to our own efforts, but our "exclusively" or "for revenue only" friends demand that we virtually surrender this advantage—and to whom would they have us transfer it? Would it not be to the foreign manufacturer? Certainly not to those whom he employs. Statistics, for illustration, show that notwithstanding the enormous increase of wealth in England for the last quarter of a century, the wages of her workpeople have not by any means increased in the same ratio.

The Rational Policy.—How much more rational is the policy that would transfer a certain portion of European skilled workmen to our own country, rather than to hand over the advantages of manufacturing to the foreign capitalist, as would be the result of our adopting the policy of low wages. This transference of skilled workmen to our shores is one of the good effects of the tax or tariff on property in the form of foreign made articles, that we ourselves could produce. Foreign manufacturers on this account often transfer their machinery and appliances to the United States, and make on our own soil the articles we need and would otherwise have to purchase abroad. They bring with them numbers of skilled workmen, who remain as citizens and teach our native born who may be employed in such factories—the latter also becoming skilled in the art. In three respects these advantages accrue to our own people; the *first*, in their obtaining employment in the mills thus established; *second*, to furnish these workpeople with bread and meat, becomes the province of the western farmer, while the produce merchant and the market gardener in the vicinity supply them with other household provisions; and *third*, the articles thus made are equally good and under the circumstances equally cheap. It is evident that the benefit that accrues to the public of having these essential articles and of common use made on our own soil, and by our own workpeople, far outweighs in importance the advantage that would even accrue to the Nation at large on the supposition, that these articles were made abroad and

paid into the United States treasury the usual import duty. This statement, as a general rule, does not apply in the case of high-priced goods, that have required in their production great skill and experience, for in these two requisites in such manufacturing we are as yet lacking. Such classes of merchandise are purchased by the comparatively rich few; the tariff on such articles being judiciously high, the duty derived from them furnishes a great proportion of the revenue for the support of the National government.

The Transfers.—Of the many instances that might be noticed in which manufacturing establishments have been in part transferred from Europe to this country, we will mention only three, as they happen to be in the same line—that of flax thread and that of cotton thread, the former represented by Barbour Brothers, and the latter by two firms, Clark & Co. and Kerr & Co., the former from Ireland, the latter two from Scotland; the first two are located at Paterson, New Jersey, and the last at East Newark in the same State. These firms found it to their advantage to transfer their spinning and reeling machinery to this side of the Atlantic, and also a portion of their skilled workmen, and to make on our own soil a portion of the thread which they would hereafter supply to the American people. These firms employ altogether in their mills more than 2,000 persons, not counting those who are employed incidentally. They pay their employés living wages, so that what they would have to pay in the form of tariff, before entering the American market, on their thread, if made abroad and imported, goes to those whom they employ here—our own working people—and thus the *cost of thread production* is equalized in the United States and in Great Britain.

Mr. Ira C. Davis, superintendent of the mills belonging to the last of these firms, Kerr & Co., writes: “We import the yarn from our Paisley (Scotland) mills, and the only process of manufacture we carry on in the United States is the *winding* of the thread on the 200 yards spools.” “If the

tariff is not taken off, we may, perhaps, spin and twist in this country—that is, manufacture our thread in all the processes from the raw Sea-Island cotton.” Again: “Of course if 200 yards spool cotton could be imported into the United States free, we could not manufacture here, unless we had factories, machinery, and *wages* at the same cost as in Paisley. We are paying, as nearly as possible *double* the wages here that we pay in Paisley.”

IV.

ENGLAND WISHES FREE TRADE.

England has one reason for adopting free trade with other countries that does not apply to the United States, and that is in relation to her supplies of food for her workpeople. Yet, in her own market, her own food producers, if they had only land enough, could compete with the outside world, because of the low wages paid farm laborers. Her land for cultivation is very limited in extent; so much of it being taken up in hunting grounds and parks around the castles or homes of the nobility. Under this system the great majority of the working people must engage in mechanical industries. It is different in the United States; their territory being so much more extensive, a greater number in proportion are engaged in agriculture than in any other single pursuit, and what is still more in contrast, it is estimated that nineteen-twentieths of American farmers own the land they cultivate. The Homestead law was designed, among other excellent features, to prevent vast accumulations of land in the hands of one person or family as it is in England; we have no law of primogeniture, nor one preventing the creditor from levying on the land for the liquidation of a debt. With us great landed estates do not remain in the same family more than one or two generations—witness the entire breaking up into moderate sized farms of the great Straughn plantation in the State of Illinois, at one time said to have been the largest in the Union.

The Comparison.—In the United States—not including Alaska—there are (1887) about twenty inhabitants to the

square mile, while to the same amount of surface in Great Britain there are about 287—in England proper 476. In consequence the land cultivated in the United Kingdom cannot by any means afford sufficient food for the inhabitants, and it is vastly important for the people at large to have food from outside sources and as cheaply as possible. The latter, as raw material, is as essential to sustain the working power among her employés as coal is to melt iron ore or to generate the steam which drives the machinery in her factories. The low wages paid in England has its source in the surplus of work people incident to an overcrowded population, and not to free trade, as is sometimes assumed; this state of things is taken advantage of by the employers in order to lower the price of labor, thus enabling the former to compete with manufacturers elsewhere in the markets of the world. This feature of low wages the American law-givers, in defence of their own workpeople, must contend against. The rapid and increasing commercial intercourse between the United States and the countries of Europe has a decided tendency to bring wages to the same level on both sides of the Atlantic, and by a law as stringent as that by which water seeks its level. We see this result to-day in the uniform low wages paid workpeople throughout the countries of Europe, and because they lie near each other. It will only require time and the embodiment in law of the usual theories pertaining to the trade held by our free trade friends to *equalize*, or nearly so, the wages paid in the United States with those paid on the other side of the Atlantic.

Raw Material Sometimes Taxed.—England raises only a very small portion of the food her people require, and she treats grain as raw material and admits it free of duty. Her own production of food is so limited, she is compelled to supply the deficiency from abroad, and thus ignore the claims of her own farmers for the protection due their agricultural interests. The case of England in respect to the provisions she herself can produce *from her own soil*, and

that of the United States in relation to two important items of raw material—wool and iron ores—cannot be adduced as parallel, as the latter have ample means for supplying both these from their own resources. Our farmers have facilities for producing an abundance of wool, while our mountains and their foot hills abound in iron ores. There may be grades of wool that we cannot raise, and there may be foreign ores that produce an iron having unique and valuable properties. If there is a class of wool that we cannot raise *at all*, as a general principle let it come in free or at a nominal rate, and we can apply the same rule to the ores—but we are not aware that this is the case absolutely, in either instance. But by all means, let the principle be maintained, that no raw material which we ourselves can supply shall be made less valuable by adverse legislation in admitting a similar foreign article as free, or taxed so low, as to interfere with the home production.

Iron ores come from other countries, especially from certain portions of Europe, and can be laid down at our wharves very cheaply, because of the low wages paid for mining and placing them on board the ship in which they are transported in ballast, and at a mere nominal freight rate. Our iron ores are found in the interior, and to freight them to furnaces located at the seaboard would be expensive, while the latter could receive ore from abroad at a much cheaper rate. This would give the iron-makers thus situated a decided advantage over their brethren in the interior. The only means by which to remove this inequality is to impose a tariff upon foreign ores, so as to *equalize* in all our furnaces the cost of making iron.

Difference in Appreciation.—The lack of sympathy for one another among the different classes of the English people strikes the observer with pain. Labor and trade as occupations are not respected in England as they are in the United States. In the former exists a sort of *Anglicised caste* feeling—originating among the aristocracy with royalty at its head—which has little regard for the welfare of those who

work for wages. This feeling the middle class of Englishmen, as they are termed, promoted by what Hamerton in his *Intellectual Life* (page 424) calls "The pathetic spirit of deference and submission to superiors, which characterizes the English people. The wonder is that the great active majority of the nation, the men who by their industry and intelligence have made England what she is, should ever have been willing to submit to so insolent a rule as the rule of *caste*, which, instead of honoring industry, honored idleness and attached a stigma to the most useful and important trades." This influence of *caste* descends to ranks below the aristocracy, and the one higher despises the next lower; hence there is no, or at best but little, sympathy between the employer and the employed. On the other hand the American manufacturer looks upon those whom he employs as his equals in a political sense, and he has for them a feeling of which his English brother is not conscious, as the latter is imbued with this "*caste*" sentiment, so unknown to the native American. This unfortunate feeling of "*caste*" is likewise cherished in England because of the union of the Church and State, as between Dissenters and Churchmen, while such feeling has no existence among the American people, who in their church relations are on a perfect equality, each denomination voluntarily supporting its own organization, and not in addition unjustly taxed to support a State church. The recognition, also, of political equality is one of the strongest elements in influencing the American employers to treat kindly those whom they employ.

The Irishman's Revenge.—Justin MacCarthy, in his sketch of the troubles of Ireland, shows in what manner the manufacturing interests and other industries in that island were ruined. English policy did it, by depressing them in pretty much the same way that the adoption of free trade or for revenue only would do here, by lowering the profits to such an extent that capitalists would be forced to withdraw their money and live upon it, rather than lose it by engaging in manufacturing. A similar operation could not

affect agricultural products in the United States as it did in Ireland, because in the former the farmers nearly all own the land they cultivate, though in respect to our mechanical industries the result, in time, would be virtually the same. Yet, astonishing to say, Irishmen—American naturalized citizens—with this example before them of the ruined industries of their native island or that of their fathers, have hitherto voted year after year for those political leaders, who, though professing to be the special friends of the laboring men, have never done otherwise, when they had the opportunity, than to pass laws whose influence was to injure, rather than benefit, the industries of the Union. If these leaders and theorists are not misguided, but are truly in favor of promoting the interests of the skilled mechanic and of those who make their living by the simpler forms of manual labor, how can they consistently advocate principles that lead to lowering the wages of that class of workmen to a level with that paid for similar service in England, France, Belgium, and other countries in Europe ?

Misrule and Votes.—Does the Irishman really reflect on the condition of his native Isle, whose misfortunes he attributes to English misrule ? Does he remember that history tells in what manner the industries of Ireland were first crippled and then ruined by English legislation ? If he really wished to avenge Ireland's wrongs, his most effective means would be through the medium of the United States, the chief rival of England in commerce and in manufacturing ; that is to say, he would vote to sustain and promote our own mechanical industries in opposition to those of England, while at the same time *keeping up the wages* of his countrymen, who work for hire, and have cast in their lot with us. But if he votes as he usually does, he thus far aids his old enemy, inasmuch as the English manufacturer has the advantage over the American in the low wages he pays his operatives, and the only remedy for the latter is, either to have a tariff sufficiently high to *equalize*

the cost of production or put down the wages of his own workpeople to a level with that paid abroad. Does the Irishman still wish to aid his old enemy, as he terms the English landlord and manufacturer, by voting in such manner as to put our industries in the latter's power ?

V.

THE TWO KINDS OF CAPITAL.

In carrying on manufacturing enterprises, especially on a large scale, two classes of capital are brought into requisition—one much concentrated, the other much diffused. The *first* is the money invested, which furnishes the buildings, the machinery and the raw material to be operated upon, and the wages paid those who perform the labor; the *second* is the brain, the skill and the muscle of those who do the manual or mechanical part of the work. The employers own the one class of capital and those employed own the other. The one class is as truly property as the other, and each possessor has an absolute right to the control of his own. According to the economy of civilized society, these two classes of property owners, are mutually dependent upon each other in making their respective capital available in producing incomes, which are in reality of the same nature, though custom calls them by different names—the one dividends; the other wages. There is no less merit in acquiring one class of this property than of the other—both in their acquisition demanded labor of body and mind.

Capital; Whence Derived.—The money capital is the result of labor performed by some one, somewhere and at sometime; it may have been by an ancestor in a former generation, or it may have been by the individual himself, be that as it may, he has an absolute right to its use and the endowments derived therefrom; the workingman's capital has also been acquired by hard labor, but by the owner *himself*, because it is of a nature that cannot be derived

from an ancestor or a friend. God has given him brain and strength of muscle, while his own merit consists in his cultivating them both by correct moral habits and labor, making his capital proportionately available and valuable. In one respect he stands upon higher ground than he who merely inherits wealth, as he has acquired his capital by his own exertions. As one class of capital—money—can accumulate from time to time, so can skill by a different process acquire force from one generation to another, as each succeeding one avails itself of the experience and teaching of the past. This is evident from the fact that mechanical skill, especially among American workmen, increases so rapidly that what seems remarkable for its proficiency in one generation is often deemed crude and almost useless in the next. There is no more interesting subject for our statesmen or political economists to investigate than this progress of the arts of manufacturing, as it pertains not only to our own invention, but also to the acquisition of skill by our individual workmen.

The Two Investments.—The parallel may be drawn still further. If the money—one class of capital—is not invested in some way the owner cannot derive from it a dividend; and if the other's capital—his skill, his brain and his muscle—is not invested; that is, if he does not work, he will receive no wages. The former has this advantage, that if he does not invest his money in business, he can live upon it; but the latter can invest his capital only by individual exertion or working; he cannot put it out at interest or live upon it alone. It thus follows that the opportunity afforded the working people for employment *is far more important to them than to any other portion of the community.* The proprietors of manufacturing establishments, in addition to their capital, give the aid either of their own skill and experience or pay for that of others, in order to develop their money investment. In proportion—if it can be thus rated—to the money value of the workmen's capital, their skill and muscle invested by them, is not the percentage of

their dividends equally large if not larger? In the cost of manufactured goods in the United States, 85 to 90 per cent is due to the *high price* of the labor bestowed upon them, while in Europe owing to the *low rate* of wages—an average of about one third of what the American capitalist pays—the labor cost of the manufactured article is only about 25 or 30 per cent.

Distribution of Wealth.—In connection with the feature of the subject just mentioned, the following summary may be of interest. According to statistics adduced, it is estimated that the wealth of the United States is \$50,000,000,000, while that of Great Britain is \$40,000,000,000. This would average to each inhabitant of the United States (1884) about \$875, and to each one of Great Britain about \$1150. The same authority states that of the “wealth of the United States 72 parts go to labor, 23 to capital and 5 to government, while in Great Britain 41 parts go to labor, 36 to capital and 23 to government.” There must be a reason for the difference in this distribution of national wealth; is it not because of the *higher wages* paid in the United States that out of every \$100 of this wealth 72 accrue to labor, more than three times as much (23) as accrue to capital, while because of comparatively low salaries of officials only 5 per cent goes to the government. On the other hand, in Great Britain, because of *low wages*, 41 parts go to labor; 36 to capital, because taking advantage of an overcrowded population it *demand*s and *enforce*s low wages, while 23 parts go to government in order to sustain the dignity of royalty and the corresponding heavy expenses.

Standing Armies.—Another feature is worthy of mention. In Europe the combined standing armies of all the States under the names of empires, kingdoms, or republics, number about 4,000,000 men. These armies earn nothing, and are supported by the unremitting toil of the laboring millions, and in addition about 10,000,000, are known as a reserve force, the latter, though now in civil life, having

served a number of years in the regular army to the detriment of their industrial habits. The United States has an army of nominally 25,000 men, who ordinarily are supported by funds derived from import duties. The armies of Europe are used to maintain the balance of power between the different nations and to watch each other, and keep a few crowned heads on their thrones, and every branch of their families in stations of luxury and idleness. The army of the United States is scattered all over the country in little groups, either doing garrison duty on our seaboard, or on the frontiers watching Indians and keeping them in order.

The Farmer's Grievances.—The advocates of the “exclusively or for revenue only” theory, adduce another instance of grievance. They tell the farmer, in whom they profess to have an unusual interest, that in consequence of the tariff on iron, for illustration, he is compelled to pay a much higher price for his plough-shares, hoes and his other iron utensils. The absurd statement was reported to have been made on the floor of Congress by an ardent free trader, that in consequence of the tariff, the farmer paid 170 per cent on the iron he used. The author—a prominent Congressman—of “Free Land and Free Trade,” also tells the farmer that he “pays 40 per cent average advance price out of his farm products for the goods (he buys) which come from abroad.” This author failed to intimate to the disciple of Cincinnatus that his farm products are enhanced one hundred fold or more in value because he has near him a large population who are engaged in mechanical industries, and whose households he supplies with their necessary provisions. The intelligent farmer who reads and studies on this subject recognizes the fact that the increased value of the products of his farm ought to be taken into consideration, since they would be for the greater portion almost valueless if the capitalists in his vicinity, who are engaged in manufacturing, were to cease or greatly curtail their operations and dispense with the labor of large numbers of

their working people, whom the former supplies with provisions. This consideration far overbalances the enhanced price—even if the statements cited above were true—of the farmer's iron utensils, etc., since their cost is not one five hundredth part of the expense in carrying on a farm.

Two Illustrations.—The application of the latter theory is shown in the case of the great Cambria Iron Works in Pennsylvania, where are employed thousands of workmen, whose families have to be supported. It is a well ascertained fact that the existence of these works, has enhanced the value of the farms from 50 to 100 per cent per acre, according to location, for a radius of ten miles or more around. The result is similar upon the value of farms in the vicinity of manufacturing villages everywhere. The latter class of small farms or gardens produces a greater amount of that kind of food which perishes more easily, such as the varieties of garden products, while a similar influence extends to the distant prairies of the Great West, where the farmers furnish food supplies of wheat, corn, cattle, etc. Though the western farmer incurs larger expenses in reaching a market, this disadvantage is more than counterbalanced by his greater facilities in producing, comparatively, much larger crops, which from their nature are less perishable and bear transportation for a greater distance.

A striking illustration of the principle involved is afforded by the State of New Jersey, though in the fertility of native soil it is not pre-eminent, yet from mere location, between the two great cities on the Atlantic slope, and also having cities on her own territory, her lands are estimated by the United States census to be the highest priced in the Union.

For some unexplained reason our friends, the advocates of the for "Revenue only or Exclusively," either persistently ignore or belittle this feature of the subject in hand.

VI.

THE REAL EFFECT OF THE TARIFF OF 1846.

No tariff has been and continues to be so much eulogized by the advocates of for "Revenue only or Exclusively" as that of 1846. Its history, its principles and its influence are recognized by them to-day as closely interwoven with their present theories in relation to sustaining or aiding the mechanical industries of the Union. This tariff, with slight modifications; was in existence about fifteen years. Says a leading revenue-only "Journal and Courier:" "Democrats who get mad every time they read the words 'tariff for revenue only,' should read up the history of this country between 1846 and 1861, and see what a cock of the walk and lusty youth was the United States under the banner of 'for-revenue-only' during that period," This writer, however, ignored the fact that at the end of "that period" the National government was in debt \$87,700,000, and the Secretary of the Treasury was unable to borrow funds to defray its current expenses, even at six per cent, in European money markets, where at the same time the usual rates were three and a half and three per cent. It is worthy of note that the platform adopted by Democratic National Conventions for a third of a century show, that when the object is noticed at all, the prevailing policy enunciated in relation to the tariff is for one embodying the theory for revenue only : witness their platforms of 1876 and 1880 and also that of 1884.

English Views.—The *London Times* characterized the report of Robert J. Walker (1845), Secretary of the Treasury under President Polk, as being "The only Free Trade docu

ment ever presented to Congress by an American minister of finance;" is it for the same reason that the advocates of both Free Trade and for revenue only still eulogize Walker and his report so highly? On the principles embodied in that report were based the peculiarities of the tariff of 1846. Had the latter been enacted in 1842, instead of the one of that year, when our industries which competed with those abroad were almost totally ruined, they would never have revived at all, but instead become even more and more depressed, being to a great extent yet under the malign influence of the famous compromise—horizontal tariff (1883) of 20 per cent on all articles imported. (See. p. 11.)

The Effect of Finding Gold.—It is very singular that the admirers of this 1846 tariff claim that under its influence *alone* the country prospered, and, while ignoring other stimulating elements, even assert that "the foundation for our manufacturing on the largest scale was then laid." Where are the data for that assertion found in our industrial history? The truth is rather that the impulse derived from the tariff (1842) carried our industries forward in spite of the retarding influence of that of 1846, until they fell in with the stimulus incident to the Mexican war, which also urged them on till they received another impulse because of the discovery of gold in California (1848). Under these two forces, supplementing each other, the whole industrial energy of the Nation bounded forth and overwhelmed the demoralizing influence of that tariff—in principle almost free trade.

The Mexican war commenced February, 1846; in the preparation for which, and afterward in the disbandment of the army, about two years were consumed. Meanwhile the National government disbursed for the time an abundance of money, amounting to \$150,000,000 in the form of Treasury notes, which passed current in commercial transactions, because in due time they would be certainly paid; and thus was afforded facilities for carrying on the business

of the country. Immediately after the discovery of gold an immense tide of migration set out from the Old States for California, while it required an equally great amount of active industry to fit out and support the expeditions and to furnish supplies to the miners after they had reached the mines. This industrial activity continued for years. Meanwhile, owing to the numbers of working men going to these mines, those who remained at home in the old States had employment and at good wages. Of two influences which our friends persistently ignore, one was the failure of crops in Europe for three seasons, 1847, '8 and '9, and an enormous export of grain from this country supplied the deficiency, and, in consequence, we paid our debts and soon had a balance in our favor. The other, the Crimean war (1854) and lasting nearly two years, when Russia contended against France and England. In the latter two their industries were much deranged, and this circumstance also aided us materially, but at the close of the war the ports on the Black and Baltic seas were again opened, and Russia poured her surplus wheat into England and virtually shut us out; meanwhile France and England resumed their manufacturing, while the output of the gold mines in California had already commenced to diminish. "But the low tariff or duties finally had their natural effect; the country was flooded with cheaper-made foreign goods, our manufacturers, stimulated by the excitement of the times, produced more than they could sell under that foreign competition, and within eleven years the inevitable financial crash came in 1857," when the balance of trade was against us to the amount of \$335,000,000.

Tactics of Theorists.—The free-trade and the exclusively or for-revenue-only orators and writers, usually keep in the background the advantages accruing to our people who work in factories in their having employment and at remunerative wages; but on the contrary, often assert that if no tariff, or if a very light one, was imposed, these employés could obtain foreign instead of home made articles

correspondingly cheaper—we have already shown the fallacy of this assertion (p. 14). Again, these advocates uniformly make prominent the alleged profits of the owners of manufacturing establishments, often intimating, and sometimes asserting, that these profits were derived from the only partially requited labor of the employés, while it has been shown that to the latter accrue from eight to nine tenths of the advantages derived from such establishments (p. 29). This mode of reasoning, if not designed, has the effect of arraying one portion of the community against another, of antagonizing, especially, the employed against the employer, by not presenting the subject in all its relations. When did these theorists take the trouble to point out the mutual dependence and the mutual benefits accruing to these two classes of capitalists—the one furnishing the money invested, the other the labor ?

Interest and Sympathy.—From the general tenor of the arguments these advocates use, it would seem a legitimate inference that they have more interest in the success of the foreign manufacturer than they have in that of the American. The latter by his greater skill in inventing and using machinery, and availing himself of the greater intelligence of his employés, has been very successful ; is it because of these requirements that the tariff should be removed or greatly lowered ? The effect of which would be that the foreigner, who has not been so skillful in inventing and applying machinery, would derive an extra profit from his own lack of energy, as well as from the ignorance of his own workpeople. Has not the American a claim upon the proceeds of his skill and energy, and has not his employés the same for the outcome of their greater intelligence ? These advocates appear, also, to have more sympathy for the foreign workpeople than for the American, because in proportion as they take away employment from the latter do they enhance the price of the labor of the former.

The Retrograde and the Advance.—Our for-revenue-exclusively friends seem to have stepped back a half century or

more, away into the gloom of Nullification times, or even beyond, and virtually take the position then held, that the Americans ought to be satisfied if they supplied their own wants from their own workshops—nothing more. In that day nearly all the statesmen, and most of the intelligent people, little dreamed of the vast improvements in store for our own mechanical industries that have since come into existence. The American manufacturers of to-day look far beyond that primitive idea; their ambition is not only to supply the wants of their own people, but they even have the audacity of competing in the markets of the world with European manufacturers of the same class of articles.

VII.

THE PHILANTHROPIC THEORY.

Here is an opportunity for the philanthropic professor of political economy to step in. He, far away from the turmoil of practical life, has wrought out in his study a beautiful theory, a sort of humanitarian idea that all the inhabitants of Christendom, at least, are brethren—as they are in one sense—and, therefore, there should be free trade between the nations as of one vast brotherhood. That sounds well; but unfortunately the professor ignores the fact that all the nations are not at present prepared for the adoption of his theory, and while he is experimenting the American workman and his family would be found in sad straits, because his wages must be either lowered or stopped altogether. The odds are too much against the manufacturer in this comparatively new country, where workmen are not so numerous, and where from that fact alone, if for no other, wages must be higher than is paid for similar service in the crowded workshops of the Old World.

Does the professor in order to carry out his theory desire the American workman to be denied many of the comforts of life, in consequence of his being cramped in his wages as his fellows are in the workshops of Europe? Practical Americans do not wish to grind the faces of their workpeople; while they cannot see why property in the form of imported merchandise should not bear its share of the current expenses of the government, and so long as that principle is just, there ought to be a tax or tariff on that class of property.

Reciprocity Treaties.—Men may patronize one another—nations never; they must act toward each other with mutual

recognition of rights—that is, on an equality. On this principle only can treaties of reciprocity in trade be negotiated. It would be worthy the effort of our philanthropic professors and lecturers in favor of free trade or even for-revenue-only to secure such treaties, and, for the sake of humanity, benefit the workpeople of Europe by increasing their wages and proportionately lowering the tariff on their exports to the United States, their principal customers. This would be a vast benefit to the European operatives themselves, and bring no loss to their manufacturers, as such loss, if any, would be more than made up by the diminished duty and by the increase of sales. Treaties based on these humane principles may be in the future, but meanwhile the American government says to the people in Europe who wish employment, “come here and we will give you farms as your own to cultivate; we will adopt you if you honestly wish to become citizens, and will educate your children equally with our own, and our working people will share with you the advantages they enjoy, but we cannot, for the sake of strangers, oppress our own laboring men by lowering their wages to the level of that paid you.”

A Tariff Based on Wages.—We can see no fairer adjustment—if it were possible—of this question between the United States and Europe, than to *base the tariff on the aggregated wages paid* in the respective countries in the production of the manufactured articles thus laid down in our market. For illustration, take an example that is among the less complex. We impose an average duty of 55 per cent on imported silk fabrics; now let us compare the wages of the operatives engaged in that class of manufacturing in the several European countries. When the American manufacturer pays one dollar or 100 cents, the English pays 48; the French, 33; the Italian, the German and the Belgians, each 25. The average amount of wages paid by these *five* is 33 cents, which would require a duty of 67 per cent to be imposed on the silk goods we import, in order to *equalize the cost of its production*—that is 12 per

cent more than our present tariff, the raw material being assumed to be equal in cost in both Europe and the United States. In accordance with this theory or arrangement, if the foreign manufacturers wish to lower our tariff, they can do so by raising the wages of their own employés. For example, instead of paying the average of 33 cents, they pay 66, that would bring our tariff on silk down to 34 per cent, and if they increased the wages to 75, it would bring the tariff down to 25 per cent, and so on.

An Equal Basis of Cost.—The tariff thus regulated would be as far as possible an *equalizer*, but in respect only to the wages paid the operatives, and thus far the American manufacturer would be on an equality with the European, but even then the former would be at a disadvantage, owing to the lower rate of interest paid on capital in Europe, and the lower rate of wages paid in erecting buildings and in providing machinery, and in addition the greater skill acquired during generations in manufacturing. The latter statement is verified in the case of articles of a very high grade of workmanship, which as yet American skill has not been able to equal—such as certain classes of velvets and silks. The American manufacturers would, however, be willing to enter into competition with their European brethren, even on these unequal conditions, trusting to the general intelligence—an important element of success—of their own employés to make their work more perfect, under their own invention of labor-saving machinery and its appropriate application, together with their own energy and skill in carrying on their works and putting their goods in the markets of the world. When these facts and comparisons are taken into consideration, it is found that the present United States tariff, *in every instance*, falls below the average percentage of European wages that would in that respect make the cost of production equal in both countries.

A Worthy End to be Secured.—If we happen to have more revenue than we want, let the tariff be adjusted on common-

sense principles, meanwhile making the interests of our own workpeople of *primary not secondary* importance. For illustration, if the choice has to be made, which is the better, *high tariff* to make the importation of certain goods almost prohibitory, or by a *low one* to make our own production of the same kind of articles almost prohibitory? Our friends for revenue only, or exclusively, etc., are often exercised lest the tariff should be *so high* as to prohibit the importation of certain goods that compete with those of our own make, but it seems they are not moved to much sadness because of a tariff being *so low* as to prevent our own workpeople having a fair share of employment.

Misleading Statements.—These advocates often use arguments that are misleading. They tell the bewildered workman or mechanic that the government imposes a tariff of 55 per cent on imported silk goods in consequence he—“the down trodden”—must pay for his wife’s silk dress fifty-five cents on a dollar more than he would if there were no tariff, or in proportion if a very low one. The simple man imagines he has been treated ill, but his common sense wife, detecting the absurdity of his complaint, tells him she does not want high-priced silk dresses, if silk dresses at all. If rich men buy for their wives or daughters silk or velvet dresses of foreign make and at a very high price by all means let them. Why should any one object to the purchase of high-priced materials of dress by those who are able and willing to buy them. For every hundred dollars they thus pay for foreign make velvets or silks, fifty-five go to defray the expenses of the National government, and thus these buyers aid the people at large, while in addition affording occasions of employment to thousands upon thousands in our own silk factories, but producing a lower graded article. Under the influence of this duty—the highest we impose on textile fabrics—our workers in silk obtain fair wages for making ribbons and trimmings and dress silks, and likewise velvets of a lower grade, as we have not yet acquired the skill to make the very highest class of silk manufacture. If no duty or very

little was levied on foreign silks, the low wages paid silk operatives, especially in France and Italy, would compel this particular manufacture to cease altogether in the United States, unless we paid our workers in silk the same rate of wages. This industry has grown so rapidly since 1861 that there are invested in it in the Union nearly 40 million dollars, and in consequence, in this manufacture, multitudes of Americans, male and female, especially the latter, find employment. The present tariff pays well to the treasury; though the amount of silk goods imported is limited in quantity, yet, the duty being high, the revenue derived is very large. Moreover it comes from the rich, who choose to indulge their taste in that form of luxury.

Luxuries.—The sum of the matter is, that those who purchase luxuries from foreign lands confer benefits upon the country at large, by paying the heavy duties usually imposed upon such articles, and this principle is carried out, as the presumption is that none but the wealthy will purchase that class of goods. It is well understood by the intelligent that the introduction of elaborate works of art and specimens of skill and culture, such as bronzes, paintings, etc., have a refining influence upon the people, and for that reason the duty upon them should be only nominal. This class of property stands in a different relation to American labor than that which is used in the production of articles that supply a common want, and yet such importations, when large, are among the evidences of the prosperity of the country, and indicate that the majority of the people have employment at remunerative wages, while the capital invested pays fair dividends.

VIII.

WAGES.

It is clear that the chief difficulty in the way of manufacturers in the United States competing successfully with those of Europe must be the vital question of wages—estimated by practical men to range in this country, in proportion to the wages paid, from 80 to 90 per cent of the cost in producing the article made, while in Europe it ranges also in proportion to the wages paid. The money invested in lands, in buildings, in machinery, and raw material is found to be comparatively a small amount of the aggregate expended, when compared with the continuous expenses of hiring the workpeople. On account of the low rate of interest on money and low wages, it costs less to erect buildings and obtain machinery in Europe than in the United States, but it takes no more heat to smelt a ton of iron in England than in Pennsylvania, no more power to weave a yard of cloth in Manchester, England, than in Lowell, Massachusetts, or to make a yard of silk in Lyons, France, than in Paterson, New Jersey. Yet there is a vast difference in the expense, arising from the fact that the American manufacturer pays from two to three times as much to his operatives as is paid by his European rival.

The Illustrations.—Suppose a manufacturer in Lowell pays in wages \$2000 a week, while a rival in Manchester, making the same style of goods, pays but \$1000 in producing the same amount. This alone enables the latter to sell the week's product of his factory \$1000 cheaper than the former. Under these conditions the American must retire from the business or reduce the wages of his employés to

the level of that paid by his rival, the Englishman. This statement in respect to the difference in amount of wages paid the workpeople in Europe and those paid the same class in the United States is based upon well ascertained facts.

Again: Col. Carroll D. Wright, the chief of the Massachusetts "Labor Bureau," in its annual report (1884), institutes a comparison between the weekly wages paid operatives in twenty four separate industries in Great Britain and the corresponding ones in Massachusetts, and with the following results: In Great Britain the average weekly wages paid was \$5.33, while in Massachusetts it was \$10.31. It is thus seen that the wages paid in the latter lacks only a few cents of being double that paid in the former. As we learn from other sources, very nearly the same rates of comparison in wages prevail between the foundries and furnaces of the United States and those of Scotland and England, while it is strikingly true of the shipyards on the Clyde and on the Delaware.

Shipyards.—As so much attention has recently been directed to the building of American iron ships and the revival of our navy, it is not out of place to notice this item more fully. A shipyard in England or on the Clyde employing 2000 men of all grades, pays weekly \$10,700, while on the Delaware the same number of men performing similar work, receive weekly \$22,540. Mr. John Roach, a builder of iron ships at Chester, on the Delaware, says that 90 per cent of the cost of an iron ship is in the wages, and the Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, of New York city, a well-known statesman and manufacturer, is reported as confirming in general terms that statement in respect to the cost in other American manufacturing; with this opinion also coincides that of Mr. Edward Atkinson, of Boston, a celebrated expert and political economist.

Statements of Experts.—At a meeting of the British Association, held in Montreal, August 1884, the latter gentleman

demonstrated that the proportion of wage-earners to employers was 15 to 1. He assumed that in the United States the maximum rate of profit on capital "does not exceed ten per cent, and that the overwhelming mass of annual profit is shared by those depending on work for subsistence." "In the long run, the wage-earners must get 90 per cent of the annual profit." "The profits in manufacturing were only one half what they were fifty years ago, and while they were steadily diminishing the wages of workmen were advancing." In the same line of illustration is the statement of Col. Wright, of the Bureau of Statistics in Massachusetts, that in twenty years, from 1860 to 1880, the average annual wages for each one employed in making shoes, "men, women, and children, increased from \$251.48 to \$387.21, yet the shoes were cheaper and better made by the improved machinery."

In connection with this is given the statement of Sir Richard Temple, made at Montreal, August 1884, "That the aggregate of British national industries was beginning to fall behind that of the United States, and that, regarding thrift, the growth of savings banks in England was moderately greater, though being much less than in the United States."

A Further Illustration.—The iron ore and the coal in the mine, and the timber standing in the forest, are in theory worth nothing until the skill and labor of man manipulates them and finally puts them together in the form of some article, it may be the form of a plough or of an iron ship. From this data it is estimated that nine-tenths of the direct advantages derived from building iron ships or making ploughs accrue in the form of employment and wages to the mechanics, who prepare their materials and work upon them, and in this way they derive dividends from *their capital*, their skill and their muscle.

The Virtual Protection.—It is proper to notice in this connection that the builders of iron ships on the Clyde have

a very efficient, indirect protection, which becomes a great inducement for capitalists to invest in building them, for in consequence of this they can be sold to a much greater advantage. That protection consists in the enormous subsidies paid annually by the British government to the owners of these ocean-going iron steamships, in addition to ample remuneration for carrying the mails. These subsidies far exceed in value any aid American ship-builders incidentally receive from the operation of the tariff. The advancement of its marine is a benefit to the whole British empire, and the encouragement thus given is in the form of paying liberally for whatever the government requires of these steamers, such as carrying the mails or transporting troops. A similar practical recognition of the importance of sustaining our merchant marine ought to be made by Congress.

Reports on Wages Paid in Europe.—The very important item of wages requires further elucidation. The national government during the administration of President Hayes instituted for the first time systematic measures to ascertain the amount of wages paid the operatives in foreign manufacturing establishments. The Hon. Wm. M. Evarts, then Secretary of State, directed the United States consuls in the various cities of Europe to institute inquiries in respect to the hours of labor required, the rate of wages paid, and also as to the habits of the working people. The reports of these consuls (1879) proved, among other items, that the average wages paid in the United States for similar service were more than double that paid in Great Britain; in France, two-thirds more; in Belgium and Denmark, nearly the same, while in Italy, Spain and Germany, it was more than three times as much, and in the Netherlands four times. The consuls also stated in their reports that bread and the ordinary necessaries of life were better and cheaper in the United States than in Europe; that in the latter work-people could afford to have meat only once or twice a week, and frequently not at all, while the living in comfortable

homes, as enjoyed by the industrious and temperate people in the United States who work for wages, were almost unknown to the mass of the laboring class in Europe. It is sometimes stated, however, by American tourists, that living is cheaper in certain localities in Europe than in some portions of the United States; but that condition evidently results from the low rents of buildings and the low wages paid the caterers, and not because of the cheapness of the food itself. These consular reports also stated that great misery resulted to the working people, especially in England, because of their using intoxicating drinks to excess, and from strikes, the latter causing waste of time, while inducing habits of idleness and the consumption of savings. These reports attracted universal attention, and their substance was quoted by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, London, which added: "More misery results in England and Germany from drinking, strikes, and socialism than from all other causes, hard times included."

Efforts not Relaxed.—The general government itself has not thus far relaxed its efforts in this respect, since these reports were handed in, while the investigation has been carried still further by private enterprise. Mr. R. P. Porter, a member of the "Tariff Commission" appointed by President Arthur in 1881, was commissioned by the *New York Tribune* to investigate the subject more fully. The results have been issued in its extras 84 and 85. The later reports (1882–1883) go very much into detail, and to them we refer the reader for the confirmation of the general truth of our statements in respect to the low wages paid in Europe, when compared with those paid in the United States.

IX.

LOW WAGES—HOW CAUSED.

THE cause of low wages in England may be traced to the over-crowded population, and not to the system of free-trade; for the latter under the circumstances is certainly the best for her workpeople, especially in regard to their supplies of food. Her facilities for manufacturing far excel to-day those of any other nation in the world; because of her policy of protection in times past, her mechanical industries have been firmly established, and her workshops have never been broken up by foreign enemies, as the Island has not been invaded for the last eight hundred years. During the wars that grew out of the French Revolution—and which lasted for twenty-five years—her industrial interests progressed far beyond precedent, while at the same time the corresponding industries of the nations on the Continent were broken up again and again by hostile invasions, and manufacturing nearly ceased, except that pertaining to the carrying on of war. These influences combined to push forward the mechanical industries of England, especially of every kind used in the domestic life of her own people, as well as in that of the outside civilized world, and gave them an impulse which carried them so far in advance of those of other nations that in the main they have never yet been overtaken. Her laboring population, meanwhile, increased so much that her workshops were crowded to repletion, and multitudes were out of employment; the excessive competition thus induced brought about the reduction of wages. To supply this large population with food and as cheaply as possible induced the government, in the interests of the laboring classes, to *remit*

the tax which had been levied hitherto on that class of property known as corn, which term covered all cereals used in supplying food to this large portion of the population. Cereals thus took rank as one kind of *raw material*, and were as essential for carrying on England's manufacturing as was the wool and iron ore or coal, or any other material which she put in shape for the use of her own people or to sell to the outside world.

The Discussion.—There has recently been much discussion in relation to our own over-production of manufactured goods, and the reason given why we fail to dispose of this surplus to other nations is, that we have imposed a tariff so high upon the goods imported from the latter that they are unable to exchange with us on equal terms. Then it is urged that all our duties should be removed in order that we could exchange our surplus of manufactured products for those of foreign nations. This surplusage has been the outgrowth of the fair wages paid our workpeople, as by means of that they were induced to labor. Suppose that our manufacturers lower the price of these goods to what they could afford had they paid the same wages that are paid in Europe, and, at so much loss, dispose of the present stock on hand, what would be the result in the future? The inevitable answer would be, that they must hereafter lower the wages of their employés to the European standard in order to meet their European rivals in the markets of the world. The ultimate effect would be to speed our workpeople on the way toward pauperism, at which goal untold multitudes of English workpeople have either already arrived or are in the near vicinity.

Results of Low Wages.—It is not out of place in this connection to notice the effects produced where low or inadequate wages prevail. Since our commercial intercourse is more intimate with Great Britain than with any other country of Europe, and inasmuch as our mechanical pursuits have equally close relations with those of her people,

we will confine this notice to that country alone. In Great Britain the system of low wages has reduced more to absolute pauperism in proportion to the population than in any other European country. American Consul-General Merritt, at London, reports that, in 1883, in the British Isles the number of paupers was 1,010,061—one in every 33 of the inhabitants—and while the British government spent 20,000,000 dollars on its public schools, it spent 52 millions on its paupers. The same year \$91,000,000 were spent in the United States on the public schools.

The Corrupting Influences.—The degrading effects of pauperism are not limited to one generation alone, but extend much farther, and corrupt the inner life of both parents and children, destroy the independence of those who labor, and fritter away their self-respect. The evil propagates itself; the children, seeing their parents content with being paupers, look upon that condition of life as not disgraceful. This seems to be, as far as we are concerned, the worst feature of the case; and its general truth can be partially verified to-day in the pauper asylums of New York City. In taking the census of the nativities of the inmates of these institutions, it will be found, that in addition to the foreign born, that of those who claim to be natives, perhaps four-fifths are the offspring of *foreign parents*, and, still further, that about an equal number of the latter are from the British Isles. The American people must eradicate these evils or they will extend to future generations. To-day there is growing up among us, especially in the large cities, a generation of this class that is more or less imbued with the negative elements of non-self-respect and non-independence of character. Such material does not produce industrious and self-supporting citizens. In the practical application of the theory of “for revenue only or exclusively” to the wages of those employed the United States government would drive a hard bargain with its own workpeople—those who earn their living by hired labor—and yet the American people are blandly invited to

enter upon the first stage on the way toward pauperism, the natural outgrowth of low wages or an insufficiency of the means of self-support. The advocates of these theories pooh! pooh! the results of the low-wages system when applied in the United States. Is it because, when compared with that of England, its evils have not yet attained so great proportions? The influence is evidently increasing, and will in time interfere with the progress of our mechanical industries if we lower so much the wages of the work-people therein engaged.

The Disclaimer.—The advocates for free trade or for revenue exclusively exclaim, what have we to do with the paupers of England and the vile homes in which so many of her workpeople live? We answer: experience shows that even the limited application of either of your theories to our mechanical industries has hitherto crippled and, in some instances, ruined them, and if fully put in practice, and thus lowering wages still further, will produce, though in a modified form, results in the United States similar to those existing to-day in England.

National Training.—No intelligent patriot nor true statesman wishes to introduce measures that would demoralize the minds and habits of the people by frittering away their self-reliance and independence, but rather that they should support themselves and train their children in the same elevating principles, that they may become good citizens. This can be brought about, to a great extent, by the work-people themselves—male and female—having wages that will inspire them with hope and enable them by means of industry and judicious economy and temperance to live in comfort. But what are we to think of the grade of patriotism, or how shall we appropriately characterize the inhumanity and selfishness of associated mechanics, for a temporary gain to themselves, preventing young men or boys learning trades or some mechanic art, by means of which they can honestly support themselves and become worthy

and self-respecting citizens, rather than enforced idlers and perhaps, in time, criminals before the law? Can a greater wrong than this be inflicted upon American young men? Yet we often read in the newspapers of the day of such outrages being committed.

That would be a singular process of training a virtuous and noble man, to permit him to pass his youth amid debaucheries and vices, as if his soul would be more pure in after life because of being thus contaminated! We would prefer the young man should be pure from the start and continue so through life; and thus we want the American people to pass their National youth amid encouraging and elevating surroundings, educational, industrial, and moral.

But, after all, it is easy to see that the over-production which arises from persistent and energetic labor, because of high wages and the hope of reward, as in the United States is preferable to the over-production which results because of low wages, as in England, and which tempts the manufacturer to extend his operations oftentimes unwisely.

X.

WAGES SEEK THEIR LEVEL.

OWING to the easy and frequent intercourse between the civilized nations of to-day, the products of both agricultural and mechanical industries are coming more and more into competition in the markets of the world. The articles thus on sale will gradually approach each other in the cost of production, and if manufacturers find themselves working at a disadvantage in this respect with their rivals, they will use means to lower their expenses. Experience has shown that their most effective measure to accomplish that end is to cut down the wages of those whom they employ, because in that item is incurred the greatest amount of cost. This process, unless counteracted, will surely continue until the wages paid in the workshops of Europe, and in those of the United States, will become virtually the same in amount. Such will be the result of this excessive international competition, and which can be avoided by us in only one way, and that is by Congress imposing a tax or tariff upon foreign manufactured articles which come specially into competition with our own industries, in such manner as to equalize the cost of production.

The Cure of Over-Production.—When competition between our own manufacturers is carried to extremes it results in over-production—that evil must cure itself, and if proper prudence is exercised it need not occur. The fault is in the want of foresight in the capitalists, who for illustration, when there is a sufficient number of cotton mills making a certain class of goods, and in such quantities as to supply the market, outside capitalists step in and establish

more mills and add to the stock on hand! In consequence the market becomes glutted; the result, all the mills lose and the weaker become bankrupt, not because of a high tariff, but of a lack of common-sense business capacity in those who interfere with a market evenly balanced, both in production and in consumption.

The charge that a high tariff stimulates industry too much seems to be a favorite argument with free traders, if we may judge from the number of their writers, who assert that over-production is such a result; one saying that "through excessive competition stimulated by high protection, business is conducted with little profit;" another, that "the excessive tariff stimulates the industries which it protects into over-production." These writers do not appear to realize that the stagnation of business, because of our over-production, is not quite as bad as that brought by competition with foreign low wages. But in this matter, however, the tariff is not at all in fault, as it does not *propose* to furnish brains nor business talent to capitalists who happen to have money lying idle. This lack of practical wisdom is by no means limited to the United States, as free-trade England has often been subjected to similar mismanagement.

Higher Wages.—It is sometimes argued that a tariff imposed on this equalizing principle does not have the effect of keeping up in this country the wages of those employed in mechanical industries. How do gentlemen using this line of argument account for the acknowledged fact that wages *are higher* in the United States, and always have been, than in Europe? This fact was recognized by our leading statesmen at the very inauguration of our government, and also that some measure must be adopted by which our manufacturers could meet, even in our own market, those of Europe on equal terms as to cost. That sentiment is embodied in the preamble to the first tariff (1790) enacted by us as a nation, and signed by George Washington.

It is of special interest in this connection to note the progress that has been made within twenty-five years in the increase of wages and in the cheapness of the necessities of life. Mr. Edw. Atkinson (already quoted) furnishes statistics which show that "the wages of mechanics in Massachusetts have been 25 per cent more in 1885 than in 1860, while the purchasing power of money was 26 per cent greater; the workman, therefore, could either raise his standard of living, or on the same standard could save one-third of his wages." It follows from this that the mechanic or workman of 1885 was fifty-one per cent better off than the mechanic of 1860. It is a question whether the capital in money, in its increase, has a better showing than the capital of skill and brains, during the same period.

Contrast in Populations.—If American employers even wished to pay wages as low as those paid in Europe, our sparse population would forbid it, we having only, it is estimated, 20 inhabitants to the square mile, in contrast with 287 in Great Britain—in England proper 476; in France 133, and in Belgium 443. Our only alternative is to *equalize* the cost of production by import duties, thus enabling us to pay our workpeople fair wages, or else reduce the latter to the same level with those paid in Europe. We do not expect a shrewd American capitalist to invest his money in manufacturing enterprises in which he would pay his workpeople 50 or 70 per cent higher wages than his European rival; neither do we expect a common-sense American workman to invest his capital—his brain, his skill and his muscle—and for return receive as dividends *starvation* wages.

The practical application as we have seen, of the "exclusively or for revenue only" theory, has almost the same disastrous results upon the mechanical industries of the country as that of free trade; though the former produces revenue, it is at the expense of ruining the wages of the workpeople. From the nature of the case this would be the result, as the system practically treats the industrial rights

of the individual citizen as *subordinate* to the abstract *money interest* of the general government.

Employment of Females.—At this point a word may be said in relation to the employment and the remuneration of females in American mills producing textile fabrics. Says Mr. Joseph Nimmo, Jr., chief of the Bureau of Statistics, Washington City, and an authority on the subject: "The wages we pay in the United States average 1.10 per cent higher than that paid in Scotland for identically the same class of work, the quality of the work being similar. The causes of this great difference in wages are in the very high comparative rates paid for the labor of females in the United States." In Mr. Lincoln's first administration (1862) the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, employed numbers of women as counters of money, clerks, copyists, etc. They were found to be competent for that class of work, and the system extended to the other departments, where similar work was required. At the close of Mr. Arthur's administration (March 3, 1885), the whole number of women employed in the various departments, was about 1600 of whom 700 were in the Treasury. According to the grades of efficiency, their salaries ranged from 720 to 1200 dollars a year. The example set by Secretary Chase has had great influence, and merchants, bankers, publishers, etc., have since employed increasing numbers of women in such clerical service as required more than the ordinary education that is obtained in the common school.

In the schedule of wages paid in both England and Scotland, that of females is in proportion low when compared with that of males, and much more so when compared with that of their own sex in the United States. For this act of justice and kindly feeling toward woman, let honor be given the native American manufacturer.

Kind and Unkind Treatment.—It has been the custom since the introduction of manufacturing on a large scale into this country for the native American employer to care

for the comfort and the morals of those whom he employed, especially females. (*Patton's Hist. of the American People*, p. 712.) Says Mr. R. P. Porter, when speaking of the girls coming out of the thread mills in Paisley, Scotland—Clark's and Coates's: "Most of them were warmly clad, none had bonnets, and some barefooted tramped through the cold slush, yet upon the whole they were a superior class of girls to those I had seen coming out of the mills in Manchester, England." They "would not compare with the neatly-dressed girls, with shapely American shoes, neat hats, tidy collars or ruching round the neck, with umbrellas in rainy weather and sunshades in summer, that one can see coming out of the Merrimac mills at Lowell, or Conant's thread Mills at Pawtucket." How could these poor girls of Paisley or Manchester dress differently or live comfortably on starvation wages? Boarding and lodging houses under such control as to protect the girls employed in the mills, and as far as possible, give them a comfortable home, as are found in Lowell or Willimantic, *are in Paisley or Manchester unknown*. The same authority says when speaking of the linen factories of Dundee, Scotland, in which great numbers of women are employed: "The operatives' quarter of the city contains hundreds of houses totally unfit for human habitations. They are low gray stone buildings, with but one room on a floor, and windows about two feet square. Some of them which I entered fairly reeked with filth, and I actually found in some whole families living like animals on the bare ground." These examples of poverty and squalidness are the legitimate results of low wages, and belong more to the general rule than to exceptions. Neither are these terrible and degrading effects attributed alone to the improvidence and idleness of those employed, for the economical and industrious, and even temperate, can at best, under such circumstances, live only from hand to mouth, and finally for the most part end their days in the poor-house.

The Contrast—Paisley and Willimantic.—In contrast with

the facts just stated in respect to the care for the welfare and comfort of the workpeople employed in the thread mills of Coates and Clark in Paisley, we will notice the manner in which persons are treated who are employed in their great rival in the United States—the Willimantic thread mills, in Connecticut. How marked the contrast in the character of the houses in which live the operatives of the Paisley mills with the dwellings occupied by the employés in the Willimantic! The latter company has erected nearly fifty cottages in a healthy and desirable location, to be occupied at reasonable rents by the families of those employed in the mills. These cottages are of several styles of architecture, and are generally painted in neutral colors to please the eye; they front on a winding road; each one has around it a grass or garden plot, and for flowers in front. The company even awards prizes for the best of the latter, on the principle, that if the spinners “love flowers they will make better thread,” as was remarked by an official of the corporation. This may be assumed by a free-trade casuist as an impure motive; but humanity deems it certainly better than to work employés at “starvation wages,” and then when they are worn out provide them only with a pauper’s home. Yet a Yale College Professor of Political Economy—of the free-trade type, and a member of the Cobden Club, would blot this all out, as we infer from his reported aphorism when referring to Willimantic: “*We want thread, not thread mills.*”

The Workpeople’s Library and Recreation.—In addition, these employés have access to a circulating library, to which the corporation as well as the employés contribute to share the expense, and the interest which the latter take in the books of the library may be inferred from the fact that among them, on an average, are in use at the same time about 400 volumes. These advantages are fully appreciated by the *native-born* employés, because they have learned to read in the public schools; but unfortunately not so by the multitude of foreigners, who have not enjoyed

the same privileges; especially can this be said of those who come to us from Canada and the British Isles.

The mills run sixty hours a week, but it is so arranged that the operatives have the afternoon of Saturday to themselves—the odd hours being distributed. “They work sixty hours a week, but not ten hours each day; for five days they work longer, in order to quit at quarter past one o’clock on Saturday, and thus have time for recreation.” Similar arrangements for the comfort, the mental and moral improvement of those who are employed, especially in our textile factories, are not unusual, but common, throughout that portion of the Union where such mills exist. For illustration, the Willimantic Linen Company, of the same village, decided a year or two since to employ only those who could read and write; and they at their own expense established night schools, also naming a certain time for the illiterates in their employ to remedy the defect. The directors, however, discriminated in respect to those who were too advanced in years to learn, but were strict with all others. This action was based on the true principle—*the more intelligent the workman the better his work*.

This account concerning the Willimantic Mills is thus more fully given as a type of the usual manner in which native-born manufacturers, for the most part, treat those whom they employ. Numerous instances to that effect could be further adduced, but it is not within the scope of this brief book to treat of these contrasts but in very general terms.

John Bright’s Lament.—In this connection, let us listen to the wail of an extensive manufacturer, the famous liberal English statesman—John Bright—than whom no one knew better of what he spoke concerning the condition of the working people of England and Scotland. He says in an address: “We find poverty and misery. What does it mean, when all these families are living in homes of one room, to us who have several and all the comforts of life? It means more than I can describe, and more than I will

attempt to enter into. The fact is, there passes before my eyes a vision of millions of families—not individuals, but families—fathers, mothers, passing ghastly, sorrow-stricken, in never-ending procession from the cradle to the grave.” To a similar condition of poverty, induced by low wages, the workpeople of the United States are invited by their injudicious friends, the “for-revenue-only or exclusively for public purposes,” and their zealous allies at the ballot-box—the free-traders. As low wages have been so long established in Europe and are not likely to change for the better, we must adapt our policy to counteract this bad influence, and not depend upon European employers to adopt our more liberal system of paying living wages. We must take the facts as they are; the poverty and distress among the operatives of Europe are for the most part the outgrowth of low wages, crushing the hopes and obliterating the self-respect of the workpeople. These immense evils genuine and humane statesmen wish to ward off from the working classes in the United States.

XI.

BUY WHERE YOU CAN PAY EASIEST.

A favorite maxim—originating with Richard Cobden—of the advocates of “for revenue only or exclusively,” has often deceived American workingmen; it is, “Buy where you can buy cheapest, and sell where you can sell dearest.” This is a nicely-turned phrase, but, unfortunately for its application, it is never true or available to any extent when applied to workingmen, who, instead of having a surplus of money on hand to make purchases, have to earn it as needed by their own labor. The aphorism ought to be *Buy where you can pay easiest*. An article may be cheap in its nominal price, but dear under certain conditions. If a workingman wishes to rent a house for his family, and contracts to pay for it by his labor, it is cheaper for him, as he can pay his rent *easier* than if it was nominally at a lower rate, when he runs the risk of obtaining the means by employment elsewhere. He pays easily and surely by selling his labor by contract, the latter being his *only* article to exchange for his rent. This principle holds good in respect to the supplies he may buy for his family. Now, where can he sell his labor? He certainly cannot sell it in Europe; he must sell it here, if anywhere, but he cannot sell it here unless he has the opportunity to secure employment, and, if our industries are crippled or our factories closed, he will have to sell it at a low rate in the first instance, and not at all in the second.

The advocates just mentioned, whose theories on the general subject would bring about this state of uncertainty, attempt to console the working people by asserting that they could buy foreign goods much cheaper if very low or no duties were imposed upon them. This statement we do not

accept as true, because other considerations prove it to be untrue. These gentlemen fail to show the workmen how they would be able to purchase articles made abroad, if they themselves have little employment and consequently little money.

Workingmen's Views.—The intelligent and industrious mechanic prefers to have good wages, and even pay higher for what he needs—very little of which comes from foreign lands. In order to ascertain the facts on this point, extensive inquiries have been made in New York City of temperate and industrious mechanics or workingmen who gain their living by wages; their answers confirm this statement. To the question how much of their money goes to purchase foreign-made articles for their families, the reply has uniformly been, scarcely any—some say not one dollar in thirty, and some not one in fifty. This appears more clearly if we look at particulars. His house rent, the daily food of his family, are home productions, and ninety-nine hundredths of his wearing apparel are made by his neighbors—other American workmen. The linen in his shirt bosom may come from abroad, and so does his tea and coffee; but the Republicans in Congress took the duty off both these in 1872; yet, unfortunately, in respect to coffee, the Emperor of Brazil, Dom Pedro, immediately put the same amount as a tax or export duty on the coffee sent from his dominions. The result is, we derive no benefit from removing that duty. The author of "Free Land and Free Trade"—by the way a member of the Cobden Club—thinks there ought to be a tariff on tea and coffee, because we do not produce them. Is he willing to put a tax on that which we cannot produce, but not on the article of foreign manufacture that comes in competition with that which we can make ourselves?

Higher Wages—Higher Prices.—If the goods that we ought to manufacture are made abroad, just to that amount is employment taken from our people. Let these advocates—the latter's professed friends—persuade the workingmen to

follow their lead, and vote to cripple indirectly the mechanical industries of the country, and either throw themselves out of employment or lower their own wages. The arguments on the cheapness of foreign products have very little force, if the laboring man or mechanic has not the means of earning the money wherewith to purchase them. It is financially better for those employed to receive the higher rate of wages, and pay higher for what they need, than to have low wages and buy at a lower rate. Because of the higher wages received in the United States they are presumed to earn more than they expend, and in that case their income or dividend will be enhanced in a greater proportion. It is a well-ascertained fact that such is the result in respect to those workmen who are industrious, economical, and temperate, and that the idle, the improvident, and the intemperate are the ones that are mostly found in financial straits.

Savings Banks.—In this connection we cite the case of the savings banks in Massachusetts, because in that State the proportion of those who work for wages, we presume, is greater than in any other in the Union, and likewise this State collects for the use of the people accurate information from year to year, both in respect to labor and wages. These carefully prepared statistics show that in 1865 the amount in savings banks for each man, woman, and child was \$47.29; and twenty years afterward, in 1885, the amount was for each \$141.64, lacking only a few cents of being three times as much. Yet our free-trade or for-revenue-only friends never weary of proclaiming their favorite aphorism that “the rich are growing richer, and the poor poorer,” but, on the contrary, in the presence of these facts, “is it not true, that while the rich may have become no poorer, the poor have been steadily growing richer?” The commissioners of savings banks estimate that at least three-fourths of the moneys thus deposited are by those who work for wages. This estimate is made in relation to the working people of New England and the Northern Middle States.

XII.

SUCCESSFUL INDUSTRIES BENEFIT ALL THE WORKPEOPLE.

The workingman neither needs nor buys much of the kind of goods he himself aids in making. Suppose the father works in a cotton mill; how much of his wages goes to buy cotton cloth or prints for his family, when compared with the amount he expends in house rent, food, and other necessaries? The same principle applies to the man who works in a woolen mill, a hat factory, or an iron foundry. The ratio of the expense is about the same for the amount of what each needs of the articles he or she aids in producing. This principle pervades the whole field of mechanical industry and pertains to all those who labor for wages in factories. The women who work in silk mills in Paterson, New Jersey, or in Hartford, Connecticut, may buy for themselves silk ribbons, but very few of them purchase silk dresses made at these mills, because of the expense.

Mutual Interests.—The worker in iron cannot afford that the hatter should give up making hats that he, the former, according to the theory, should be able to buy a hat a little cheaper because on it there was no duty. Neither can the cotton spinner or weaver afford that the woolen mill should stop work that he might buy a suit of woolen clothes a dollar or two cheaper. It is for the advantage of those employed in mechanical industries that the same should be *diversified, and all be successful*. If one industry fails or ceases to exist, the injurious effect is felt by the employés in all the others, because the workmen thus thrown out of employment cannot afford to have their capital—their skill and their muscle—lie idle, and they soon begin work in

some other industrial pursuit. The result is the latter becomes crowded with workmen, and in consequence the wages of those originally employed are lowered. In a money point of view, it is clearly more advantageous for working people to have good wages, and even pay higher for what they need, than to be restricted in supplying their wants or comforts because their incomes are so limited. This supposition is based on the assumption that those who labor are industrious, temperate, and economical, and at the end of the year have a surplus, unless an unlooked-for misfortune befalls them. The idle and the spendthrifts, or those who waste their time and money in drinking-saloons, would of course always be in financial difficulties. Will not American workingmen—skillful mechanics and ordinary laborers—read and think for themselves on this subject, and be thus able to recognize that the interests of those who work for wages and of those who furnish the capital that gives the latter employment, are mutual? Let both classes of capitalists act together harmoniously and vote intelligently, so as to prevent adverse legislation, and thus secure good dividends—the one class by having their money profitably invested, and the other by having abundant employment at fair wages.

Home Competition.—Our statesmen of the lukewarm or half free-trade school in times past often took measures to lower the tariffs that *equalized* the cost of production just enough to make the competition between the American and foreign manufacturer, instead of so legislating as to induce others on our own soil to enter upon the business, and thus secure two objects—employment for our own working people and at the same time cheapening the manufactured article by means of home competition. When the American people entered upon the policy of doing their own manufacturing, it was supposed they could do no more than supply their own wants; but their mechanical industries advanced so rapidly in consequence of the discreet management of capital, and the intelligence and industrious habits of the

operatives, together with the aid of native inventions, that in many classes of goods they began to compete with the manufacturers of Europe in their own as well as in the markets of the world. This competition received a great impulse because of the Centennial Exposition (1876), which for the first time afforded an extensive comparison of American skill with that of other nations. Another secret of this success is also found in the fact that our industries have been virtually untrammled since 1862, though often threatened by adverse legislation. True statesmanship is willing to let well alone, and by judicious measures promote our own mechanical industries, that by means of their products sent abroad our merchants may oftener have the balance of trade in their favor. On the contrary, any influence that would cripple these industries would also retard this exportation.

The Balance of Trade.—Our industrial and commercial history proves that we always have had the balance of trade against us—that is, imported more in value than we exported—whenever we did not have a tariff sufficiently high *to equalize the cost of production*. This difference in value, of course, had to be paid the foreign manufacturer in gold or silver. Our first experience in this line was during the period—about eight years—between the treaty of peace at the close of the Revolution and the passage of our first National tariff bill, signed by George Washington in 1790. During this time the balance of trade was against us, when, according to Bolles (p. 9), in his *Financial History of the United States*, “every piece of gold and silver was swept from the land in paying for English manufactured goods.”

Our *second* experience was in 1837, during the reign of the famous Compromise Tariff of 1833. According to this tariff it was calculated that an annual reduction of one-tenth per cent of the current import duties would reach in 1842 a uniform or horizontal rate of *twenty* per cent on all classes of imported goods, but the balance of trade increased against us so rapidly that the crash came in 1837, five years

before the designated time. The balance against us amounted to \$150,000,000. Twenty years later, 1857, we had our *third* experience, when the amount against us was \$335,000,000. This was the result of the semi-free-trade tariff of 1846.

The *fourth* instance in which the balance of trade was against us was in 1873, when it amounted to the unprecedented sum of \$1,000,000,000. The conditions under which this happened were peculiar. In the first place, we had a tariff sufficiently high to be protective, but there were other influences at work. Owing to the immense outlay of money in the then existing war, the government was under the necessity, in addition to the tariff, of levying an *internal tax*, which reached almost every variety of manufactured goods, among which were those that came in competition with the foreign made. The result was that the home-made article was taxed to such an extent as to neutralize the *import duty* as a protection. Under these circumstances the foreigner, having the advantage of paying lower wages, could pay these import duties, and then be able to undersell the native manufacturer in his own market, because of the internal tax which the latter paid. This state of things, together "with the speculation and over-production incited by the inflated currency of the ten previous years," brought about the crash of 1873. Congress retrieved the Nation's affairs by removing the internal tax, especially on those articles with which the foreigner competed, but let the tariff on imports remain, and within about three years the \$1,000,000,000 of foreign debt disappeared, and the balance of trade turned in our favor, and to such an extent that in nine years (1876-1885) it amounted altogether to \$1,447,000,000, an average annual credit balance in our favor of \$161,000,000.

Effects of High and Low Tariffs.—Low tariffs with us induce a large importation of common articles, which we can make ourselves, and thus they interfere adversely with the incomes of our workpeople by limiting them in their employment, while a tariff proportionately high on high-priced

goods, which require much skill and labor to make, induces a comparatively limited importation; but that high duty is paid by the wealthy, while at the same time it incidentally benefits the workpeople who may be employed in producing the lower grades of the same kind of goods. In this manner an equalizing or protective tariff, as generally understood—for illustration, such as the one imposed on manufactured silk goods of high grades—makes compensation, inasmuch as it gives, incidentally, remunerative employment to our own people, creates incomes from capital invested in the form of money, while the recipients of the latter can afford to purchase the foreign high-priced articles, and thus bring an abundance of revenue to the National treasury, the benefit arising from which accrues to the people at large.

DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RESOURCES.

Enlightened and judicious statesmanship is slow to act, but careful to devise measures that are adapted to develop and make available the resources of the entire country, and at the same time give employment to that class—by far the largest in the community—who work for wages. To thus harmonize mutual interests is one of the highest accomplishments of genuine statesmen, those who labor for the welfare of the greatest number, but not at the expense of the smallest, and so combine measures that the benefits arising from such combination may accrue equally to both parties—those employed and those employing. In order to secure success, it is essential that this policy should be uniform. Up to 1862 there was no greater detriment to American improvement and success in mechanical industries than the frequent and injudicious changes made during that period by Congress in relation to duties levied on foreign manufactured articles that came directly in competition with the same class made here, and indirectly interfered with the employment of the laboring classes.

Harmony Needed.—Now is the time for the statesmanship of the whole Union to act in harmony in respect to the development of all our natural resources. The former slave-labor States can have diversities of industries if they wish; there is no impediment in the way of their being successful in manufacturing that cannot in time be overcome. Let them make strenuous efforts by means of schools, public and private, to give a sufficient amount of education to all classes of the community, that they can be able to work

intelligently in whatever employment they may engage. These States have abundant water-power in certain districts; they have vast deposits of coal and iron ore; they have a large population, white and colored, that could be trained to perform all that is required in manufacturing establishments. In addition, they have a climate and a soil so combined as to give them, virtually, the monopoly of the world in raising cotton, which cannot be said of the agricultural products of the West and Northwest. In process of time the people of the South who labor for wages could improve their skill in working in mechanical industries, as the same class has been doing in the North for more than half a century. These considerations ought to introduce into the South a diversity of industrial pursuits wherever there are facilities for the purpose. In addition, it may be noted as an essential element of success that the laboring class to a certain extent must be intelligent, and the people of the South must train the rising generation in their common schools. The unparalleled success in the early stages of manufacturing in New England can be traced fully as much to the intelligence of the young people who then worked in the mills as to the careful supervision of the managers.

The Misleading Term.—Our free-trade or for-revenue-only friends often make the charge of monopoly against those who employ others—it may be manufacturers or railway corporations. The charge thus made often misleads those who unfortunately have not the opportunity, or it may be the necessary information, to investigate and detect the fallacy involved. There can be no monopoly when all are at liberty to enter upon the same business. “Every American has an equal right to engage in and pursue any lawful business or manufacture in any part of the country without preference or favor.” There may be isolated cases wherein the word might be applied, but they are comparatively very few, and such monopolies are soon brought to terms by competition; the mischief done consists more in exciting prejudice in the minds of those who are fit subjects

to be influenced for political purposes. No one thinks of charging the farmer or the captain of a ship with being a monopolist, because any one who owns a farm or a ship can enter upon the business. Can the farmer command the sunshine and the rain for his crops alone? or can the captain secure for his ship alone the winds that are abroad upon the ocean? Neither can a manufacturer continue to monopolize the making of a certain class of goods; the same may be said of railways running in the same direction. When all are at liberty to compete, these apparent monopolies regulate themselves by means of the laws of trade, which are more sure in their operation, and in the long run never infringe on individual rights, as legislation sometimes does. Between the people of the different States of the Union exists the monopoly of free trade, the most extensive and complete in the world, and in the exercise of which mutual benefits accrue to our *own* people, while the tariff operates only on certain foreign products, so as to compel them, *as property*, to bear their share of the Nation's expense. These foreign products pay this tax before they can enter the free-trade markets within the States. A system thus guarding material interests makes our Nation in many respects independent of the rest of the world—a sort of monopolist in having within itself that which is essential to its own success and general advancement.

XIV.

ENGLISH EFFORTS TO RUIN AMERICAN MANUFACTURES.

THE American manufacturers have their most formidable antagonists in their English brethren, as the latter are engaged more especially in producing articles which come into common use, such as are made from cotton, and flax, and wool, while in the field of the metals, such as tin, copper, iron, and steel, in all the latter's appliances from the delicate needle to the massive iron steamship. On the other hand the Americans' principal rivals on the Continent are the French and Italians in their silks and the Belgians in their fine cloths. These latter products, however, are insignificant in their commercial value, when compared with that of England's more useful and important ones. The English government by an astute and comprehensive system of efficient tariffs and bounties, applied in various forms in the course of one hundred and fifty years, built up a series of industries, and in so doing, she acquired a power in the skill and number of her employés that enabled her to compete triumphantly with all the world beside. Under these conditions she became able in the process of time to throw open her ports to free trade in the raw material and otherwise, as no nation could compete with her in the *low wages* she paid, and in the skill acquired by her workpeople. Within the last thirty or forty years she has found it for her interest to enter upon a new phase of free trade in obtaining one of her most important *raw materials*—that of food for her operatives—fully as necessary as cotton for her mills or iron ore for her furnaces.

The Unique History.—Before we give an account of England's present attitude toward us as rivals in the manufacturing and commercial world, let us trace very briefly the history of that opposition, which arose soon after we became a Nation, and has continued till this hour. While in general terms, between the English people and the American, there has always been a friendly feeling, the outgrowth of having the same origin, the same language and literature, and the same traditions, and withal a genuine sympathy with true liberty, both civil and religious, yet on the part of the money-makers of England, even before we were rivals to be feared, there was a latent hostility, arising perhaps from the unconscious influence of the love of gain or rather on the vulgar basis that "business is business," to which all other considerations must be held subordinate. England was an oppressor of the trade and mechanical industries of the American colonists, and only encouraged them in producing the raw material. This feeling passed over from colonial times, and was plainly evident in the generation immediately succeeding that period.

Lord Brougham's Suggestions.—In accordance with this policy of crushing industrial and commercial rivals, which the Americans were about to become, Lord Brougham, in his place in Parliament after the Treaty of Ghent was signed, announced that "it was well worth while to incur a loss upon the first exportation of goods *in order by the glut to stifle in the cradle those rising manufactures in the United States which the war [that of 1812] had forced into existence, contrary to the nature of things.*" (Hansard's Parl. Debates, 1st Series xxxiii., p. 1099.) The phrase "the nature of things" evidently means that England ought to be the workshop of the world, which pre-eminence she had been aiming to attain, and for which she still is struggling. The interest that the people of the United States take in this quotation is the fact that the merchants and manufacturers of England, when opportunity served, have followed from that day to this the advice therein given. They at

that time flooded the United States with goods at a very low rate, often below cost, and *effectually stifled* our domestic manufactures that had thus come into existence, at the same time threw out of employment multitudes of work-people, and forced the limited capital of the country to lie idle. This state of affairs remained until an impulse was given to mechanical industries by the Tariff of 1816, and the years following. We learn incidentally that this crippling policy was afterward quietly carried out; for illustration, a Parliamentary commission in 1854, spoke of the losses their manufacturers sustained "*in order to destroy foreign competition and to gain and keep possession of foreign markets.*" Thus "*to overwhelm all foreign competition*" and then "*step in for the whole trade when prices revive.*" Again, Lord Goderich announced in the House of Lords that the English meant by the advantages of free trade "*to get the monopoly of all their (other nations) markets for our manufactures, and to prevent them, one and all, from ever becoming manufacturing nations.*" (*Address of Mr. Dexter A. Hawkins, p. 49.*)

Illustrations how the same ends are attained by combinations of manufacturers and merchants sometimes come to light. Before the civil war one of the largest establishments in England for rolling iron had an agency in the City of Boston. The duties on railroad iron at that time—under the tariff of 1846—were quite low, and our railways were supplied partly from domestic mills and partly from those in England. The latter firms systematically kept lowering their prices from time to time. Meanwhile, the American mills, the weaker first, but one by one, were compelled to shut down. These successive failures were duly noted, and when the last one succumbed, the news was sent to England, and with it also the statement "that there was no longer any danger from American competition." The reply immediately came back, "Advance prices." The advancing process was commenced, and in less than a year the price of English rails to American consumers was increased about 100 per cent. (*American Protectionists' Manual, p. 68.*)

The English merchants and manufacturers have never deviated in their intercourse with other nations from this line of policy; it crops out all along their history. In connection with this underlying principle is her effort to limit other nations to the single industry of supplying her with the raw material, knowing well that in the ultimate cost of the manufactured article, the raw material is only about 10 or 15 per cent, the remainder of the cost, 90 or 85 per cent, accrues with the profit to the employed and the capitalist, and especially to the latter if the wages are low. Nations in their intercourse with each other seem to ignore the Golden Rule, and in relation to this policy of our great rival we must be on our guard.

The Mode of Operations.—England's great rival to-day in mechanical industries is the United States, and it is not strange that in self-defence her manufacturers should form associations whose object is to influence public opinion among us on the subject of tariffs and free trade. This is to be accomplished "by subsidizing certain of the press (in the United States), by employing lecturers, and paying writers, by circulating tracts," etc. We do not find fault with this mode of procedure; let the subject be fully discussed, and give the American people all the *facts*, not failing to show their legitimate influence; let the voters have opportunity to judge for themselves and pronounce their own decision through the medium of the ballot-box. Some of our professors of political economy can furnish the *theories*—they may be somewhat difficult to reduce to practice—but by all means let our workpeople hear both sides.

Reasons for Alarm.—It is not strange that English manufacturers should be alarmed at our industrial progress. A writer quotes the London *Quarterly* as saying: "The competition of the United States is certainly real. It has not only virtually deprived us of its 50,000,000 of people as customers, but it threatens us with permanent active rivalry in outside markets. Their imports of cotton goods have

steadily declined from 227,000,000 yards in 1860, to 23,000,000 in 1881, while the American exports of cotton goods in the latter year reached nearly 150,000,000 yards." The 23,000,000 yards imported in 1881 were evidently of the very finest texture, which the American mills are as yet unable to make to advantage; though they produce ordinary cotton goods of such excellent character, "that certain home-trade houses in England frequently call English cloth American, and stamp it with the names and trade-marks of certain American mills."

Mr. Thorneley's Report.—One of the associations mentioned above, in 1879, sent an expert, Mr. James Thorneley, to this country to investigate our cotton manufactures. He reported, "that the people in America work longer than in England, they taking fewer holidays; that drunkenness is less common than in England, and the earnings of the working classes are spent in providing for their wants, and what they do not require for this purpose is invested, instead of being frittered away in vain attempts to raise wages to an unnatural level by means of trade unions." This was eight years ago. Could this be said of the manner in which the American working people disposed of their "*earnings*," if their wages were so low that they were compelled to live from hand to mouth, as do the English operatives? He continues, "the food-producing districts of the world are nearer to the American than to the English manufactories, and the necessaries of life are therefore cheaper."

Sympathy for the Rebellion.—It may be remarked in this connection that one of the elements in the hostility manifested during the late rebellion toward the free-labor States, by the great majority of the merchants and manufacturers or Great Britain was the expectation that the Confederates—they being for the most part composed of the Southern wing of the Democratic party—would, if successful, adopt *free trade* as their policy.

An Englishman's Remarks.—A year or two since a frank English woollen and hosiery manufacturer was reported as saying: "The success of the Democratic party in the United States, and their coming majority in Congress, and their prospects in 1884, are looked upon here as the forerunners of a daybreak in the trade of the cloth country. Their (the Democrats) *traditions are free trade*, and we expect that should they be installed at Washington, they will throw down the artificial barriers which have so long barred out our products." Has not this been attempted in the famous Tariff bill brought forward in the House by Mr. Morrison, a member of the Cobden Club during the first session of the 48th Congress, and again in the first session of the 49th Congress?

The Bland Advice.—The English manufacturers would persuade us to lay aside all our industries that interfere with their own, especially woollen, cotton, iron, and steel. When asked how under such circumstances the tens of thousands of our own people employed in these industries can earn a livelihood, we are blandly told to settle them on our *vast and fertile lands*—that is, throw away the skill they have acquired as industrial artizans, and learn the trade of the farmer—in order to raise provisions to pay for the goods which our considerate friends over the water would make for us. In return the latter are willing to buy our wheat and other grains, even in large quantities, *when their own crops happen to fail*; otherwise, they would prefer after exhausting the exchange in cotton, that we should pay the balance in gold.

The People Constitute the State.—When it is objected that crippling our industries would produce a glut in the labor market in that contingency, they suggest that the moneyed capitalists can then employ labor as cheaply as in England. That is a result which the genuine and patriotic American statesman does not want. The latter's theory is "the people constitute the State," and he has an eye to

their continual development as an intelligent, industrious, temperate, and moral people. This phase of American statesmanship has attracted attention, especially in England. The *London Times* (July 12, 1880, p. 11), when speaking of Congress protecting American industries for the previous twenty years, says: "The object of their statesmen is not to secure the largest amount of wealth (revenue) for the country generally, but to keep up by whatever means *the standard of comfort among the laboring classes.*" Designed or undesigned, could there be a more just and expressive compliment to the humane sentiment that characterizes the statesmanship of that political organization which has thus cherished the industries, the comforts, and the general progress of the people of the Union.

The Retort.—By way of apology for his views of independence and of self-respect as a workman, the American can say to the Englishman: "You have tried the experiment of employing people at the lowest possible wages, and you have succeeded in having *one in thirty-three of your population paupers*; and in addition you have multitudes more, who, if there should come a commercial reverse, would sink also into the abyss of pauperism. You have destroyed the self-respect and independence of your laboring classes by paying them starvation wages; in times past you have done but little to elevate them by means of public schools, in which all children alike could have received an education fitting them for the duties of citizenship. To be sure you are now partially doing what should have been done half a dozen generations ago, to give some education to the people at large; but to-day the sad results of this neglect on the part of your ruling classes are upon you, and with your utmost efforts these evils cannot be removed in less than two or three generations."

Quotations from Blackwood.—The "Eclectic" (New York), March, 1882, has an article on "Finance West of the Atlantic," taken from *Blackwood's Magazine*. This paper

says; "There is an obvious reason why Englishmen should devote some special attention to the progress of the United States if England is to maintain her commercial primacy in the struggle with the rest of the world." As one omen of evil it affirms: "It is unnecessary to dilate on American ingenuity; it is proverbial." Then again, the writer remarks that the phrase, "*Tariff reform adopted instead of 'free trade' in Democratic electioneering speeches must not be overlooked.*" Why this change of expression, and why is its shrewdness complimented? Does the writer view it as a means to bamboozle the simple-minded American voters, and thereby under that guise promote the free-trade sentiment among them? That change of phrase does not deceive the intelligent any more than the word *exclusively* does when substituted for the word *only*. This writer acknowledges that between the States themselves, "it is true that America is the greatest free trade country in the world—it is even a continent." Therein is the contrast, England is for free trade abroad; the United States for free trade at home.

XV.

THE COBDEN CLUB.

BUT by far the most persistent and the most powerful antagonist of our mechanical industries is the famous "Cobden Club," named in honor of Richard Cobden, who did so much to inaugurate free trade in England. This club justly boasts of more distinguished names than any association of the kind in the world. Ever since its formation it has been popular with the ruling classes in England, counting among its members a year or two since twelve cabinet ministers out of fourteen, and all the great Secretaries of State, from the Prime Ministers down to those of the colonies. Home and Foreign Affairs, and in addition about two hundred members of Parliament, and also other prominent men in Church and State, besides manufacturers throughout the United Kingdom, and owners of the soil. The wealth that can be drawn upon by the Club is enormous. Many of the members are millionaires, men of great energy, intelligence and enterprise.

The Obstruction.—The chief impediment, it is acknowledged, in making England the workshop of the world is the manufacturing skill and progress of the American people. The Club "cannot rest while the United States are unsubdued—not only England but the whole world is to be brought into obedience." The prize to be obtained is well worth the ambition even of the Cobden Club. It is no less than to secure 60,000,000 customers now (1887), in our own land, and break up our mechanical industries, that the English, from their own workshops, by means of low wages and free

trade, may supply the articles we ourselves now produce. Being conscious of its vast resources, the Club does not hesitate to proclaim its design of abolishing everywhere measures that are calculated to *equalize* the cost of production, or in other terms *protective tariffs*, and thus in effect to bring the wages paid in mechanical industries throughout the world to one common standard, that of England. This has been a leading object of the Club for years, and at one of its annual meetings it was announced: "We can well afford to wait a little longer for the adhesion of a people (the American) whose verdict when pronounced will be decisive of the fate of protection both in Europe and America."

The Jubilant Dinner.—The Cobden Club in 1880 manifested unusual interest in the elections to be held in the United States in November of that year for members of Congress and for President. The *London Times* of July 12, 1880 (pp. 11, 12) gives a glowing account of the Club's annual dinner, at which the members were unusually jubilant, as they were assured that the prospects for the success of the Democratic party in the coming Presidential election were very favorable. Earl Spencer presided and made the opening address, saying: "That aided by such distinguished American economists as we see here to-night, he hoped the United States would see the errors of their ways and adopt free trade." Several well-known American "revenue reformers,"—honorary members of the Club—were reported as present on this occasion.

The Earl also gave an account of a book or pamphlet on the "Western Farms of America," written by Mr. Augustus Montgredien, whom the Club employed in a literary capacity and which book was issued by the Club, and distributed by its American members, and coadjutors in many tens of thousands throughout the western and northwestern grain region of the Union, and also of another pamphlet on "Free Trade and English Commerce," for gratuitous circulation. The number of documents and pamphlets issued by the

Cobden Club, and thus distributed in the United States, amounted in all to about 700,000. American citizens can judge of the modesty of the Club by the following directions contained in one of these pamphlets: "Let the American farmers give support to no candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives who does not pledge himself, if elected, to propose, or at least vote for a reduction of five (5) per cent every successive year on the *import duties* until the whole are abolished." But the Hon. Wm. R. Morrison, himself a member of the Club, and chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, wished Congress (1884) in his famous *Horizontal Tariff bill* to reduce all *import duties twenty per cent instead of five*.

The Earl in the course of his address, made a statement, which he appears to have believed, to the effect that Mr. Montgredien proved in his book "that the Western American farmers were taxed \$400,000,000 a year because of the existing protective tariff." (*See reply to Montgredien by Hon. Thomas H. Dudley.*) That nobleman must have been disappointed at the amount of influence this pamphlet had upon these farmers if he scanned the returns from the same grain-growing States in the Presidential election in the following November.

Medals to American Students.—At the same dinner Mr. W. E. Baxter, M. P., announced that "prizes or medals had been given by the Club to students in Harvard and in Yale for essays in favor of free trade," and in a special report made a week later, a student in Williams College, is also mentioned as having received a medal. In the latter two colleges the professors of Political Economy are members of the Cobden Club. Did it not occur to these students, if not to their instructors in Political Economy, that the Club might possibly have an ulterior and a peculiarly interested motive, in their being thus liberal in conferring medals? In addition to giving prizes as above, it also furnishes pamphlets advocating free trade, the latter being distributed gratuitously by its American members.

Benevolence of the Cobden Club.—If the design of this association of English gentlemen was, for illustration, to promote among the American people elevating principles, as in literature, or in science, or temperance, meanwhile its *only reward* being the consciousness of having advanced a good cause, it ought, and it would be welcomed in its noble and philanthropic work. But what are the real motives and designs of the Cobden Club? This question has been answered as we have seen, and that explicitly, by statements in the reports made by its trusted agents; the same receiving the approval of the Club itself. In these reports crops out its systematized plan, which is nothing less than first to break down our mechanical industries, because in the latter we are recognized as England's most dangerous rival, and on their ruins to construct an immense monopoly, which would manufacture and supply us with the articles that we are now making for ourselves. Do intelligent American working men and women understand what this scheme implies? It simply means that English manufacturers and merchants, aided and abetted on our own soil by the advocates of free trade and for revenue only, intend, by breaking down our mechanical industries, to curtail our workpeople's facilities for earning a living, and afterward compensate them for their losses by inaugurating free trade, and promising them for the future cheaper goods made abroad. Our workpeople can answer: "We prefer to let well alone, rather than undergo poverty and suffering even for a short time, and run the risk of the promised millennium of cheap goods, which, by the way, we will then be unable to purchase since our opportunity for earning the money has, in the mean time, according to the programme, been taken away. And, moreover, we have already found that home competition not only gives us goods equally good and cheap, but in addition the opportunity of earning the wherewith to buy them."

The Animus of the Club.—English statesmen, manufactur-

ers, and merchants are willing that the American and other nations should supply the English people with food and the raw material for their manufactories. The latter costs about *ten per cent* of the article when ready for market, the difference in value being about *ninety*, which, because of low wages, accrues for the most part to the English manufacturer, whom the Club represents. In all this scheming there is such a flavor of mercenary gain and selfishness, that we are unable to imagine how self-respecting Americans are willing, knowingly, to play into the hands of an association so hostile to our mechanical industries, and to the welfare of our own working people. In unguarded moments the members have revealed their ulterior designs, and these avowals carry with them clearer evidence of their truth because of their being unconsciously given out. The Cobden Club has only reduced to a system what "Blundering Brougham" advised and Lord Goderich sanctioned, and which has been attempted again and again by individual manufacturers or merchants in certain lines, in endeavoring to break down our industries by means of flooding our country with similar goods at the lowest prices. The policy is to secure the manufacturing and the trade of the world, not in a fair and generous competition, but by foul means, ruining the mechanical industries of other nations, and when they are destroyed, as the Parliamentary Commission said, "step in for the whole trade when prices revive." The animating spirit of the Cobden Club is the same to-day as in 1880, when the members were so sanguine the Democratic party would succeed that they spoke out incautiously. The failure to elect those whom they had every reason to believe would follow in the main the policy which the Club had laid down has induced the members since that time to be more careful in enunciating their plans—the tiger is only waiting an opportunity to spring.

It may be retorted that those Irish-Americans are equally impertinent in meddling with English affairs, who furnish funds to aid the Irish people in obtaining "Home Rule."

The cases are by no means parallel, inasmuch as those who thus contribute do not expect to *make money* out of the operation, either for themselves or for those whom they may represent.

The Singular Advice.—That certain American writers and lecturers on political economy are in sympathy with the Cobden Club in its efforts to introduce the system of free trade into the United States, the following advice and suggestion would lead us to infer. As the revenue of the National Government was greater than needed for its current expenses, the question arose as to how a reduction of the surplus could be made to best advantage. A prominent leader in the “revenue reform” movement—a member of the Cobden Club—is reported to have advised in one of his addresses, that the members of the association “should aim to prevent the abolition of the internal revenue system, as the reduction in the taxes, which was inevitable, would then be obtained by a reduction of the tariff.” Another advocate of the same “reform,” also a member of the Club, suggests that they “pray for a little more bankruptcy, which would do more to knock off the tariff than free-trade doctrines.” (New York *Tribune*, July 5, 1883.) The first advice means that the internal revenue tax, which is direct and obligatory, and was levied in war times upon articles many of prime necessity, *should be retained*, and that the indirect tax, which can be avoided by not buying the foreign article upon which it is levied, and which also, comes in competition with articles that we can make ourselves, *should be taken off*—and why? To promote the theory of which the Cobden Club is a persistent advocate?

Tactics of the Club.—A committee of the Club reported in 1883 that “in the United States the events of the last few years, the efforts of many able and active free traders, and *the exertions of your committee in disseminating publications, have had the effect of bringing free exchange to the front as one of the great questions of the day.*” It also re-

ports on July 19, 1884: "Your committee continues to afford all the assistance in their power to those who are laboring in the free-trade cause in foreign countries. In America, in the course of political events there is great promise. . . . The result of the turning of public attention in this direction is seen in the fact that *revenue reform* is becoming a leading question in the Presidential contest, and is on the winning side."

In the same issue of the *London Times* referred to, the editor exclaims: "The Cobden Club is in the ascendant—its opponents seem literally nowhere. . . . How free trade will come some day to the United States must be left to the Cobden Club, and to its twelve Cabinet ministers in their unofficial capacity to decide. . . . It is to the New World that the Club is chiefly looking, as the most likely sphere for its vigorous foreign policy. It has done what it can for Europe, and is now turning its eyes westward, and bracing itself for the struggle which is to come. . . . So it will go on until reason has destroyed protection in the great stronghold (United States) in which it has intrenched itself. . . . We intend to break down the protecting system in the United States and to substitute the British system—that done, our victory is complete and final." It may be remarked, however, that since the result of the presidential election in 1880 became known, the members of the Club at their annual dinners have not been quite so exultant in their hopes of establishing free trade in the United States; they have certainly not been so outspoken; for obvious reasons they are more cautious.

The Conclusion.—It seems to be expected that the success of our mechanical industries and the wages of our work-people, are in due time to become dependent on the theories of our own "revenue reformers," under the direction and stimulus of the Cobden Club. The latter demands absolute free trade, but the majority of our friends, the Democratic leaders, and their allies are a little more cautious, and they prefer for the present, that we should have a homœopathic

dose in the sugared pill of "for revenue only," or "exclusively for public purposes." Are the American people willing that their mechanical industries should be thus unceremoniously handed over to the tender mercies of the Cobden Club?

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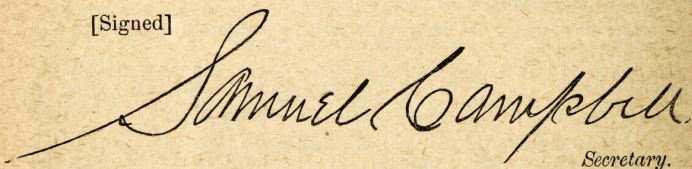
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