

THEY WANT FREE WOOL

TEXTILE WORKERS PETITION TO THAT EFFECT.

The McKinley Tariff Shows to Be Positively Harmful—Protection in England—The People and the Sugar Trust—Oat Meal and the Tariff.

Want the Duty Removed.

The following is a portion of the petition in favor of free wool, and lower duties on woolens, sent to the Committee on Ways and Means by the Kensington Reform Club of Philadelphia. The club is composed of workmen in the large woolen factories of that city:

"Although the tariff is most directly interested in the arrangement of tariff schedules, it has been customary for those who favor high protective duties to turn a deaf ear to its appeals, despite their protestations of solicitude for the welfare of the toilers, while the clamors of those who find a special interest in high duties, having the time and means to besiege the doors of Congress, have not been unheeded. The fact that is being tried out of the workmen enables them to render special service to the partisan machine, and thus they can make their weight felt far better than the flocked workmen.

"Now, however, that there is once more an opportunity for labor to be heard upon an equal footing with the capitalists, we, the Kensington Reform Club, an organization composed of workmen in every branch of the textile industries, send greeting to the friends of fair play and honest government, with a prayer for the immediate passage of the free-wool bill now under consideration in the House, which, while it may not fully meet our desires, is yet a measure offering great relief to the whole people.

"The labor in the woolen mills has never been in so depressed a condition as in the past year. The carpet industry was never so demoralized. Wages have been reduced both in a direct way and by the various subterfuges called adjustments, readjustments and fines, and yet the cost of living has been perceptibly increased until the condition of labor is well nigh unbearable. Employment has grown more unstable, many mills working but partial time, some closed entirely, while in others the waiting for warp and filling amounts to a loss of from one-quarter to one-half a cent.

"This is no idle talk, but the result of investigation, as it is one of the miseries of our organization to intelligently watch the effect of legislation upon labor; and we here add that there has never been an increase of tariff rates that was not almost immediately followed by reductions of wages. This is surely contrary to what was promised as a result of the tariff law passed by the last Congress, and it is therefore not surprising to find workmen realizing that they have been fooled once over.

"It, as has been asserted in Congress recently, the manufacturers do not need or want a high tariff, and that it is solely for the benefit of labor, which never gets any of them, then there is not the slightest impediment to a mutual agreement for its abolition. But since the gentlemen who make this association still oppose a reduction, the workmen who do not want it either, and certainly justify in praying that these kindly souls may still be benevolent enough to raise wages by laws, which they cannot do, and set about raising them in the mills, which they can do, and if they will only divide with their workmen that which they usually give to the party machine it will make a perceptible difference in the workers' pay-rolls.

"We here reiterate the fact that the greater cause for the inability of American manufacturers to compete with their foreign rivals is because of the unjustifiable tax on the raw materials, and not the difference in wages; and that this tax amounts to from three to five times more than the entire wage account in the product. It is needless for gentlemen to imagine that they can forever fool the workmen by their expressions of solicitude for wages, while yet willing and even anxious to bear the enormous burden of this unnecessary tariff on the raw materials.

"To the workman of ordinary intelligence this looks like trying to find excuses for the further reduction of wages; so long as they can be made to believe that their wages are princely as compared with the wages of the workmen on the other side of the water, the more ignorant of them may be induced to submit to reductions without knowing that they are rapidly nearing the level of the so-called 'pauper labor' of Europe. Intelligent workmen, however, are praying deeply just now that their protectionist friends may cease their hard labors to raise the wind by tariff laws so as to take time to give their professions a practical turn by raising wages in fact. But if we may judge men by their actions we are justified in asserting that if these professional friends of labor thought that a tariff would raise wages they would drop it quickly.

"In a recent number of the Manufacturer, the organ of the protectionist manufacturers, its editor, in a labor article, tried to show that the English manufacturers were selling their goods here as cheaply as they did before the present law went into effect, and that this made it evident that the foreign manufacturers were paying the tax for the privilege of selling in our markets. In another article of the same number, the fact is stated that many tops have been taken in price in the London market 16 cents per pound, and this is given as a partial reason for this, to sell at the old rates, but when we consider that this decline in wool prices is equivalent to a saving of 32 cents and upward on every pound of manufactured cloth, we may find it to be the whole reason. Here is a pretty mixture of fact and fancy; but then if the tariff advocates' facts were given without a mixture of fancies their cause would suffer badly.

"On a par with this is their aversion that the materials of manufacture are not deteriorating. They dare not put their workmen on the stand to testify to this under oath, for then there would be a full corroboration of the statements made to your honorable Committee of Ways and Means by the committee of the Wool Consumers' Association that the McKinley Tariff has largely promoted the adulteration of woolen manufactures. It is only necessary to state one fact to expose the falsity of their claim. If all the wool in the country, domestic and imported, outside of that used in carpets, were made into pure woolen goods, we would not have over 80,000,000 pounds of clothes, dress goods, hats, blankets, underwear, etc., for our 62,000,000 people, or a little over 14 pounds for each individual.

"Who dares to say that this is sufficient to keep us from becoming a nation of shakers at the slightest blast of cold, and who dares to say that 80,000,000 pounds will cover all the goods that are sold to the American public as all-wool manufactures in a year? One must be silly indeed to believe this. But we must not forget that they have learned to manufacture wool by putting old cast-off clothing through a chemical process which eats out all but the wool in them, and this residue is recorded and used to mix with other wool, but as the life is out of it is no better than cotton, and thus between the cold and diseases transmitted through the old clothes there

is at least one infant industry well protected—that of the doctors.

"With reference to the difference between American and foreign wages we are prepared to show that in many branches our rates are even below the English rates, and the same is true even of actual earnings. The rate paid for woolen weaving in the Huddersfield (England) district varies from 1 cent for eight picks to 1 cent for six picks, according to the rate of work, with extra pay for extra hurdles, extra colors, and extra beams, whilst ours is from 1 cent for nine picks to 1 cent for five picks, with no extras. Thus for sixty pick work the English rate is 7½ cents to 10 cents per yard, extra to be added, while our rate is from 6 cents to 12 cents per yard and no extras.

"If the American weaver earns more money in a week, it is simply because he works faster and turns out more product.

"Now we declare, without fear of contradiction, that there is not now a woolen manufacturer in Philadelphia who does not privately long for free wool; and those who openly advocate taxed wool are actuated by partisan rancor, and we are still more emphatic in the declaration that there is not in Philadelphia one woolen worker in a hundred who would not openly ask for free wool if he were free from the sinister influences of the bosses. As we prefer our own prosperity and bread and butter to party success, we ask for free wool without reference to its effects upon party.

"The stubborn perversity and dishonesty of the protectionists is nowhere better shown than in their steady refusal to correct the glaring inconsistencies and mischievous discriminations of the tariff laws even after their attention had been called to them repeatedly. One is the discrimination against American manufacturers involved in the adjustment of duties between the raw materials and the finished products, and the other the placing of a heavier tax upon the poor man's necessities than upon the rich man's luxuries. We called their attention to these points as far back as the spring of 1886, and the protectionist National Association of Woolen Manufacturers pointed out substantially the same errors in their letter to the Secretary of the Treasury in the fall of 1885, and hence they could not consistently overlook it, and yet in the make-up of the McKinley act this infernal pice of injustice was not only retained but made worse than ever.

"This shows that in a vicious and determined purpose to serve a few masters they lost sight entirely of their duty to justice to the people. In fact it appears to be a pleasure to them to shift the burdens of taxation off the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor—to make the rich the pack-mule of the rich. The unanimous cry of the protectionist manufacturers now is that the McKinley law let alone because it is doing the manufacturers a great deal of good. Yet in the face of this there is yet to be recorded one important instance of a raise of wages, while instances of the paring down of wages are numerous."

Protection in England.

Edward Atkinson writes as follows on the history of protection in England: A very common but utterly erroneous idea prevails in this country that Great Britain only gave up the system technically called protection when by means of this system she had attained conditions of great prosperity and a substantially commanding position in manufactures and commerce.

The very reverse is true. The protective system was given up by Great Britain under the pressure of pauperism and bankruptcy in which it culminated in the year immediately preceding 1842, when Sir Robert Peel presented and carried his first great measure for the reform of the British tariff.

The origin of customs in England was in the time of Edward I; thenceforward duties were added and multiplied, each one being devoted to a specific purpose, until in 1784 as many as fifteen separate duties were levied upon the same article. In 1787 William Pitt carried through an act for consolidation without reducing the number of articles taxed, this measure left 1,200 articles subject to duty, and in order to bring the act into force 3,000 resolutions were required in the House of Commons. In 1787, however, the laws relating to customs filled six large folio volumes unprovided with an index. The great subsequent wars rendered nugatory all of Pitt's efforts to relieve commerce; between 1797 and 1815 600 additional acts were passed, and in fifty-three years of the reign of George III, the total number of acts relating to duties on imports was 1,300. At length taxes became so numerous that nothing was left untouched; even premiums offered for the suggestion of fresh subjects for taxation failed to stimulate invention.

In 1824, under the lead of Huskisson, several of the crude materials necessary to British industry had been put into the free list, of which the most important was wool. This change had worked great benefit to both wool-grower and manufacturer; the price of domestic wool advanced, while the manufacturer was enabled to reduce the cost of goods through the opportunity given him by freedom from taxation on imported wool to buy, sort, and mix his wool in the most effective manner.

The first decisive step in tariff reform was brought about in 1840 by the appointment of a Parliamentary committee at the instance of Mr. Joseph Hume. The condition of the country was then desperate. The most concise account of the case is given in Nibley's "Fiscal Legislation of Great Britain," but all authorities—Liberal and Tory—are substantially at an agreement upon that point. It is written that "every interest of the country was alike depressed; in the manufacturing districts mills and workshops were closed and property daily depreciated in value; in the seaports shipping was laid up useless in harbor; agricultural laborers were eking out a miserable existence upon starvation wages and parochial relief; the revenue was insufficient to meet the national expenditure; facts were given without a mixture of fancies their cause would suffer badly."

The protective system, which was supported with a view to rendering the country independent of foreign sources of supply, and thus, it was hoped, fostering the growth of a home trade, had most effectually destroyed that trade by reducing the entire population to beggary, destitution and want. The masses of the population were unable to procure food and had consequently nothing to eat at the old rates, but when we consider that this decline in wool prices is equivalent to a saving of 32 cents and upward on every pound of manufactured cloth, we may find it to be the whole reason. Here is a pretty mixture of fact and fancy; but then if the tariff advocates' facts were given without a mixture of fancies their cause would suffer badly.

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DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

DEPLORABLE RESULTS OF INDOLENCE PORTRAYED.

Solomon's Satire and Denunciation of the Sluggard—Some Are Born Lazy, Some Achieve Laziness and Some Have Laziness Forced on Them.

Good Game Wasted.

Dr. Talmage's text was Proverbs xii, 27. "The slothful man roareth not that which he doth in hunting."

David and Jerome, and Ezekiel and Micah of the text showed that some time they had been out on a hunting expedition. Spears, lances, swords and nets were employed in this service. A deep pitfall would be digged in the center of it. There was some raised ground with a pole on which a lamb would be fastened, and the wild beast not seeing the pitfall, but only seeing the lamb would plunge for its prey and dash down, itself captured. Birds were caught in snares or pierced with arrows.

The hunters in olden time had two missions—one to clear the land of ferocious beasts, and the other to obtain meat for themselves and their families. The occupation and habit of hunters are a favorite Bible simile. David said he was hunted by his enemy like a partridge upon the mountain. My text is a hunting scene.

A sportsman arrayed in a garb appropriate to the wild chase lets slip the bloodthirsty hounds from their kennels and mounting his fleet horse, with a halloo and the yell of a greyhound pack they are off and away, through bridle and over marsh and moor, across chasms where a missle would hurl horse and rider to death, plunging into mire up to the haunches or into swift streams up to the bit, till the game is tracked by dripping foam and blood, and the antlers crack on the rocks, and the hunter has just time to be in at the death. Yet after all the haste and peril of the chase, my text represents this sportsman as being too indolent to dress the game and prepare it for food. He lets it lie in the doorway of his home and become a portion for vermin and beasts of prey. Thus by one master stroke Solomon gives a picture of laziness, when he says, "The slothful man roareth not that which he doth in hunting."

The most cases produce like effects. Under the pretext of protection to the miners of this country, and especially Pennsylvania, a duty has long been maintained upon the import of foreign iron ores; it is now 75 cents a ton, which is precisely equal to the labor cost of producing a ton of iron ore in Pennsylvania—a ton of iron ore in Pennsylvania whose single incomes in a single year have exceeded the whole sum earned by the protected iron miners.

The effect of the first measure of tariff reform in Great Britain—that of 1842—was not immediately perceptible, the evil effect of the previous conditions being very deep-seated; but before 1845 the beneficial influence upon every branch of industry, agriculture, manufacture, and commerce alike, had become so manifest that little opposition was met to Peel's second great act of tariff reform of 1843, by which 430 articles, consisting of the crude and partly manufactured materials which entered into the processes of domestic industry, were put on the free list, the duties on the lessening number of dutiable imports being at the same time reduced and adjusted to those new conditions.

In 1846 the Irish famine forced the abatement of all taxes upon food, by orders in Council, subsequently followed by the repeal of the corn laws.

In 1847 Sir Robert Peel left office, but the immense benefits to every branch of British industry rendered it a comparatively easy matter to bring the tariff substantially to its present condition in 1853, coupled with a repeal of the navigation laws under the lead of Mr. Gladstone.

Since that date the people of the United States have been forbidden by their own acts to compete with Great Britain in the construction and use of ocean steamships, while the commercial flag of Great Britain dominates every sea under the beneficent influence of freedom from all restrictions and by virtue of the protection which is given by exemption from taxation on all the materials used in the construction and in the subsistence of the vessels.

The People and the Sugar Trust.

WITH A TARIFF ON REFINED SUGAR.

The Sugar Trust is "protected."

(a) By duty of 4 cent per pound on refined sugar. (b) By natural advantage or protection of 4 of a cent per pound.

Present price of raw sugar, 36 degrees centrifugal, 34 cents per pound.

Present price of refined sugar, granulated, 42 cents per pound.

Difference between above prices, 14 cents per pound.

Cost of refining, not over 8 cent per pound.

Net profit on refined sugar, 8 cent per pound.

Net profit on barrel, \$2.03.

Net profit on 12,600,000 barrels, or minimum yearly production, \$25,593,000.

Actual value of Sugar Trust properties, about \$35,000,000. Rate of profit on actual valuation, 73.08 per cent.

Sugar Trust capitalization, 7 per cent.

Preferred stock, \$37,500,000; common stock, \$37,500,000; 6 per cent. bonds, \$10,000,000.

After paying 7 per cent on preferred stock and 6 per cent interest on bonds, the above rate of profit would yield 59.65 per cent. on the common stock.

WITHOUT A TARIFF ON REFINED SUGAR.

The natural advantage or protection to sugar trust is 4 cent per pound.

Price of refined sugar, granulated, 4 cents per pound.

Difference between above prices, 4 cents per pound.

Cost of refining, not over 8 cent per pound.

Net profit on refined sugar, 4 cent per pound.

Net profit per barrel, 81 cents.

Net profit on 12,600,000 barrels, or minimum yearly production, \$10,237,500 per year.

After paying 7 per cent on preferred stock and 6 per cent. on bonds, the above rate of profit would yield 18.7 per cent. on the common stock.

Proposed rate of saving to the people by means of free sugar, \$15,356,000 per annum.

Present rate of taxation from the people by means of the tariff, 8 cent per pound or \$15,356,000 per annum.

In the compilation of these figures we have treated the trust very liberally.

Is it not time that the wholesale extortions now practiced by the trust be stopped? Let us have free sugar in reality and not merely in name.—New York Daily Commercial Bulletin.

Oat Meal.

ACT I.—Scene: Congress, act of 1890.

(Duties raised.) McKinley increases

the duty on oat meal from half a cent to one cent per pound in the interest of the manufacturers of Ohio.

ACT II.—Scene: Columbus, Ohio, January, 1891. (Trust formed.)

The New York Tribune describes

what occurred as follows: "In

corporation papers were filed at Columbus to-day for the Consolidated Oat Meal Company, with a capital of \$3,500,000. All the oat-meal mills are thus brought under one management, with headquarters at Akron, Ohio."

At that very time, when the protective system culminated in the desperate condition of Great Britain in 1840, it will be observed that it was at the end of a period of profound peace which had lasted over twenty-five years, in which the personal wealth of the upper classes of Great Britain had become immense. When presenting his first measure of the tariff reform, Sir Robert Peel remarked, after stating the deficit and the financial difficulties to be met: "You will bear in mind that this is no casual and occasional difficulty. You will bear in mind that there are indications among all the upper classes of society of increased comfort and enjoyment; of increased prosperity and wealth; and that, concurrently with these indications, there exists a mighty one which has been growing up for the

last seven years, and which you are now called upon to meet." This evil was the increasing poverty and destitution of the great mass of the working people. The remedy was sought in a redistribution of the burden of taxation. The tariff then covered 1,200 separate subjects of taxation, of which seventeen yielded 94 per cent. of the revenue