

VERY SEVERE ON RANDALL.

Representative William L. Scott's Compliments to His Protectionist Colleague.

The Mills Bill Is Intended to Benefit the Whole People and Is a Blow at the Trusts.

How the Farmer and the Mechanic Are Robbed Under the Protective System.

One of the strongest speeches of the many delivered in the House on the tariff, was that by Mr. Scott, of Pennsylvania, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the following report of which is telegraphed from Washington:

Mr. Scott began his speech with a defense of the science of political economy and the correctness of its conclusions. He asked whether the great country, sixty millions strong, with inventories, fisheries, with labor more skilled than any other people on the globe, should decline to compete for supremacy in the markets of mankind, and continue forever to trade among ourselves, under the insane delusion that we were growing rich by the process. Our friends, the enemy, said: "Yes, let us build a Chinese wall around this young and vigorous people, whose eager enterprise already chafes under the bounds of nature, and if we cannot make it wholly impervious let us make it as nearly so as we can." They were Bourbons, Democrats, and of the dullest kind. Their faces were turned backward, not forward; they were looking through the dismal shades of the dead past, not through the glowing day of the living present.

The bill was framed in the interest of the people—the whole people. It was intended in the first instance to stay the mounting surplus in the Treasury, threatening overwhelming and possibly immediate disaster, even now vividly impending; and, second, to relieve, as far as prudent would permit at this time, the overburdened industries of the country from excessive taxation, the proceeds of which do not profit in the Treasury, but directly or indirectly go to the support of grasping monopolies. These were, for the most part, combined in utterly indefensible and atrociously oppressive trusts. If the bill did not measurably accomplish these purposes it was because the majority of the Ways and Means Committee was incompetent to frame such a law; and of that the country would be the judge.

A bill has been introduced by a member of this House (the Randall bill) and referred to the committee which provided for a large reduction of internal taxes and dealt very curiously indeed with customs duties. At the time of its introduction the Republican press, though opposed to tariff reform, was loud in praise of it as a bill on which all could unite—not only gentlemen on the other side of the House but gentlemen on this side also, who were supposed to differ with the majority. It is fair to presume that those who had considerably approved this remarkable bill did not understand its provisions. Covering 127 pages, it was too voluminous to be analyzed without great labor. But taking the iron and steel schedule as a test, and the general line of the proposed bill, and the one with which the members introducing it was supposed to be most familiar, one which he would naturally desire to conform most nearly to the demands of his immediate constituents or advisers, and passing judgment on the whole from this, it was safe to say that it was not in line with revenue reform. Taking it item by item it gave the astounding result, that for every dollar of reduction of duties in the iron schedule, \$2 was added to the burdens of the public, already too onerous to be borne. Imagine the taxation as advised by the administration, and the effect of checking the flow of the people's money into a Treasury already dangerously full; instead of relieving a tax-ridden people clamorous for relief; instead of following in line with the declarations of every public officer this Government has ever had, that when we were collecting more money than was needed taxes ought to be reduced, this bill actually proposed to increase them. He said that the measure, from whatever point it was looked at, was a misbegotten, unshapen, portentous, unjustifiable measure, with no excuse for existence, and no purpose in its life but to obstruct the Democratic party and delay the justice which the country demanded.

The majority of the Committee on Ways and Means realized and appreciated the condition of affairs existing in the country to-day; and, however desirous they might be to extend that full measure of relief the wage-workers and the agricultural classes of the country, to which they are so justly entitled, invested capital in the public service. Keeping these objects in view it is sought, first, to relieve the manufacturing industries by placing on the frontier, as far as it possibly could, such articles as were essentially necessary to them to enable them to compete, not only in their home markets, but in the markets of the world. Secondly, in the revision and readjustment of the various schedules under the existing tariff, to leave ample duties on all merchandise that could possibly be imported from abroad from competition with our home products and to protect our home manufactures and the labor employed thereon.

Since the Secretary of the Treasury had resumed the purchase of bonds this month (May), the amount offered and purchased would not equal even the amount of the daily taxes collected from the people, after the deduction of the daily expenses of the Government. This bill now under consideration has been formed for the double purpose of reducing the surplus and relieving the country of needless taxation. The changes made, the majority of the committee believed, would accomplish these objects, but he wished it to be clearly understood that the interest of labor had been steadily held in view at every stage of the proceedings, that the bill was framed with protection to labor, which his opponents proposed to give, but which their policy had been directly opposed. The effect of this bill would not be to reduce his wages, but to lessen to him the cost of necessities of life, and to decrease his dependence upon the employer. Extreme poverty and liberty never existed together. Starving men and women could not be free.

Protection, so-called, would add no penny to the wage-worker's pay or give him one day's additional labor in the year, but it would rob him of an undue proportion of his earnings to pay for it. Protection, like keeping a trembling dependent, since the recent history of this country showed that the most effective protection industries was toward combination in the form of trusts, under which production was arbitrarily suspended, raising prices to the consumer, and throwing the workman out of his job. Monopoly more terrible, more dangerous to the liberties of a country, more oppressive to the laborer, could not be imagined.

Upon no class of our people did the present fiscal burdens of our country bear so heavily as upon the farming class. One of the strong arguments that the protectionist made to the farmer was the home market that protection was alleged to insure for his produce. It was a fallacy and a fraud, and intelligent farmers would not longer be deceived by it.

Turning his attention to the metal schedule of the bill Mr. Scott cited the case of the Edgar Thomson Steel Works as exhibiting the operations of a monopoly and swelled the profits of the manufacturer to the most unreasonable and overbearing figures. When adding nothing to wages of labor, either common or skilled, and at the same time restricting the market for his produce, through simply piling him upon his purchases of implements and apparel.

Contrasting the coal industry which, as he said, protection did not protect, with iron and steel, he said that from a practical experience of over one-third of a century in the coal mines of his State, both anthracite and bituminous, he was just as certain in stating that the wage-worker's pay did not increase in proportion of the selling price of the coal at the mines, as against the eight per cent, that labor receives at the Edgar Thomson Steel Works, on the selling price of a ton of steel beams. The tariff did not protect the coal miner, but robbed him in just so far as it increased the cost of what he consumed by the imposition of duties the Government did not need to meet its requirements.

He next turned to another vexed question—wool. When he called it vexed he did not mean

it was not clear or easily solved upon correct principles, but only that the Bourbon took stand upon wool and howled the more lugubriously, albeit more unreasonably, than on anything else, because he hoped thereby to delude the farming interest to his support. This bill puts wool on the free list. It does so not only in the interest of the woolen manufacturer but in that of sheep husbandry itself. To enable a manufacturer of this country to compete in his home market and to export wool abroad, he must be able to purchase his wool as favorably not only as to price, but as to selection of qualities and kinds as does his foreign competitor. No better illustration of the results of moderate duties or free raw material could be pointed to than the carpet industries of this country. Russian carpet wools, grown in Southern Russia, bordering on the Black Sea, partially scoured, were largely imported into the United States in 1846.

In 1847 when enormous revenues were required to meet current expenses and interest on the vast public debt, and when no surpluses restricted the volume of circulating medium, Mr. Sherman declared, as I have already stated, that:

"Every advance toward a free exchange of commodities is an advance in civilization; every obstacle to a free exchange is born of the same narrow, despotic spirit which planted castles upon the Rhine to plunder peaceful commerce; every obstruction to commerce is a tax upon consumption; every facility to a free exchange cheapens commodities, increases trade and production, and promotes civilization. (Report on International Monetary Standard, June 9, 1848.)

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"The wit of man could not possibly frame a tariff that would produce \$140,000,000 in gold without amply protecting our domestic industry."

Yet now legislation which would "frame a tariff that would produce" nearly \$170,000,000 is stigmatized by Mr. Sherman as being "free trade."

As lately as 1870 Senator Allison had this to say of the Democratic tariff of 1846:

"The tariff of 1846, although confessedly and professedly a tariff for revenue, was, so far as regards all the great interests of the country, as protective a tariff as any that we have ever had."

He further said:

"But I may be asked how this reduction shall be made. I think it should be made upon all leading articles, or nearly all, and for that purpose we can get an opportunity in the House, if no gentleman does better, to recommend that the pending bill be recommended to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report a reduction upon existing rates of duty equivalent to 20 per cent upon the existing rates, or one-fifth reduction. Even this will not be a full equivalent for the removal of all the internal taxes upon manufacturers."

Now, if Senator Allison thought that the tariff on import duties in 1870, when the rate was less than 47 per cent, could be safely and wisely reduced, making me accept that generous tender and vote for it, then the monopoly under concern of the employer? If they do, the hideous disaster, foreseen by Jefferson as the natural result of the restrictive and subsidy policy, will rush down upon us, and the government of the Union will pass into the hands of those who openly propose to pervert its powers and employ them to plunder the people for their own enrichment. I do not believe, sir, that American liberty is destined to be extinguished in this ignominious fashion. Surviving, as it has, armed assault, and every corruption of subsidy, it will be throttled by mere greed or smothered by vice and corruption."

Mr. Scott spoke for more than two hours, and was loudly applauded as he concluded. During the delivery of the speech Speaker Carlsisle, Postmaster General Dickinson, and Assistant Postmaster General Stevenson were attentive listeners, while Mrs. Cleveland was in the gallery for a short time.

TOWNSHEND ON THE TARIFF.

There Is No Question of Free Trade or Protection Before the People.

An Able Speech by Mr. Townshend, of Illinois, in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Townshend, of Illinois, speaking on the tariff in the House of Representatives, said:

Mr. Chairman, the issue presented by this (Mills) bill has been often misstated in this debate. It is not that of protection or free trade. No one insists upon such a statement of the issue except some desperate Western Republican Representative who is forced by his party's dash to betray his constituency in opposing a measure which will bring relief to his own people from the curse of unjust and oppressive taxation. This he does with a hope that he may find an excuse which will shield him from the blame of those who sent him here. It is well known to us that there are no advocates of free trade at this time in Congress; even those in theory believe free trade preferable to protection concede that the amount of the public debt and pensions render free trade at present impracticable. But the false arguments of such unfatigued Representatives will fail to deceive the country or their outraged constituents. A leading Republican newspaper of the Northwest, the Chicago Tribune, tersely states the issue, and avers firmly warning to Western Congressmen that by supporting what they believe to be themselves, as well as some of the following extract from a leading editorial of that paper:

"The real controversy is between those of all parties who want high taxes for the sake of plunder, and those of every party who will resist further plucking, and every Republican Congressman from the West should understand that this presents a local issue which is not to be indefinitely postponed or obscured in a partisan fog but which must be met now and in accordance with the interests of his constituents."

I especially commend this clear statement of the issue by this great Republican organ to its readers from the Northwest, and advise them to re-visit their speeches before distributing them where the Tribune circulates. It presents the issue of free trade against protection, and the charge that the President advocates free trade in his message. I give this friendly advice that their constituents may not charge them with duplicity as well as subversive to Eastern monopolists. The message of the President expressly refutes such a charge when he uses in his message the following language:

"Our progress toward a wise conclusion will not be improved by dwelling upon the terms of protection and free trade. This savors too much of party epithets. It is a condition that confronts us, not a record made by us from this condition may involve a slight reduction of the advantages which we award our home products, but the entire withdrawal of such advantages should not be contemplated. The question of free trade is absolutely irrelevant; and the persistent claim made in certain quarters that all efforts to relieve the people from unjust and unnecessary taxation are schemes of so-called free traders is mischievous and far removed from any consideration for the public good."

Senator Sherman in 1837, when discussing the tariff, rebuked this reckless and demagogic use of the term "free trade" when he said:

"In considering so complicated a subject as a tariff, nothing can be more deceptive than the application of such general phrases as 'protective tariff,' 'revenue tariff,' 'a-free-trade tariff.' Every law imposing a duty on imported goods necessarily is a restraint on trade. It imposes a burden upon the purchase and sale of imported goods and tends to prevent every importation. The expression 'a-free-trade tariff' involves an absurdity."

The only issue raised by this bill is whether we shall reduce the high taxes created during the war, which are wholly unnecessary now, and which produce distress among the masses of the people, and, if so, upon what subject of taxation the reduction shall be made. An examination of the bill will show that out of the \$217,000,000 of tariff taxes collected last year it only proposes a reduction of less than \$34,000,000, and it becomes a law as it is still to leave tariff taxes aggregated \$183,000,000. It will only reduce the present rate of tariff taxes from 47 to 36 per cent, being a reduction of only 11 per cent."

Now, sir, Senator Sherman, a Republican candidate for President this year, said in 1837 it was "simply an absurdity to talk about a free trade tariff, and to talk about a protective tariff is unnecessary, because the wit of man could not possibly frame a tariff that would produce \$140,000,000 in gold without amply protecting our domestic industry." If he is good authority on such a subject, and he is so held by the Republican party, this bill still leaves twenty-three millions more on the tariff list than, as stated by Senator Sherman, will afford ample protection to our manufacturing interests.

Mr. John Sherman, whose versatility of opinion has inspired his friend and biographer, Judge Lawrence, to commend him on sympathetic grounds to the support of every variety of American voters as being politically a sort of conjurer's inexhaustible bottle, with every variety of sentiment on tap, declared in 1868

that:

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He further said:

"But I may be asked how this reduction shall be made. I think it should be made upon all leading articles, or nearly all, and for that purpose we can get an opportunity in the House, if no gentleman does better, to recommend that the pending bill be recommended to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report a reduction upon existing rates of duty equivalent to 20 per cent upon the existing rates, or one-fifth reduction. Even this will not be a full equivalent for the removal of all the internal taxes upon manufacturers."

Now, if Senator Allison thought that the tariff on import duties in 1870, when the rate was less than 47 per cent, could be safely and wisely reduced, making me accept that generous tender and vote for it, then the monopoly under concern of the employer? If they do, the hideous disaster, foreseen by Jefferson as the natural result of the restrictive and subsidy policy, will rush down upon us, and the government of the Union will pass into the hands of those who openly propose to pervert its powers and employ them to plunder the people for their own enrichment. I do not believe, sir, that American liberty is destined to be extinguished in this ignominious fashion. Surviving, as it has, armed assault, and every corruption of subsidy, it will be throttled by mere greed or smothered by vice and corruption."

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