

VOORHEES' SP RECH (From 1st Page.) THE FARMER.

Wherein He Bears a Wholly Unjust Portion of the Burden.

But let us at this point consider a little more closely the different classes of people who are affected by a protective tariff, and the false and delusive arguments made to them by its supporters. The farmer is the most important factor in the civilization of the world, and any policy of government which hinders his prosperity is necessarily false and vicious. His toil feeds the human race, and no burden should be laid upon him to trammel his energies or obstruct his success. The wisest thoughts and best efforts of statesmanship have been to secure to the agriculturalist the most remunerative markets in which to sell his products, and the cheapest markets in which to buy the necessities and comforts of life. Restrictions on trade have never in any period of the world's history been advantageous to him, although he has often been compelled to submit to them, sometimes, it is true, in the interest of government revenue, but far more frequently for the support of kings, royal families, titled nobilities, and moneyed and privileged aristocracies. Every dollar taken by the tariff from the American farmer over and above what is due for government expense is simply the same kind of extorted tribute which enslaved labor has paid to caste, to crowned heads, and to their pampered retinues during all the ages of the past. This fact is becoming transparent, and will very soon be accepted on all sides.

The one great aim of the plutocracy is to hide and obscure it by a carefully prepared system of falsehood, without a parallel for its skill, fecundity, and brazen persistence.

To convince the farmer that he is protected and in anyway benefited by a high protective tariff is a task it would seem to baffle the boldest juggler, and imposters, but in some instances it has been done. I recall one at this time. During the campaign of last year, in one of our beautiful Indiana towns, and in a very fertile belt of country, I witnessed a republican procession. It had in it many industrial exhibits claiming to show the power and the glory of a tariff laid for protection. As I scanned the long line of moving vehicles I caught sight of one that riveted my gaze and gave me much food for reflection on the power to mislead and deceive which was abroad in the land. It was a wagon driven by a farmer and loaded with productions of his fields. There were specimens of his corn, wheat, rye, hay and oats, of his potatoes, pumpkins, watermelons and cantaloupes, of his cabbages, beans, onions, pieplants and tomatoes, of his apples, peaches, pears, grapes and cultivated blackberries, and on each side of the wagon in big staring letters I read the words, "These are the fruits of protection." My first thought was that such a man would certainly become the victim of a bunco steerer or a confidence swindler before he got out of town, but in a moment I reflected that he had been listening to the eloquent advocates of the monopolists, and had been persuaded that tariff protection had done more for him than the sun, the dews, the rains and a rich and bountiful soil, with all his labor thrown in. The stupendous extent of this unfortunate man's delusion can only be estimated when you turn away from a political parade and look at him while at work on his farm.

You there behold the poor blind dupe breaking up his grounds, preparing them for crops, and then planting and drilling in his corn, his wheat, his oats, and his rye with plows, harrows, planters and drills on which he has paid

out of his own pocket from 75 to 100 per cent., nearly double their real value, as a tariff tax laid for the protection and enrichment of the manufacturer of such implements in this country. You behold this enslaved and deluded victim of the money power cutting his small grain and his hay with a reaper, and a mower for which he has paid twice what they would cost him but for a protective tariff. He uses a double-priced hoe in his cabbage patch, and a double-priced pitchfork at his hay mow and wheat stack in order to avoid foreign competition and thus get rich. He then puts a set of harness on his horses taxed from the bridge bits to the breech bands, and on every buckle, link, and chain, hitches them to a wagon taxed 85 per cent., at least, on every bolt, spike and tire that holds it together, and then with a suit of clothes on his back taxed at about the same rate, and with his wife by his side, also covered with raiment of his wagon proclaiming the vaunted lie that the productions of his farm were the fruits of protection! They were planted, nurtured and gathered in spite of protection, and at a double expense because of such a curse in the statute books of the government. It is a notorious and self-evident truth that the tariff, as it now stands, increases the farmer's expense account from 35 to over 100 per cent. on every implement of husbandry with which he toils from one year's end to another. The Mills bill attempted to place all fibers, such as hemp, jute flax goods, and manilla used in the manufacture of twine, on the free list. That just and moderate bill was defeated by the monopolists, and now, with a tariff of \$20 a ton and 40 per cent. ad valorem on twine, and also on twine trust, creating a close monopoly in its manufacture, thousands of farmers during this summer's harvest have not been able to pay the increased price of twine-binders. They have been forced back to the machinery of their naked hands, and with bloody fingers and thumbs have reflected upon the price of binding twine, enhanced to 18 cents a pound by tariff and by trust.

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It is true that party prejudices are stubborn and hard to remove, but surely it is not too much to suppose that between these same sore fingers and thumbs a republican ticket will not be found next year. The very house in which the farmer lives is a monument to unnecessary, unjust, vicious, wicked and criminal taxation. His barn is the same. There is not an inch of lumber or a single nail or a pane of glass in either of them which has not cost the farmer an average tax of more than 50 per cent. paid, not to the government, but as a naked subsidy to the manufacturers of lumber, iron and glass. His table, spread with dishes with his daily food, is an altar reared to taxation, on which he sacrifices three times a day to the unholy god of Mammon, now controlling the councils of the nation and devouring the enforced offerings of unpaid labor. His bed is not a place of untroubled rest. It is lined and stitched and quilted with dishonest taxes, which he is compelled to pay before he can draw his blanket over his weary frame and sink down to sleep. Nothing so exasperates the monopolists, the usurers, the tax-eaters, the tariff spoilsmen, or so inflames their rage, as the recital of facts such as these. They are fully conscious that their system of spoliation and plunder is blackened at the bar of public opinion whenever its hideous and oppressive details are brought to view.

Like beasts of prey, they desire to feast upon their quarry without molestation, and they often persuade themselves that their depredation and banquet on the stolen proceeds of labor are not seen. They invoke the veil of mystery for the whole scheme of

(Continued on 4th page.)

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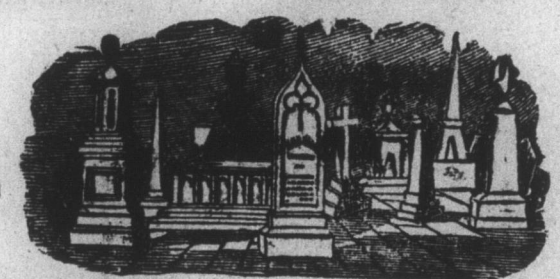
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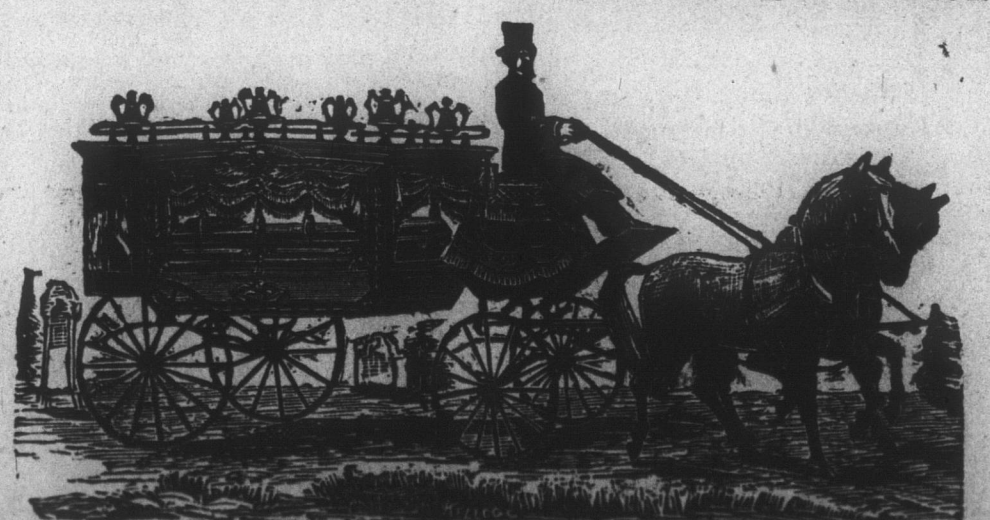
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