

VOORHEES' SPEECH

(From 1st Page.)

FARM VALUES.

A Heavy Decline and the Causes Leading Thereto.

"There has been a heavy decline. Farm property is from 25 to 50 per cent. cheaper today than it then was."

This is a very startling statement, coming from such a source, and I commend it to a wide reading at this time—Ohio is no stranger to the tariff but has extensive interests for it to operate on. It would seem, however, that if anybody has been benefited there, farmers, on the contrary, have been sorely victimized and comparatively destroyed. But this is not all with the farmers of Ohio. Their rich and exceedingly productive lands have not only been diminishing in value, but they have been forced to mortgage them to an alarming extent. The official reports of that misled and usually wrong-voting state show that her real estate is under mortgages for many millions of dollars, the greater portion of which is owing to foreign loan associations for money borrowed with which to pay home debts, hold onto their farms and cultivate them. You know what this means. No farmer can pay from 5 to 10 per cent. on borrowed money of any considerable amount and for any considerable length of time, out of the proceeds of his farm. Sooner or later there will be a foreclosure and a sale, and the farm goes. It will be swallowed up and digested in the maw of the money power—a maw as merciless, as insatiate and as unimpeasable as the maw of death itself.

Turn to the state of Michigan. Within the last twelve months the Hon. Wm. L. Wilson, a member of congress from the Harper's Ferry district of West Virginia, and a gentleman of ability, learning and eloquence, made the following statement on the floor of the house in regard to the condition of that state.

"I do not wish to make any statement that is not sustained by the facts, and so I have obtained the last report of the labor bureau of the state of Michigan, which covers an investigation into the mortgages on Michigan farms, and which presents some striking figures. I stand here to-day to say that I have not the slightest doubt that the Michigan farmer is as industrious, as hardworking, as intelligent as the farmer in any other section of the country, and yet this official volume shows that 47 per cent of the farm lands of Michigan are covered by mortgages, and that the mortgages are 46 per cent. of the assessed valuation of the farms mortgaged.—Compare the condition of the unprotected Michigan farmer with the condition of the protected owner of copper mines in Michigan, the latter piling up dividend upon dividend, million upon million, out of the privilege granted him by congress to tax the people of this country, while the farmer is working early and delving late and piling up mortgage after mortgage upon his estate. The farmers have neither the time nor the money to come here and besiege congress about these matters. They are chained to their plows, to their daily labor. They cannot come here to look after their own interests, but the owners of copper mines and other industries that are protected and subsidized are here at all times in your lobbies, urging measures for their own benefit."

This appalling disclosure was made in the presence of the delegates in congress from Michigan, and met with not a word of denial. How long a people, born free, and with Anglo-Saxon blood in their veins, will submit to mortgage one-half their farm lands, for radically their full value, in

order to pay taxes to manufacturer of from 35 to over 160 per cent. on all they are compelled to purchase and consume in their daily lives, is a problem I remit to the near and swift-approaching future. This side of the serfs of Russia, of the down trodden and plundered tenantry of Ireland there is no other such enslavement of the tillers of the soil on the face of the civilized globe as exists in these United States.

I might point to our adjoining sister state, Illinois, that empire of agricultural and commercial wealth, and dwell upon the condition of her farmers and farm lands. We would there behold the same mountain ranges of mortgage indebtedness, reaching from Cook county to Cairo, and from the Wabash to the Mississippi, covering more than one-half of the abodes of her inhabitants. I have the official report from her labor bureau for 1888. Its details are an overwhelming proof of the fatal tendencies of the times. In our own state, the splendid state of Indiana, I appeal to the records of every county within her borders. They disclose a more cruel oppression of debt upon the farming interests, and more mortgaged securities to foreign loan associations, than ever existed in our history before. Indeed, the condition of all the western states at this time is substantially the same. They stand as a perpetual and enduring refutation of the stupendous falsehood that the farmer is protected, encouraged, and assisted by our wretched system of tariff legislation.

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where we let accumulates and FARMS decay."

MINES AND FACTORIES. How They Are Being Ruined By the Tariff.

But leaving the farming industries at this point and for the present, what is to be said in regard to the mines, the factories, the workshops, the wage-workers? In view of the distressful and appalling condition of the wage-workers of the United States at this time, the man who would say that the tariff was a protection to them would claim that smallpox induced health and piracy as a profession, promoted Christianity. Wherein lies their protection? They are



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not protected in their contracts by any tariff law; they are not protected in their employments or in their wages. The employer is left to deal with them with all the superior power and commanding force which wealth gives over poverty and dependence.—Were the wage-workers of Illinois, who have been destitute and turbulent, as destitute people will always be, protected during the last six or twelve months? Was the poor woman at Braidwood, whose twin babies died at her breast for want of nourishment, she herself in a starving condition, protected as a wage worker's wife? Were the wage-workers of that haughty steel baron, Carnegie, with his income of millions a year, protected when he announced to them a reduction of their wages of 15 per cent. When they entered their protest

(Continued on 4th page.)

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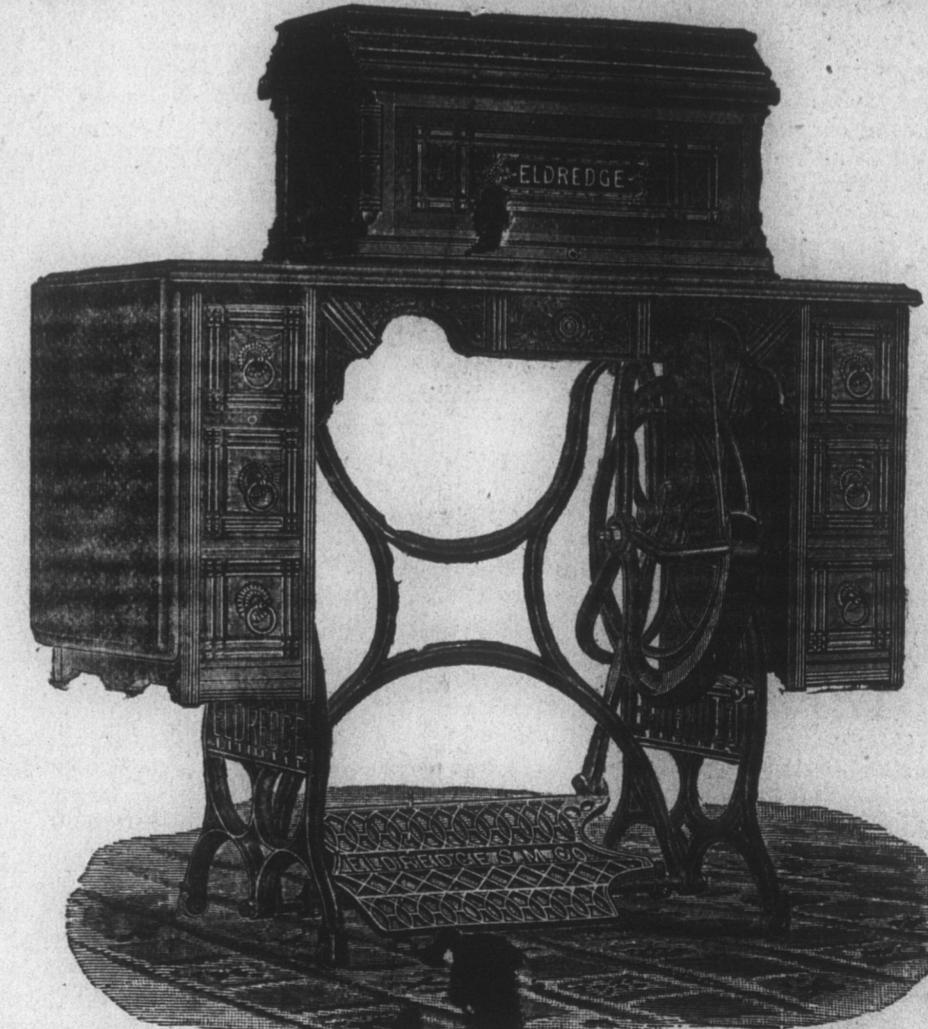
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