

My Summer

At the risk of bringing a rather large basket of coals to Newcastle, I am going to venture to call your attention to certain observations which I have been making recently in the land of the Protective Tariff. For some years I have eyed that territory with more or less bewilderment, and I must confess with some suspicion. I have tried to convince myself of its real value, reading with some care the glowing reports of Mr. Horace Greeley and William Haller who paint it as the Land of Promise. I have also read what Mr. E. L. Godkin and Sumner Fox had to say of it, travellers who find in it a veritable Desert of Sahara. I cannot deny that all of these gentlemen have influenced me more or less, but none of them ever quite ^{satisfied} convinced me. I have long felt that I should like to see with ~~my~~ ^{my} own eyes what it was really like, so a little over two years ago, with some difficulty, I persuaded a friendly editor, who I fear thinks now he was a victim of misplaced confidence, to back me up in a little exploring tour of my own. Since that time the bulk of my working hours have been spent in

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wading through that dismal ^a-swamp known as The Congressional Record, and trying to cut a path through the jungle of Treasury Reports, Bureau of Labor Reports, Tariff Schedules, and other over-grown thickets. In the intervals of my labor, I have talked with many of the inhabitants of the land; chairmen of ways and means committees, members of Congress, statisticians and students. I am still far from the end of my journey. The path I have cut so far is too narrow and crooked to be of much use to anybody but myself, I fear, nevertheless, it has given me the opportunity to make my own observations, a poor thing, but mine own. And it is these observations which, briefly, I want to lay before you. Please remember that I give them to you simply for what they are worth, utterly disclaiming any desire to present them as expert or authoritative.

And to begin with, one of the strongest convictions that my voyage of discovery so far has forced upon me is that never at any time since the Civil War have the people of the United States had the tariff in which the majority of them believed, for which the majority of them had declared, and which their leaders had promised them. *mainly of this* *as nearly as I can make out* That is, I am convinced that ~~for~~ *for* fifty years fully three quarters of the people of this country have been in favor of nothing more than a tariff which would give revenue and protect industries sufficiently to put them on a fair competitive basis with the foreign products. *yet there has never been a time that we have not had a tariff far beyond this* ~~To this measure we have been a protectionist country I believe; that is, while we have not been for free trade or for tariff for revenue only, we have as a people never at any time in these fifty years believed in anything like the tariff we have had.~~

Now, I must confess that I have been surprised at this conclu-

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sion. I had always said to myself that while I believed that the duties were ~~far higher than were necessary to meet any righteous protective claim,~~ still the people at large must have believed *it* ~~that this was no so,~~ since they allowed them to exist. ~~I believed that the majority was ruling in the matter of the tariff.~~ Any candid examination, however, into public sentiment before each one of our great tariff bills, that of 1870, 1883, 1890, 1897, and I believe before even that of 1897 will convince you that this conclusion is correct; that is that three quarters of the people have wanted one thing, but that somehow something else has been fixed upon them. Again and again ~~as I have~~ studied popular feeling on the tariff before each of these particular bills, I have felt that strict reductions were inevitable; again and again I have found Congress, both the House and the Senate voting for reductions, and yet when the bill would finally come forth for adoption, ~~generally after having been through a joint conference, the reductions were not made, although voted for by both~~

~~bedies, yet somehow had been hoisted back to their old place, even some-~~
~~times hoisted higher than before.~~ I confess that for a long time nothing
that I met on my exploring tour baffled me so much as this. How could it be?
~~I had heard rumors, of course, of how it happened. Other travelers had~~
~~warned me that it was thus and so, but as I wasn't not to verify other~~
~~people's reports, but to find out for myself, it took me some time to make~~
~~it out.~~ It was obvious to me that there was somewhere a steering committee
at work which at the last moment ^{defeated} prevented the will of the majority from
~~being carried out.~~ It took no little time for me to make it out for my-
self, to catch this mysterious committee at work; to get my hand on it, so
to speak. ^{I have to convince myself beyond a shadow of doubt} ~~I did blunder on it at last, and then it all seemed obvious enough.~~

For nearly forty years the tariff schedules of this country have been made
by and for the people who have profited by them. These people have been or-
ganized for this purpose. They have devoted time and money and pains for

this purpose. They have never relaxed their vigilance or their efforts.
Roughly speaking it is not unfair to say that five organizations, repre-^{hool}
senting as many different industries have made our tariff schedules. These
organizations are the Association of Woollen Manufacturers, The Industrial
^{The Steel Union}
League now defunct, its successor the Iron and Steel Association, The Tin
Plate Association, and the Sugar Trust. ~~Separately or combined they are~~
~~working with rare skill, backed by abundant funds for the thing which each~~
~~found profitable for itself and in securing what each wanted they have not~~
~~hesitated to satisfy the demands of scores of small manufacturers.~~ Indeed,
I think we might even go farther and say that less than a dozen men, leaders
in these associations are responsible for the present tariff schedules of
this country. ^{Canner}

Now, I take it no one denies the right of people who have been developing industries in this country to be heard on the tariff. They certainly should have the right to present their cases fully. But this they have never been required to do. What they ~~have done~~ ^{and} anybody who wants to wade through the thousands of pages of testimony with which they have stupified the intellects of various ways and means committees can verify this statement. What they have done has been to tell what they wanted, not to prove what they needed. I am rather inclined to think that most of them have believed that they needed what they said they wanted, for one thing that has been forced upon me in studying their demands is, not so much that they were greedy and conscienceless, selfish and corrupt, but that they were men actuated by fear. It is one of the curious contradictions of the American temperament that unreasoning fear often accompanies the most unreasoning audacity. Americans will undertake anything that they can see, but they are easily frightened by what

they do not see.

The American manufacturer ~~could not be more perfectly characterized. He~~ scoffs at nature and all her ways because he is familiar with them, and ^{but he} fears the ^a foreign workman five thousand miles away. That we who have at our doors unbounded natural resources, who can draw from the strongest, the most energetic, the most ingenious and productive laborers that there are in the world, who can sell our wares in a market made up of the freest buyers in the world, ~~the freest because they have the largest supply of~~ ^{afraid} ready money, that we should be ~~reluctant~~ to compete openly in the markets of the world is one of the anomalies of the times! And what are we afraid of? Why of the poor, over-crowded, under-fed, military-ridden workmen of Europe. Fantastic as it seems, the dreams of the American ^{manufacturer} ~~workmen~~ have for years now been haunted by the spectre of the starving ^{foreign} workmen stealing from under his nose his founders, and mills, and mines. ~~Besides this there has been~~

~~another spectre even more mysterious than the first, because less understand-
able. It was the spectre of free trade. At no time in this fifty years has
there been a shadow of danger of free trade in this country. Yet protect-
ionists have ~~built up~~ ^{built up} this boggy man into horrible proportions. Let any
word of revision be mentioned and horror fill their whole horizon.~~

So far as I have been able to judge, it has been ^{the fear of this} ~~these two~~
spectres that has driven by far the greater part of American manufacturers to
combine, to besiege Congress, ^{to} spend money to keep up the duties. It was en-
tirely logical that they should do this. The tariff in their minds was what
they called it "the protection of prosperity" and like any other safeguard
from danger ~~they~~ ^{to be guarded. Men to} ~~guard it.~~ We speak with derision sometimes of the
"sacred tariff," and there is no question that to thousands of people in this
country, good and honest people too, ^{it is just that} ~~the word counts for much.~~ They revere

reverse
the tariff as superstitious races ~~see~~ the wooden idol which wards off danger.
And its sanctity has been and is still so strong in some parts of our
country, that to speak lightly or even critically on the subject is to bring
a look of shocked protest ~~on~~ to many faces. It is a fact that I, myself, as
a child believed that the protective tariff was one of the things proscribed
in the Methodist discipline for all faithful adherents of the church. This
notion had been borne in on my childish mind ^{by} from the reverence with which
I ~~heard~~ ^{mentioned} the subject ~~spoken of~~ by the ministers who frequented my father's house.
In these two things, the fear of an impending invasion, and in the sacred
regard for the thing which ^{protects} ~~prevents~~ you from this invasion, you have the main
elements, I am convinced, of the support of the tariff; not, but what there
has been a goodly body of men who entertained no illusions of this kind. They
knew that there were successful iron founders in the United States, that there
was sheep raising and woollen manufacturing before there was any tariff laid

and for many years when there was but a low or moderate tariff. They knew too, that if all tariff were removed these industries would go on. But these men feared God as little as they did the bogey man, and they fought for more duty because more duty meant more money.

Now fear and greed have been at the bottom of our manufacturers' ~~campaigns~~, and there are ^{now} two things which it is ~~more~~ difficult for an intellect to stand up against. Scare a man or excite his avarice, and his mind ~~is~~ ^{begins to play tricks} closed. I see no other explanation than this for the amazing contortions through which the protectionists argument has undergone in the period I have been investigating. This juggling has taken the most fantastic and contradictory forms.

were launched in the air in season and out, a spectre to disturb the dreams of those who ventured to believe that our protective duties were too high. Any one who knows the history of the last fifty years, knows that at no time has there been the least danger of free trade in ^{the U.S.} this country. They also know ~~that the tariff reform leaders have never preached that doctrine, however much they might believe in it abstractly.~~ The free trade cry has been dishonest from first to last, a scare-crow put up and kept in order by our manufacturers to frighten all consumers who wanted to get more of the bountiful crop of profits which nature and their own energy and ingenuity were producing. ^{grow people}

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then. But our tariff schedules are infinitely more complex than freight schedules. There is but one way to manage tariff schedules, so far as I can see, and that is to put them in the hands of a permanent committee of non-partisan experts. Such a body could, if it worked hard enough for years possibly find out approximately how each particular duty really works, and what it ought in justice to be approximately. I say approximately for I doubt if any human agency could ever tell exactly how a tariff works. However that is a limitation which applies to many mundane affairs and I do not mean to hold it up against protection.

under a fair competition basis - But it has been a long time since
 we have had this and
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people have been in favor of it, but careful study of our tariff history shows
 conclusively, I think, that ~~again & again in the last 50 years~~ at least three quarters of this people ~~business have~~
 repeatedly pronounced against the kind of tariff that we have now, have repeated-
 ly instructed their representatives to reform it, and repeatedly have had
 their views disregarded by Congress under the influence of a few powerful private
 interests. *i.e. people have not made tariff - the whole thing*

My own notion is that the people who support high protection in this
 country have tricked their minds until they cannot see what they are doing. *2 kinds*

a matter of fact, all of those who are supporting privileges in this country are
 in the same class. *case* They have closed their minds to a great multitude of fun-
 damental principles in their eagerness to get wealth and the power it gives. *no longer reflect, but simply in*

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policy of protection as we had to shift their
ground and their argument & support. They
must find the logic.

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fundamental principles in their arguments to get wealth and the power is given.
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There is another strong conviction I have reached in this work.

allies itself with other classes in enjoying privileges, ~~that in this country~~
~~in alliance of monopolized manufacturing, trade & distribution~~
~~with the railroads which have secured land grants, with the shippers who have~~
~~built a hardware grabber~~
~~secured railroad favors, with the municipal companies that have secured~~

franchises. These people wish to preserve their privileges in exactly the way that the nobles and the church and the army have in other countries and in other times. ~~The result is that our democratic system is passing away, being replaced by an aristocratic system; that we have a union of classes each of which is growing in wealth because they have certain special privileges which are not open to other classes of citizens.~~ What we have done with our high tariff, our reckless land grants, our unlimited franchises, our winking at railroad discrimination is to rear a temple of privilege in our land, a thing which to ^{support} ~~spread~~ means more privilege, always more privilege, a thing so greedy that it is demanding now that last and cruellest sacrifice, the youth of little children and the working hours of mothers. Now to substitute aristocracy for democracy in this country is an immoral thing. It is destroying the very foundations of our manhood, ~~and that is self-reliance.~~ The time was when to be an American man meant that one must stand on his own

feet and must ask no man's aid. We have come to boast of luck and advantage ^{of protection} and ~~privileges~~, a poor exchange, indeed, for self reliance.

The intellectual juggling which it has required to make the protectionists' arguments plausible is in itself an immorality and a far-reaching one. The mind takes curious revenges. It is not to be trifled with. Refuse it all the facts, force it to support an absurdity or a falsehood, and it soon closes itself in disgust to the real truth of things. It refuses to warn, to distinguish, to understand. We speak of the ~~stagnant~~ closed mind. It is only the mind which has been forbidden to walk freely abroad and to report fearlessly what it saw, that ever closes. This is just what our privileged classes have refused to their minds. The revenge is coming today in their inability to understand the signs of the dangers that they have brought upon themselves.

But the protective system has not only ~~led us to overestimate~~ ^{to} ~~privileges and under-estimate self reliance, it has not only made us willing to sacrifice our independence and to close our minds, it has brought on us a still more serious evil, that is the dulling of our perceptions of right and wrong. To support and extend the protective system, it has been necessary for manufacturers and for legislators to bully, to wheedle, to spend enormous sums of money in different ways, to compromise, and to barter. Men cannot go on indefinitely doing this sort of thing without blunting their moral senses. Many of our business men have engaged in these practices until they do not know the right wrong thing when they see it. There has been nothing more curious about the ^{discovery} ~~developments~~ of the last ^{few} years than that so many of the men, who to some of us seemed to be engaged in operations which were contrary even to the most primitive moral sense, have evidently been surprised~~

wrong. They have forced their minds to believe that it was right for them individually to build up business on such privileges as high protective tariffs, railroad rebates, great land grants, perpetual franchises, and the time has now come when they cannot ^{of they have} see the immorality in ~~it~~ what they have done, the immorality of substituting special advantages for self-reliance. They cannot see that they have been building up their fortunes by putting unequal burdens on other people's shoulders, not by standing on their own feet and playing their own game, a thing that they boast loudly that they do do. To me it is the worst of immoralities to substitute in this country this aristocratic system of privilege for the democratic system of self-reliance. It is the worst of immoralities to support the propositions which benumb the intellect, which destroy the sense of right and wrong. (The most precious possessions of a nation are self-reliance, intellectual integrity, and sensitiveness as to right and wrong. When men for any

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as dishonest-transacting, & have been surprised

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and horrified that the public could believe them capable of wrong actions. ^{They did not know they were doing wrong. They many of them do} They had simply lost their sense of right and wrong. Now I do not believe ^{not- see still in spite of all the talk} that there is any one thing which has been more responsible for this than ^{particularly} the kindly support that has been given to the protective tariff. To sustain it, men have been obliged to deny that questionable methods were questionable; pernicious acts pernicious, and they have suffered the consequence in moral obtuseness. ^{This is all wrong} If anything was needed to emphasize this blindness to the moral side of the tariff questions it seems to be to be supplied by the fact that ^{20 many people} throughout the debate we hear so little of it, and that so large a part of the people who are sustaining the tariff seem to be ignorant that there ~~was~~ was any moral issue at stake. For example, the great church, which in a way has stood for the protective theory and to which I have already referred, has never seemed to be conscious of the immorality inherent in granting such privileges. As a matter of fact they have seemed to feel that the criticism

of the system was in itself an immorality.

A system which produces such results is bad. The most precious possessions of a nation are self-reliance, intellectual integrity, sincerity & upright & wrong. With these qualities its future is sure. Without them its downfall is sure.

Any system which undermines these qualities must go. Protection is such a system. And I believe it is the solemn duty of every citizen to make ours appreciable this fact - to do this best manner.