

more than he would if there was no duty at all, and in fact he gets the article cheaper. Let me illustrate: It costs in England twenty cents to make a yard of flannel, where labor is cheap and wool is free. In America, where labor is higher and wool is fixed fifty six per cent, it costs thirty cents to make a yard of the same flannel. The American manufacturer says he can't compete, and the Englishman is bound to buy and drive him out of the business. This is undoubtedly true, for simple arithmetic proves it. Very well. A duty of fifty per cent is then placed on the Englishman's flannel; this enables the American to turn the tables on his rival and undersell him. How so? Simply because the duty of ten cents a yard being added to the foreign article makes it cost thirty cents also, whilst cost of transportation raises it above the cost of the home article. So far nobody disputes the plain arithmetic of the case. But after the consumer has paid many millions of dollars—not for flannel, but to support the home manufacturer in a losing contest—he at last gets tired of being taxed for another man's pocket and proposes to remove some of it; then the figures which we have known and trusted from childhood begin to lie. The consumer is told that he is altogether mistaken; that he is not taxed at all; that the duty is not added to the price of flannel, and assures him in proof of it that he never bought flannel so cheap before! Nay, sometimes, when his blood is up, he will go so far as to say that he makes flannels cheaper than the Englishman, and he can beat him at his own game any day! Now any man in his senses will say that there is a lie somewhere in this statement. There is bound to be. Either the manufacturer lies when he says the tariff duty in whole or in part not added to the price, or he lies when he says he can't compete without the duty; that is without something which is non-existent! In my opinion both assertions are "desperate of due exactitude"—to use the language of a Spanish diplomat. My observation has been that in matters touching the tariff and their profits under it, the reputation of protected manufacturers in much the same way that of Shacknasty Jim, of whom his eulogist wrote that his reverence for the truth was so great that he never uttered it, or went near it, or interfered with it in any way whatever. How can the tax protect home products unless it increases the price? How can it increase the price unless it is added in whole or in part, to the cost? And if they can make goods as cheap as the foreigner, why can't they compete with him, and what is the necessity of retaining the duty? When pushed to the wall on this point they say the duty keeps out the foreigner and gives them the entire home market. But what benefit to them is the home market unless they are supplying it? And if they do make money and still make cheaper goods than the foreigner, the question then reverts with redoubled force, why keep up the duty? It is too plain for argument, the price of domestic goods is enhanced by a duty on the foreign, and enhanced at the expense of the consumer. Common sense and common honesty can make nothing else out of it.

That protection encourages our manufacturers is undoubtedly true. But it so happens that there are two sides to that proposition, as there are to almost all others. Manufactures is bilateral, and it seems to be a law of nature as well. So also in the moral world. A life-opinated old chap of my acquaintance was once brought to what was supposed to be his death-bed, and in preparation for the long journey, the preacher was called in. "My friend,"

said the ghostly counsellor, "before you can hope for mercy and forgiveness you must admit that you are a poor, miserable sinner, and there is no good in you. Do you confess that?" "Well, Parson," he replied, "I do, in a general way; but there's a heap to be said on the other side of that question if a body had time!" "Nay, there is very much to be said on the other side of the proposition that a tariff encourages our own manufacturers. When men deal with each other, if one makes money by the trade it *must* beat the expense of the other; if one gains, the other loses. It is true that in exchanging our article for another not unfrequently both sides are benefited, but that is different from a sale. If A is compelled by law to pay B ten cents a yard more than the normal price of flannel, I can well see how B is benefited to the amount of ten cents, but I can't see for the life of me where A's benefit comes in. It is undoubtedly "encouraged" to the extent of ten cents, and it seems to me that A must just as surely be "discouraged" to the same extent—that is, always supposing that A has common sense. If he were a natural born ass he might, when the whole protection theory was explained to him, feel "monstrously hope up" by the loss of his money. So the duty of two dollars per thousand is a great encouragement to men engaged in the cutting and sawing of lumber, but to the same extent it is a discouragement to the poor man who is about to build a house to shelter his wife and children. The same may be said of window glass, crockery, iron and steel rails, woolen clothing and all the rest of it; if the tax laid on these things encourages the men who received it and doesn't correspondingly discourage the men who pay it, then it can only be so on the principle that it is more blessed to give than to receive; an excellent precept in morals, but of doubtful application in political economy.

I take it to be a self-evident proposition that where there is abnormal gain there must be a corresponding loss somewhere. If one man in a community gets rich in such a way, the people around him are poorer by just that amount. If one section gets rich in like manner, it must be so ordinarily, by absorbing that amount of the wealth or other sections. When trade is left free it is not necessarily so. The natural laws of political economy, which are a beautiful system of compensations, checks and balances, tend to equalize the gains and losses of human intercourse. But where the law interferes, and by taxation confers unnatural gains on one. It inevitably imposes an unnatural loss on another. The laws of economy will not right this wrong by reparation to the taxed man, though they may avenge their violation, and do, by injuries of equal extent to the wrong doer.

Failing to show how these things can be done by protection; how the tax can enter into the question when needed to keep the foreigner out, and obligingly disappear when the consumer is required to pay, and then reappear again in the treasury, like a "lumber Jimmy" or a jumping Jack in a magic box; or how a duty levied to protect manufacturers is not a tax imposed on one class to enrich another; failing utterly to explain in these contradictory things, the advocates of the theory fall back on generalities, trusting to the mobility or indisposition of the common mind to distinguish between cause and effect. With this aim they constantly pre-empt the public attention with a series of the most delightful pictures of local prosperity. They will tell us that in a certain place there was a stream of water flowing fitly to the sea, the country was rude and poor, the inhabitants few, and in poverty and ignorance. One fine day a wandering capitalist came along in search of an investment for

his money. He sees this stream, and immediately perceives its power to turn machinery. He conceives the idea of making blankets, but he can't make them as cheap as they are made abroad. He purchases the site and water power for a sum, goes to Congress and gets a tax of 75 per cent piled on all foreign blankets, builds his mills and goes to work. As if by magic the whole scene is changed. Stately buildings arise on the banks of that neglected stream, the lonely forest gives place to the workman's white cottages, the stony soil is converted into smiling gardens and orchards. Illness disappears and the factory bell calls busy men and women to profitable toil every day in the week, and church bells summon to worship on Sunday. Education, intelligence and comfort prevail with all the blessed incidents of prosperity. This, enchanting, and in many cases it is true. Well, isn't it a convincing argument for protection? It is an argument—an overwhelming one—for the existence of manufactures, but not for protection. Where does it all come from? From the profits made by manufacturing those blankets. Where do these profits come from? From the duty on foreign blankets, which enables the mill owner to put nearly all the tax on his blankets. Who pays that tax? Every man who buys a blanket. Every farmer in this broad land, every plowboy, wagoner, ditcher, blacksmith—in short, every man who sleeps under a blanket, high and low, rich and poor, the pampered lord of the mansion and the shivering window in the cottage, all pay a tax over and above the actual cost of blankets to produce this scene of beauty and prosperity. It is a prospect of loveliness, tainted, for the thoughtful man, by the foul streaks of injustice and "robbery under the form of law." It has all been paid for by pinching, discomfort and self-denial in every home in the land. Practically, what difference is there between that tariff act and the giving of that manufacturer a bounty on every blanket he made equal to the difference between its cost and the cost of the foreign ones? Practically, is not that tariff law just the same thing, if the amount collected under it could be exactly estimated, as it had read thus: "Be it enacted, etc., that one million dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated to pay John Smith for operating a blanket factory at Fall River, Mass. for two years from the 30th of June, 18—, and selling said blankets at the market price of the world!" In the one case the government would collect the tax from the people and pay it over to John Smith; in the other the government authorizes John Smith to collect it for himself, and by the law keeps all outsiders from interfering with him. The only practical difference I can see between them is in favor of the direct appropriation from the treasury. In the first place the amount is limited, whilst under the tariff Smith collects all he can without limit. In the next place, the people would know just what was done with their money, and could not be confused and deceived as to the real objects of the taxation. Then if they saw fit to be fled to enrich private persons, they would suffer with their eyes open. Z. B. VANCE.

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