

ing to the utmost the production of the things in the making of which they excel, and exchanging them for those products in the making of which other countries excel. It is simply the principle of the division of labor by which a village community thrives carried into operation in the larger business of the world. In fact, all the great laws of the science have their source in the humble dealings of the hamlet. The laws which are evolved there in the petty transactions between man and man are the same in principle as those which control all other business, great or small, in which the same human nature is enlisted.

Bearing this in mind, let us look further into the pretensions of protectionist that our tariff taxation is the cause of national wealth, and that it must be kept up if our wealth is to increase. It must always be remembered that money is not wealth, but only the medium by which wealth is exchanged. Real wealth consists in the possession of objects of utility or pleasure. Now it is desirable that as far as it is possible to do so with profit, a country should supply its own political economy admit it is to the advantage of countries in their infancy to encourage domestic manufactures by extraordinary means. The first necessity of such a country, struggling to establish itself among the nations, is to secure a home supply of the things necessary to its existence, of which it might be deprived by war in case it were dependent on foreigners. But that period soon passes, and then comes the question of a surplus of products. So long as our country is producing only its own supplies, of course its wealth is increasing day by day; and if we made all that we required and could make no more, we could attain to national wealth by dealing with each other only—that is to say, we could attain to all the wealth possible in such a state of things. But human industry cannot stop without decay and ruin. After it has supplied our own country, one of two things must take place: either a foreign market must be found for our surplus products or we must cease to make any. If we make more than we want and can't sell it, this lessens the value of what we have, and our aggregate wealth is not increased a particle; if we stop production at the point of home supply, then all the labor and capital of the country beyond that limit is unemployed, and again our wealth ceases to grow. Common sense points out that we must have a market for our surplus and high tariffs tend unmistakably to prevent this. They are intended to prevent it, for as all foreign commerce is simply exchange, nations will not buy from us unless they can pay us with their products. With a tariff wall around our country they cannot trade with us.

The wickedness of this policy is only equalled by its folly. There is no country upon earth prepared to become so rich by foreign trade as these United States, because there is none so abundantly supplied with all the material and all the conditions of production—absolutely none. There is not labor enough in our sixty millions of people to dig up all of our coal and iron ore in a thousand years; our forests, though rapidly decreasing by lavish waste and the tariff premium we offer for their destruction, are still most abundant. We have a practical monopoly of cotton, a staple which clothes two-thirds of our kind, whilst in all food products our vast and fertile plains are the granary as well as the wine-land of the world. In addition to all these advantages, which are the gift of nature, our population, under the stimulus of free institutions, has developed more industrial energy and more inventive genius than any other people upon earth. Their labor-saving inventions form an epoch in the history of our race, and have multiplied the production

of human labor beyond the dreams of the poet. The statistics show and candid men everywhere admit, that the best trained labor to be found in Christendom cannot equal our skilled workmen, measured by the amount and quality of their work. And yet, in the face of this, and whilst the sound of our boasting of it is still heard, we declare in the next breath that we are unable to compete with our inferiors, shut out their products by prohibitory tariffs, deny ourselves the riches and the political friendships which are the fruits of foreign commerce, and condemn this mighty repository of unborn wealth and human energy to the narrow limits of the home market. With the ore and the coal under his feet, the Pennsylvania iron master declares he cannot make a ton of pig iron without a tax of seventy-five per cent on the product of his nearest rival, who is from three to four thousand miles away beyond the sea. So it is with the cotton spinner, the woolen weaver, the spelter, and all the rest. Offer to reduce the duty, even slightly, on any one of his products, and he will cry, "Murder!" loud enough to wake a sleeping city, and declare that the least reduction will destroy him instantly and forever. If he would consent to die alone it would not be so alarming—we might attend one funeral—but he is equally positive that the country at large will perish with him. He wants no foreign trade of course. The home market is good enough for him. There the competition of the foreigner is forbidden by law, the competition of his neighbors, whenever it gets troublesome, is regulated by a ring or trust which stops production and keeps up prices as dividends may demand, and there is none to molest him or make him afraid. When by chance he miscalculates and finds himself possessed of more goods than he can sell at home, he ships them abroad and markets them in competition with the foreigner paupers. If he suffers any loss he makes it up out of his own people, who are not allowed to buy anywhere else, and he goes on prospering and to prosper. In this way we have failed to secure the trade of foreign nations. It is all done at the expense and for the benefit of the protected classes. If it were not for the home market, if prices were allowed to be fixed by supply and demand, if the supply is getting too large they shut down their mills and turn their operatives into the streets. Having control of the engine, they move forward, backward, or stand still, as suits their pockets. Meanwhile consumers are at their mercy, and the farmers worst of all. Their market prices are fixed abroad by the competition of the whole world; their purchases are made in the restricted home market. If they want woolen cloth they send their wheat to Liverpool and sell it for, say one dollar per bushel there the cloth they need could be bought at twenty five cents a yard—one bushel of wheat paying for four yards. But a tariff of seventy five per cent prevents them from doing that; so they bring the dollar back, and from a Massachusetts man they buy with it two yards of the same cloth.

The farmer has lost two yards of cloth, and the public wealth is that much less. The manufacturer has made that man's not by sale and voluntary exchange, but by an unjust and unconstitutional law. Not all the saprophytes of all the talent which the nation wealth can hire to prevent human reason can make anything cheap out of such a transaction. The farmer cannot at all share in his own production and discharge his obligations; his production are perishable and will not keep over indefinitely; therefore he is obliged to sell his surplus at any price he can get, or lose it altogether. Therefore it is that year after year seven-eighths of the exports of this country are agricultural

products. The farmer supports the manufacturers, maintains our foreign trade and exchanges, and does his full share in bearing the public expenditure besides; and all this he does with the most necessary conditions of political economy reversed in their application to him—being forced to sell in the cheapest market and to buy in the dearest.

Small as your foreign trade is, there would be universal distress and financial ruin without it. It furnishes the exchange which pays for whatever we are obliged to buy abroad, keeps our precious metals at home, and maintains the credit of our country. It could be made double its present volume in a brief time if we would only legislate a little in the interests of the whole country and not in that of class. We have twice the population of Great Britain, ten times the material resources, and thirty times the territory, yet she has double the foreign trade that we have. Ours has been protected to death. It has been fitted with a Chinese shoe, and can only grow by distortion.

In the same way our merchant marine has perished. We undertook to protect it; we not only imposed heavy duty on the material of which ships are built, but we excluded foreign ships from all internal and coastwise trade, and tried to exclude it from the open sea also by refusing registration and the American flag to any ship in whole or in part made abroad, though owned entirely by American citizens. But there we failed. We could bind the land and make factory men rich by excluding competition; we could control our inland waters and our coasts and enrich our domestic vessel owners; but the great, free seas refused to be bound. They refused to obey any laws except such as God imposed upon the intercourse of nations. As our people could not build and operate ships as cheap as other nations, owing to high tariffs, and as they could not buy them from others without forfeiting their rights as American citizens, our once magnificent merchant marine lay down quietly to die. It was not even permitted to die in peace. Its last hours are disturbed by the clamor of the quacks who brought it low. In their anxiety to divert attention from their malpractice, they loudly accuse their adversaries of the authorship of the calamity. They say that but for them the government would have given the ship-owners two dollars from the treasury for every one they lost through tariff and navigation laws, and they "had not died!" Two doctors attend a sick man's bedside; one bids the other stand back, and assumes entire control of the same. "I will bleed him and give him calomel," he says. "It will kill him if you do," says the one in control. "I will treat him on the home system. I want nothing to do with the theories of your European doctors." So he bleeds and purges, whilst the patient gradually sinks, and as his grasping breath changes into the death-rattle the self-confident doctor turns with indignation to the other, whose advice he had scorned, and upbraids him: "You wretched murderer! When you saw this man sinking why didn't you give him brandy to sustain him under my treatment? If you had done your duty he would not have died from the loss of blood!" Well, I suppose that is true. If the government had made good their losses and supported them from the treasury, so that they would be alive now and flourishing. And what of the people who pay these taxes, but prevent purposes? Oh! it doesn't matter about them! If manufacturers are supported by taxation indirect and sneaking, why not support the ship-owner openly and boldly by bounties? If the first is right, there is, indeed, no reason for refusing the latter.

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