

THESES,

TARIFF-PROTECTED AMERICA,

FOR DEGREE OF B. L. IN SCHOOL OF

ENGLISH AND MODERN LANGUAGES,

BY

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Tariff - protected America,

The world has heard a great deal about liberty for the last century. That period has been marked by great struggles on the part of nations to secure independence, and on the part of individuals and classes to secure freedom from old traditional restraints. The world has struggled towards "freedom and liberty" as if these were the first considerations of peace, justice, prosperity and happiness. And the result has been to produce in the forefront of modern civilization, states whose fundamental principle is to give the freest scope to individual effort and energy.

We in the United States make it our greatest boast that we have accepted this broad principle absolutely and applied it fearlessly. Nevertheless

we demand more liberty; we demand more liberty so that those of us who want to choose the course of prosperity ^{1st} and solid security may be left to do so freely, or at least that we may not be burdened in the attempt. The liberty which we demand is that whereby we may exchange our products as we will, ^{2nd} we ask only, that in that one particular our efforts to advance ourselves may be left free to exert their full effect.

All systems of government ^{3rd} forms of law have for their end, to secure to man, liberty of person, liberty of conscience ^{3rd} liberty of exchange. In the degree that a government recognizes ^{3rd} defends these rights, does it serve its legitimate purpose. Personal slavery has substantially passed away from countries which

claim to be civilized. Liberty of conscience is making rapid progress through the separation of the Church and the State. The Liberty of exchanging the products of a man's free activity, which is involved in the freedom of his person, remains to be vindicated. The right to fix the price at which he will exchange the products of his labor for those of other men, is an incident of his right to the products themselves. These rights are natural and universal and the state may not interfere with them, except for the public service and in accordance with laws which bear equally on every citizen.

America stands preeminently alone in denying the natural and universal right of free exchange to her citizens. By her high protective tariff legislation she imposes un-

equal nd unjust taxes on the many for the support of the few, and at the same time she does injustice to the nations with whom she trades. She is no longer "the land of the free nd the home of the brave." She has turned craven. She avoids foreign competition. She fears inundation from foreign goods. She trembles lest European industry so deluge the country with abundance that our mills shall be silenced, our workmen forced idle, and the nation itself made bankrupt. For we have built dykes, - tariff dykes against the commerce of nations; and no ship may steam into our harbors, laden with the fruits of foreign progress nd peace, till first she has the customs-blockade, and paid a forty per cent. duty on her cargo. Yet the blood of the old

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Yankee colonists feared no foreign competition - whether in peace or in war. Generations before tariff-protection they planted manufactures of all kinds. Their plain straight-forward sense never dreamed of this tariff device, of developing a country by taxing it. They thought brain and brawn, not bounty, were the factors of industrial success. So by virtue of honest toil they built two-thirds of the ships that floated the British flag, shipped so much iron into John Bull's ant-hill that British self-defence levied twenty-seven tariffs. Yet, to-day, the descendants of those colonists, working at the self-same industries, are clamoring for tariff-protection - protection for their "infantile industries"

It was in 1789 that the first tariff was levied for the temporary protection of infant

industries. We have had, since that year, protection in all sizes and shapes: high tariff, low tariff, total prohibition - duties specific and duties ad valorem. But the infants we have had with us all ways. That tiny, modest, wedge-shaped beginning, levied on but thirty articles, averaging but eight per cent., limited to but five years existence, has doubled and trebled and quadrupled; grown with the growth of the protected; increased with their increase of capital; risen with their power over Congress until on its eighty-sixth birth-day it covered twenty-three hundred articles, averaged nearly fifty per cent., and was pledged to stay through till eternity.

The day of "infant industries" is passed. Nevermore can "infant-protection" be urged for any nation. Steam, electricity, and the press make discoveries the property

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of all men, information as free as the air we breathe.
Fifty days will bring to our shops the deftest ma-
chinery, the most skillful mechanics, the most exper-
ienced directors on the globe. And those manufactur-
ers, too feeble for the times, who clamor for infant
protection, should be taken from the lobbies of Congress
and shown the inside of their own factories. We have no
infant industries, except those we have made by
tariff. The youngest and least protected are shipping
their wares to all nations. Age, tradition, and custom
have no kin with industry to-day. This new-born
age of steel has discarded all ancient contrivances, and
started entirely anew. Modern manufactures are of mod-
ern growth, have modern methods, modern inventions.
New countries and soils, new resources and industries, new
establishments, processes, and machinery, instead of be-
ing arguments for protection, are the very conditions

of supremacy.

But the wail of infant-protection touches no longer the heart of the American voter, accordingly the time has been changed, and now the burden of feeble manufacture is shifted upon the back of labor. That high wages cannot compete with low; that in the struggle of open competition the poorest paid labor will survive - is, to-day, the bulwark of protection. Then follows the application, that America's prodigious resources, and amazing opportunities for labor create high wages; that her general abundance, her free privileges of suffrage, her educational advantages and incentives, by multiplying desires and expenditures, demand high wages; that, therefore, the well-paid American mechanic must succumb to the favorers of Europe and Asia; and accordingly, that tariff-protection must prevent that competition.

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So these bounty-fed prophets would have us believe that comfort, education, and liberty are impractical, sentimental and useless; that progress and culture, the multiplying of human desires, the developing of human powers, as industrial investments, do not pay; that all the resources, advantages, and privileges which we thought would make us great, are the very forces which by raising wages have rendered us industrially helpless. And they assert and reassert in pamphlets, editorials, and speeches, that never can America strip off her protection and stand free and independent among the industrial powers, till she lowers the wages of her laborers, degrades their condition of living below that of the poorest and most groveling of all her foreign competitors; then low down to the Hungarian and Mongolian. Crown ignorance, oppression

And want as the magnates of industrial supremacy.
 But under the dominion of such Mammon-philosophy, let the laborer look out for his future.

Now, suppose the agricultural and manufacturing resources, which guarantee good wages for the laborer, have increased his power to produce, and therefore his power to compete. Suppose the cheapness and abundance of food, which has raised the standard of his living, by augmenting his energy and endurance, increased his power to produce, and therefore his power to compete. Suppose the rights and duties of suffrage, requiring leisure for reflection, expenditures for information, have, by making the workman more thoughtful and ambitious, increased his power to produce, and therefore his power to compete. Suppose the educational advantages and incentives, necessitating expenditures for text-books and schools, have given the laborer, in

return for his investment, resources of Knowledge ^{and} insight, quickness of adaptation ^{and} tact, and therefore have developed his power to produce, ^{and} from that his power to compete. Suppose that every influence which has widened the laborers desires, raised his standard of living, increased his outlay for news-papers ^{and} books - has, through these very instrumentalities, widened his powers to observe ^{and} invent, raising his standard of morals ^{and} intelligence, fitted him to employ both science ^{and} machinery; ^{and} therefore, by very aid of high wages, has builded up the power of America both to produce ^{and} compete.

Good workmen ^{and} good wages are inseparable. The sources of production ^{and} the sources of comfort are one. The only causes of superior wages, where scarcity of labor is not felt, are superior resources of nature and superior energies of man and the very

fact that a nation persistently pays high wages is prima facie evidence of sturdy, resistless powers for production ^{and} competition.

To these facts the whole industrial world rises ^{and} testifies by official figures ^{and} facts. England, paying for manufacture the highest wages in Europe, floods her wares into continental markets, right over the tariff-defences. Australia, paying for farm-work the best wages in the Eastern Hemisphere, dis-tributes her product of wool throughout the factories of Christendom. And the young, rich States of the West, paying the highest known wages on the globe, ship their farm implements ^{and} machinery, their beef ^{and} hard wheat to all the pauper Kingdoms of the earth. Take the operatives of the four manufactur-ing empires of the globe. The German produces annu-ally \$220.00 worth of wares; with wages one-fourth

higher, the Frenchman, \$375.⁰⁰ worth; with wages three-fourths higher still, the Englishman, \$800.⁰⁰; while with one-third higher wages than the Englishman, the American laborer produces, in a year, a value of over \$2000.⁰⁰. Therefore, we may affirm with all candor and frudence that good resources, good workmen, good work, and good wages inevitably go hand-in-hand; hand-in-hand they have come down to us along the thoroughfares of history—hand-in-hand they traverse the earth to and fro through the workshops of continents, and hand-in-hand they will journey on forever.

The wage-argument is a pretext; the cry of infant-industry is a farce; yet these are the only supports of protection. How long, then, shall we maintain that temporary tariff of ninety-six years ago? Possessed of the largest

capital on earth, the broadest expanse of ^{14.}
tillable soil, double the iron of the whole outside
world; contributing one-third the worlds daily
income, one-third of the product of live stock ^{and}
grain, one third of its outlay for colleges ^{and} schools,
manufacturing more wares than any two other
nations, mining more ores than all Europe combined,
^{and} daily receiving to our midst the youth ^{and} ambition,
the vigor ^{and} unrest of all nations - It does seem
that the time were come to step forever from
our swaddling-clothes into free ^{and} independent man-
hood.

Afraid of Great Britain? Afraid of that little
island away off in the Atlantic? Why we have
wealth enough to buy up the entire island ^{and} all
there is on it! Our coal fields alone have twice the
area of the whole United Kingdom. Already we

manufacture double the wares. Even Mr Blaine admits that American operatives do more work for their pay than the British. Coal, pig-iron, and cotton goods are the factors of England's greatness, yet coal and cotton goods we now produce cheaper than England; and pig-iron we produce at a cost less than the freight from Liverpool. Our dealers and manufacturers have testified before the Tariff Commission that there is not an article of hardware, from a locomotive down to a nail, in which England can compete with America, even in the British market, except cutlery; and cutlery we ship into Sheffield. Stop for one year our exports of beef and cotton and wheat, and one-half the English people would starve; their greatest industry would be silent in its cobwebs, the laborers would become a raging mob, and Crown and Princes and Lords would

roll in the dust together.

Why fear the commerce of nations? If China, South America, and the Indies flood us with coffee and tea, sugar and spices, they beg us in return, to flood them with clothing, machinery, and furniture of England and Germany and France inundate us with their laces and gloves and wines, they propose to be inundated with cotton, provisions and hardware. Let, therefore, the commercial tides meet and commingle. America is big enough and broad enough to stand the shock. And if in the industrial onset the shores of this Continent tremble, it will not be from foreign bellows without, but from the beat and throbbing of our own mighty energies within.

You ask me for precedents - precedents that nations may develop in a state of commercial liberty. I will not give you Great Britain, nor Belgium

nor Holland, which have become in proportion to
 their population, first in commerce, first in man-
 ufacture, first in general wealth. But I will give you
 America, — America, that sought free commerce before
 writing the Declaration of Independence, — America,
 that drove out the English monopolists for their restric-
 tions upon our commerce, their burdens on our indus-
 try, their unjust "discriminating" taxes, — America, whose
 first treaty with the world was a free trade treaty with
 France, — America, that by her constitution established for
 the first time upon earth the system of free trade between
 States, — America that has demonstrated, year after year,
 that big States ^{and} little States, old States ^{and} young States,
 States with large capital ^{and} States with small, States
 with high wages ^{and} States with low, not only may
 trade together in free, equal, harmonious union, but
 must so trade for their best development ^{and} true

grandeur. Our twelve years of free commerce with Canada quadrupled that commerce. Five years of free duties on coffeend hides trebled our Venezuela trade, multiplied by ten our shipping in that trade. Six years of free-trade with the Sandwich Islands have trebled both the exportsnd imports. That fourteen years of comparative free-trade, ending with the late Civil War, accumulated double the ratio of wealth of any equal period before or since in the history of the United States. While, today, after twenty-four years of the highest protection known to man, with the markets glutted, mills idle, laborers becoming tramps, scarcely an industry that cannot double its present product, we are seeking the outlets of commercial freedom by treaties with the West Indies, treaties with South America, treaties with Mexico, treaties with Spain.

It suffice it then to say, that when one clears one's head of all the sophistries and special pleas by which protection is usually defended, and looks at the matter as a simple matter of common sense, one must be convinced that an industrious people on a fertile soil, so abundant in extent that the population is inadequate to the highest organization of labor, must enjoy advancing wealth and prosperity. They will owe this to a diligent use of their natural advantages. They will reach the maximum of production when they produce and exchange most freely. Certainly, no application of taxation can possibly increase their production, that is their national wealth. Every tax or other interference with the freedom of production or exchange, produces restraint, confusion, delay, change, risk and vexation, and these, as every one knows

cause loss of time, labor, ^{and} capital, that is, diminish the product which may be obtained from a given amount of labor. The amount of this loss can never be measured in figures, because we can never get statistics of "what might have been"; but when it is seen that the legislation of the United States has been constantly vacillating, not only in its policy, but also in the degree to which its policy has been pursued; that it has been placing burdens on production ^{and} exchange in a clumsy, brutal ^{and} ignorant disregard of possible effects on the delicate network of modern industry; that it has had in view, from point to point, only a single interest, ^{and} has had no national standpoint or conception of the public interest (much as it boasts to the contrary); then, I think, anyone must see that such legis-

lation has lamed the national productive power, wasted the natural advantages which the nation enjoys, diminished its wealth, and contracted the general status of comfort for the whole people."

Then let us be up ^{and} doing. Ten thousand markets in smiles are inviting us; the winds ^{and} the waves are calling; labor, hungry ^{and} idle, is begging us - to down with the walls, out upon the seas, and to our present articles of freedom add - freedom of commerce, freedom of industry.