

THE FREE LIST BILL

The farmers' free list, passed by the democratic house, is now awaiting the action of a republican senate. It is one of the most important and far-

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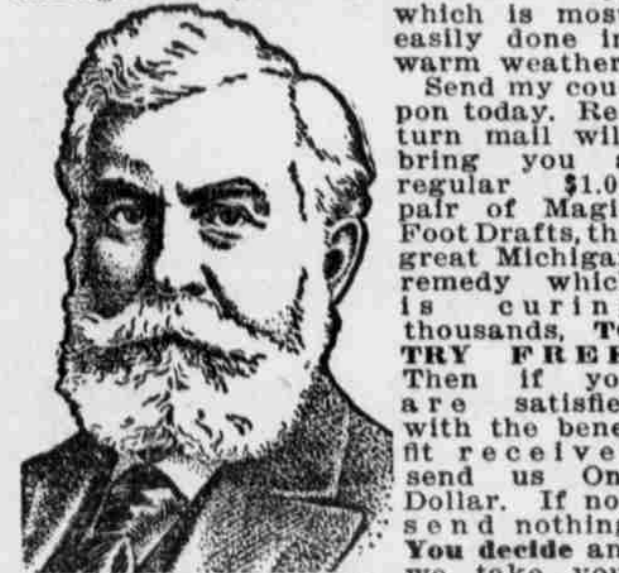
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reaching measures introduced into congress for a generation. This is conceded by enemies, and claimed by friends. One standpat congressman dramatically exclaimed: "To accept this free list is to abandon protection!"—and probably it will be the abandonment of his sort of protection. Another exclaimed with equal fervor: "There is no place in the principles of the republican party for a free list!" If that be true, which the News would regret to believe, we suspect there is no place in the nation's councils for the republican party.

But in spite of all that has been written and said about the free list, comparatively few persons know exactly what it is; and fewer still have much definite knowledge as to the changes it will make in the farmer's expense account. Therefore, the News will devote several editorials to going over the matter in detail; first presenting a general summary of the bill.

The free list, technically known as House Resolution No. 4413, is entitled:

"An act to place on the free list agricultural implements, cotton bagging, cotton ties, leather, boots and shoes, fence wire, meats, cereals, flour, timber, lumber, sewing machines, salt and other articles."

Going into detail, the bill specifies among agricultural implements everything from plows and divers makes of harrows to farm wagons; and expressly declares that all parts of the same, imported separately, shall likewise be free of duty. All sorts of leather are specified, and also all parts of shoes and boots. Harnesses and saddles, complete or in part, finished or unfinished, are put on the free list by this bill. Barbed wire, woven wire, wire rope, wire staples; all forms of beef, veal, mutton, lamb, pork, dressed or undressed; all forms of flour; all those forms of cereals which masquerade as foods and really improve our health by diluting our nourishment; all kinds of lumber and timber, except the finer grades of cabinet woods; sewing machines, and all parts thereof; and salt in all forms and packages, are made free of duty.

A single glance shows that this bill should relieve the cost of living of a number of tariff additions hitherto imposed. Most of the free list items have special reference to the farmer. But free sewing machines, free shoes and leather, and free salt appeal to all; and so do free meats and cereals and flour. The News has never before printed a tariff measure which contained so much in so little; which was so packed with meaning for the whole country. The separate lists will be dealt with separately. But here we wish to point out one remarkable fact:

Almost everything which this bill puts on the free list is now controlled, wholly or in large measure, by a trust.

Go over it with us, and see if this sweeping statement is not justified. Agricultural implements? The harvester trust controls their manufacture and sale absolutely; and, as will be shown in detail later, taxes the American people a considerably heavier price than is paid by the foreign buyer of the same things.

Bagging? Four-fifths of all the jute bagging used in this country is handled by what is known as the bagging trust. Leather, and boots and shoes? The monopoly in this line of products is one of the tightest in the universe; so tight, indeed, that we doubt if free trade will break it up altogether, though free trade will help greatly. Fencing wire in all forms? There you get into the gentle grasp of the steel trust; and no more need be said. Meats—beef, ham, bacon, etc? The beef trust handles those things; and once again, further

explanation is needless. Cereals? The evidence is not conclusive, but so far as it goes, the cereal manufacture is pretty well centralized. Flour and bread? Ask the milling trust, with headquarters in Minneapolis. Timber and lumber? Government reports indicate that less than a hundred men own four-fifths of the standing supply of timber in the United States. Sewing machines? Absolutely trustified. Salt? The national salt trust is one of the richest organizations of its kind; and, just in passing, Joseph F. Smith, president of the Mormon church, is head of the western branch of the salt monopoly.

Did you realize before how thoroughly the tariff had delivered the farmer over to the tender mercies of the trusts? Frankly, we did not. We knew it in a general way; but not until this free list came out did we put together the separate facts of our acquaintance, and see how tight those facts held the farmer to the good pleasure of the trusts. The farmer sells practically all his produce in a free trade market, and a competitive market. He has bought nearly all his supplies in a tariff-walled market and a trust-controlled market. The free list bill is a step toward righting that iniquity.

Later on, we shall show how many of the articles named above, though manufactured in America, are sold abroad cheaper than at home. Today, there is room for but one illustration of this kind, and we choose sewing machines. A gentleman from the south, visiting in New York, saw a sewing machine which he thought would just suit his mother. He went in and inquired the price. It was \$29. The man could afford it, and said he would buy. The polite salesman took out pencil and pad, and asked the customer's address.

"I want to send it to my mother. in Edinburgh, Scotland," was the answer.

The salesman hesitated a moment—no wonder—and then said, in substance:

"You don't need to send this machine over to Scotland. We have the same machine, exactly, on sale in Edinburgh. The price there is \$19 apiece!"

That is the difference between trust-controlled products protected by heavy duties; and trust-controlled products on the free list.—Denver News.

LITTLE BOY AND HIS DREAM

The little boy smiled in his sleep that night,
As he wandered to Twilight Town;
And his face lit up with a heavenly light
Through the shadows that drifted down;
But he woke next morning with tear-stained eye
In the light of the gray dawn's gleam,
And out of the stillness we heard him cry,
"I've lost my dream—my dream."

And he told us then, in his childish way,
Of the wonderful dream he'd known;
He had wandered away from the land of play
To the distant Land of the Grown;
He had won his share of the fame and fight
In the struggle and toil of men;
And he sobbed and sighed in the breaking light
"I want my dream again."

As the years passed by, the little boy grew
Till he came to the Land of the Grown;
And the dream of his early youth came true,
The dream that he thought had flown;
Yet once again he smiled in his sleep—
When those near by might have heard him weep,
"I want my dream—my dream!"
For he dreamed of the Yesterdays of Youth,
And the smile on a mother's face.
—Grantland Rice, in *Columbian*.

AN ANTI-TRUST LAW OF 483 A. D.

In the year 483 the Emperor Zeno issued an edict beginning with this declaration:

"We command that no one may presume to exercise a monopoly of any kind of cloth, or of fish, or of any other thing serving for food or for any other use, whatever its nature may be, either of his own authority, or under a rescript of an emperor already procured, or that may hereafter be procured * * * nor may any persons combine or agree, in unlawful meetings, that different kinds of merchandise may not

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