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from the sole of his shoes to the crown of his hat. It taxes him on the lumber that goes into the roof over his head and on every nail that holds a lath to the wall that helps to shelter him. It taxes him on the blanket that is wrapped around him when he is born and it taxes him on the shroud in which he is buried when he dies.

"If the states have been strong enough to withstand such a system of taxation, a federal levy on mere income, which helps to distribute the burden, is not likely to impair what vitality remains."

### WHY SHOES ARE DEAR

To the Editor of the World: Senator Scott of West Virginia certainly exemplifies admirably the general senatorial attitude toward the tariff. He sharply denied not long ago that "West Virginia produces millionaires." People who are at all familiar with the details of the trade in lumber and coal have been greatly deceived if the advance in price of these products within the past fifteen years has not brought to Senator Scott, personally and individually, a profit amounting to at least more than \$1,000,000 each.

Within fifteen years the prices upon various grades of manufactured lumber have advanced from 60 to 110 per cent. That is to say, the average price of manufactured lumber has nearly doubled in fifteen years. How much do lumber-producers want? The demand for a continuation of any duty whatever is simply an economic outrage. It is hard as yet for the common run of folks to understand that they pay these indirect taxes. I should think, however, that increased rents, due largely to the great increase in cost of building, would drive this fact through the intelligence of most people after a while.

Possibly an item of taxation which may be more directly appreciated by the popular mind is the duty on hides from which heavy shoe leather and sole leather are made. Here also the demand for a duty is simply the cry of greed. I quote from a responsible journal of the hide and leather trade the statement that packer hides "are from 3 to 5 cents a pound dearer than at this time last year," and that certain other hides "are 7 cents a pound higher." The general price-list of hides is in many details higher than was ever known before. Yet the 15 per cent duty condemned by Blaine and struck out by the house was restored by the senate. This situation in the market for raw material for leather is reflected in the increase

in the price of shoes, and will eventually be conveyed to the popular mind thereby.

From the same periodical, which is accurate and careful in its market reports, comes the statement that "manufacturers have raised the price of many grades of shoes 20 cents a pair." The public may as well sit up and take notice that by the time this advance is transferred to them individually it will mean paying from 25 to 50 cents a pair more for shoes, this, too, on top of an average increase of from 50 to 75 cents a pair which has taken place during the past few years. I know enough of shoe-retailing to know that the retail dealer can not be made the scapegoat, as has been attempted recently in the senate. The percentage of profit is small and failures have been numerous in the retail shoe trade. There was a recent remarkable instance right here in New York in a failure which in volume of liabilities made it, so far as my information extends, the greatest that ever occurred in the retail shoe trade.

Personally, I have always been a republican from the ground up and I believe in the protective principle so far as it benefits the general public. But here are two items relating to two of the great primal necessities, clothing and shelter, in which the demand for a duty is simply a demand that the public be taxed still higher to swell the profits on materials which have already vastly advanced in price and which are yielding enormous profits to the great industrial and commercial combinations which control them.

WALTER C. TAYLOR.

New York, July 19.

### THE RUSSIAN OIL CLAUSE

House of Representatives, Washington, D. C., June 2, 1909.—Hon. W. J. Bryan, Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Mr. Bryan: I have just read your article in The Commoner of the 28th ult., headed "Senator Johnson in Error," in which you reply to Senator Johnson, of North Dakota, who is said to have severely criticised you for having been largely responsible for the clause giving the Standard Oil company a tariff as against Russian oil remaining in the Wilson bill. You state in your reply that your attention was never called to the use made of that clause until less than two years ago.

I took the trouble to look up the Wilson bill, and find that as it passed the house, section 568 of the bill, which was the free list, provided as follows: "Oil, crude or refined," which placed oil on the free list. As the bill passed the house there was no tariff on oil and no countervailing duty. As the bill passed the senate, and as it was finally passed by congress, by an amendment put on in the senate oil, crude or refined, still remained on the free list, but a countervailing duty of forty per cent ad valorem was provided. The McKinley bill had the same provision as the Wilson bill. (See U. S. Stats. at Large, Vol. 26, p. 613.) The Dingley bill had the same provision when it passed the house, and the provision was stricken out and the provision for the countervailing duty was put on in the senate, which now amounts to 99 per cent, or about fifteen cents per gallon. So that, when the Wilson bill passed the house, oil was on the free list, and I apprehend that is the bill you voted for at first. The senate put on the countervailing duty by providing that when any nation should put a tariff on oil coming from this country, oil coming from that country should be taxed at forty per cent ad valorem. The McKinley bill contained the same provision, as also, the Dingley bill, and this provision which gives the Standard Oil company the power to charge the same rate of duty that any other country imposes upon our oil, so far as I can ascertain, was first put upon the Dingley bill in the senate, and, as has been charged and never denied, it was done on the request and advocacy of the Standard Oil interests.

C. L. BARTELL.

### IN A NUT SHELL

"Many newspapers are trying to make it appear that the Payne-Aldrich-Smoot bill is a revision downward. That is absolutely untrue.

The average of rates of the Payne-Aldrich-Smoot bill is about 2 per cent higher than the average rate of the Dingley bill.

When the maximum goes into effect March 31, 1910, the average rate will be about 27 per cent higher than the average of the Dingley bill.—Champ Clark, Minority Leader in the House of Representatives.

## Practical Tariff Talks

The debate in the senate over the tariff bill has been marked in fact by the definite and final abandonment by the republican high protectionists of the theory that the tariff was necessary only to develop the infant industry to that proud station in life where it must and could get along without government aid. They unblushingly now demand that the consumer must always and eternally, as long as there is an infant factory in any industry, pay tribute to all engaged in that industry. It was proved beyond dispute in the debates that the harvester trust was in complete control of the manufacture and distribution of agricultural implements, manufacturing 85 per cent of the entire consumption. It has grown so great that it is now building factories in Canada and England to supply its customers there. The Commoner not long since printed a letter from a hardware dealer in Lyndon, Kansas, who was a former European salesman for the harvester trust. He stated that binders made in America were sold in Europe for \$33 less than here, reapers \$15 less, mowers \$12 less and rakes \$5 less. The fact that there is an \$85 tariff on binders keeps all foreign makes out of the American market. This was cited by Senator Overman of North Carolina. It was conclusively shown that the only effect of the tariff is to enable the trust to get more for its farm machinery, but because there are other factories in the country, the senate refused to put agricultural implements on the free list. The independents, it was decided, would have to have a duty on these goods or they would be crushed out of existence and the trust have full sway. The same argument was made as to the sugar and other schedules.

The limit was reached the other day when, apparently because the state prison in California runs a jute bag factory that supplies the local market and protects the California farmer from being held up by a combination of importers, the senate refused to admit jute bags free—protecting prison labor in America as against pauper labor abroad. There are many millions of jute or burlap bags used in this country yearly. The Pacific coast farmer buys some 50,000,000 bags in which he ships his wheat across the ocean. Forty million of these come from India, the home of the plant, the fiber of which is called jute. Outside of the penitentiaries at San Quentin and Walla Walla, there are few bags made in this country and as all jute must be imported it is not an industry that can be made to flourish here. The farmer buys the bags ever time he makes a shipment because that is the only way in which his wheat can be carried. These bags are emptied abroad and sent back, but they come back to the exporter not to the farmer and he must buy them at market prices if he desires to use them again. The tariff on jute bags is, therefore, a tax upon the wheat farmer levied on every bag of wheat he ships abroad. The southern farmer is an involuntary purchaser of about 40,000,000 bags a year. These carry the fertilizer used on his acres and they can be used but once. On the bag proposition the farmer is in the same predicament as when he ships his grain by rail. The price made to him by the grain buyer is the primary market price less the freight, but when he buys a manufactured article made in the east the price he pays is the price at the factory plus the freight. When the Pacific coast farmer ships his wheat to the Orient he pays for bags used, and when the southern farmer ships in fertilizer the guano man charges him up with the bag that encases it. The proposition to put jute bags on the free list had a fair chance to carry until Mr. Aldrich got up and remarked that "the senate had always voted consistently for the protection of everything that is grown and produced in the state of Washington, and I can see absolutely no consistency whatever in the proposition to put these manufactured articles on the free list." And the senate, despite the showing made that we do not produce these bags here to any extent compared with the amount we must have and never will produce them, voted to keep jute bags on the dutiable list.

C. Q. D.