

Practical Tariff Talks

One of the difficulties that confront the ordinary investigator of tariff schedules is that there are so many different branches of manufactures that require expert knowledge to understand the effect of a change of duty. The paper schedule is one of these that have so many angles to confuse. The tariff-makers cut the duty on print paper, the kind used by the newspapers, but were careful not to make the reduction of sufficient size to give the paper-buyer any more of a chance with the print paper trust than before. All that was done was to lessen the margin of protection, and nothing to lessen the price to the consumer. On the surface-coated papers, of which a tremendous lot is used in this country, there was an actual advance in rates. Under the old schedules this stuff carried a rate of 3 cents a pound and 20 per cent additional. Under the new law the tariff is 5 cents a pound, with 20 per cent additional. As the average cost is a little less than 9 cents a pound, it will be seen that this paper carries a very high protection.

The protective policy is defended on the ground that it nourishes infant industries. The truth is, as most all know, that no industry ever grows to such a size as to wittingly take itself out from under the shelter of the tariff. The surface-coated paper industry is neither an infant or a new industry. For more than seventy years it has been a part of our manufactures. There are, in fact, several factories still in existence that started seventy-two years ago. Surface-coated paper is the familiar kind one sees on shoe boxes, hat boxes and the like. It is a simple manufacturing process, the putting onto white paper stock of a color and then polishing that color until it becomes a glazed finish. The materials used are pulp and dry colors, glues, clays, etc., the coating being done by machinery after which the paper is finished, if the real article, by being glazed with a flint stone, or if the imitation by being run through a friction machine. The purpose of the increase was to raise the price to the consumer. It has since then been increased.

The paper manufacturers were able also to slip over something else on the consumer, when it came to amending the section relating to parchment papers. Originally parchment meant the skin of a calf, sheep or goat prepared for writing upon, but the term as it now is employed means simply papers that approximate that kind in appearance. Most of the grades included in this classification are of the kind familiar to all patrons of grocers and butchers, the grease-proof papers that show the contents of the package but protect the customers' hands from the grease of its contents. These kinds of paper have been on the market for about sixteen years, and their use is rapidly increasing. The Germans and Swedes had control of the market at first, but Americans have been furnishing most of the supply in the last six or eight years. These waxed papers are made of sulphite fiber coated with paraffin or made waterproof by another mechanical process, and came in under the Dingley tariff at 25 per cent, being in the unclassified papers. If one cares to trace back the incorporation of these under special schedules that gives a protection of approximately 70 per cent, he will find that the paragraphs, substantially as they appear in the law, were suggested at the first hearing by the paper manufacturers' committee, another illuminating instance of how tariffs are really made.

The book and paper schedule contains a paragraph taxing children's toy books, the familiar ones that consist of a little text and many illuminated lithographic prints. Formerly these were imported in large quantities, but the McKinley bill, by putting on a tariff of 8 cents a pound, over 50 per cent, drove the imported article from the market and gave the Americans a monopoly, which has taxed the children ever since. Several foreign manufacturers started plants here, and found they could make them just as cheaply in the United States as abroad, proof that no protection is actually needed in the business. A strong effort was made to reduce the tax to 5 cents a pound, or about the same duty as is levied upon toys, 35 per cent. An inspection of the new tariff law shows that the tariff was reduced to 7 cents, which is farcical, because the rate is still prohibitive.

C. Q. D.

THE TACTICS OF GUILT?

Does Mr. Edward Tilden, president of the National Packing company, realize that the eyes not only of this community but of the people of the United States are focused upon him and his desperate struggles to prevent the examination of his books?

Do Mr. Tilden's associates and the men high in the banking and business world who are using their influence against the Helm committee's investigation realize this?

Do they realize that protestations of innocence are valueless when canceled by the tactics which go with guilt?

Mr. McCutcheon's cartoon in the Tribune on the king who was robbed of a crown jewel expressed the public thought.

"What have you to say for Yourself?" inquired the King of the Accused Man.

"I am Innocent," he answered. "I know nothing about the Crown Jewel. But Just the Same, I don't want to be Searched."

For some moments the king deliberated. At last he spoke.

"I have no wish to be Harsh with you, but if you are innocent, you Hurt your Own Cause by Striving for Concealment. If I allow you to go without being Searched, you will always be suspected of Guilt. Therefore, in your own Interest, I think it Best that you be Searched in order that your Innocence may be open to no Doubt in the Minds of your Neighbors."

Of what is Mr. Tilden afraid?

Do his books contain evidence embarrassing not only to him but to his associates in the National Packing company?

Do these prominent gentlemen consent to being placed in the light of needing protection by Mr. Tilden? Are they willing that the public should infer that their transactions are such as will not bear the light?

If Mr. Tilden is content to bear this inference, are they?

Is it within the bounds of possibility, is it even probable that the National Packing company has acted as a political clearing house?

Is it a possibility that the National Packing company is the "little black man" who has done vicious things which big white men would not be known to countenance?

Is it possible that the books required by the Helm committee or the books of the National Packing company, or both together, would disclose financial transactions involving other elections than Mr. Lorimer's or other legislative activities?

Is it possible that these books would disclose, say, the carrying of stocks for officials—police officers, for example—of the city of Chicago?

These and other grave and unpleasant suggestions spring up in the mind. They would not have such vigorous growth if it were not for Mr. Tilden's evident determination to prevent an examination of his books at any cost.

If ever there were a time for the National Packing company, Mr. Edward Tilden, and his distinguished business associates to come before the public with outstretched hands, with books freely offered for lawful authoritative examination, this is the time.

Instead of that there is a scuttling for attorneys and habeas corpus writs, the wires to Springfield are kept hot with secret appeals to check the investigation at any cost.

And the American people are drawing their own conclusions.

They are not conclusions business men or business concerns of high place would invite without reasons which make it all the more important that duly recognized representatives of the public should know the facts so desperately defended.—Chicago Tribune.

WATCH IT GROW

Mr. Bryan has given instructions that every new subscriber shall receive The Commoner for a period of two years (which will carry it beyond the presidential election of 1912) for the sum of one dollar. Every Commoner reader is asked to secure at least one new subscriber. Everyone will be able to secure more than one. Everyone, however, may render some aid in this work. Following are sample letters:

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Edward P. Hughes, West Virginia—Enclosed find check for \$6.00 in payment for renewals to the following named subscribers to The Commoner for two years each.

C. McGarvey, Georgia—I am enclosing my check to prepay for twelve subscribers to The

Commoner for two years at \$1.00 each. I shall do all in my power to increase the circulation of your paper here.

W. B. Pendell, Washington—Enclosed find money order for \$5.60 to pay for eight subscriptions; six for one year and two for two years.

H. C. Clay, Idaho—Please find enclosed draft for \$6.00 to pay for two-year subscriptions at \$1.00 each. I will try to get others and send in as I can get them. I would like to send you a thousand or more names if it were in my power to do so. You will hear from me again as soon as I can do anything more in getting subscribers.

W. W. Kridlebaugh, Iowa—I am enclosing you herewith the names of five persons to whom I desire you to mail The Commoner as prescribed in your latest offer. I am enclosing you my draft for \$5.00 in payment of the same. I trust that my action will assure you of the high regard in which I hold your valued paper as I consider it one of the truly necessary educators of the times.

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