

SAMUEL M. RALSTON'S GREAT SPEECH

(Continued from Page 7.)

schedule could be scientifically investigated and the real facts ascertained, then congress would have

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Also called Tetter, Salt Rheum, Pruritus, Milk-Crust, Weeping Skin, Etc.)

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Dr. J. E. Cannaday, 1638 Park Square, Sedalia, Mo. References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo. Could you do a better act than to send this notice to some poor sufferer of Eczema?

a basis for action, without prolonged hearings, without public agitation, without all the partisan discussion, always disturbing and unsettling that accompanies tariff revision."

I am impressed with the similarity of the reasoning on this subject of my friend Watson, and that of his former republican companion in eulogy of tariff inequalities. Colonel Roosevelt. Their arguments are so strikingly alike that one can scarcely believe they are today occupying respectively hostile camps. It is all the more difficult to become reconciled to their separation when we reflect that practically every wrong against which the people are crying out is traceable to the injustice of a high protective tariff. Speaking at Providence, R. I., a few days ago, of his method of revising the tariff, Colonel Roosevelt used this language:

"We propose to deal with the tariff schedule by schedule in accordance with the reports of a non-partisan commission of experts, who shall make their reports, not on the theory of being good to anybody, but with the theory of doing justice primarily to the American wage worker and the American consumer."

When I read the proposed method of these gentlemen for correcting the abuses of the tariff, I recalled the argument on that subject made not many years ago, by that distinguished son of Indiana, Senator Beveridge, whose eloquence always carries my friend Watson to dangerous heights, and frequently causes him to forget his own convictions.

I recall that in the course of the senator's argument he pointed out that the American tariff system was a masterful piece of work put together by the consummate skill of republican statesmanship so perfectly that harmony existed between all its schedules and an attempt to revise as the democrats were proposing to do, one schedule without readjusting the others was likely to throw the whole system into confusion. I should add, however, in justice to the senator, that this argument was made prior to the taming of the bull moose.

So it seems that the proposal of republicans and progressives to revise the tariff by piece-meal is an adoption on their part of a scheme long advocated by democrats. But republicans and progressives maintain that the work of revision can not be properly done without the aid

of a commission. Democrats insist we already have sufficient governmental machinery to collect all needed information looking to a revision without incurring for a commission an annual expense, running into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In support of their position democrats cite the fact that the department of commerce and labor costs the people annually approximately \$20,000,000 and has ample authority to have every investigation made necessary, both at home and abroad, to secure the information required to base a revision upon. It is the duty of this department to become familiar with the commercial and labor conditions of every country of any consequence.

Besides there is no reason why the department of agriculture can not collect needful information for use in revision, as the same relates to agricultural interests. Why, therefore, burden the people with additional machinery to render a service amply provided for?

But the democratic party opposes a tariff commission for another reason. Experience has shown that it delays rather than secures relief for the people. A commission or board can not bind congress by any report it may make. In the very nature of things its work is advisory only. While this is true, it is also true that there are those charged with the duty of legislating and those charged with the duty of approving laws, who seek to excuse themselves for a nonperformance of duty to the public by taking shelter behind the delayed action of a tariff board.

The people can not afford to allow a congressman or a senator to escape in the remotest degree the obligation resting upon him properly to represent his constituents, when the taxing power of the government is called into action. No power of government, when put into operation, unless it be the power to declare for war, is attended by more serious consequences than the power to fasten a tax upon the people.

The plea for a tariff commission is a plea to delay the day for the people's deliverance from as cruel a system of taxation as ever cursed civilization. Let the people not be deceived. The stand-pat republican and the new so-called progressive are alike high protectionists, and they both favor revising the tariff through a commission scheme that was discredited thirty years ago,

when the strangling clutch of the special interests upon the throats of the people was feeble compared with what it is today.

Senator John Sherman, in his Record of Forty Years in the Senate, gives an interesting and for us, I trust, a profitable account of the tariff commission of 1882. In part he says:

"The members of the tariff commission, appointed by the president, \* \* \* were of high standing, representing different parts of the country, of both political parties, and notably familiar with our internal and external commerce and productions. In their report they say: 'In performance of the duty devolved upon them all the members of the commission have aimed, and, as they believed, with success, to divest themselves of political bias, sectional prejudice, or considerations of personal interest. It is their desire that their recommendations shall serve no particular party, class, section or school of political economy.'

"They transmitted their report to the speaker of the house of representatives, on the 4th day of December, 1882. It was a clear and businesslike statement of their action, accompanied with schedules of duties on imported goods recommended by them, with suggested amendments to existing customs laws, with testimony taken by them, and with tables and reports covering, in all, over 2,500 printed pages. It was by far the most comprehensive exposition of our customs laws and rates of duty that, so far as I know, had been published. \* \* \* The schedules prescribing the rates of duty and their classification were so radically changed by the committee, that the scheme of the tariff commission was practically defeated. Many persons wishing to advance their particular industries appeared before the committee and succeeded in having their views adopted. \* \* \* I have always regretted that I did not defeat the bill, which I could easily have done by voting with the democrats against the adoption of the conference report."

So thirty years ago a high grade commission recommended a material reduction of tariff taxes, but the representatives of the special interests went before the committee of congress and had the recommendations of the commission set aside and rates suggested by themselves adopted.

The work of the present tariff

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