

information gained from the returns made by citizens.

And now, Mr. Chairman, let us consider the objections which have been made. The gentleman from New York (Mr. Bartlett) who addressed the house this forenoon, spent some time in trying to convince us that, while the supreme court had without dissent affirmed the constitutionality of an income tax yet it might at some future time reverse the decision, and that, therefore, this bill ought to be rejected. This question has been settled beyond controversy. The principle has come before the court on several occasions, and the decisions have always sustained the constitutionality of the income tax. (Hylton vs. United States, 3 Dall., 271; Deasie Bank vs. Fenn, 3 Dall., 171; Deasie vs. Rew, 23 Wall., 331; Pacific Insurance Company vs. Soule, 7 Wall., 433.)

In Springer vs. United States (102 United States, 586) the question was directly raised upon the law in force from 1863 to 1873, and the court held that the income tax as then collected was not a direct tax within the meaning of the constitution, and therefore need not be apportioned among the states according to their population.

But gentlemen have denounced the income tax as class legislation, because it will affect more people in one section of the country than in another. Because the wealth of the country is, to a large extent, centered in certain cities and states does not make a bill sectional which imposes a tax in proportion to wealth. If New York and Massachusetts pay more tax under this law than other states, it will be because they have more taxable incomes within their borders. And why should not those sections pay most which enjoy most?

The census shows that the population of Massachusetts increased less than half a million between 1880 and 1890, while the assessed value of her property increased more than half a billion during the same period. The population of New York increased about 900,000 between 1880 and 1890, while the assessed value of the property increased more than \$1,100,000,000. On the other hand, while the population of Iowa and Kansas combined increased more than 700,000, their assessed valuation increased only a little more than \$300,000,000. This bill is not in the line of class legislation, nor can it be regarded as legislation against a section, for the rate of taxation is the same on every income over \$4,000, whether its possessor lives upon the Atlantic coast, in the Mississippi Valley or on the Pacific Slope. I only hope that we may in the future have more farmers in the agricultural districts whose incomes are large enough to tax.

But the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cockran) has denounced as unjust the principle underlying this tax. It is hardly necessary to read authorities to the house. There is no more just tax upon the statute books than the income tax, nor can any tax be proposed which is more equitable; and the principle is sustained by the most distinguished writers on political economy. Adam Smith says:

The subjects of every state ought to contribute to the support of the government, as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities; that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the state. In the observation or neglect of this maxim consists what is called the equality or inequality of taxation.

The income tax is the only one which really fulfills this requirement. But it is said that we single out some person with a large income and make him pay more than his share. And let me call attention here to a fatal mistake made by the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. Cockran). You who listened to his speech would

have thought that the income tax was the only federal tax proposed; you would have supposed that it was the object of this bill to collect the entire revenue from an income tax. The gentleman forgets that the pending tariff bill will collect upon imports more than one hundred and twenty millions of dollars—nearly ten times as much as we propose to collect from the individual income tax. Everybody knows that a tax upon consumption is an unequal tax, and that the poor man by means of it pays far out of proportion to the income which he enjoys.

I read the other day in the New York World—and I gladly join in ascribing praise to that great daily for its courageous fight upon this subject in behalf of the common people—a description of the home of the richest woman in the United States. She owns property estimated at \$60,000,000, and enjoys an income which can scarcely be less than \$3,000,000, yet she lives at a cheap boarding house, and only spends a few hundred dollars a year. That woman, under your indirect system of taxation, does not pay as much toward the support of the federal government as a laboring man whose income of \$500 is spent upon his family.

Why, sir, the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cockran) said that the poor are opposed to this tax because they do not want to be deprived of participation in it, and that taxation instead of being a sign of servitude is a badge of freedom. If taxation is a badge of freedom, let me assure my friend that the poor people of this country are covered all over with the insignia of freemen.

Notwithstanding the exemption proposed by this bill, the people whose incomes are less than \$4,000 will still contribute far more than their just share to the support of the government. The gentleman says that he opposes this tax in the interest of the poor! Oh, sirs, is it not enough to betray the cause of the poor—must it be done with a kiss?

Would it not be fairer for the gentleman to fling his burnished lance full in the face of the toiler, and not plead for the great fortunes of this country under cover of the poor man's name? The gentleman also tells us that the rich will welcome this tax as a means of securing greater power. Let me call your attention to the resolution passed by the New York chamber of commerce. I wonder how many poor men have membership in that body! Here are the resolutions passed at a special meeting called for the purpose. The newspaper account says:

Resolutions were adopted declaring "the proposal to impose an income tax is unwise, unpolitical and unjust for the following reasons:

"First—Experience during our late war demonstrated that an income tax was inquisitorial and odious to our people, and only tolerated as a war measure, and was abrogated by universal consent as soon as the condition of the country permitted.

"Second—Experience has also shown that it is expensive to put in operation; that it cannot be fairly collected, and is an unjust distribution of the burdens of taxation and promotes evasions of the law.

"Third—The proposal to exempt incomes under \$4,000 is purely class legislation, which is socialistic and vicious in its tendency, and contrary to the traditions and principles of republican government."

Still another resolution was adopted declaring "that in addition to an internal revenue tax the necessary expenses of the government should be collected through the custom house, and that the senators and representatives in congress from the state of New

York be requested to strenuously oppose all attempts to reimpose an income tax upon the people of this country."

They say that the income tax was "only tolerated as a war measure, and was abrogated by universal consent as soon as the condition of the country permitted." Abrogated by universal consent! What refreshing ignorance from such an intelligent source! If their knowledge of other facts recited in those resolutions is as accurate as that statement, how much weight their resolutions ought to have! Why, sir, there never has been a day since the war when a majority of the people of the United States opposed an income tax. It was only repealed by one vote in the senate, and when under consideration was opposed by such distinguished republicans as Senator Sherman of Ohio, Senator Morton of Indiana, and Senator Howe of Wisconsin. It was also opposed in the house by Mr. Voorhees, and by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Holman)—

Mr. Patterson: And by Roger Q Mills.

Mr. Bryan: Yes, by Roger Q. Mills. I am informed, and a host of others. Not only did the senators mentioned oppose repeal, but they spoke with emphasis in favor of the justice of an income tax. Senator Sherman said:

The senator from New York and the senator from Massachusetts have led off in declaring against the income tax. They have declared it to be invidious. Well, sir, all taxes are invidious. They say it is inquisitorial. Well, sir, there never was a tax in the world that was not inquisitorial.

The least inquisitorial of all is the income tax.

I hope, after full discussion, nobody will vote for striking out the income tax. It seems to me to be one of the plainest propositions in the world. Put before the people of the United States the question whether the property of this country cannot stand a tax of \$20,000,000, when the consumption of the people stands a tax of \$300,000,000, and I think they will quickly answer it. The property holders of the country came here and demanded the repeal of the only tax that bears upon their property, when we have to tax everything for the food of the poor, the clothing of the poor, and all classes of our people \$300,000,000.

There never was so just a tax levied as the income tax.

There is no objection that can be urged against the income tax that I cannot point to in every tax.

Writers on political economy, as well as our own sentiments of what is just and right, teach us that a man ought to pay taxes according to his income and in no other way.

Could language be stronger or more pertinent to the present discussion? Senator Howe said:

There is not a tax on the books so little felt, so absolutely unfair in the payment of it, as this income tax by the possessors of the great fortunes upon which it falls.

There is not a poor man in this country, not a laborer in this country, but what contributes more than 3, more than 10, more than 20 per cent of all his earnings to the treasury of the United States under those very laws against which I am objecting; and now we are invited to increase their contributions, and to release these trifling contributions which we have been receiving from incomes heretofore.

Senator Morton said: The state taxation in Indiana, and, I undertake to say, of every state in the union, has in it every inquisitorial feature that the in-

come tax has.

The income tax is of all others the most equitable, because it is the truest measure that has yet been found of the productive property of the country.

The chamber of commerce, in its anxiety to defeat this tax, has distorted the facts of history, and yet the gentleman from New York says that the rich favor the law. If, sirs, they favor the law, why is it that the opposition to the law comes only from the districts in which the wealthy live? Are the representatives from those districts unwilling to do what their people want done, and is it necessary for the great agricultural districts to come here and force upon the rich districts of the United States a tax which the rich love so much?

The gentleman from New York says that this tax is inquisitorial, that it pries into a man's private business. I sent to New York and obtained from the city chamberlain copies of assessment blanks used. The chamberlain writes:

The matter of assessing personal taxes is arrived at by interrogation of the persons assessed by either of the commissioners, which is a very rigorous cross-examination in reference to the amount of personal property they have, and reductions are only made by an affidavit asking for the same and sworn to before a tax commissioner of this county.

The citizen, after giving in detail his stock in various banks, makes oath that—

the full value of all personal property, exclusive of said bank shares owned by deponent (and not exempt by law from taxation) on the second Monday in January, 189—, did not exceed \$—; that the just debts owing by deponent on said date amounted to \$—, and that no portion of such debts has been deducted from the assessment of any personal property of deponent, other than said bank shares, or has been used as an offset in the adjustment of any assessment for personal property, whether in this or in any other county or state, for the year 189—, or incurred in the purchase of non-taxable property or securities, or for the purpose of evading taxation.

Is the proposed tax any more inquisitorial than that?

In Connecticut the citizen is required to give the number and value of various domestic animals, the number of watches, the value of jewelry, household furniture, library, etc.; also bonds, stocks, money at interest, and money on deposit. Is the proposed tax any more inquisitorial than that?

In Nebraska the citizen is compelled to give the number and value of all domestic animals, watches, diamonds, jewelry, money, credits, etc., and what is true in Nebraska is true generally of all the states. Is an income tax more inquisitorial than those taxes upon personal property? I insist, sirs, that the income tax provided for in this bill is less inquisitorial in its nature than the taxes which are found in every state in the union.

But they say that the income tax invites perjury; that the man who has a large income will swear falsely, and thus avoid the payment of the tax; and, indeed, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Walker) admitted that his district was full of such people, and he said that our districts were, too. I suppose these constituents whom he accuses of perjury are expected to pat him on the back when he goes home and brag about the compliment he paid them.

If there is a man in my district whose veracity is not worth 2 cents out the dollar, who will perjure himself to avoid the payment of a just tax (Continued on Page Nine.)