

lower wages, and to reduce the price paid to farmers for fruits and vegetables. Farmers, laborers and consumers are the victims of this tariff-protected combination.

The Steel and Wire Trust.

Let us examine one or more of these combinations whose operations are made possible by the tariff tax imposed for its protection. Builders, farmers, mechanics, and all who have occasion to use nails or wire are deeply interested in the American Steel and Wire Company. Its manager, Mr. John W. Gates, is one of the products of the time. He is absolutely unconscious of any valid objection to the extraction by the government of millions of dollars from the pockets of the people, if his business is only increased thereby. Last November he appeared before the Industrial Commission as a witness. Mr. John DeWitt Warner, who has analyzed this concern with his usual lucidity and thoroughness, seems to be astonished that Mr. Gates did not blush at his own admissions. Why should Mr. Gates blush? He does not know evil when he sees it. He is of the spawn of the protective system. He is ignorant that he is making a confession when he says that the mendicant of which he is manager obtained its alms under false representations. He forgets, for the moment, that his concern pretends to exist for the benefit of the country and that its protection is to cheapen prices. He forgets that "the tariff has nothing to do with or for trusts," and he admits all the accusations against him and his kind with pleasurable pride and suggests that if the tax bearers will only permit a further robbery to be perpetrated upon them, in the form of a direct bounty, the iron-masters of the United States will do 90 per cent of the iron and steel trade of the world. And perhaps the American people will be glad to contribute a few more millions out of their earnings to make the happy iron-masters happier still.

Mr. Warner is my authority for facts and figures which I take from his letter recently published in this series. The present "trust" was formed in 1899. It succeeded other trusts. Its capital is \$90,000,000 and its assets less than \$40,000,000. It will be observed that these tariff defended trusts always expect to make profit enough to pay a fixed per cent, 6 or 7, on preferred stock which represents generally the full value of the business and profit, and a dividend on as much more, or even a greater amount of common stock. This trust has a monopoly of wire rods, drawn wire, barbed wire, wire nails, and almost controls the manufacture of woven wire fencing, of which it manufactured about 10,000 miles in 1898.

Under the tariff the trust has raised prices enormously. For example: The average yearly "base" price of wire

nails, per keg, has increased since 1894 from \$1.11 to \$2.60—the present price being \$3.53; and the price of barbed wire from \$1.80 in 1897 to \$3.17 in 1899—the present price being \$4.13. The profits of the trust run from \$8,000,000 to \$15,000,000 a year, the increase of price being nearly all profit. It has, however, by its increase of prices, greatly reduced the consumption of wire fencing, and, in 1896, the consumption of cut and wire nails was reduced, by a former trust, about 1,000,000 kegs. While the trust raises the price of its goods to the American farmer and mechanic, it sells to the foreigner for much less. In 1896, for example, the price of nails to foreigners was \$1.30 and to Americans \$2.70. In 1899, the retail price to Americans was about \$4.50 and to foreigners \$2.14 "base" or about \$3.10 retail a keg. It was possible to buy at export-price, ship the goods to Europe, bring them back and even then undersell the trust's domestic prices. In 1899 the trust exported 51,000,000 pounds of wire nails to its former foreign customers and 215,000,000 pounds of wire. Canadians fare a little better than our own people, but not so well as Europeans. They are too near our tariff system for that.

Trust Robbery Due to Protection.

These are examples of the manner in which the protected countries keep their promise to reduce prices, once they are "created" and "established". It is time to return to the issue that has been dropped for six years, for the protected interests are solidifying and strengthening their hold on the industries of the country. The protective system is for private gain. It is a socialism whose beneficiaries form a selected class. When protection is no longer profitable it will be abandoned, but not before with the consent of the protected. If it is permitted to continue to be the economic policy of this country, its beneficiaries will, in the future, reap larger profits than they have ever gained before. They will do this through combinations which will crush out all competition. The tariff protects them from foreign competition. The combination will protect them from domestic competition. The examples here given show the tyranny of the tariff-defended trusts—the greatest tyranny that the protective system has yet set up. Its profits are enormous. The protected trusts produce so cheaply because of combination that they can sell abroad at comparatively low but profitable prices, but they draw the blood sacrifice to greed from the American consumer.

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New Rochelle, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1900.

IMPERIALISM.

Numerous meanings may be given to the word "imperialism." In this coun-

try, at present, imperialism seems to be-taken the extension of national territory by conquest. Imperialism also means power. The most profound manifestation of power is intelligent self-government. This is as true of nations as of individuals. Another meaning of imperialism is closely identical with monarchy. He who is monarch of all he surveys may be said to be imperial. Imperialism, except in the self-government sense, is certainly not an American characteristic. Have we arrived at that condition to any degree to merit self-satisfaction? On the contrary we have vastly degenerated from the imperialism of the fathers and are fast adopting the imperialism of the decaying monarchies of Europe.

The Two Williams.

There is a striking resemblance between William I. of the United States—Pan America, he would like it to be—and William III. of Germany. While the latter proclaims himself imperial by the grace of God, William I. of the United States no less declares he is doing God's work in subjecting men and women to slaughter, because they will not subject themselves to his imperial will. Both proclaim themselves servants of God, and yet both assume imperial control over the lives and property of their subjects, equally "God's children."

Not Christians.

Both William I. of the United States and William III. of Germany affirm themselves to be Christians, and yet Christianity is proclaimed to be a religion of peace and good will among men, which is directly contrary to the principles and example of these "War Lords." If "brotherly love, peace, and humility" are Christian characteristics, it is safe to say that there is not a Christian nation on earth, unless it is to be found among the Buddhists. If virtue consists in self-renunciation, as these war lord Christians may claim, then they are far off the true mark. If virtue consists in intelligent self-government, then they are still farther off. If a despot is one who bleeds his subjects to the last possible drop, then William I. of the United States is fast appropriating that imperial desideratum.

Having assumed about all the methods of imperial despotism in our machine politics, it only remains to crown William I. as the first emperor of the United States to fill our cup of national degeneracy to the brim. While William III. of Germany is imperial by heredity, the will of the people, and the grace of God; William I. of the United States is imperial by treason to the constitution and usurpation.

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