tive, and the protective tariff therefore, necessarily, only impedes, blights and destroys those interchanges of goods and products between this and other nations which are reciprocally profitable. All existing duties, instituted to restrict exchanges between the United States and other parts of the globe, ought, in my judgment, speedily to be repealed. The history of agriculture, manufacture and commerce proves that whenever statute-makers have entered the economic domain for the purpose of legislatively encouraging or restricting production, they have wrought positive injury to the many for the possible benefit of the few. It is agreeable to observe, however, that the thought, trend and talk of our law-makers and executive officers in the United States today are struggling towards an enfranchised commerce.

Domesticated.

The domestication of tariff legislation, that is to say, the assumption on the part of the Congress of the United States of its power to discriminate here at home by federal legislation in favor of one industry and against another has been exceedingly unjust and vicious. A pioneer fallacy of the domestic application of the protective tariff was the first statute discriminating against oleomargarine. Oleomargarine is a preparation of wholesome, edible fats. It is so compounded that it competes because of its cheapness and nutritiousness with butter. The first federal legislation relative to this was for the purpose of aiding the butter-makers and discouraging the manufacturers of oleomargarine. It was passed under the false pretense of raising revenue and has been followed by various malevolent statutes in the several states which are intended to aid butter-makers. This sort of legislation, this law-making, for the purpose of building up one industry and tearing down another, cannot be too severely or too universally condemned. Persisted in, this system of class law-making must logically spawn industrial strife, and result, at last, in civil war. It sets one citizen against another citizen. It arrays one industry against another industry. It formulates prejudices, selfishness, envy and malice into statutes.

Too Many.

In a brief paper it is impossible to mention even a small percentage of the laws which ought to be repealed or radically amended; but I think all will agree that the patent laws of the United States ought to be generally and carefully revised, for the reason that as at present administered they establish, by their abuse, the only real monopolies in the country. The founders of this government endeavored to protect authors and inventors through Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States, which "conferred upon Congress the power to promote the progress of science and the useful arts, by securing, for limited terms, to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries." Congress has abused this power by enactments which have bred, fostered and perpetuated monopolies year after year. The people have paid millions upon millions of dollars in extortionate prices for threshing-machines, mowers and reapers, plows, sewing machines, cultivators and other useful implements, utensils and inventions, because of the careless and criminal manner in which the Congress has legislated under this wholesome and wise provision of our fundamental law. Congress has thus imposed upon labor and the producing classes, generally, an irksome and unnecessary and irritating burden. These patent laws, seemingly, grant a perfect monopoly to the patentee, and provide damages and penalties for violation of the privileges of his monopoly. To stimulate invention by decently generous legislation, is a beneficent and wise prerogative of the law-makers. But patents which have already been continued in existence for thirty and forty years, by constantly claimed additional improvements, ought not to be everlastingly extended.

The Law Cure.

Corrupt legislation, many believe and aver, has very frequently been secured in order that a reaper, a sewing machine, or some other useful and necessary invention might be extended as to the period of time in which it could alone be manufactured and sold by a given party or corporation.

On September 2, 1873, it was my pleasure and duty to call the attention of the farmers of Nebraska to the very general abuse of the power of Congress to extend patents and thereby to perpetuate monopolies as to the implements and machinery necessary to successfully carry on modern agriculture, but at this late day it is a work of supererogation to depict the infamous methods which are declared to have been in vigor, at times, for securing extensions to monopolies which had already been sufficiently remunerative to make many multi-millionaires.

There exists a mania for the curing of all faults—political, social and economic—by the enactment of statutes. Some in each industrial class in the United States think that by favorable legislative enactment, their vocation, their daily calling may be made more profitable or agreeable. There is an epidemic desire for legislation in behalf of nearly all the staple and producing industries. But in a government like ours, declared to be made up by the people, of the people, for the people, paternalism can find no rational lodgement There is no power to determine what part of the American citizenship shall act as parent and what portion play child. Paternalism is utterly impossible of useful perpetuation in this form of government, and every advance towards it is a movement towards the ultimate overthrow of the republic.

Common Schools.

In many of the states the common-school system has been debauched so that it assumes general parenthood for the commonwealth. The books are purchased by the state. Thus the great lesson of ownership, of care, of thrift, which was instilled under the old system, when each child received the books from his parents with an injunction to take good care of them, each book being carefully covered with strong cloth by a competent and thrifty mother in order that the money invested therein might not be wasted or lost, is eradicated from the mental and moral discipline of the pupils.

The ownership of books by the children in the old-fashioned country school carried with it a lesson in self-reliance, in self-denial and in economy which not one of the public schools of today teaches half so well. Now in many of the states the educational system is primarily for the benefit of certain types of modern educators rather than for the intellectual expansion and training of pupils. Boards of education in many of the cities of the Northwestern states have been involved in great scandals of corruption because of the bribes which are alleged to have been paid to their members by the agents of the publishers of certain classes of school books. The frequent changes of text-books in the public schools are largely the result of the log-rolling of book agents with boards of education, and the unnecessary taxation thus saddled upon the citizenship of the country runs annually up into millions of dollars.

However, the laws most of interest to an audience made up of merchants, are those relative to the collection of debts, and as it is not possible in this paper to refer to those of each of the several states and territories, I make general reference to the present Bankruptcy Act.

U. S. Bankrupt Law.

Is it not so imperfect as to make it impossible to properly amend it so that it may in any desirable degree, be a protection to the interests of creditors? Did not the Supreme Court of the United States recently hold [see the decision in John T. Pirie, Robert Scott, George Scott, Andrew McLeisch, Samuel C Pirie, John E. Scott, and James Grassie, trading as Carson, Pirie, Scott & Company, *Appts.*, *vs.* Chicago Title & Trust Company—argued January 18-21, 1901, and decided May