

THE WAY OF SALVATION.

The promoters and beneficiaries of the arbitrary interference with the natural laws and spirit of commercial exchange, called the protectionist policy, which in turn has promoted unjust and burdensome discrimination in business and is the ally and supporter of combinations, monopolistic in their tendency, are in great perturbation because the unholy fruit of their system seems to be turning to ashes upon their lips. This alarm in high places has not been surpassed since Nebuchadnezzar "dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled and his sleep brake from him," and he "commanded to call the magicians and sorcerers and the Chaldeans for to show the king his dreams," or since the great king's successor saw the hand-writing on the wall. It will be remembered that these soothsayers and sorcerers, who had theretofore been the infallible flatterers of the ruler whose unnatural, conglomerate empire was fast getting ready to fall to pieces, now gave up their job in despair and begged the king to turn it over to a simple and obscure Jew, who quietly told him the simple but tragical truth. The upshot of Daniel's prescience was that the kingdom of God finally arose and "brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold" which composed the Babylonian kingdom, and "they became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them."

Mr. McKinley, the Nebuchadnezzar of the protectionist system, "dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled," and, very shortly before his lamented death, was constrained to utter for the first time the free-trade truism that nations cannot sell without buying also. And Governor Cummins speaks for an Iowa republican majority ninety thousand strong. Here, indeed, is a Daniel with an eye single to the soundness and the equity of the principles of free trade:

"I stand for competition, the competition of the republic, if possible, but of the world if necessary. I regard the consequences of a monopoly, or substantial monopoly, in any important product, as infinitely more disastrous than the consequences of foreign importations."

Now couple these warning words against the tariff-built monopoly with those of a well known English publicist and writer, just spoken. While he regards the recent formation of large industrial corporations or combinations as in line with natural economic tendencies and in the interest of economical production, and therefore likely to be permanent, he does

not consent to the fear that they will necessarily be non-competitive:

"The main products of the world are produced in too many different countries, under too many different industrial systems, standing on too varying grades of civilization, for any absolute combination into a single hand. A trust may, indeed, easily come to dominate a single market. The remedy for any oppressive raising of prices, is, then, to abolish the customs tariff, and to call in the foreign producer."

But the present republican protectionist, Belshazzar, has not yet called in a Daniel to interpret the handwriting on the wall, and so "the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers" are so far soothing him with the humbug of reciprocity, which is an acceptance of the principle, but in practice, a contradiction of free trade.

Upwards of a million free-trade or tariff-reform voters, mostly of democratic, but many of republican tendencies, have of late years favored the republican party only because they feared the socialistic assaults of the democratic party upon legitimate property interests and business organizations. As the panic recedes in the distance these independents are getting over that fear. Many of them will be ready to co-operate with the radicals rather than see great combinations or trusts built up or propped up by the artificial aid of a burdensome tariff. A thorough reform of the tariff would hold countless numbers of voters along conservative political lines. These countless conservatives, holding the balance of power, join The Conservative in asking, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

THE TRUE DESECRATORS.

Considerable complaint is heard, of late, that the American flag is desecrated by being put to mere commercial uses.

The complainants aver that the flag which cheered the ragged hosts of Washington, at Valley Forge, floated over Grant's army, at Vicksburg, and went with Sherman to the sea; which marked the van of the khaki line over the cane fields of Cuba, and across the rice glades and through the tangled jungles of Oriental America, is now adorning hams and bacon, beer and suspenders, liniment and mite exterminators.

To desecrate; to divest of a sacred character, or office; to divert from a sacred purpose; to violate the sanctity of; to profane; to put to an unworthy use.

The sole complaint heard, so far, may be found in the latter definition;

but there is another, and more serious desecration countenanced year after year, namely: the use of the flag as a means of extortion, and the everlasting activity of the lobby which works in the interests of the only concern in America which prints bunting.

To divest of a sacred character, or office, by making prominent the commercial side of the flag; to divert from a sacred purpose, by using it as a means of extortion and greed; to violate the sanctity of, by forcing its purchase by law, that it may float from every school house in the land, emblematic of the special privileges given the industry which created it; to put to an unworthy use, by associating it with greed for gain, instead of loyalty and patriotism; to profane, by making it the means of enriching a favored institution, which, by virtue of a prohibitive tariff, avoids foreign, and throttles domestic, competition.

When the flag no longer flutters for greed, rapacity and special privileges for the favored ones; when a whining lobby no longer pleads for laws to boom the output of an unreasonably protected industry; then we may turn our attention to the hams and bacon, beer and suspenders, liniments and nostrums, of which complaint is made.

TOO MANY COOKS.

The purchase of the Danish West Indies, at one time, perhaps, excusable, is now utterly needless, and to no purpose.

Before securing to ourselves Porto Rico, and acquiring what a horseman might term a "talking interest" in Cuba, negotiations were commenced with Denmark for the purchase of these barren and commercially worthless islands to be used as outpost stations for the navy; but now that the late war has changed the map of the world, why persist in acquiring territory which will be, not only useless, but burdensome?

The situation is a reversal of the predicament of the man whose new trousers were too long; which fact was noted by his sister, his wife, his mother, and his grandmother; so each good lady found time that evening to slyly cut off a few inches and turn up the hem, the result being that when the object of their solicitude arose the next morning he adorned his person with nothing more than some buttons and a waistband.

We lacked naval stations in South Atlantic waters. Schley, with Shafter, thundered his way to a foothold in Cuba, and Miles and Sampson conducted a less dramatic, but no less successful, campaign in Porto Rico; now congress, apparently unconscious of what has been done in this line, prepares to purchase outposts in a territory that is all outpost now.

Unlike the other fellow's, Uncle Sam's trousers have been repeatedly lengthened until what used to be the knee, now drags in the mud.