

ONE OF MANY.

(Continued on First page.)

the purchasing power of every dollar he earned would be greater. It would make this difference, at least, to the men in our factory. As you know, we are compelled to have very high class labor, which is not the case in the iron and even in the woolen industry where they are supposed to have genuine "protection" though I think manufacturers generally receive much less benefit from the high tariff than many of them suppose.

Lending the way into the immense workshops," Mr. Hicks pointed to a mechanic and his assistant making the body of a carriage. "That man," he said, "is an Englishman. He tells me he received about the same amount for his labor in England as he does here. He says the work costs perhaps a little less here because our methods are better."

Going to another department, he said: "See here. This man is given this drawing and merely the paper, and he is supposed to be constructing the body and furnish a well made body of a carriage. It requires mental effort of no common order, and considerable skill to do this. Now, as all the work is done by the piece, I suppose this man can earn from \$2.50 to \$4 a day. On the other hand, we have men who cannot earn more than \$1.50 a day, because they are slow and less skillful. As you may imagine, it is more profitable to pay the higher wages. When, therefore, I see some of the tales of alleged tales of wages, and the ridiculous arguments used by screeching protectionist newspapers, I cannot help laughing. Labor, like everything else, is a matter of supply and demand. The reason why we pay better wages here than in foreign countries is because we are young, so to speak, and because skilled labor especially is not so plentiful here as it is abroad."

A FREE WOL ARGUMENT.

Then Mr. Hicks showed two samples of green cloth used in lining the insides of carriages. One was very fine, soft, glossy, the other finely woven but harder, of coarser material. "This glossy material," he said, "we get from Germany. It is very fine and has the reputation of wearing splendidly, so we use it, for our best work. The other is made here and is only for inferior work."

"I asked him if that was the best to be had here."

"Yes it seems to be," he replied. "They don't seem to have the material here to make the finer quality."

"Is that an argument in favor of free wool?" I asked. "If we had free lustrous wools wouldn't we make as fine goods as the German supply?"

"Well," said Mr. Hicks, "I spoke to the manufacturer of whom I bought it to that effect, and he said, 'Oh, that's all very well. I would like to have free wool, but if I accepted that, the farmers would then insist on taking off the duty from manufactured cloth, and then I should be ruined.'"

"The same, same old chestnut," was suggested.

"Yes," said Mr. Hicks, "they harp upon that all the time—a false theory persistently maintained. Why, these same poor farmers have been mulcted under the present tariff a thousand fold. They have been robbed day in and day out since it went into operation. How in Heaven's name they have stood it so long I cannot imagine. I, of course, know their loyalty to Republican precepts, and how hard it is to move them. But imagine the millions they are paying every year and getting nothing in return, for their protection is a sham and a fraud, and has always been."

A QUESTION OF BUSINESS.

"In addition to the other advantages you named, do you think that free raw material would increase your trade and thereby increase the benefits to labor?"

The Herald correspondent inquired.

"If we regard the generally accepted theory in political economy that the cheapening of an article increases the demand—yes, I do not suppose the difference would be felt immediately, but I have no doubt it would eventually improve business, and hence improve the condition of the wage-worker. I believe the Mills bill would be a great thing for the country. I look at it much as I did the substitution of specie payments for for an inflated currency. I was never frightened by the 'predictor' collared that was to follow its introduction. You know it made the country more prosperous, and you would have to travel a long distance to find a workingman who wants to return to the old order of things. I would have regard for certain interests for a certain time, but I believe it is inevitable that the tariff shall be reduced, and reduced until the country is restored to its proper position among the trading nations of the earth."

"Just see what this extortionate tariff has done. As I have shown you, there is scarcely one of the dozens of articles used in the making of a carriage that is not controlled by a trust or oligarchy or combination—whatever you choose to term it—whose object is to maintain artificial prices by severe and unbusinesslike methods, and to create a competition. Supposing such 'severe means' were adopted between the different sections of the country, what an extraordinary condition of things would ensue! Because the brewers, let us say, manufacture an article and sell it for one-third or one-half more than we charge, is that any reason why for my partner shall not be permitted to sell our goods in New York city if we can? Suppose we have some advantages that a competitor has not, that a reason for shutting one out of the territories of the other? It is certainly a singular spectacle to see high protection theorists shouting for free and untrammelled competition between the States, and yet upholding a taxation principle which defies enterprise and brands and throttles enterprise and competition, such as we find in the 'trusts' of to-day. Oh, no, I can't follow my party this time. It is on the wrong track, and is appealing

to elements which hitherto it has always avoided or despised."

BAD FOR THE G. O. P. Mr. Hicks thus condemned the attitude of the G. O. P. He might have gone further and demolished completely the house of cards which Mr. Blaine built recently for the Connecticut workmen. It was Horace's "mountain of labor to produce a tiny mouse." In substance Mr. Blaine said:—"We have protection and we have high wages; ergo, protection brings high wages. England has low wages, also free trade; ergo, free trade brings low wages. Wonderful reasoning! It is unworthy of the smallest schoolboy. But the premises are false; ergo, the conclusions are false. Why didn't Mr. Blaine put it in this way, and so as to bring his logic into consistency with his alleged facts?—"This is a Republic, we have high wages; hence, Republicanism brings high wages. England is a monarchy, with low wages; hence, monarchy and low wages go hand in hand." Adam Smith made a statement one hundred years ago to the effect that America paid a hundred per cent higher wages than England. Now, according to the Blaine theory, with "protection on everything," America ought to be two hundred per cent ahead in the matter of wages. But she isn't twenty-five per cent ahead and cannot be. She has come back to the anarchical prices.

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