

The lot of the president-elect is anything but enviable, and if there is a spark of human sympathy in the breast of any individual it will be extended to the man who will take his seat as president of the United States on the 4th of next month.

Major McKinley will take the presidential chair more handicapped than any other president who has been inaugurated, because greater things have been promised of his administration than of any of his predecessors, and still he will be more hampered in his action than have been any of the other presidents.

His favorite theory of political economy has ever been that the source of prosperity is the home market for home products, coupled with an increased foreign market stimulated by reciprocal provisions, also the shutting out of foreign competition.

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THE LIMIT OF PROTECTION.

The great exponent of the principles of protection, the Oregonian, which has held up the protective principle as one of the necessary adjuncts of prosperity, has at last had the scales removed from its eyes, and frankly admits that protection to the agricultural and manufacturing industries of the country, the primary protector of wealth, is a myth.

There are signs that the United States is approaching a crisis. It has not actually reached the absolute economic limit of the application of the policy of protection to most American industries. Many of these, like the steel industry, have reached a stage of development where they can dispense with protection, where, indeed, it is ineffective, because the pressure of domestic competition has reduced prices below that for which the product can be imported.

These results have been foreseen by rational protectionists. Protection has been shown to be a mere expedient as a temporary expedient only. A time would come, it has always been held by those having faith in the resources of our country and the skill and energy of our people, when protection would be unnecessary—indeed, impossible, because we should produce all articles of consumption for which our soil and climate are fitted more cheaply than they could be imported. No one expected that time to come so soon as now seems probable.

Indeed, it could not have come so soon through the influence alone of the pressure of domestic competition. The pressure of articles produced for the home market. This influence has been reinforced powerfully within the last ten years, with increase of facilities of transit and communication among nations, the result of the war against Mitchell, the result of the election of Major McKinley to the presidency.

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WOOL AND THE PEOPLE.

The Philadelphia Ledger is of the opinion that the disagreement of the wool growers and the woolen manufacturers was a good thing after all, "a prudent disagreement," as it terms it. The disagreement certainly showed the people how they were victimized by the tariff barriers where they agreed.

The Ledger says the schedule prepared and presented by Judge Lawrence, president of the Wool Growers' Association, would afford a much higher measure of protection than the McKinley tariff; that in fact it is virtually prohibitory, and even the most likely wool grower, if he imposed it. It goes on to say that once the attempt under the McKinley tariff to harmonize the wool and woolen schedules was unsatisfactory. "Indeed," declares the Ledger, "the excessive McKinley duties upon wool and woolen goods have been a constant and increasing source of discontent which made itself manifest at the poles in 1882 and swept out of power the party that imposed them."

The great political revolution of that year was accomplished and a democratic Congress and executive supplied a republican Congress and executive. Speaker Reed is stated to have said: "It was the women who did it; it was the women at the head of the homes of the whole country, who, going to the stores, were compelled to pay McKinley's prices for woolen clothing of every sort, and for woolen carpets, that did it. There was nothing made of wool, either wholly or partly, which was not enormously enhanced in price by the McKinley tariff, and it was the women shoppers, who are the buyers for the households, who sent their husbands to Congress to vote for the party that pledged itself to revise the tariff which was taxing so heavily the necessities of living."

The great industries of this country always have been, and probably for generations to come will be, agricultural. The most important articles of our commerce, home and foreign, are wheat and cotton, corn and cattle in the farm and in the mills, but not material for the food and clothing of nations. These and other like them we produce for export, and their sale abroad extends our commerce and increases our national wealth. These industries are not susceptible of protection. Duties upon them are neither a help nor a burden, are absolutely ineffective, because the price of them at home and abroad is made in the markets of the world. Consequently producers of these articles, getting no benefit from protection, have no compensation for the tax they pay as consumers of articles made for the home market alone, whose price is enhanced by protective duties.

This did not matter so long as prices of our agricultural products were high, and even with wretched methods of production, an extravagant mode of living, and our export trade was highly profitable. But conditions have changed greatly in the last ten years. The price of all these articles has been pressed down by competition in the world's markets by cheap methods of production, and the price of the world, brought in touch with Europe by extension of steam communication on land and sea. All our agricultural interests suffer under a depression which exacts extreme economies in production and living as the alternative of ruin. Protection cannot help these interests. They sell to the world, and must take the world's price. The only escape is to produce and live more cheaply, so as to maintain their industries at the reduced price. That is to say, since the income of farmers is reduced, their output for freight, implements, lumber, fuel and clothing not yielded by the farm, house furniture and all articles of consumption must be reduced in proportion.

This makes the farmers of the United States who produce for export, consciously or unconsciously, the enemies of the protective system, and creates an economic pressure for reduction of prices held up by tariff, which cannot be resisted for long. The agricultural interests see the crisis, they realize and have been striving to get rid of it. First they attacked the railroads, the source of their nearest and greatest expense in marketing their products. The railroads are accused of taking all the profit, and reduction of rates is demanded. This must be conceded, as it is the duty of the railroads to reduce the out-of-pocket expense of the farmer, but the concession only removes the pressure one step. The railroads can no more bear all the loss than the farmers. They must do demand compensation from their employes, whose wages they reduce, and from all of whom they buy, from steel mills and locomotive and car works down. This brings the pressure where the farmer has already brought it, by his simultaneous demand for cheaper clothing, implements, furniture, etc., upon the protected industries of the country, and they may yield in turn, though the inevitable result will be great reduction in the wages of labor. The break in price of steel rails and the cut of wages in Chicago is typical of what must take place all over the country."

MCKINLEY TARIFF METHODS. The tariff-hearings that have been conducted by the congressional ways and means committee are on the same basis as the system that made McKinley's tariff. It is a method and one that demonstrates how thoroughly the wealth of the country declines all legislation. The coal barons are called in to fix the coal schedule; the iron and steel men to say how much protection they demand, and so on through the entire list of the articles that are to go in the Dingley bill. This method is beautiful in its simplicity and, of course, can not be highly beneficial to the workmen.

For nothing can be more easily demonstrated than that Messrs. Carnegie, Rockefeller, Hanna, et al., after being elected in extra session by a proclamation from the governor. Now let Mr. Simon order one of these senators arrested and brought before the bar of the senate to show cause why he should absent himself therefrom. In this manner the matter can be brought before the circuit court, and a

spedily decision from the supreme court can be had upon the question will Mr. Simon pursue a legitimate course to establish his ruling, or will he follow in the footsteps of Benson, and neglect to take steps to substantiate his rulings through the medium of the courts? Responsibility in this matter has been shifted from Benson to Simon, and the people of Oregon await his action.

POSTAL TELEGRAPH. There is no possibility of Congress making a bill for creating a postal telegraph system. A marked reduction in telegraph rates is contemplated by the measure, which provides for the transmission of messages any distance at the rate of ten cents for the first ten words or less, exclusive of the address and signature. The proposed system is to be operated by the postoffice and under the direction of the postmaster-general, who shall cause to be issued postal telegraph cards of the denomination of ten, fifteen and twenty cents. These cards may be deposited in any letter likely to be mailed, and the bill further provides that the money-order system now in operation shall, as soon as practicable, be adapted to the postal telegraph, and that the charge for transmitting money orders within the United States, wherever money-order offices are established, shall be the same as charged upon money orders transmitted by mail, in addition to the regular charge for postal telegrams. This measure, it is safe to assert, will meet with the combined opposition of the telegraph monopolies, and no effort will be spared to bring about its defeat.

EDUCATIONAL NOTES. At last Governor Bunnell has had to give in to the demands of McKinley to make Mark Hanna U. S. senator. Now what will Forkner do? A defective sidewalk cost the city of Spokane \$10,000. Here is an object lesson by which the Dalles may well profit. It is better to pay money for good sidewalks than for broken limbs.

Theater goers of The Dalles are all delighted that the Dalles Circuit Court has made a date here, and that on March 1, they will be favored with an opportunity to hear these great artists.

It is estimated that the total appropriations of the present congress will be considerably more than \$1,000,000,000, and will overtop the greatest amount ever appropriated by Congress by \$200,000,000 to \$300,000,000. This explains the how for more revenue prior to the last election. The bigger the appropriations the more excuse for laying heavy taxes for the benefit of the favored booty grabbers.

A company has been incorporated at Union for the purpose of establishing a woolen mill at that place. This paper will be pleased to chronicle any like enterprise in The Dalles. The first thing we know all the golden opportunities for making The Dalles a great manufacturing city will slip by, as one by one the enterprises that should come here are being located in other places.

Mitchell took his wing of the legislature to Portland, and will throw the blame of his defeat on the higher than 1883. The entire west end of the city is inundated. All but two blocks of Prineville is covered, while a number of little towns along the north fork of the Kentucky river are under water. The people have been forced to seek shelter in the mountains.

Reports from Jackson and other places say there has been loss of life and property. Mrs. Huteell and little daughter were drowned in their house, which was washed from its foundation in Breathitt county. Two women whose names could not be learned were drowned in one of the streams of Bell county.

WATERS ARE RISING. The Flood in Pennsylvania. Has Done Its Worst. PITTSBURGH, Feb. 24.—The great flood has done its worst, and the waters are now receding. A cold wave broke the back of the flood. Reports from all points between Pittsburgh and the headwaters indicate the danger has passed. The river in this vicinity reached a higher stage than at any time since 1884. The Monongahela registered 29 feet 6 inches. At 10 o'clock this morning the water had fallen a foot since midnight.

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