

A Middle Course.

MEX and mice who advocate the schemes of the extreme protectionists claim that the tariff question is simply a question between free trade, and protection. It does not follow. Between the two extremes of the are described by the pendulum of commerce is the natural inertia of conservatism; a natural dislike to be radical either way; and it is that feeling which must finally determine the question. To be enforced and to succeed in being maintained, all issues must be practical. At present there exists a radical protective tariff; its advocates want its provisions intensified; its opponents demand a modification—and the charge that they wish to bring about a total annulment of all existing protective duties is too idle to require refutation.

To reform, simply and lessen the present onerous system of duties is the subject of controversy. It is the almost unanimous sentiment of the country that we need a certain amount of protection, but when such protection favors monopolies and acts as a direct tax upon consumers the matter can not go on. There is a stage that succeeds ripeness in all fruit. The protective fruit has now reached that stage and must necessarily fall to pieces. The elements that compose it may assume new forms of life and growth but can no longer cohere in the present disintegrating combination. The success of the conservative element will not be a triumph for the free traders nor a total defeat for the reasonable advocates of reasonable protection; for the matter is a self-adjusting one in which neither defeat nor triumph is involved. If it ever comes to a vote the advocates of a revision of the tariff and an adoption of conservative free trade tenets will have a large majority, but it is not likely to come to a vote, for the advocates of the present tariff system are organized; they belong to the grand army of the "sins," and are virtually stronger in the sinews of war than their undisciplined adversaries. There are so many ramifications and minor discussions in the whole matter of tariff, protection, internal revenue tax, duties, etc., that it will require a concentration of effort on the part of the radical free traders to wake up dormant thought and make the south and west realize the extent of the present imposition.

Wants.

Oregon's developing resources will claim the use of every commercial avenue she can command, and competition will whet the edge of effort and give production advantages it now does not enjoy. We want the mouth of the Columbia cleared; we want the locks at the Cascades built; we want the locks at Oregon City under State control; we want the Yaquina harbor improved; we want the Oregon Pacific railroad built; we want an interchange of traffic by common carriers; we want the Columbia, Snake and Willamette rivers as free throughout their entire lengths for commercial exchange as the water that rolls over their beds; we want public opinion to sit solidly down upon the monopolists of Oregon and give them no quarter. When these wants, or most of them, are supplied, Oregon will rise to the dignity of a prosperous commonwealth, and her agricultural opportunities, manufacturing necessities and commercial facilities, will draw to her aid capital and the bone and sinew of labor. Oregon's future is brilliant; she has within herself those fundamental elements of resources whose development will place her in the front rank of states, and secure for her citizens

those amenities of civilization so conducive to the privileges of life's enjoyments.—*Albany Herald.*
All this is good. In addition to the above wants, may be mentioned the matter of the Astoria land grant. That wants attention as badly as any other existing evil.

EDWARD ATKINSON, in a recent article, shows that Massachusetts has the greatest railway mileage in proportion to area of any section of country in the world being one mile of railroad to a little over four square miles of area. By dividing the country into five sections according to population and estimating that the first will require the proportion prevailing in Massachusetts; the second, one mile of road to eight square miles of area; the third, one to sixteen; the fourth, one to thirty-two; and the fifth, the territories, one to sixty-four, he shows that by the end of the century 117,447 miles of additional railroad will be necessary, making the proportion of mileage to area in the United States about one to fifteen. At the present rate of railroad building, this number of miles will have been laid in fifteen years, but an allowance for one railway and one commercial panic in the interim lengthens the period to 1900. According to these estimates the total mileage at that time will be 209,000, as against 91,000 at the beginning of the present year. At the rate of \$35,000 a mile these additional roads will cost over four thousand millions of dollars, or more than two hundred million dollars every year for the remainder of the century. As over two-thirds of the miles of roads now in operation have been laid in the last sixteen years, or about 66,000 miles, and as the additional mileage is constantly increasing, it being this year nearly seven thousand five hundred, Mr. Atkinson's figures are not so startling, though they show us to be almost in our infancy as a railroad country. If railway magnates keep even pace in grasp of power with the ever increasing mileage of railroads, the Emperors, Kings, and other potentates abroad will have nothing but their titles to recommend them to special notice. Their actual power will, by the time referred to, be far below that of many an American railway king.

The London Standard, commenting on the relations between the United States and Chile, which may grow out of our interference between the latter country and Peru, remarks in a strain the reverse of complimentary that, "In the meantime America cannot stir, even to resent a slight. The American navy, if not a phantom fleet, would find it difficult to compete successfully with the Chileans." This is hard language, and unfortunately, its truth makes it still more unpalatable. With the exception of Switzerland and Patagonia, and perhaps Arabia, there are few other civilized or uncivilized communities that could not make it decidedly unpleasant for our mightiest nation on the face of the earth." Blaine's pronouncement on the Panama canal is very fine reading, but a couple of Spanish gun-boats could, at present, make a very unsatisfactory answer.

Iowa, which has of late felt comparatively neglected, comes proudly up with a weather prophet who announces that the "quantivalent forces" for 1882 will be active. "Quantivalent" is good.

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