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T. L. DUGGER

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TARIFF REVISION A NECESSITY

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY cannot deny parentage of the present protective tariff system. Oh, no! The protective system has been the central thought around which its political platforms have been built, since the days of the Civil war, when the Morrill tariff was devised as a war measure. Then revenue had to be derived from every possible source; for our country, in her dire extremity, needed money and lots of it. So the duties of imports and internal revenue methods of taxation were worked to, what was then considered, the widest possible extent. Everything in the way of food stuffs and wearing apparel were taxed at rates which were then thought, unbearable. Yet, on many articles, those war tariffs were not one-half so high as at the present time. Our present Payne-Aldrich tariff would have made the congress of '61 and '62 hold up it hands in holy horror. It would have blocked the prosecution of the war. The loyal people of the north simply would not have stood for it.

Every tariff bill, since the war days, has been an increase of duty rates over its predecessor. Duties have been increased so gradually that the people became accustomed to being thus legally robbed. True, a few articles were placed upon the free list to appease the consumer and a tariff was placed upon wheat to satisfy the farmer. The people were persuaded to submit to these tariff increases, by the false statement that high duties on imports enabled our manufacturers to pay high wages to their operatives.

But manufacturers do not make such statements now. They know it is false now and they knew it was false then. Now, the people have found the whole protective tariff system to be a colossal bunco game. Only recently, have a majority of the people found out about the truth of this matter. Years ago, the manufacturers put up such a plausible argument, favoring high duties, that the consumer was persuaded, almost against his will, to allow himself to be robbed.

But now the whole rotten selfish theory has been exploded. The people know that manufacturers pay their operatives no more than they have to pay and the people know that the consumer has to pay the entire cost of an article including tariff duties, nevertheless the article was made at home and is consumed at home and to which, of course, must be added the dealers profit.

The protective tariff theorists were able to fool the people for many years, but they cannot do so any longer. The tariff sponge has been squeezed until the last drop of benefit to the manufacturer has been exhausted and these same manufacturers know that the day of reaction in this regard is at hand. They know that the people have become wise as to how the tariff beneficiaries have been deceiving them for years.

Now many republicans—those who are progressive, would be glad to reduce the tariff to a revenue producing basis, for the reason that the life of the republican party depends upon reduction. The verdict of the elections last fall was a most convincing evidence of this fact. Insurgent republicans know this. So does President Taft. They know that tariff reduction is the only salvation of their party. They are becoming very anxious to let loose of the incubus which now points towards party ruin. They are, even, willing and anxious to have the democrats help them to let loose.

President Taft, as a starter, has negotiated a reciprocity treaty with Canada and the treaty, by the help of democrats, has been ratified by the House of Representatives. The treaty is now before the Senate, but is likely to be staved off for the next Senate to act upon. There are too many of the present members of that body, who are servants of the "interests" for the treaty to be ratified at the present session. The President has indicated that if the treaty is not confirmed by the present congress, he will call a special session of the new congress to consider the matter. The new congress would be likely to take up revision of the tariff schedules all along the line as well as to ratify the treaty. This may cause the present Senate to act one way or the other.

As before stated, the protective tariff is the child of the republican party. It is the central thought around which all of its political theories have been built, almost since the birth of the party. But the theory has now been pushed to the extreme. The extreme high tide has been reached and reaction is an absolute necessity. President Taft is wise to seek some method of letting his party down easy and the Canadian treaty is a happy means. Whether the Cannons and Aldriches of his party know the temper of the people well enough to second his efforts, remain to be seen. But democrats seem disposed to help the president. They are showing themselves to be patriots; in that they are willing to place partyism in the background in order that a long suffering people may receive the good. Nor will they regret that they are thus manifesting a disposition to be patriots before they are partisans.

The people have learned that extreme partyism is the bane of our political system. They know that this extreme partyism is responsible for class legislation, graft and general political cussedness, and they want no more of it. The rapid growth of the independent voter, is an indisputable evidence of this fact. Any system which makes millionaires and paupers at one and the same time, is wrong. The people have found out this truism. The democrats, thanks to populist agitation, have known it for a number of years and, finally, the republicans, themselves, are finding out the fact. "The world do move."

OUR LATE LEGISLATURE

THE TWENTY-SIXTH Oregon legislature is now a matter of history. Its acts, whether good or bad, are now beyond recall, so far as that body is concerned. When Governor West and the people get through with the appropriation measures enacted, in common with all taxpayers, we may have cause to revise our opinion.

At the present time, however, the average taxpayer cannot help but feel aggrieved at the action of this so-called bunch of law makers.

If a man should place his hands into our pocket and, forcibly, take money therefrom, nevertheless he may have an official right to do so, a feeling that one has been robbed is sure to follow. This is about the character of feeling of the average taxpayer of today.

He doubts the justice of taking more than two dollars from the pockets of every citizen, to give a college education to about 5 per cent. or less of our boys and girls, whose parents in many cases are abundantly able to pay for such education, especially when a large majority of the other boys and girls of the state must slave in the shops and fields to pay the bill.

He doubts the wisdom of spending more than a half-million dollars in improving the asylum for the insane at Salem, when a like amount is to be expended in constructing a like institution at Pendleton, for the purpose of relieving the congestion at Salem.

He doubts the expediency of spending more than \$100,000 in improving the Salem fair grounds, at the present time. And he knows that the additional \$1000 salary given our circuit judges is a profligate waste, when the best lawyers of Oregon run over each other to secure nomination for that office at the old salary.

Some days ago the Oregonian asked the question "Is Oregon a \$6,000,000 State?" When we consider that we have less than 700,000 people and that the appropriations of the late legislature amounts to more than \$7 for every soul in Oregon, no matter what his age may be, nor his color or previous condition or servitude, everybody will respond with a most emphatic NO in capital letters.

All of the members of the state legislature, save nine, we believe were called republicans. We know that that party has been guilty of many unforgivable things during late years, yet we will not be uncharitable enough to charge the shortcomings of the late legislature to that party. Oh, no! They were simply a bunch of misfits and we hope, that Oregon will never be inflicted with a like bunch again.

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