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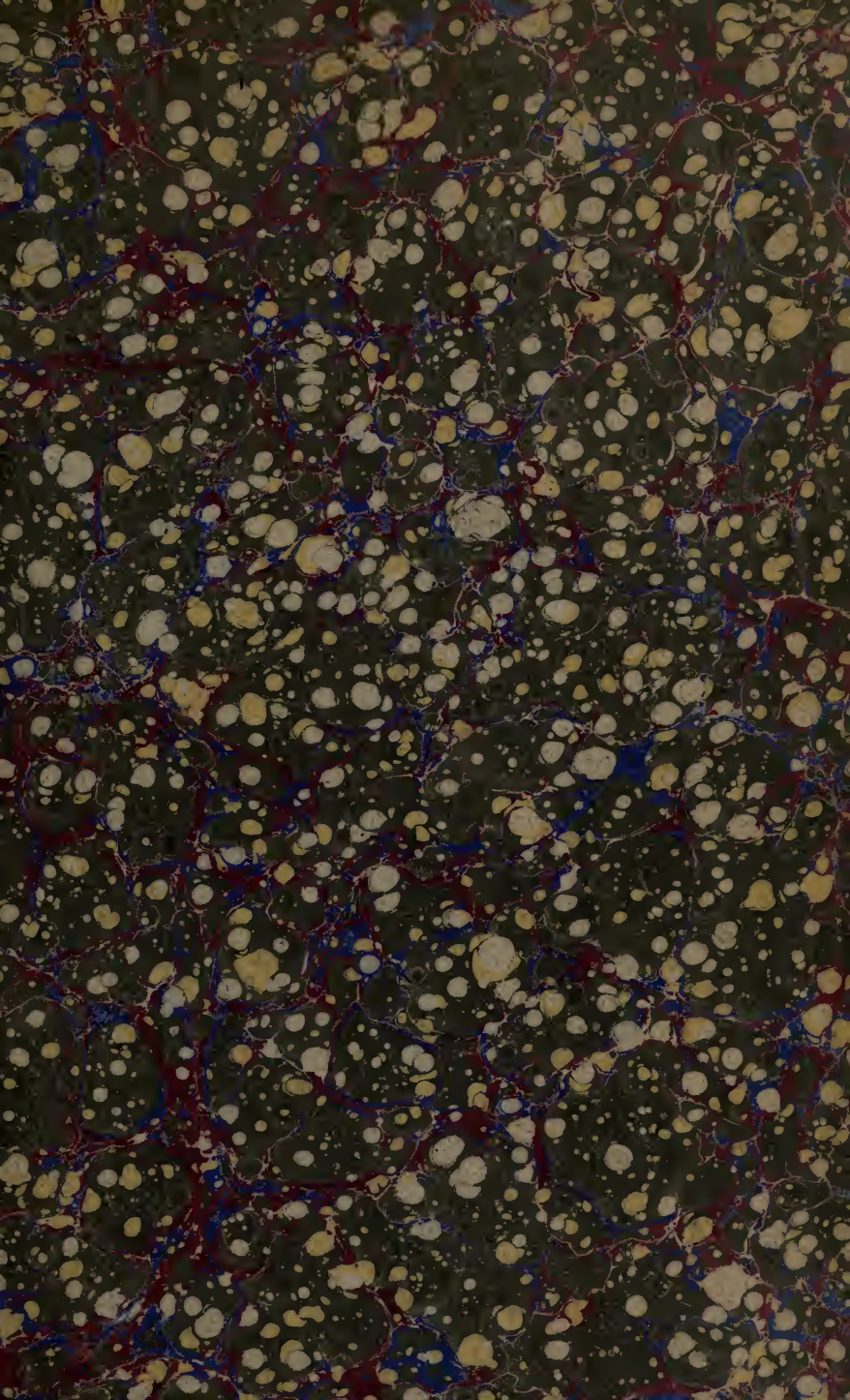
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EL MAHDI; OR, THE FALSE PROPHETS AND PROPHECIES
OF FREE TRADE.

SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN A. KASSON,
OF IOWA,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

TUESDAY, MAY 6, 1884.

WASHINGTON.
1884.





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SPEECH OF HON. JOHN A. KASSON.

The House being in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 5893) to reduce import duties and war-tariff taxes—

Mr. KASSON said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I had hoped at the conclusion of the last Congress that both this House and the country would be relieved from further agitation upon the tariff long enough to enable both the House and the country to know what would be the effect of the measure so recently adopted. I feel that in entering upon the debate again at this time, at the very next session following the passage of the present law, we are traveling over beaten ground, and very little can be said to further enlighten either this body or the country upon the great questions at issue. We are to a great extent necessarily thrashing the straw-stack of last year's harvest.

A new bill has been formed and presented before six months had elapsed of the operation of the previous law. This bill was inaugurated under circumstances differing from any which have previously existed. Ordinarily a tariff bill is formed clause by clause under the consideration of a regular committee. This tariff bill, it is an open secret, sprang full-armed from the brain of our Jove of the Ways and Means Committee, or of the Olympian council which surrounded him. We of the minority were not permitted even to share the duties of a nurse of this promising infant when it made its appearance among us. So jealous of the child were its authors, that they allowed no change to be made in its garments, no suggestion to be accepted, but insisted that it should be brought to your baptismal font, Mr. Chairman, without any aid from us, there to receive its baptismal designation of "20 per cent."

I object, sir, to this bill in the first instance because of the twelve schedules affected by its provisions six are aimed at the interests of the agriculture of the country. The proposed reduction strikes a blow in six instances at one or another branch of this great interest, and that at a moment when the advocates of the bill are claiming on this floor that those interests are depressed and need relief.

I object to it, because in one especial particular it touches largely the interests of the Northwest. I have before me a telegram received this morning urging that on account of its effect upon flax and flaxseed this bill should be defeated. It affects injuriously this interest to which Northwestern farmers are to-day turning their attention, as the profits on the wheat crop diminish. That interest is one which needs a continuance of protection during its growth. Recently at the Institute in Boston a new process was disclosed for reducing the flax fiber which

now goes to waste to the condition necessary for the manufacture of linen, largely cheapening the process in that particular which has alone disabled us hitherto from successfully introducing the linen industry into the United States and adding it to the profits of our agriculture. At this juncture, when our people are most encouraged to develop on a large scale this branch of industry, when they most need an enlargement of the diversity of agriculture, comes the blow by this bill to inflict greater discouragement than before.

But I object to the bill also because as an administrative law it is simply impossible of administration. Not a member of the Ways and Means Committee can tell the importing merchant to-day what duty he will be obliged to pay on numerous articles in its schedules. A variety of questions must be asked touching every article imported under its provisions, and these questions must be separately investigated. The first is, what did the article cost; next, what is the present duty; and third, what is 80 per cent. of the present duty; fourth, is that above or below the tariff of 1861; fifth, if below, how much will exactly equalize it with that tariff? In the case of cotton an additional question is to be asked: is it above or below 40 per cent. ad valorem? In the case of woolen goods an additional question will be asked: is it above or below 60 per cent.? In the case of metals an additional question will be propounded: is it above or below 50 per cent.?

I challenge the tariffs of the world to produce a legislative enormity, a principle of confusion, equal to that presented by this bill which is now commended to the country. [Applause.] Neither in our history nor in any other has it been required that there shall be a complicated catechism, with numerous catechumens to answer the questions which you propose at the custom-house before a foreign article can be introduced into our markets. In less than six months every importing merchant will clamor at your doors begging you for Heaven's sake to restore the old or any other tariff, that he may be able to get his goods into the country at any rate of duty whatever. I repeat that as an administrative measure this bill is impracticable. It is impossible of administration except with great delays, hinderances, and embarrassments, and an additional corps of custom-house employes far beyond all calculations of the authors of the bill.

But, sir, another objection to the bill which may fairly be offered on both sides of the House to-day is this: It gives to you and me, now legislating for the revenue and for the interests of the country—it gives to you and to me no information as to what the duties are to be on the articles embraced in the schedules. This was so patent to the gentlemen who are its authors that they proposed to remedy it for the information of the House by producing these crowded pages of figures which you see here, attempting and professing to show the present and the proposed rates of duties. But I beg gentlemen not to overlook the introductory note to those statements. They procured from the Treasury an expert, who was consulted during the progress of the construction of this bill, and who desired to be accurate, but could not be. He says at the head of the schedules what his attempt has been, and I call to that the attention of the committee. "It is not claimed," says he, "that the column of estimated receipts and rates under act of March 3, 1883, is more than a proximate exhibit of results; with the changes in both classification, and rates made in act of March 3, 1883, an absolute exhibit is not practicable." Yet the committee publish that with their bill as giving trustworthy information to the House and the country as to what

the old duties are and the new duties are to be. I assure gentlemen that if they will study, even so far as I have done in the attempt to apprehend the effect of this bill on our rates and revenue, the effects of the 20 per cent. reduction, subject to the various conditions of 40 per cent., 50 per cent., 60 per cent., and of the tariff of 1861, and of the additional ad valorem elements introduced, you will be utterly discouraged. On the arrival of every ship from abroad your accountants at the custom-houses will be thrown into inextricable confusion in their effort to ascertain what the duty is on a large part of the merchandise imported. You declare your wish to remove the hinderances and embarrassments from the foreign trade of the country. Yet you have made a bill here which means at every step almost insurmountable hinderances and embarrassments without precedent in the history of your legislation. The parties most interested in having accurate knowledge of the conditions upon which that foreign trade may be conducted must remain in ignorance of them till their goods are actually passed by the custom-house.

I object to it further because, with the exception of a single clause, it tosses into the lap of Canada and of Europe one-fifth of the duties which now flow into the Treasury of the United States without an equivalent or compensation from those countries which have imposed hinderances and embarrassments on our commerce. With Germany still excluding our meat products under as we believe inaccurate pretensions; with Italy doing the same; with France still resisting our just claims; with Spain embarrassing our commerce with her colonies; with Canadian obstruction, while our executive government is trying to-day to procure from these governments better conditions for our commerce, what do you now propose? At this time of all times you say to them, we give freely into your laps one-fifth of the revenue of the United States and demand nothing in return. To call that statesmanship is to nullify the meaning of the English language. The authors of the bill recognized this rule of reciprocity in the case of coal placed on the free-list, but in that only. They provided that this clause should not take effect until Canada admitted our coal free instead of under a duty as at present. The committee was right in that. Why did you not extend the principle to lumber, on which the duty which Canada now imposes on American lumber is higher than our duty imposed on Canadian lumber? Yet you say to Canada, you may fill our markets; we will permit your lumber to come in free, and you may still by your higher duty shut all American lumber out of Canada. Is there justice in that? Such legislation does not deserve the name of statesmanship. You give away our interests, demanding nothing in return, when for these great concessions of duty you could obtain important advantages to the commercial and industrial people of this country. For that reason, and I commend it to both sides of the House, I demand a new bill instead of going into the details of this, in order that the interests of our country may be protected on more just principles of legislation.

Ah, Mr. Chairman, there are two kinds of protectionists. There are men on this side of the House, and some on that also, who are for protecting Americans and American interests. There are men on that side, I am sorry to say, who are by this bill proposing to protect the interests of Canada and of Europe instead of the American people. [Applause on the Republican side.] I should much prefer—it would be far better than this bill—to act on a report from the Committee on Ways and Means asking our executive government what better conditions could be obtained from foreign countries in respect to the ad-

mission of our exports if we would concede 20 per cent. on this schedule, 30 per cent. on that, or 10 per cent. on the other, or if we should put certain articles on the free-list.

Now, sir, we are not to be understood as objecting to all further revision and reduction of the tariff. We do object to that sweeping reduction which professedly ignores the interests of our national industries; which professedly marches to free trade, and which professedly repudiates the principle that we can protect our national interests under our Constitution. We demand that this question shall lie open at least for another session, until a better start can be taken for the care of both the commercial and the productive interests of our country.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to have this opportunity of contesting the views of gentlemen on the other side of this House who incline to free trade and who rest their arguments on the unconstitutionality of protection. Your position is that we have no constitutional right to impose a duty for any other purpose than to meet the necessary expenditures of the Government. Am I not right in this statement? You maintain that under our Constitution—not under the confederate, but under our own Constitution—we have no right to impose duties for any other purposes than to get revenues for the support and maintenance of the Government. Is not that your theory? [A pause.] There is no denial of your position. On the other hand there are gentlemen here who rely upon the “general-welfare” clause of the Constitution, and say that under that we may protect our home interests. I go further still, and say that under the clause giving authority for the regulation of foreign commerce you have a distinct, absolute, constitutional right to take care of the American people as against foreign interests. [Applause.]

One of the greatest causes of the Revolution was the continued effort on the part of England to rob us of all our manufacturing facilities. It was the desire of that government to keep us poor in all save raw materials. They prohibited even the erection of slitting-mills in the Colonies, they restrained the manufacturing of hats, and prohibited even the transportation of wool by water; and many other restrictions upon the productive interests of the country were imposed to compel the Colonies to receive all their manufactures from England. I beg to read a statement of historical interest, being some questions and answers of Benjamin Franklin before a parliamentary committee in 1766:

What will be the opinions of the Americans on those resolutions?—

Asserting the right of Great Britain to tax the Colonies.

Answer. They will think them unconstitutional and unjust.

Q. Was it an opinion in America, before 1763, that the Parliament had no right to lay taxes and duties there?

A. I never heard any objection to the right of *laying duties to regulate commerce*, but a right to lay internal taxes was never thought to lie in Parliament.

Q. On what do you found your opinion that the people of America make any such distinction?

A. I know that whenever the subject has occurred in conversation it has appeared the opinion of every one that we could not be taxed by a parliament where we were not represented. But the payment of *duties, laid as regulations of commerce*, was never disputed.

You observe here that Franklin, afterward one of the framers of our national Constitution, speaking the “unanimous” voice of the Colonies, as he said, regarded the laying of duties as a power inherent in the authority “to regulate commerce.” Imposition of duties is of itself the regulation of commerce by the custom and usage of all nations.

Lord Chatham, a few days after this testimony was given by Mr. Franklin, on the 14th of January, 1766, in his celebrated speech in the house of commons on the right of taxing America, pointed out the same distinction. He said:

There is a plain distinction between taxes levied for the purpose of raising a revenue and duties imposed for the regulation of trade.

Go with me one step further. After the defeat of the British at Saratoga they became convinced that by war this country could not be conquered. Then it was that they passed a bill, under the direction of Lord North, in 1778, yielding the demand of the Colonies, but too late. That bill declared:

It is expedient to declare that the King and Parliament of Great Britain will not impose any duty or tax for the purpose of raising a revenue in the Colonies, except only such duties as may be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce.

I should be glad to read you what that eminent historian, for whose long-preserved life the whole country is grateful—what Mr. Bancroft says on the occasion of the formation of our present Constitution; and to read from Hildreth's History of the United States what he says. But enough to say that at the close of the war with England, as soon as peace was made, we were deluged with foreign goods, even from the miserable second-hand shops of Dublin and of London; that our people incurred debts they could not pay, and that in a short time they imported thirty million dollars' worth of goods, and could export only \$9,000,000; that the country was drained of its specie, and that impoverishment and poverty everywhere prevailed.

It was under these circumstances that our Constitution was framed. It was to secure the regulation of commerce by the imposition of duties that that clause was put into the Constitution. In the light of Franklin's statements, of Chatham's speech, of the British act of Parliament; in the light of the condition of the American Colonies as certified by authentic history, it is an established fact that our fathers understood by the right to regulate commerce with foreign countries the right to regulate it by the imposition of duties. That fact was further established by the first general act passed by the First Congress which met under the American Constitution. In the very title which they gave to this first act imposing duties they declared it to be "for the encouragement and protection of manufactures" in this country. And yet gentlemen say, and my friend from Kentucky [Mr. BLACKBURN] said an hour ago, that our constitutional power was limited to raising revenue for the purpose of revenue only, and therefore that there was no right whatever in Congress to impose duties for the regulation of commerce and thus protecting the interests of our own country and of our own people.

Now, sir, in proceeding with my argument, I turn to that offered by the eloquent gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HURD]. If your right exists, if it has been established in this country from the beginning of the Government to have two objects in view in levying duties, one the raising of revenue and the other the regulation of commerce, then you gentlemen can go with us the next step in the inquiry, whether such duties imposed for the regulation of commerce are beneficial to this country or not. The gentleman from Ohio, in his admirable speech the other day, said:

Subject to the necessities of the Government, every man has the right to sell where he can get the best price for what he has produced and buy where he can buy most cheaply.

He treats our Government and our people as two independent bodies; the Government on one side, the people on the other; the Government to take money out of their pockets and the people to submit without benefits in return. The Government may tax to fill its own coffers, but it can pass no legislation to refill the empty pockets of the people. The Government may take from the people, but it can give nothing to the people in return. I dissent by the width of the heaven from the earth from that proposition. There are no two adverse sides in this country as Government and people. The people are in the Government and the Government is in the people, thank God! [Applause.]

What the people have a right to do for the Government the Government has a right to do for the people within the limits of the Constitution. The Government is not a power of exaction alone. It is a power of protection also to the interests of the American people. It has been for most of its existence a power of blessing; it ought still to be a power of blessing in all its years to come. When, if ever, the theory offered by the gentleman from Ohio shall be established by the laws of the land, and the Government exhausts without protecting in return, that moment will the people find an opportunity to choose a different government, and one which can bless as well as burden the citizens who are subject to its laws.

Sir, I am reminded of what John Quincy Adams, as a member of the minority of the Committee on Manufactures, said in 1833:

It has been said there is no philosophic falsehood so absurd but it has been maintained by some sublime philosopher. Surely there is no invention so senseless, no fiction so baseless or so base but it has been maintained by some learned, intelligent, amiable, and virtuous but exasperated and bewildered statesman.

It may be said here that in the course of this debate there is no economic theory so baseless, no free-trade sophism so absurd, that some "exasperated and bewildered statesman" of that flock has not accepted it and advocated it on this floor. [Laughter and applause.]

There is on the other side of the water a sort of religious meteor, "an exasperated and bewildered" fanatic, who has appeared in the deserts of Africa, and the whole world has become familiar with the name of El Mahdi, the false prophet. He preaches a new doctrine, and insists that his followers shall accept and circulate it through the world. Are there not El Mahdis in America? I submit, Mr. Chairman, that the El Mahdis on this floor, the false prophets of free trade, surpass in the extraordinary character of their teachings and in the extraordinary abundance of their prophecies the original El Mahdi of the Soudan. [Applause.]

Let me refer to some of these teachings and prophecies. They say that protection creates monopolies, gives a bounty to individuals, enhances prices by the amount of the duty, is robbery and oppression of labor, obstructs trade, has robbed America of half the markets of the world, and impoverishes the country. In the fervor of his eloquence my honored friend from Ohio [Mr. HURD] said the other day that "the fruits of protection in America are want, penury, and starvation." So teach our El Mahdis.

I wish to examine these teachings. How does protection create monopolies? Must you assail not only the laws of your country, its interests, and its history, but must you assail even the standard dictionaries of Webster and of Worcester in their definition of monopoly? A monopoly, they tell you, is that which one man or one set of men alone can do or possess. It is a privilege confined to one from which

others are excluded. Now, where is your American industry which is not open under our legislation, and on equal terms, to rich and poor, to high and low, and even to the foreigner who comes upon our soil? Where is the element of monopoly in a system which creates conditions for increasing rivalry and competition? Where is your monopoly in a system under which where ten manufacturing establishments existed years ago ten hundred exist now to supply the wants of the country? Where, I repeat, is the monopoly in a system of protection which enormously augments competition? The only monopoly that threatens to be created is the British monopoly, gentlemen, that you propose to foster by this bill and its sequences. You say this is the first step in the progress toward free trade. I speak now of all the three gentlemen, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means [Mr. MORRISON], the gentleman from Ohio whose speech was most loudly applauded [Mr. HURD], and the gentleman from Kentucky who last spoke [Mr. BLACKBURN]. I assume that they substantially concur. If I am incorrect let me be corrected now, that I may make the proper distinction. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HURD] declared this to be the first step, and that you are going on with reductions—how much? Ten per cent., 20 per cent., 30 per cent., or 50 per cent.; the country knows nothing of the result at which you will ultimately arrive. If you succeed and by accident or design reach that point where any one of the industries of this country is substantially broken down and its doors closed, then will you arrive at the establishment of a monopoly, and that monopoly in Canada, in England, or in Europe, and not in this country. [Applause.] So long as you foster American production and enable it to grow, so far you increase that competition which destroys monopoly.

Is it a bounty to individuals? I have had occasion heretofore to explore this House to recognize the fact that for some reason or other the old principle of patriotism is decaying in this land. I repeat to-day that this free-trade argument on the other side shows that the element of American patriotism has somehow disappeared from too many of the Democratic breasts in public life. Why was this protective principle established? Why was it introduced in the first act of the First Congress? Why was it enlarged in 1816 with an addition of 42 per cent. of duties at a single jump? Why was it further continued in 1824? Why was it still further continued in 1828? Why was it again perpetuated in the bill of 1832? It was so perpetuated because our patriotic fathers of both parties knew that no nation in the world could be independent if it did not have the means of self-support both in peace and in war. [Great applause.]

We are of that kind of protectionists to-day. It is not bounty to individuals; it is bounty to the country of our birth. It is not because a factory is in my district or a mine in yours that we are protectionists. I am a protectionist because my country can not live in the presence of the great powers of the world, liable to war on land and to disaster by sea, without she has in her power, within her grasp, the means of clothing her people, of feeding her people, of defending her people, summer and winter, in peace and in war. [Renewed applause.]

From the beginning of the Government that has been the principle of protection. It is to make our people independent, and you can trace it step by step before the Revolution, after the Revolution began, after the peace, in the formation of the Constitution, and in the laws passed under the Constitution. We stand here to-day supported, I regret to

say, by only a small minority on that side of the House; we stand here upon the platform of our fathers, both Democratic and Whig. The Democratic majority of this House in this latter time has left that platform, has introduced a new interpretation of the American Constitution, which denies the right to protect our own people. The gentleman from Kentucky, in his speech just made, has attempted to support that interpretation by pointing above us to that coat-of-arms of Kentucky, with its motto "United we stand, divided we fall." I reclaim that motto given to Kentucky by Henry Clay himself, the constant supporter of the American protective system. [Great applause.]

It was Henry Clay who forty years ago uttered words in the debate which preceded that fatal law of 1833 which we are now asked to reenact in principle—words full of warning for us to-day. Speaking of the probable fall of the protective policy in the then condition of parties in Congress, he said: "The fall of that policy would be productive of consequences calamitous indeed." I ask the Clerk to read the passages I have marked.

The Clerk read as follows:

But in my opinion, sir, the sudden repeal of the tariff policy would bring ruin and destruction on the whole people of this country. There is no evil, in my opinion, equal to the consequences which would result from such a catastrophe. * * * And what is the just complaint, on the other hand, of those who support the tariff? It is that the policy of the Government is vacillating and uncertain, and that there is no stability in our legislation. Before one set of books are fairly opened it becomes necessary to close them and to open a new set. Before a law can be tested by experiment another is passed. Before the present law has gone into operation, before it is yet nine months old, passed as it was under circumstances of extraordinary deliberation, the fruit of nine months' labor; before we know anything of its experimental effects, and even before it commences its operations, we are required to repeal it.

Mr. KASSON. Thus you find that Kentucky then was of a different opinion from Kentucky to-day. And I would wrest back from the hands of my eloquent friend the motto which he misappropriates in aid of free trade and apply it to the holy cause of American labor and home interests. [Applause.] Here and now I beg to say to the protection members of that side of the House, "United we stand, divided we fall," and our country falls with us. Acting on the principle of that motto we shall defeat this bill and continue the prosperity of our country. [Applause.]

I ask you to mark the similarity of conditions in 1833 and now. The country was prosperous then; it is prosperous now. After 20 per cent. reduction under that law was effected the ruin and all the evils which Mr. Clay predicted fell upon our unhappy country in 1837. You propose now to break down the policy, beginning with the same reduction of 20 per cent. We have not had one year's test of the existing law; and you propose to sweep it away and introduce this conflicting and impossible system of assessing one-fifth less duties. Your effort, if successful, will be followed by like disastrous consequences. The law of 1833 provided that of the existing duties all were to be taken off down to 20 per cent. in nine and a half years. This change was effected by a reduction of 10 per cent. in January, 1834, 10 per cent. in 1836, 10 per cent. in 1838, 10 per cent. in 1840, half the residue in January, 1842, and the other half in July, 1842.

Now, you are proposing a reduction of 20 per cent. only; but you have avowed by the utterances of your leaders that you intend to go on further hereafter; that this is only the first step. And you propose to go on in this way without notifying the years in which you will do

it. The law of 1833 provided for a gradual reduction, and it gave ten months' notice before it was to go into effect. It was passed March 2, 1833, and was not to take effect until January, 1834. By this bill you provide for no notice at all. It is to go into effect on the 1st of July next, though if it should pass it can not pass before the 30th of June. You are reckless in your dealing with the interests of the country. Aiming at free trade you have no motive to consider the interests of the country. Your principle does not admit it. The chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means said in his speech that if the bill were to be formed upon the principle of protecting American industry, then the people should turn it over into the hands of the friends of protection. I accept that declaration, and I wait for that time speedily to come when the people will turn this question over into the hands of the friends of protection, whose blows they would rather receive than the dangerous caresses which the enemies of their industry are offering them in their false teachings and false prophecies.

I pass without special comment the revival of our industries and of popular prosperity after the restoration of a protective tariff in 1842. I also pass without comment the recurrence of disaster and distress in 1857, after the free-trade politicians had again reduced the tariff to mere revenue rates, without discriminating for protection. It is enough to say that the people turned out of power in 1860, as they did in 1840, the reckless party which persistently ignored the rights of American industry and labor. Since 1861 your tariff has been continuously and unquestionably protective, and it has been one continuous history of prosperity, with the exception of 1873, when the whole world suffered from panic, from which our country, still under the protective policy, was the first to recover.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have presented this sketch of the period of 1833-'37 to show the effect of a persistent horizontal reduction. We then had a surplus of revenue to be got rid of. We have a surplus of revenue, it is claimed, now to be got rid of. Then it was done by a gradual flat reduction of duties, as you propose to do it now by horizontal gradation of duties. It was then accomplished, and emptied the Treasury most effectually. I believe if accomplished now it will empty the Treasury far beyond your desire. It emptied the pockets of the people then, and brought them to ruin, absolute and universal ruin. I believe the same result, because of the same causes and conditions, will follow if adopted now.

Then it was effected by the votes of a nearly solid South, headed by South Carolina. In 1832, at the very time of the consideration of this question, that State was organizing troops to resist the power of the United States. Then it was that South Carolina passed an act declaring that the revenue laws of the United States should not be executed in South Carolina, and were null and void. The South stood together for free trade; and while, thank God, South Carolina proposes no such extreme measure now, I am sorry to observe that the South does stand to-day largely for repeating the ruinous process of 1833. They are demanding a reduction of the duties now with far less reason than they demanded it then, because the very industries which have grown prosperous under the protective system have since that time been largely developed in the Southern States. On the testimony of their own citizens prosperity is spreading over the entire South as it has never spread before. Mines, forges, furnaces, factories, railroads have largely increased, and manufactures have been extraordinarily developed in

Northern Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Virginia. Farms and real estate in their neighborhood have shared the general advance. The home consumption of cotton has increased from 20 per cent. in 1860 to over 30 per cent in 1883. In a word, all the elements of national development have advanced as rapidly in the South as in the North. Prosperity has not only dawned upon them, but it beams with the light of the midday sun all over the regions of the South. [Applause.]

Sir, I repeat my regret that we should find the South still lingering in the bondage of the old South Carolina interpretation of the Constitution, and still declaring that free trade must be forced upon the prosperous North, because in some States they have not yet reached that degree of prosperity which prevails in the Northern States of the Union, with their diversified industries.

The gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BLACKBURN] appealed to the statistics of the different States of the Union to show that there was larger per capita of wealth in the manufacturing States than in the States from which manufactures were largely absent. Why, then, does he not encourage in the South the growing manufactures, which bring increase of wealth, instead of depriving the prosperous States of the very elements of their prosperity. Instead of diminishing the wealth of others I would invoke that gentleman to encourage the introduction into his own and other States of diversified industries, bring among his own people these new elements of wealth, and then he will find that the per capita of wealth amongst them will grow as rapidly as it is growing anywhere else in the Union. [Applause.]

Time fails me, Mr. Chairman, to speak at length of the effects of protection on the prosperous history of my country. Is it true that the system is one of robbery and of oppression? Has it obstructed trade; has it robbed America of half the markets of the world; has it impoverished the country?

In these two decades of protection the population of the country has risen from 31,000,000 to 51,000,000. It has not, then, embarrassed the unprecedented growth of the population of the country. The immigration, chiefly of laborers, has risen from 150,000 in 1860 to 593,000 in 1880. It has not, then, been opposed to the interests of labor, for labor migrates from worse to better, and not from better to worse. The value of farms has risen from \$320,000,000 to \$10,197,000,000. The annual value of their products has risen from \$1,600,000,000 to \$3,600,000,000, according to Mr. Dodge, the statistician of agriculture. It has not then impoverished or even retarded the farming interests.

Our production of manufactures has risen from \$1,885,000,000 to \$5,369,000,000. Our exports of domestic manufactures have risen from \$45,000,000 to \$111,000,000. Our whole domestic exports have advanced from \$373,000,000 to \$825,000,000. Our total imports have advanced from \$362,000,000 to \$751,000,000. It has not, then, obstructed but promoted trade, with the balances in our favor. The total wealth of the United States has increased by the census from \$16,000,000,000 to \$43,000,000,000. Its annual increase is put by a free-trade economist at \$825,000,000—more than double that of any other nation in the world.

Yet El Mahdi by the mouth of one of his prophets says that "the fruits of protection in America are want, penury, and starvation," and lifts up before us "the protection giant of robbery and oppression."

I turn now to the false prophecies of free trade. It is directly de-

clared that if you would introduce free trade into the United States all the markets of the world will then be opened to us in generous rivalry. My eloquent friend from Ohio promises us, in the exuberance of his rhetoric, two thousand millions of people who will be waiting for our supplies. These El Mahdis of ours, like the false prophets of antiquity, make up for their deficiency of facts in the past by liberal promises for the future. In this case they enlarge the figures of human history in order to create a population out of their imagination to be supplied by an imaginary condition of free trade in the United States. [Applause.] It is a slight excess in the world's population of only about six hundred millions, including the breechless sons of Africa. [Laughter and applause.]

Sir, after the establishment of free trade are you not subject to the same competition of the whole world? Will not the cheapest still be first sold in the foreign market? Can you sell a bushel of American grain against a bushel of Indian wheat, unless you can furnish it as cheaply as the Indian? Can the manufacturer find a market unless he can sell cheaper than free-trade England? It is self-evident that the elements of production must be as cheap with us as with any other foreign country before we can take away the markets from it. Our manufacturing plant has cost more, our rate of interest is higher, our labor costs higher wages, and you will still, even under absolute free trade, have these embarrassments to contend with before you can drive foreign countries from any market of the round world which they now possess. Your proposition would simply cost us our home market by turning it over to foreigners, without enabling our people to manufacture on equal conditions with those which foreigners now enjoy. Even wheat can be delivered in New York to-day from India as cheaply as it can be delivered in Liverpool, and under the menace of this competition you ask us to take off one-fifth of the duty which saves the wheat market of this country from the surplus of India, with which you have been threatening our farmers in this debate.

Yes, free trade must open up the markets of our own country to the products of all Europe and Asia, or we are told by the gentleman from Ohio that—

Before January next the price of wheat will be so low that it will not pay the cost of production, and the corn raised on the Western prairies will be burned again for fuel, as was the case years ago. When that time arrives the farmers will be beggars in the midst of their own plenty and paupers by the side of their own golden gathered sheaves.

And the Democrats burst out with applause as he made that prediction of misfortune to our farmers. Sir, the census shows that there has been an increase beyond all precedent in value of all of the products of the farmers of this country during this period of protection. Even wheat has advanced on the average 15 per cent. in price. From 1847 to 1861 the average was \$1.48 $\frac{1}{2}$ per bushel in New York; from 1863 to 1877 the average was \$1.69 $\frac{1}{13}$. Everything produced on the farm has on the average increased in value throughout the length and breadth of the land under the principle of protection. Meanwhile the manufactures which our farmers buy have greatly fallen in price. Our American system has produced an unexampled aggregation of wealth and distributed it among our people of all classes; it has saved labor from pauperism and made the United States the admiration of the world. In this condition of our country the eloquent gentleman from Ohio is obliged to invoke dumb and inanimate nature to support his theories. Every ripple of the water upon the seashore, he says, is an invitation to free

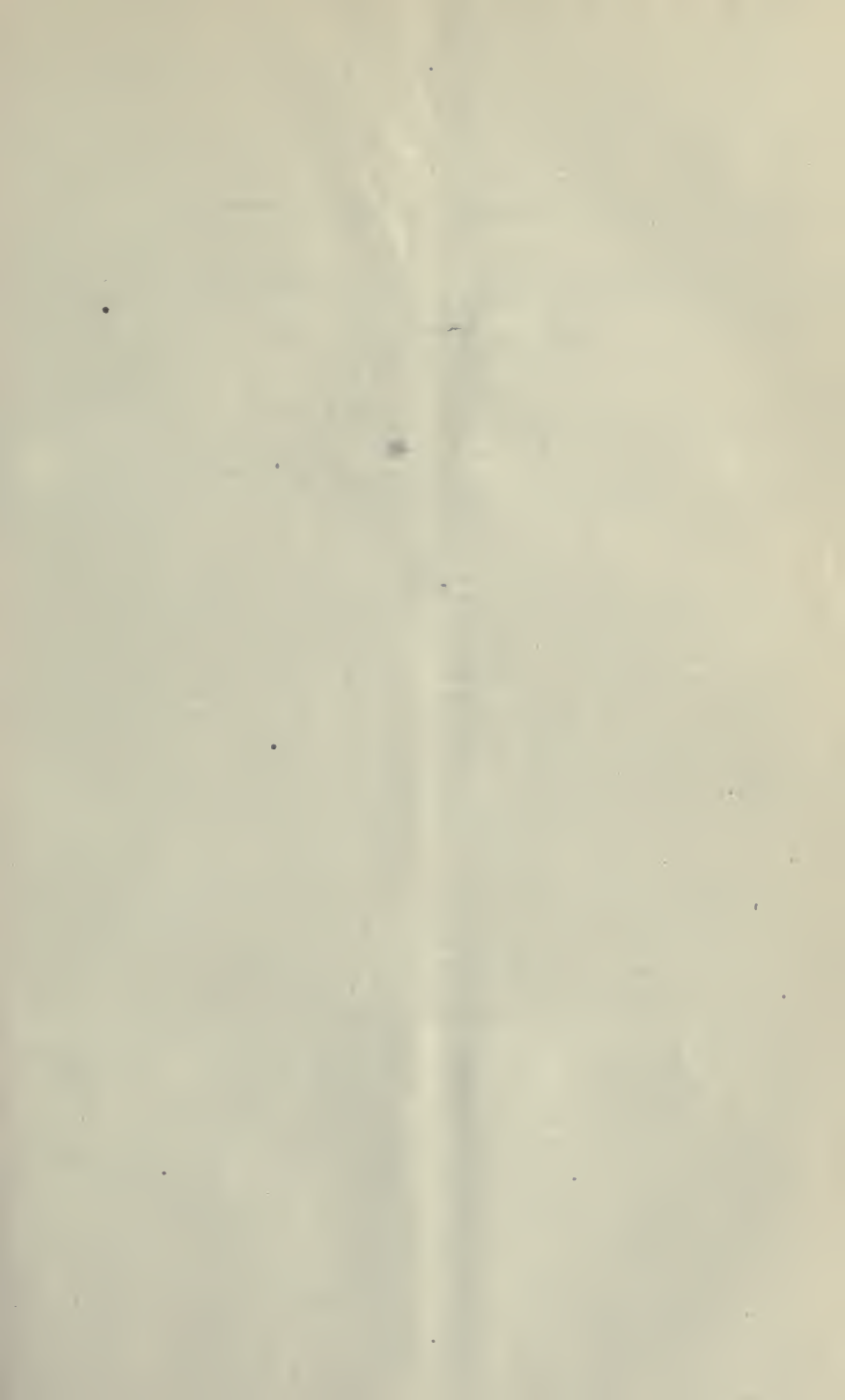
trade, and every stormy wave a denunciation of our existing policy He declares that—

The culture and the chivalry of the nation, long anxious for this hour, are ready to take the lead.

I recall his eyes, Mr. Chairman, from the sandy shores and dreary wastes of ocean and from the beggared homes of labor abroad. Let him look upon our farms, into our contented villages and thriving towns, and into the school-houses of town and country, where the children of toil and of wealth sit side by side in preparation to become sovereign citizens of a great and free Republic. Every murmur of instruction that rises from a myriad of these school-houses in valley and on hilltop is an invitation to maintain our system of home industry and good wages which has made our people happy and our nation great. [Applause.]

And I point him, sir, to the million of laborers who at eventide come from the caves of the earth, where they produce the infinite value of ore and coal, both more precious than gold, and to the other million who come forth with the declining sun from the doors of blazing furnace and forge and from countless factories in mountain valleys and on the plains. These all unite against the degradation of wages and of labor involved in free trade. Their concentrated voice, more powerful than the roar of the inanimate billow, is lifted up in denunciation of the reckless Democratic and free-trade policy which you seek to inaugurate to-day. [Applause.] "The culture and the chivalry" may be ready for it, but the enterprise and the labor which have made your country prosperous and powerful protest against it.

Ah, says El Mahdi, away with protection! It enriches you, but away with it! Every day's sun, according to your own prophet Mulhall, "sees an addition of two and a half million dollars to the accumulated wealth of the Republic, which is equal to one-third of the daily accumulations of mankind." Still away with it! But we will not throw away this giant's shield of our national defense, under whose shelter, with God's blessing, we have reached the foremost rank of the nations of the world. We will fight the battle out and we will win the victory. All hail to that giant of protection who strews his pathway with gold and plants all its borders with the flowers of popular comfort! [Great applause.]



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