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Practical Tariff Talks

In the Taft column of delegates it will be observed that the state of Vermont is well represented. In that state the marble quarry owners are quite prominent in politics, and their rounding up of the delegates for the president is but their way of repaying him for his kindness in signing the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill. Marble, perhaps, does not appeal to the average person as being a commodity that anybody would care whether there was a tariff on or not. Yet the annual marble bill of the United States is twenty millions of dollars, and the big tariff tax on the raw material pours a great many thousands into willing pockets, paid for by the home-builders and the general taxpayers who foot the bills for the finer grade of public buildings.

American marble is protected against the pauper marble of Italy by a tariff of 65 cents per cubic foot. This is a tariff that is fully absorbed, not by the manufacturers, but by the quarry owners. They have a selling combination, which fixes the price at around \$1.50 a cubic foot, which is about twice what it costs to get the stone out of the quarry. The marble schedule in the present law is unique in that the only reduction made in it was upon the finished or partly finished product, while the old protection for the raw material was maintained. The presumptive object of a tariff is to protect the manufacturer from the competition of foreign manufacturers. If the tariff on raw material is lowered or abolished the result inevitably is to stimulate the manufacture of that raw material, since the supply is greatly increased and the price lowered, creating, in turn, a greater demand. In remodeling the marble tariff the influence of big quarry owners was sufficient to prevent any change in the tariff on the raw marble.

The principal source of supply in foreign countries is Italy, where the stone, after being quarried, is rolled down the mountains and transported by boats and carts to the markets. About all of the Italian product that reaches these shores come from the Carrara region, which supplies a marble of such purity and whiteness that it is largely used in the fine arts. It costs about \$2.50 a foot to lay it down in New York, or about a dollar more than the American product is sold for. A lower tariff would bring lower grades into the home market, and enable those manufacturers who are not quarry owners to gain access to a supply that would prove a serious rival to the Vermont and Tennessee stone. The result of the high tariff

on marble is to add immensely to the value of the stone still unchiseled from the hills of Vermont, and that is why it was retained.

This rank favoritism shown in the marble schedule is repeated in a number of other schedules in the existing tariff law. A tariff is levied upon lead ore that has no other result than to greatly enhance the value of the holdings of the lead mine owners. A \$20 a ton tariff is placed upon zinc ore, and adds approximately that much to the value of the zinc ore still in the hills. A tariff is levied upon coal for the purpose of giving added value to the coal yet unmined. A tariff is maintained on lumber that adds just the amount of the tariff to every stick of standing timber left in the country. These and many others like them are all to be found in the Payne-Aldrich law, which was signed by and given the hearty approval of President Taft, and it is but natural that the owners of those lands where these great supplies of the raw material of manufacture are located are lined up behind the candidacy of the man whose influence and approval helped give them added value.

The democratic party is committed to the doctrine of free raw material for the reason that with the tariff barrier removed manufactures would flourish, since it would relieve them of the price tyranny of those combinations that control the sources of supply and give them the freedom of choice that comes from buying in a world market. The United States has handed over at a nominal cost vast storehouses of mineral and other wealth to rich syndicates, and the republican tariff policy is to protect these owners from any competition while they dole out the supply at their own figures.

C. Q. D.

IN NEBRASKA

In the democratic primaries recently held in Nebraska the preference vote for presidential candidate follows:

Wilson 14,068
Harmon 12,557
Clark 20,908

Loomis, Dunn, Westover and Bryan were the progressive candidates for delegates-at-large. Of these three were elected, Loomis, Dunn and Bryan, Hitchcock, the reactionary, being chosen as one of the delegates-at-large.

Bryan 31,209
Loomis 27,258
Volpp 17,495
Hitchcock 25,722
Smith 21,163
Dunn 24,014
Westover 23,594

District delegates were elected as follows:

- 1st—A. S. Tibbetts, W. D. Wheeler.
2nd—C. J. Smyth, F. J. McShane, Jr.
3rd—Louis L. Lightner, J. R. Tulley.
4th—C. E. Bowlby, Matt Miller.
5th—P. W. Shea, F. P. Swanson.
6th—Frank J. Taylor, Orin Reed.

Contests on other offices were as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATOR

Shallenberger 27,581
Thompson 11,993
Reed 5,244
Smith 3,061

NATIONAL COMMITTEEMAN

Hall 26,590
Fanning 15,138

GOVERNOR

Morehead 26,284
Metcalf 22,065

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Diers 39,110

SECRETARY OF STATE

Gatewood 15,275
Kelley 18,993
Whitesides 9,381

AUDITOR

Richmond 39,915

TREASURER

Hall 22,954
Seybolt 20,904

STATE SUPERINTENDENT

Clark 16,718
Monroe 10,227

Speedie 6,370
Whitehead 10,114

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Morrissey 22,677
Terry 20,065

LAND COMMISSIONER

Eastham 37,597

RAILWAY COMMISSIONER

Harman 12,425
Hayden 6,740
Hinkle 3,346
Maupin 9,137
Simms 3,911
Simmons 4,344
Stamm 4,848

AMENDMENTS

Initiative and Referendum:

Republican, for 47,880
Republican, against 7,744
Democratic, for 32,400
Democratic, against 4,311

Legislative Salaries:

Republican, for 37,764
Republican, against 12,815
Democratic, for 24,386
Democratic, against 8,518

Board of Control:

Republican, for 38,903
Republican, against 10,761
Democratic, for 24,093
Democratic, against 7,874

Biennial Elections:

Republican, for 39,038
Republican, against 11,837
Democratic, for 26,118
Democratic, against 7,273

Home Rule Charter:

Republican, for 33,800
Republican, against 15,005
Democratic, for 23,398
Democratic, against 7,883

SENATORS BY POPULAR ELECTION

Editorial in Boston Herald: An amendment to the constitution of the United States, providing for the popular election of United States senators, now goes to the legislatures of the forty-eight states for their adoption. The story of the congressional deadlock of a year, and of its final breaking under the influence of Mr. Bryan, is told in another column by the Herald's Washington correspondent.

The legislatures would better "ratify" the amendment. It would accomplish, openly and frankly, what is now secured by various devices of indirection. It is unfortunate that popular nomination and popular election—two entirely different things—have been to so large a degree merged in this discussion. Had such an amendment been adopted twenty years ago, it would have meant the election of senators on the November balloting, after they had been put in nomination, in the same way that governors were entered for the contest. Today popular election will doubtless include popular nomination as well, with all the dangers of this extreme of popularization. But here again that plan is already so largely employed that no great issue is at stake in the amendment itself.

The south, with only one party, has long had the popular election of senators. The western states, with two parties, have evolved many different plans, of which that of Oregon is the most complete, for accomplishing the same purpose in evasion of the constitutional intent. And the western system is creeping eastward. Legislative election of senators is about as dead as the electoral college in president-making, and to this conclusion the country might just as well adjust itself.

While few legislatures are in session now, it is not improbable that this latest amendment will secure final adoption earlier than that in relation to the income tax, which now lacks only a few votes of the requisite three-fourths of the states. This, at least, will be the case, if the legislatures, with the opportunity actually before them to secure organic results, vote as they have regularly done when the popular election of senators was merely an aspiration.

Will you join in the effort to increase the Commoner's circulation for 1912? Take it up at once with your neighbor.