

## HOW IT OPERATES.

### HIGH TARIFF AND BIG TRUST ARE TWIN BROTHERS.

Every turn of the screw squeezes the People Harder and yet the G. O. P. Points with Pride to its Record.

The circulars that we print below cannot well be called campaign circulars for they are issued by the wholesale houses to the dealers, regardless of politics, as a matter of business strictly. They tell their own story and the man who can squirm from under these arguments deserves the best salaried position any of the trusts can furnish. But read:

**GR. AXES.**—Sept. 9.—GENTLEMEN: An important and rather radical advance in prices of some articles in the hardware line are daily taking place, we wish to say a few words so you may more fully understand the situation and not think that the jobber is overcharging you.

There is now but one axe company in the United States, and that is called the American Axe and Tool company, with headquarters at Pittsburg. This company has purchased outright every axe factory in the country of any importance, and by thus controlling the production has advanced prices on an average of \$2 a dozen.

The company also controls the manufacture of axe polls (or the heads of axes) the machinery of which is patented, and this enables them to keep the price of polls so high no else can afford to make axes.

**SAW-HAND AND CROSS CUT.** In this industry the same forces have been at work, and to-day there are but two companies who manufacture hand saws, where there were a dozen four months ago. Prices in this line of goods have been advanced from 10 to 40 per cent. In cross-cuts it is the same. By a consolidation of interests prices have been advanced from 4 to 8 cents a foot.

**LEAD.** Everything made of lead has taken a decided advance owing to recent decisions on the admitting of Mexican ore into this country, as well as by combinations of manufacturers. Shot, lead pipe, pig lead, solder, babbitt metal, have all advanced and may go still higher. The passage of the silver bill will also affect all articles made of or coated with silver. In the hardware line plated knives and forks, spoons, etc., will be affected and advances made.

**TIN.** The present tariff on sheet tin is 1 cent a pound, and the McKinley tariff bill will pass both the House and Senate, advances the duty to 2 cents a pound. This means to \$3.25 a box, according to the weight of said box. This advance in sheet tin will affect all articles of tinware and advances will be made all along the line.

Tin in New York has already advanced all from 50 cents to \$1 a box, and is growing stronger each day as the certainty of the passage of the McKinley tariff bill becomes more assured. Not a box of tin is made in this country, notwithstanding which tin has declined in price from \$15 to \$4.75 a box during the past twenty-five years.

**GLASS.** The window glass market of this country is practically in the hands of two large companies who work in harmony as to prices, which has resulted in a steady advance for the past year averaging about 30 per cent.

**ZINC OR STOVE BOARDS.** The Adams & Westlake company, A. I. Griggs, Sidney Shepard & Co. Palmer Manufacturing company, H. Rendell & Co., Central Stamping company, W. H. Sweeney Manufacturing company. All of the above named firms were anxious for our business last year, but now they have sold out to the American Stove and Range company, with offices in New York and Chicago, and a general advance on all lines has taken place. Last year you could buy a 28-inch square paper-lined zinc for 36 cents. This year the same thing costs you 72 cents. An advance of 100 per cent.

**AMMUNITION.** The price is controlled by a combination, and you have to pay the price or go without. For powder, the same—but one price, and that nearly double what it was two years ago.

**SUMMARY.** We call your attention to these matters so you will understand why, on nearly every invoice you get, you will find something higher than it was before.

The tendency of the times seems to be consolidation, thus enabling large corporations to produce the goods cheaper and sell them at a higher price. We fail to find, however, in all the consolidation of various lines of goods a single instance, notwithstanding the advance they put on goods, where they have advanced the pay of labor a cent. If the consumer who purchases last does not pay this increased cost we do not know who does. If he reaps any personal benefit from it, we would like to know where it comes in. This is not a political document, but a statement of the condition of certain lines of business, as we daily come in contact with them.

**FOSTER, STEVENS & CO.,** Hardware Merchants, Grand Rapids.

**To the Trade.** New York, Oct. 4, 1890.—The tariff act, which goes into effect on October 6th, suddenly advances the duty on musical instruments, parts thereof and strings from 40 to 100 per cent above old rates. This combined with a steady rise in the European cost of goods for some time back, absolutely compels all importers to advance their prices.

Various American goods are also affected, because of higher duties on imported material, parts, &c., used in their construction. At a large meeting of the wholesalers of New York, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, &c., the question as to how and when to advance prices was fully discussed, and it was unanimously decided to make the necessary advance at once, and to all dealers without exception. Any other plan will demoralize

## GOVERNMENT LOANS.

### NATIONALISM THAT IS PRACTICAL AND RIGHT.

The Democratization of the Means of Transportation and Communication, and the Reduction to a Minimum of the Tribute Exact by Rent, Usury and Profit.

Single taxers and nationalists are both upon record in print as desiring the same end or object. This object or desire, simply stated, is that labor shall derive the full product of its efforts as its "fair wages" or just recompense. The factors which at present, under the present system of *laissez faire* or let alone, anarchistic government, combine to absorb from productive labor a portion of its product, and from all other labor a portion of its earnings, are: rent, interest, profit, individual ownership of means of production, transportation and distribution.

It may be stated at the outset that productive labor will never, under any system, receive its full product, as it must always inevitably part with a portion of such product to pay for the transportation and distribution of the residue, and also to pay for the labor of service, such as that of doctors, preachers, lawyers, and all such labor as does not either produce, transport or distribute, but yet renders a useful service to the community. All labor is alike subject to this drain, and cannot therefore expect the full amount of their product or earnings.

Now as to transportation of either merchandise or news: The extent to which this factor robs labor is just equal to the net interest received upon the amount of money actually invested in the plant. Such interest is, of course, in addition to the entire cost of operation, maintenance and sinking fund, and is taken from the people under the name of interest upon money. Here we find that, as in every thing else, interest is the root of the evil. If a set of individuals were presented, free of cost, with a right of way, they must either borrow money or use money they already have, which they could loan out at 6 or 7 per cent. The Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor, in their St. Louis demands, solve the matter of question of transportation by demanding "that the means of communication and transportation shall be owned by and operated in the interest of the people, as is the United States postal system."

The single-taxers, not having the courage of their convictions, straddled the question, and declaring that railroads and telegraphs "should be controlled and managed by and for the whole people concerned, through their proper governments," virtually leave matters just as they are at present. Government ownership of the railroads and telegraphs, and their operation at the cost of service, is what the people want and ultimately will have.

Now as to competition: We now, at this time, have our Knights of Labor and trade unions with their demand for shorter hours of labor. Whenever the day's labor is so shortened that it will require the whole number of workers or laborers to perform the necessary amount of labor, then the competition with itself is eliminated and destroyed. But it must not be forgotten that each store and place of business, factory, etc., etc., must run two or three shifts of hands, from superintendent down, and that railroads must put on as many shifts as workers or laborers to perform the four-hour work. So much then for transportation and distribution.

What then about rent, usury (or interest) and profit? These three terms are simply distinctive names to distinguish similar operations of the same factor in and through different channels. Rent is not interest upon money invested in buildings and lands. It is the current rate of interest upon the actual cash or rental value of land. The rental value of land is that value or price upon which the rent will pay the current rate of interest. Bodies of unimproved suburban or farm lands, held for speculative purposes, have no "rental valuation." The Knights of Labor propose to take the whole of the "unearned increment" as a tax. This would simply "nationalize" the land, as all land value is unearned increment. If not, what is the basis or normal value above which all value is unearned increment? The single taxers propose to take as a tax the current rate of interest upon the cash value of land only. We will notice this as we proceed.

Profit is not interest upon money invested in merchandise and goods; and profit is in addition to a living for the merchant, trader, exploiter, etc., etc., and family; and the payment of all expenses, including rent. The laborer, under the present "iron law of wages" can never expect any profit, and free access to land, alone, will not better his condition. Interest is rent or usage paid for the use of money. All monopolies, including the monopoly of land, are based upon the individual's monopoly of the issue of money. In other words, Congress, by misunderstanding or not apprehending the full meaning of the words "shall have sole power to coin (issue) money and regulate the value thereof" is responsible for all the monopolies that have fastened themselves upon the people.

And now a few words as to the operations of usury or interest, and an explanation of what is meant by the value of money: The value of money is a legal fiction—"an ideal thing"—and is based upon certain properties or attributes inherent in money only, created by fiat of law. These powers may be formulated as the power to represent, measure and exchange values, and the power to pay debts, or legal tender attribute. This legal tender attribute is arbitrary and authoritative and is not affected by fluctuating volume or value. The three first named powers are legal and mandatory; but the power to measure values, unlike the other three, is not fixed or arbitrary, under our present monetary system, as are the measures of weight or length, and varies and fluctuates with the increase or decrease in legal tender currency. Money measures values, not by reason of any intrinsic value it possesses, but because of its possession of the legal attributes mentioned above. Hence we find that the amount of silver that a silver dollar contains will, if billion, buy ninety cents' worth of wheat, but if coined and made a dollar by the stamp of the government will at once

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## G. SATRANG,

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