Foreign merchants, manufacturers and bankers know sufficiently well that the bonds of the United States are as good a security as can be issued by any government in the world. Despite long continued efforts to discredit them they are flowing steadily into the possession of foreign capitalists destined to yield a large profit at no distant day. A bond of the United States is worth as much intrinsically for investment as that portion of English consols which will yield in interest the same quantity of gold.

It cannot be doubted that capitalists in England and upon the continent are now willing to take bonds of the United States for the proceeds of all shipments of commodities to this country as long as the bonds can be had at a price which will yield six per cent interest, and much more readily when the bonds can be got at a rate, as now, yielding nearly nine per cent.

The reason our national bonds sell at such a large discount in Europe is, that as the foreign purchasers can obtain them at the low rate they are not disposed to give more. Gold being overvalued in this country, having risen in price on account of the special demand for it to pay customs duties, to the amount of two millions weekly, they purchase our bonds, intrinsically worth gold at par in London, and pay us in gold at forty per cent premium. If the merchants and manufacturers who now threaten to overwhelm us with foreign commodities sell here for gold they realize on it a premium of forty per cent in our currency and then take the bonds at par. Or, if they sell their goods at our high rates in currency, they take bonds at par, and one thousand dollars in these bonds are worth more to hold in London than £206 9s., the equivalent at par in sterling.

At present these circumstances offer the largest profit ever made on the shipment of foreign goods to this country. Those interested in this movement can now realize high prices for their goods, seriously injure our manufacturing industry, weaken their rivals, and obtain our national bonds at a heavy discount. These great advantages thus offered to foreign capitalists are as fully to our detriment as to their benefit. They imperil our productive power our ability to pay taxes, and, in fact, our whole financial system. They sap our national strength, they continuously damage our domestic industry by substituting the products of their own, by depriving our laborers of employment while obtaining in our markets the means of employing their own, besides realizing large profits for the enterprising individuals who engage in the business.

That there is good ground for these apprehensions is proved by the freely expressed belief in Europe, entertained as fully in this country, that the quantity of goods to reach our shores from Europe this year is to be greater than ever known. Intelligence by every arrival from abroad confirms this anticipation.

WHAT THE SPECULATION IN GOLD HAS COST THE COUNTRY.

In the midst of a war without precedent in its importance and magnitude, we were in an exceptional position, demanding immediate and special legislation and public action. We are now commercially and financially in an exceptional, and not a normal situation. The speculation in gold, which has cost the country nearly, if not altogether, a thousand millions of our money, we failed to nip in the bud. Let not this new movement at our expense be allowed to gain like strength, and do us like injury.

This subject is thus dwelt upon, and might with advantage be more distinctly set forth, because it bears with special significance upon the future ability of the country to pay taxes, to maintain public credit, and of course upon the increase of national wealth and power.

It is the policy of European governments to keep wages low, that they may manufacture for the markets of the world. England holds a million of her people in pauperism, constituting a reservoir of cheap laborers from which she may recruit the ranks of labor as they become thinned by overwork, ill feeding and bad lodging. Four millions more are in a position to be thrown on the parish, on the kindness of their countrymen, or on the charity of distant nations, upon occasions of bad harvests or of commercial revulsion. Would it be politic or humane to reduce our laboring population to that condition? Would it be economically wise? Would it add to our national strength? Can any man who understands the true interest of the country wish it?

We cannot wisely blend the European system of industry with our own. They can no more mingle than oil and water. The producing classes here have risen already so far in the scale of intellect and knowledge that they cannot be forced back. Our policy is not to legislate our people down; it is rather to guard our markets and prevent access to them but on such terms as cannot injure our working people nor lessen our productive powers.

European manufacturers can at all times furnish a limited quantity of goods at less than half the amount of our prices. If they could furnish one-fourth of our consumption at those rates it would not be good policy to take them, because it would be far less difficult to pay for what would supply our entire consumption furnished at home by our own labor than for one-fourth imported from abroad. It is easier to purchase eight hundred or even a thousand millions of home productions than to pay for three hundred millions worth brought from Europe and Asia.

It is a great temptation to men in professional life, men living upon annuities and salaries, to supply their wants from cheaper markets, but they have their advantage too in living where all labor and all services are compensated upon a higher scale. The system of labor and compensation which makes our prices is the one to which they belong, and it should not be thrown into confusion for the benefit of a few. The agricultural, manufacturing and mechanical classes must be kept up, if we keep pace with the civilization of our day, but more especially if we aspire to lead. If our consumption of food and clothing and other necessaries of life is maintained at the present standard of comfort and convenience, four-fifths at least must be the products of our own skill and labor.

PLEA FOR THE MANUFACTURERS.

We are, then, under the necessity, as a civilized people, of maintaining a vast system of manufacturing industry. We cannot do this if half, or even a fourth, of our population patronize foreign labor instead of their own. We have such advantages for manufacturing, from the aptness of the people for improvement in the production of the necessaries, higher comforts and luxuries of life, that no risk is incurred in looking to the skill and taste of our people for a full equivalent for everything that Europe can send us. We can then obtain to the fullest extent whatever is needed, even though we have nothing to export that is wanted abroad. Our manufacturers have already furnished ample evidence to warrant our confiding in them. If we tax their capacity to double the extent they will respond, and when they do, we shall be more able to import than we are at present.

It has often been alleged that our manufacturers are making undue gains, at the expense of other classes of society. This belief can only be entertained by those who have not had sufficient opportunities of observing the exact progress of manufacturing among the people who have carried it on. Lowell and Lawrence, and many other manufacturing towns, exhibit striking evidences of wealth. But divide that wealth among all who are engaged in it and it will be found to yield a sum for each one interested not much if any larger than would result from such a division among an equal number of Western farmers. The people of New England know that there is strength and success in combining their labor and their money for great purposes. The capital invested in these great establishments is vast; it is the saving of more than half a century of industry. They have found that as their wealth grows by manufacturing, their real estate keeps pace by the market which is afforded to their farmers.

WESTERN PROGRESS OF WEALTH.

And although the people of Massachusetts have to bring from the West all their breadstuffs, their improved land is, according to the census of 1860, worth on the average fifty-seven dollars per acre, the same as the superior soil of New York. So wealth, wherever the whole productive power has been developed, will be found to be divided fairly between the owners of the land and the workers of the manufactories. This distribution of wealth is moving westward. It has already traversed New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and it has made large progress in Ohio, and not a little in Indiana, Illinois and Missouri. Let not this westward progress of science, civilization and abundance be disturbed and obstructed by the watchful efforts of merchants and capitalists, who wield, for their own benefit, the bones and muscles of the working-men of Europe.

It may seem that the wealth of the Eastern manufacturers is greater than it is; from the large sum of the product as valued for the market, but it must not be forgotten, that from this sum is to be taken the cost of the wool, the cotton, iron, steel, leather, and a vast number of other articles of raw material, all of which they have to purchase, together with at least one barrel of flour yearly for every hand engaged in manufactures.

THE SMALL PROFITS.

It is very certain that the whole clear profit of the manufacturers would not pay two per cent upon the amount thus invested in the United States during the last fifty years. We have before as all the results of success, but the census of losses would be fearful to contemplate. On the whole, the manufacturers have done far more for their country than their business has done for them. More clear profit has been made in the United States by foreign manufacturers than by our own. The productive power of the country has been marvellously developed; but a very large proportion of the persons who have been engaged in this have either lost their whole estate in their efforts after success, or have worn out their lives in establishing an industry which only became profitable to their country and those who succeeded them. If the history of manufacturers were written with a view to exhibit their misfortunes, it would or should remove every suspicion of extraordinary profits. Their profits are only large two or three years in ten; for two to four years they are small, and they seldom escape ten years without years of heavy loss. At least half the time is made up of years of anxiety and care.

If we are to attain the highest destiny of which, as a people, we are susceptible, we must be one nation industrially as we are territorially. If our economical policy had belonged wholly to the States, as such, the nation could never have developed its present productive power. So now, if as a people we indulge territorial prejudices or class jealousies, we shall check progress, and become a prey to the cheap labor and cheap capital of Europe. Let our people not fail to remember why that capital and labor are cheap; the working classes are so inadequately paid that more, much more, than a due proportion of the proceeds of their labor goes to the capitalist; nor to remember that—in Great Britain especially, and more or less in other manufacturing countries—the theory of industry is, not to add to the comfort and welfare of the working classes by promoting a full exchange of their products among the whole people. Employers there purchase labor at the lowest price at which it can be obtained, and aim at foreign markets to obtain the largest return possible in money or raw materials. To manufacture for a foreign trade, in rivalry with all other countries, makes it necessary to keep down the laborer and the price of labor, his only commodity, to the lowest point. There are at least fifty millions of people in Europe who would require thirty dollars each yearly to make their condition equal to that of our working classes in this country. If the public and industrial policy of European countries were so changed as to give that additional sum to those of their own people who need it, they would have a market for their products of fifteen hundred millions of dollars, in addition to what they now command, and nearly, if not altogether, equal to all their foreign trade, certainly of far greater importance to the interests of humanity.

WAGES SHOULD BE KEPT UP.

There should be no struggle to bring down wages, rather let it be to preserve our markets and our home system of labor from being broken down by a system which has taken such deep root in Europe, but which should have no more toleration here than serfdom.

The obvious policy of our foreign trade should be not to admit foreign manufacturers to the privilege of our markets on better terms than our own enjoy. This is a policy under which every class of our people would prosper, and our taxes would prove a far lighter burden than the oppressive competition which has been so long endured with European cheap labor. Whatever may be pretended or asserted, there is no error of fact or doctrine in this. It is as well known as any other European fact that wages there have long been less than half what they are here; it is well known that the disparity now is greater than ever, with our general range of prices still bearing the same proportion to the price of labor.

Admission to our markets is, therefore, the aim of all manufacturing people, to make their sales, but not of course to take our high priced for their cheaper goods.

As we cannot obtain a supply equal to a value of two thousand millions yearly, which our home industry now furnishes, from all the world, we must maintain a system of manufacturing able to furnish at least four-fifths of our wants. It is a conclusion from which we cannot escape, that if we would obtain commodities manufactured at the cheapest rate at which they can be made here, and of the best quality, we must give our support to home industry. Our manufacturers have made such progress in their several arts as enables us to confide in their ability to meet adequately all wants and all tastes. They have already far surpassed their foreign rivals in some of the most difficult departments; they can soon equal them in all if fairly sustained.

These remarks are not offered with the object of recommending very high duties. The subject is not regarded from that point of view. It is as well known as any other fact, that the rate of wages is more than double as high here as in Europe. It is known that our working classes have more power to exact high wages here than they have there. It is not necessary to discuss the question as to the propriety of their exercising that power. They are clearly justified by the theory of our political system. Acting upon that, they demand and are receiving daily wages at these high rates. All other prices here are now adjusted to this advanced rate of labor. Our people have long since acceded to a higher compensation for labor than is given elsewhere. Interested parties at home, who were consumers and not producers, and who, from various reasons, were not willing to pay the enhanced prices for commodities corresponding to the rate of labor, declared in favor of patronizing the cheap labor of Europe, and opposed all efforts of the government to place the working classes at home in fair competition with the foreign, by fixing such duties on foreign commodities as would bring the foreign and domestic manufacturers to equality in our markets. It did not seem to be understood that it was mainly a question of competition. It is very plain, however, that if two manufacturers of the same article are beside each other, and looking to the same market, one of whom can obtain labor at less than half what is paid by the other, the one employing the cheaper labor can make a double profit and take all the business. It is just as clear that it makes only the difference of transportation, if the cheap labor is at three thousand miles distance. The hardship to the working man and the employers is not less, to be crushed by cheap labor thousands of miles away than in the same city. The evil to the country is very much greater.

The right principle of international trade should be, that all things being taken into account, the working classes should, by proper precautions and legislation, be placed in fair and strict competition in each other's markets. Even this principle would very often operate harshly, and it would be the duty of any government to save its own citizens from injury in cases of emergency. In every country the welfare of the people, and especially of the working classes, is a far higher consideration than cheapness.

THE FIRST CONSIDERATION OF A NATIONAL POLICY.

At all times, and in all circumstances, the first consideration in national policy is human welfare—the best interest of the citizen. If it be the best interest of our people that wages shall be reduced, that end will be rapidly achieved by the admission of the products of foreign cheap labor without levying duties sufficient to counteract the difference in the cost. It cannot be done, however, without producing such a cry of distress as will compel the legislature to cut off a competition so disastrous. It touches to the quick every interest of employer and workman—the living and labor of the poor. Much less can the country endure it without serious injury to its productive power. In the long struggle to which our fluctuating policy on this subject exposed our industry, it has often happened that the influx of cheap goods has injured the producing classes, for the temporary benefit of other classes, to the amount of hundreds of millions in a year. It must be perfectly evident to those who are well acquainted with our unsteady and variable commercial and industrial policy for the last fifty years that our revenue, external and internal, must fall short of what is required, if domestic industry is to undergo hereafter the same variable and mistaken course. The question should not be merely what rate of duty shall be imposed on this or that commodity, but what duties and what regulations will save our working classes from such a competition as must be oppressive to them and injurious to the country. If our to consumption of certain articles be fifty dollars yearly for each person the importation below home cost of a quantity equal to ten dollars for each person might, by its effect in reducing prices, inflict a loss of millions, and prevent the production of a quantity, however much needed by consumers, equal to twenty or more dollars for each person.

The mischiefs of its irregularity is intensified by other peculiar characteristics of our foreign trade. The people are large consumers, our prices have always ruled high, our markets have been consequently the most prized by foreign merchants and manufacturers of any in the world. Their determination to avail themselves of these advantages is shown by persevering efforts to sell goods here, to evade our fiscal regulations and to mislead our custom house officers at any hazard. But we are not only large consumers of goods, selected and imported for our own use by our own merchants; upon the top of all these we are stuffed to more than repletion with foreign commodities thrust upon us—forced into us by sales at auction. Our own merchants, for every thousand dollars' worth of goods selected and imported for our use, are obliged to purchase another thousand dollars' worth that either to be sold at auction, to protect themselves and prevent the market from being wholly broken down. As it is now, our foreign trade is the master; it controls and overrides what is in its way. It should be thoroughly controlled, and made subservient to national interests and considerations.

The trade between two or more nations can no more be conducted upon abstract propositions or unbending rules, than the trade between individuals; what is for the real benefit of the people of each nation should control the whole movement. Every government should first look after the interests of its own people; it should see that no harm comes to them from within or from without; and the highest interests of all nations can only be attained by that policy which is best for each.

EXCHANGE OF COMMODITIES.

France and Great Britain, after long efforts to obtain advantage of each other in trade or smuggling, sat down together like two sensible merchants to consider how far they could exchange commodities without injury to their respective people, and, after a patient and careful exchange of views and an examination of their respective productions and wants, occupying years, they agreed upon the terms of their future trade, carefully considering what benefits could be attained on both sides and as anxiously shutting out that competition which might prove injurious to industry on either side. Both parties were conservative. It was a study of mutual benefit between men who understood the respective interests at stake. It was not hastily nor unskillfully done.

This great measure, so cautiously and carefully perfected with reference to the internal industry of each nation, has been eminently successful. It is one of the most important lessons upon international trade ever given to the world. It teaches nations not to rely upon the generalities of their respective tariffs, but to study together how far their respective interests may be promoted by a mutual trade in which nothing injurious to their various industries should be conceded, and everything allowed which could be a mutual benefit. In such a commercial treaty, to which our country might be a party, the first step on our part would be to save our laboring classes and their wages, and so of other interests which might be endangered.

The fact that as a manufacturing people we cannot compete with the cheap labor of Europe and Asia, is often mentioned reproachfully, as if in disparagement of our activity, our capacity, or our enterprise. Such reproach exhibits a want of consideration. All manufacturing nations have certain branches in which, owing to peculiar circumstances, they excel; but in regard to the whole range of those productions which are most necessary to civilized life, no nation excels ours, and in fact very few come near it. In the substitution of machinery all others are far behind us, and our progress in this respect is far more rapid than is to be seen elsewhere. It is no reproach, nor does it furnish a semblance of reproach, that we cannot work as cheaply, nor manufacture as cheaply, as is done in most other countries. It is no reproach to us that we pay for a day's labor from two to four times as much as is paid in Europe. It is no credit to other nations that they pay but one-fourth or one-third as much for a day's labor as is paid here.

The simple and intelligible fact that it is labor which constitutes from one-fourth to three-fourths of the cost of much the largest portion of the commodities produced in every country, is one that should finally solve the whole question of competition. It is not desirable that wages in this country should be reduced to the European standard. Three-fourths of our people are directly or indirectly producers, and they are paid for their productions or their labor two to four times as much as working people receive abroad. Is it impolitic to pay such wages or is it a misfortune? Neither one nor the other. It is a natural and proper result of our political and industrial system. Whatever fluctuations may take place, our wages must ever remain higher than in more populous countries under monarchical or aristocratical governments.

If our country offers no advantages to counteract the cost of manufactured commodities enhanced by the high price of labor, it might furnish ground of complaint on the part of those who enjoy no benefit directly or indirectly from high wages. The clamor sometimes heard for cheap goods from abroad is virtually a clamor for low-priced labor; it is a clamor for the European system of labor instead of the American. It is a clamor for a change which cannot be made, for the people will not submit to it; it is a clamor for a change which, if it could be made, would reduce our working classes to the utmost depths of distress before it could be accomplished.

WHEN FOREIGN COMPETITION INFLICTS DAMAGE.

It should be kept in mind that this foreign competition does not inflict damage by the quantity of commodities it furnishes, but by their price. All Europe could not spare us what we require of articles which are there made much cheaper than they can be furnished here. We make, as already mentioned, about nine-tenths, and are furnished with one-tenth of our consumption from abroad. The trouble comes from a law of prices which results in this, that the surplus only of the production of foreign nations is sent here to be sold. Foreign manufacturers having frequently more goods than they can sell in their own markets at fair prices, send them to this country, our prices being the highest in the world. If this surplus were forced on the markets where it is produced it would break them down. It is deemed better by these foreign producers to make forced sales in this country.

Neither is it the goods imported from abroad by our own merchants which makes this foreign competition so much dreaded, but it is the commodities sent hither by foreign manufacturers or merchants to be sold at the best price that our auction markets afford, which break down our markets and reduce the prices of goods here to such an extent as to inflict heavy losses and keep the markets in a state of fluctuation, dangerous and paralyzing to both trade and production.

If our manufacturers are producing articles for the ordinary consumption of the country, to the value of ten millions monthly, and foreign manufacturers are sending hither, though with that irregularity which characterizes foreign trade, to the value of about ten millions yearly, the effect on prices will be such as to reduce the rates of corresponding domestic articles in an amount equal to the whole value of the imported commodities.

If ten millions worth of foreign goods are sold twenty per cent below the price of the domestic, the loss on the latter will be twenty per cent on over one hundred millions, or say twenty millions of dollars. In view of such injuries, industry and home trade are paralyzed. Men cannot form any reasonably safe estimate of their year's business. Enterprise is checked, and much of its power destroyed. A loss in the case supposed of twenty millions is inflicted on our home industry by the import of ten millions of foreign commodities.

It may be urged that the country has gained by this reduction of price, and by the consumers being thus supplied twenty per cent lower than would have been paid to the domestic producer. If it be better as a general policy to patronize foreign laborers than our own; if it can be advisable to compel manufacturers to sell at a loss, or without a profit, and thus be compelled to discharge their laborers and give up their business; if it can be advisable to abandon our home markets to foreign manufacturers, and allow them to advance their prices upon us when we are wholly in their power, then such events may be regarded as beneficial.

ADVANTAGES OF HOME MANUFACTURES.

Conflicting opinions on this subject have troubled our national legislation during its whole history; one is, that as we must manufacture or obtain at least nine-tenths of what we consume from our own industry, we should make that industry as effective as possible, that home competition may bring prices to that range which springs from the price of labor and other conditions peculiar to our country. Another opinion is, that as goods are cheaper abroad than at home, it is our interest, of course, to purchase where goods can be obtained cheapest. This is entirely plausible, and in some aspects true. If the cheap labor countries could stipulate to furnish us a full supply for the whole population at their lowest rates, of good quality, not increasing their price according to the magnitude of our demand, and take payment in all such agricultural products as are now consumed by our manufacturers, and further, that the terms should not be changed to our disadvantage, such propositions might be worthy of consideration, but certainly not of adoption.

The incidental advantages of manufacturing for ourselves are worth all the difference between the low prices abroad and the higher at home. These incidental benefits are national independence and self-respect, growing intellectual activity, increasing enterprise and capital, greater progress in the common arts of life and in the fine arts, stimulus to the inventive faculties; but more than all these, and above them all, is the advantage of furnishing full employment to the entire body of the people. This benefit neither agriculture, nor trade, nor the usual mechanical employments can do. No nation can attain to its maximum of wealth which does not by its national policy furnish sources of employment for its whole population; no nation can attain its due development of wealth and power which does not work its own mines, going into the bowels of the earth as well as cultivating its surface. It may be stated more broadly: no nation can maintain a real independence, suitable self-respect, make due progress in civilization, and attain to that accumulation of capital needful to progress in the useful arts, unless it produces its own food and clothing, builds its own houses, makes its own furniture, provides for its defence by maintaining sufficient military and naval power, develops its own mines and maintains a system of internal transportation and intercourse adequate to all the wants of its inhabitants, and unless by such means it affords employment to all its laborers, and full scope for all the mental and physical activities of its people. It requires a combination of such advantages to develop the power and resources of such a territory as ours, and such a people as occupy it. Our public policy has not reached these requirements. The country has prospered under a public expenditure of less than one hundred millions annually, all raised by duties upon imports, but enough has been learned from past experience, successes and failures, to warrant the conclusion that the people of this country cannot pay three hundred millions of national taxes, in addition to more than a hundred millions of State and municipal taxes, unless the whole resources of the country, including the whole power of its labor, are brought into full action. With a proper economical system, all these taxes will not be regarded as a serious burden; but, without such a system, they will become intolerable, and resort will be had to remedies injurious to national credit and reputation.

THE OBJECT OF THE REPORT.

These and similar considerations are pressed now because, although our main purpose is to reform and improve our present revenue system, it will be of little avail that our system of taxation is the best which man can devise if the annual products of our industry do not furnish the means of paying it. If that industry is checked or paralyzed by competition with cheaper labor, or if kept in suspense by commercial fluctuations, which threaten prices so reduced as not to be remunerative, then the revenue must suffer in proportion to the pressure of the circumstances.

It is just as necessary in any wise system of national revenue to stimulate, sustain and increase productive power as it is to impose taxes and distribute the burden with impartiality and skill.

NECESSITY FOR REGULATING DUTIES ON IMPORTS.

It seems now to be an imperative necessity to increase the duties upon foreign commodities competing with our own, especially in those departments of industry upon which we depend for more than three-fourths of our consumption. It is indispensable that these branches be kept in full vigor and active operation, lest, if the home supply should diminish, prices both at home and abroad should be largely advanced.

The internal taxation has, in a large number of cases, partially or wholly neutralized the discrimination heretofore made in favor of our own laboring classes.

The high price of gold is failing now to exercise its past influence in the repression of over-importation. Imports are already immense, and all indications, as well as accounts, lead to the belief that they are to be large beyond all precedent. The gold duty is beginning to be no barrier, for the goods are sold at a great advance for currency, and our gold bearing bonds become virtually the medium of remittance. Thus a door is opened by which commodities may be poured in upon us in quantities sufficient to reduce prices far below the rate at which our laborers can afford to produce them. This will diminish the internal revenue to an amount far beyond the increase of the duties upon importation.

It is not only necessary that the duties upon imports should be so regulated as to prevent our ports of entry from being flooded with goods not imported by our own merchants with their full knowledge of the wants of the country, but commodities sent hither by foreign manufacturers and speculators, with the double purpose of realizing a profit upon our financial position and of overwhelming our domestic industry—that industry which suffers even when threatened—which we cannot afford to put in peril, much less to see overthrown, even for a year.

SPECIFIC DUTIES RECOMMENDED.

The experience we have had in this country of the bad working of our appraisement system, as organized under existing laws and as carried out in our custom houses, should force upon us the adoption of the European methods of specific duties. No such abuses can be practised there as now disgrace our custom houses and defraud our public Treasury. There revenues are raised upon specific duties, not mainly, but almost altogether. The British tariff contains three hundred and eighty-two specifics to one hundred and thirty-one ad valorem duties. Belgium, which is one of the richest countries of Europe in proportion to its population—a country in which the various departments of civilized industry are best blended for their mutual advancement—has three hundred and thirty specifics in her tariff to sixty-six ad valorem duties; our tariff has two thousand four hundred and thirty-nine ad valorem duties and four hundred and seventy-eight specifics. The Belgian tariff presents a feature well deserving the attention of our legislators and statesmen. It is a special schedule, by which linens coming from France are charged with a specific duty until the quantity of four millions of pounds weight has been imported; when the amount imported exceeds that quantity, and does not exceed six millions of pounds weight, the duty is increased upwards of fifty per cent; and when the quantity exceeds six millions of pounds weight, all imported within the year is charged double the rate of the first four millions. The flax manufactures of Belgium are one of the most important of its industries, and this careful and paternal government has taken this method of saving their markets from being overwhelmed with French linens, to the injury of their working classes.

A schedule of proposed changes of duties and provisions in the tariff accompanies this report, which is commended to the consideration of the Secretary of the Treasury and of Congress, as indicating, in some degree, what the peculiar condition of the industry, foreign trade, revenue and financial position of the country seems to demand.

The indications, however, are very strong that some prompt action of Congress may be required for the relief of the country before any revision of the tariff can be effected. The great temptation to send goods to this country, and the great movement in that direction already commenced, has attracted attention abroad and given us full notice of the danger; if this movement should continue, it may become not only expedient but necessary to interpose special temporary legislation to check commercial movements which, however beneficial to those who devised and are carrying them out, cannot but bring disaster upon our working classes, and heavy loss upon our revenue.

Respectfully submitted for the Commission.

STEPHEN COLWELL.

Celebration of St. Patrick's Day.

The members of the Seventy-seventh having declared their intention to parade on Saturday, the 17th instant, the following order was promulgated yesterday:—

GENERAL ORDERS—NO. 5.

HEADQUARTERS, SEVENTY-SEVENTH REGIMENT, N. G. S. N. Y., New York, March 9, 1866.

1. This regiment will parade fully uniformed, armed and equipped, white gloves and without overcoats, on Saturday, the 17th instant (St. Patrick's Day), to celebrate the anniversary of Ireland's patron saint.

2. Regimental line will be formed in Broome street, right resting on Broadway, at half-past ten o'clock A. M. Commandants of companies, non-commissioned staff, band and drum corps will report to the adjutant in the regimental armory at half-past nine o'clock A. M., precisely.

3. As this is the first regimental parade to celebrate this anniversary it is expected that each member of this command will parade.

4. Field and staff will report, mounted, at the Colonel's quarters, No. 109 West Forty-sixth street, at nine o'clock A. M.

5. The color bearers and guard will receive the colors at the Colonel's quarters at nine o'clock A. M.

6. In compliance with Special Orders No. 1, dated "Headquarters, First brigade N. G. S. N. Y., New York, January 18, 1866," a regimental court martial for the trial of delinquents in the Seventy-seventh regiment N. G. S. N. Y., is hereby constituted. The court will consist of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Norton, and will convene on Tuesday, the 20th inst., at eight o'clock P. M., at the Regimental Armory, No. 160 Hester street.

THOMAS LYNCH, Colonel.

P. J. HEALY, Adjutant.

The Cattle Disease.

[From the Philadelphia Age, March 13.]

A farmer named John McCarty, living on the Yellow House road, has lost a number of his cows from a disease not yet known. Cattle attacked by the disease scarcely ever recover. He has already lost about twelve fine cows, and out of the entire number has now only about six remaining. The living of Mr. McCarty has been greatly affected by this calamity.

[From the St. Louis Dispatch, March 8.]

Mr. Samuel Hoge, of Grundy county, Ill., has just lost eighteen head of his finest cattle by a most mysterious disease. He can attribute the cause of their death only to eating rusty oat straw. The cattle were apparently healthy, and as soon as attacked by this disease sank into a torpid state, and, if undisturbed, remained thus until they died. They were furious and wild upon the approach of any person, and in finding out this fact Mr. Hoge came near losing his life.

Another Steamer Burned.

[From the Savannah Herald, March 8.]

From a despatch received yesterday afternoon by Mr. J. M. Kinchley, agent in this city for the steamer R. H. May, we learn that she left Augusta on Saturday last, and on Monday afternoon about three o'clock, when near Poor Robin, lower cut, she caught fire and was totally consumed. She had a freight of three hundred and thirty-one bales of cotton, which was fully insured, as also was the boat. It was the property of Geo. T. Jackson & Co., of Augusta, and is the second boat of this line which has been destroyed within a short time.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS.

Board of Councilmen.

[OFFICIAL.]

STATED SESSION—THURSDAY, March 8—2 P. M.

The Board met, pursuant to adjournment, in their chamber, 16 City Hall.

Present—J. Wilson Green, Esq., President, in the chair, and the following members:—

Councilmen Keenan, Long, Stacom, Flynn, Robinson, O'Brien, Kenney, Costello, Hartman, Brinkman, Koster, Watts, Keech, Mackay, Kellogg, Thomas, Halloran, Roberts, Pullman, Hettrick and Imlay—22.

The minutes of the meeting held March 5 were read and approved.

RESOLUTIONS.

By Councilman FLYNN—

Resolved, That Croton mains be laid in Sixty-second street, between Ninth and Tenth avenues, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Department.

Which was adopted.

And the same was directed to be sent to the Board of Aldermen for concurrence.

By Councilman MACKAY—

Resolved, That the ordinance "to amend sections 4 and 5 of chapter 68 of the Revised Ordinances of 1859," which became adopted November 17, 1864, be and hereby is annulled, rescinded and repealed.

Councilman KEENAN moved that said resolutions be referred to the Committee on Ordinances.

Which was carried.

By Councilman KEENAN—

Resolved, That the Street Commissioner be and he is hereby authorized and directed to cause the sheds which now incumber piers Nos. 34 and 38 East river to be removed immediately, as the same have been erected or built without any authority of law whatever.

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is hereby authorized and directed immediately to commence an action against the party or parties erecting said sheds for trespassing upon the rights and franchises of the corporation of the city of New York with the view of obtaining exemplary damages for such a wilful and unauthorized assumption of its corporate property, in order to deter any further violation of its chartered rights.

Which was adopted.

Subsequently, Councilman KEENAN moved that such action be reconsidered.

Which was carried.

And the paper was laid over.

By Councilman ROBINSON—

Whereas, By resolution of the Common Council, approved by the Mayor, it was

"Resolved, That the Comptroller be and he is hereby authorized and directed to advertise and sell at auction, a lease to establish and maintain a ferry from the basin at the foot of Spring street, in the city of New York, to Hoboken, New Jersey, at the point where the old ferry was established, or one thousand yards north or south of that point, for a term not exceeding ten years."

And whereas, according to the wording of said resolution, it has been found impossible to procure a suitable landing on the Hoboken shore, within the prescribed distance; and whereas, the citizens of the Fifth, Eighth and Ninth wards are desirous of having the aforesaid ferry established as soon as possible, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the above resolution be and the same is hereby amended, and shall read as follows:—That the Comptroller be and he is hereby authorized and directed to advertise and sell at public auction a lease to establish and maintain a ferry from the basin at the foot of Spring street, in the city of New York, to any point on the New Jersey shore that may be found practicable, for a term not exceeding ten years.

Councilman COSTELLO moved that said resolution be referred to the Committee on Ferries.

Which was carried.

By Councilman KELLOGG—

Resolved, the Board of Aldermen concurring, That a joint committee of three be appointed from each Board of the Common Council to represent the interests of the city of New York before the Legislature at Albany in the various measures now pending before that body relating to the city.

Councilman KEENAN moved that said resolution be laid upon the table.

Which was carried.

By Councilman KELLOGG—

Resolved, That the Committee on National Affairs be instructed to inquire into the condition of the annexed bills of the Eighty-fourth regiment, National Guard, for music, and report what action should, in their judgment, be taken upon the same.

BILLS.

1863—Russian reception, Washington Brass Band	$70
1864—Sanitary Fair, Meyer's Band	95
1864—Fourth of July, Eighty-fourth regiment Band	168

Which was adopted.

By Councilman COSTELLO—

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is authorized and directed to take the necessary legal measures to have Sixty-second street extended from Eighth street to Fourteenth, without delay.

Which was referred to the Committee on Street Openings.

By Councilman THOMAS—

Resolved, That Fiftieth street, between Third and Fourth avenues, be paved with Belgian pavement, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Board.

Which was referred to the Committee on Belgian Pavements.

By Councilman THOMAS—

Resolved, That a sewer be constructed in Fifty-seventh street, from First avenue to East river, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Board.

Which was referred to the Committee on Sewers.

By the same—

Resolved, That a sewer be constructed in Fifty-eighth street, from Second avenue to East river, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Board.

Which was referred to the Committee on Sewers.

By the same—

Resolved, That a sewer be constructed in First avenue, between Fifty-third street and Fifty-eighth street, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Board.

Which was referred to the Committee on Sewers.

By the same—

Resolved, That a sewer be constructed in Fifty-third street, from Second avenue to East river, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Board.

Which was referred to the Committee on Sewers.

By Councilman ROBERTS—

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is hereby directed to take the necessary legal steps to open 125th and 114th streets, between Harlem river and Tenth avenue, where not already opened.

Which was referred to the Committee on Street Openings.

By the same—

Resolved, That the sunken lots on the south side of 125th, commencing 240 feet east from the southeasterly corner of 125th street on the south side of the street, between Second and Third avenues, be filled up with good, wholesome earth, as a preventive from sickness, under the direction of the Street Commissioner, the same to be done immediately.

Which was referred to the Committee on Public Health.

By the same—

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is hereby directed to take the necessary legal steps to open, according to law, 124th street, from Harlem river to Hudson river, where not already opened.

Which was referred to the Committee on Street Openings.

By the same—

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is hereby directed to take the necessary legal steps to open 149th street, from Tenth avenue to Harlem river.

Which was referred to the Committee on Street Openings.

By Councilman ROBERTS—

Resolved, That the Counsel to the Corporation be and he is hereby directed to take the necessary legal steps to open 111th street, also 112th street, from Tenth avenue to Harlem river.

Which was referred to the Committee on Street Openings.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Resolved, That the curb and gutter stones be set in Second avenue, from 126th to 128th street, and the sidewalks flagged a space of four feet wide through the centre of the same, where not already done, under the direction of the Street Commissioner.

Which was referred to the Committee on Roads.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Resolved, That the sidewalks in Third avenue, from 110th to 120th street, be flagged and reflagged where necessary, where not already done, the same to be done under the direction of the Street Commissioner.

Which was referred to the Committee on Roads.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Resolved, That the sidewalks in 129th street, from Third to Eighth avenue, be flagged a space of four feet wide through the centre of the same where not already done, under the direction of the Street Commissioner.

Which was referred to the Committee on Roads.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Resolved, That 124th street, from First to Eighth avenue, be regulated, graded, and the curb and gutter stones set, and the sidewalks flagged a space of four feet wide through the centre of the same, and gas lamps placed therein, where not already done, said work to be done under the direction of the Street Commissioner.

Which was referred to the Committee on Roads.

By Councilman KEENAN—

AN ORDINANCE.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of New York do ordain as follows:—

Sec. 1. That the Comptroller be and he is hereby authorized and directed to issue stock for the amount of $75,000 to be denominated "Market Stock," which said stock shall bear date the first day of May, 1866, and shall bear interest at and after the rate of 7 per centum per annum, payable semi-annually, and be redeemable on the first day of May, 1894, and the faith of the city and county is hereby specifically pledged for the redemption of said stock and the several parts thereof, when the same shall become due and redeemable, by tax upon the estates, real and personal, in the city of New York, subject to taxation.

Sec. 2. The money raised by virtue of this ordinance is to be subject to the several provisions of an act of the Legislature passed March 15, 1853, entitled "an Act in relation to building a Public Market in the city of New York."

Councilman KEENAN moved that said paper be referred to the Committee on Finance.

Which was carried.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Resolved, That a sewer with the necessary receiving basins and culverts be built in Chrystie street, between Delancey and Broome streets, under the direction of the Croton Aqueduct Department, and the accompanying ordinance be adopted.

Which was laid over.

PETITIONS.

By Councilman HALLORAN—

Petition of George Brown and others to have Eighty-sixth street paved with Belgian pavement, from Fifth avenue to avenue A.

Which was referred to the Committee on Belgian Pavement.

REPORTS.

Report of Committee on Streets to flag sidewalks northeast corner Second avenue and Third street.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Belgian Pavement to pave Ninety-second street, from Third avenue to East river, with Belgian pavements.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers, to sewer Eighty-fifth street, between First and Third avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Sixtieth street, between Second and Third avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Seventy-eighth street, between Seventh and Eighth avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Eightieth street, between Third and Fourth avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Second avenue, between Seventy-fourth and Seventy-ninth streets.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Sixty-second street, between Second and Third avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Sixty-second street, between Third and Lexington avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer Eighty-third street, between First and Third avenues.

Which was laid over.

Report of Committee on Sewers to sewer