

# Jeffersonian Republican.

THE WHOLE ART OF GOVERNMENT CONSISTS IN THE ART OF BEING HONEST.—Jefferson

VOL. 5.

STROUDSBURG, MONROE COUNTY, PA., THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1844.

No. 1.

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## Jeffersonian Republican.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE

Speech of Mr. Stewart, of Penn.

IN DEFENCE OF

## THE TARIFF.

Delivered in the House of Representatives of the U. S., March 13, 1844.

## EFFECTS ON FARMERS AND MECHANICS.

But our present amount of foreign imports, viz., one hundred millions, is sufficient to supply the demand; how then are you to make room for fifty millions more? this can only be done by destroying fifty millions of dollars of our own domestic productions, to make way for that amount of the productions of foreign industry. We must, according to this financial scheme, not only destroy fifty millions of dollars worth annually of our productive industry, but we must send fifty millions of dollars of hard cash to foreign countries, to purchase what we now do produce, can produce, and ought to produce at home; and for what? to raise five millions of revenue by taxation, which is not wanted! Now, sir, I submit, is this a wise, is it an American policy? Is it not rather a British policy, a plan to reduce the duties and open our ports to the importation of British goods, to the sacrifice and destruction of our own mechanics, farmers and manufacturers? Yes, sir, and this is to be done by an American Congress, and by the representatives of the American people! Can such an anti-American—such a British system as this, stand for a moment before this free and enlightened people? Pass this bill, sir, take five dollars off bar iron, and still more off iron in all its other forms, and, sir, you will go far to extinguish the fires of every furnace and of every forge in Pennsylvania. By this bill you will strike down your own mechanics—your hatters, your shoemakers, your blacksmiths, your tailors, your saddlers; in short, all your mechanics; you will paralyze and prostrate your glass works, paper mills, tanneries, salt works, collieries, lead mines—your woollen and cotton factories; but above all, you aim a death blow at the American farmers, not only by destroying their home markets, almost the only markets they now have, but what is still worse, you will convert the mechanics and manufacturers thus thrown out of employment into agriculturists, into producers instead of consumers of agricultural productions. When you double production and diminish consumption one-half, do you not ruin and destroy the farmers of this country? And, sir, allow me to say, that in a country like this, where seven-eighths of the entire population is engaged in agriculture, when agriculture is destroyed, the country itself is destroyed. Agriculture is the great basis and foundation on which every thing else depends; when the farmer prospers, all prosper; when he sinks, all the rest, professional men, mechanics, and all go down with him. It is the great object therefore to take care of agriculture, make this prosperous and the whole country will prosper; and how is agriculture to be made prosperous but by building up and sustaining home markets. It is therefore not for the manufacturers, but for the mechanics and farmers, yes, sir, for the farmers, that I advocate the protective policy. There is one important fact which lies deep at the foundation of the whole subject, to which I am anxious to attract the attention of the farmers and politicians of this country, and it is this, that half, and more than half, of the entire price of the hundred millions of dollars a year of foreign goods imported into this country is agricultural produce raised on a foreign soil, worked up and manufactured into goods, and then sent here for sale; and that the farmers and people of this country send in this way fifty millions of dollars a year to purchase foreign agricultural produce, in the shape of goods, while foreigners take little or nothing from us; our whole agricultural exports to all the world (excepting cotton and tobacco) do not amount to ten millions of dollars a year; thus, sir, we purchase five dollars' worth of foreign agricultural produce to every dollar's worth we sell; this may seem strange, but it is strictly true; I defy contradiction—I challenge investigation. Let gentlemen disposed to contest it select an arti-

cle of foreign goods, a yard of cloth, a ton of iron, a hat, a coat, a pair of shoes, any thing, "from a needle to an anchor," examine its constituent parts, the raw material, the clothing and the subsistence of the labor employed in its manufacture, and it would be discovered that more than half, often three-fourths, of the whole price is made up of agricultural produce. It is a well known fact that farmers often make hundreds of dollars worth of domestic goods, cloths, &c., without using a dollar's worth of any thing not produced on their own farms; goods and cloth thus made are therefore entirely agricultural; and are not the same materials used in the manufacture of goods, whether made on a farm or in a factory?

Mr. S. said he had ascertained the fact from his own books kept at a furnace, that more than three-fourths of the price of every ton of iron sold, was paid to the neighboring farmers for their domestic goods, their meat and flour, that clothed and fed his hands; for their hay, corn oats, &c., that sustained his horses, mules, and oxen, employed about his works. In England, iron is made of the same materials that constitute it here; well, we now import, manufactured and unmanufactured, eight millions of dollars worth of iron and steel; say only half its value is agricultural produce, thus, then, we send four millions of dollars a year to purchase foreign agricultural produce, converted into iron, and sent here for sale, while our own country is filled with ore and coal, buried and useless, and the produce of our farmers left without markets. Will the farmers of this country submit to such a system as this—openly advocated and adopted to favor foreign industry at the expense of our own? Will they tamely and silently agree thus to be crushed and sacrificed? No, sir, they will not; they will speak out against this unjust and ruinous measure; your tables will soon groan under the weight of their remonstrances against it. I call on them to do so; I call on them to come to the rescue before it is too late.

## BRITISH BILL.

The avowed object of this bill is to open our ports to the importation of British goods—to favor foreign farmers and mechanics, and destroy our own. Sir, give the people time to be heard, and this bill cannot pass; let it be discussed, and it can never pass an American Congress. There is one way in which it can pass—send it to the British Parliament, and it will be passed by acclamation. England would give millions to secure its passage. It had recently been stated in an official report, read in the House of Commons, that unless the American Tariff of 1842 was modified and reduced, Great Britain would have to pay the United States cash for their cotton, instead of paying in goods as she formerly had done; and this bill accordingly modifies and reduces the Tariff of 1842 to suit the wishes of the British Chancellor, who, while he recommends free trade and low duties to us, takes special care to adhere to his own prohibitory system. While this bill proposes greatly to reduce the duties on foreign distilled spirits, England exacts a duty of 2,700 per cent. on ours; and this is reciprocity! This bill reduces the duties on tobacco and its manufactures, while England demands 1,200 per cent. on ours, and actually collects 22 millions dollars of revenue annually from our tobacco, equal to the whole revenue of this Government—such is British reciprocity and free trade. Since the Tariff of 1842, the tables with England have been turned; last year the balance of trade with Great Britain exceeded \$13,000,000 in our favor, instead of being about that amount against us, as in former years. The imports of specie had in the last year reached the unprecedented amount, as appears by official reports, of more than 23 millions of dollars, most of it from Great Britain. No wonder England and her statesmen were anxious for the reduction of the American Whig Tariff of '42. No wonder her Chancellor exclaims against the Tariff, and says it will oblige them to send us specie instead of goods hereafter to pay for cotton. No wonder our country is rapidly recovering from its late depression—that its course is again onward and upward—that its former prosperity is returning—a prosperity it always had and always would have under an efficient protective system; but which it never had and never would have without it. No wonder specie has become abundant—that the banks had resumed—that exchanges had become equalized and interest reduced—that manufacturers had revived—that agriculture was recovering—that the mechanic and every other branch of the national industry was fully and profitably employed. All these were the necessary and undeniable fruits of the existing tariff policy—results seen, felt, and acknowledged throughout the land—yet, in the face of all these facts—shutting their eyes to these great lights blazing before them—the Committee of Ways and Means have reported a bill to repeal this beneficial act of 1842, and bring us back to the low duties and the low condition of 1840. They have struck a death-blow at this policy—a policy which had vindicated its adoption by all its fruits, which had fulfilled all the hopes of its friends, and falsified all the predictions of its enemies; but shall this

blow be unavailing? No, sir, it will recoil and overwhelm its authors. The people who have experienced the benefits and the blessings of this measure, will not abandon it. Even its enemies are now disposed to give it a fair and full trial, and condemn it only when it fails. Then why not, sir, wait till the people have an opportunity to pass upon this question at the approaching elections? They will then settle it one way or the other. If the enemies of the Tariff policy prevail, they can and will repeal it; but if you repeal it now, and its friends are successful, it will be immediately restored. Then why not let it abide this result? Let it go to the people, let them decide it, and, for one, sir, I am prepared to acquiesce in their decision.

But, sir, if more revenue is wanted, why not increase the duties on luxuries consumed by the rich, rather than thus strike down the poor man's labor, and take the bread from the mouth of his children, to make room for the importation of fifty millions of dollars worth of foreign goods? Is this, sir, an American measure, can it receive the support of an American Congress, or the representatives of the American people? I call on the authors of this ruinous measure to come forth in its defence. I call on them to assign some reason for its adoption. I can readily discover reasons enough why England should desire its adoption, but they are the very reasons why we should reject it; just so far as it benefits them it injures us; this is a contest between foreign and American mechanics, farmers, and manufacturers, for the American market, and the question is, which side shall we take? The tariff of 1842 shuts out the foreigner and gives the Americans the market; this bill proposes to repeal the tariff of 1842, and give it to the foreigner; to open our ports and again flood our country with foreign goods, and export money by ship-loads to pay for them; and why? I again ask the committee upon what principle of national policy this measure is sustained?

## THE TARIFF DEMOCRATIC—FREE TRADE MONARCHIAL.

Mr. Dromgoole replied to enable bare-headed people to buy cheap hats! To enable bare-headed people to buy cheap hats! Sir, let me tell the gentleman if he carries this measure, the poor people of this country would not only go bare-headed but bare-backed; they would be doomed, like the pauper, to "the poor man's law," it is this and this alone that gives him employment and wages. Just as the tariff goes down, the wages of labor will go down with it. Repeat the tariff—adopt the gentleman's favorite plan of "free trade," and you will bring down the laborer here, in every department of industry, to the level of the serfs and paupers of Europe. This is certain—it is inevitable. As certain as the laws of gravitation—as inevitable as that the removal of an obstruction between two unequal bodies of water, will reduce the one to the level of the other. Repeat the tariff, and what is there to prevent our country from being instantly inundated with the productions of the low priced labor of Europe. When hatters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and all must come down and work as cheap as they do, or give up the market! With the present facilities of intercourse by steamships, you might as well attempt to establish higher wages and higher prices on one side of a street than on the other, as to establish and sustain higher prices and wages here than in Europe, under the delusive and European scheme of "free-trade." But, sir, this scheme would bring in its train other and more fearful consequences. Adopt this scheme, and you will soon bring down and degrade the now free and prosperous laborer of this country, not only to the moral, but to the political condition of the slaves and serfs of Europe. By reducing their wages, you deprive the poor man of the means of educating his children and fitting them to be free. By thus depressing one class of your people, you necessarily elevate another. You divide society horizontally into upper and lower classes—distinctions and titles supervene—jealousies and finally hostilities follow, and liberty itself is in the end swallowed up in monarchy. Such are the political and moral tendencies of every step in the direction of free trade. The protective policy is therefore democratic in its character and tendencies, it is a policy which promotes equality, not by depressing one class, but by elevating all—by elevating, sustaining, and protecting the labor of your own country against the ruinous and degrading effects of a too free competition with the low priced and depressed labor of Europe. These are views which belong to this subject, and should not be overlooked or disregarded by those who represent the free labor of this country, and especially by those who make professions of democracy and love of the people. Now is the time, and this is the question, to test their sincerity. Those who represent slaves may be excused, but those representing freemen will be held to a strict accountability.

THE DUTIES ADDED TO THE PRICE, NOT TRUE!  
The great and leading objection to the protective policy is, that the duties are added to the price, and paid by the consumers. This objection lies at the foundation of the opposi-

tion to this policy; and, if unfounded, this objection ought to cease. The duty is added to the price; this is the theory. Now, sir, how is the fact; what says experience? All experience proves that this objection has no existence, save in the imaginations of those who make it.

Now, sir, I lay it down as a general proposition, that there never was a high protective duty imposed upon any article, from the foundation of this Government to the present day, the price of which has not been in the end reduced—greatly reduced—in many instances to one-half, one-third, and one-fourth of what it had been before these protective duties were imposed. This, sir, may seem to gentlemen on the other side to be a strong declaration; but, sir, I make it deliberately, with a full conviction of its truth, and I challenge gentlemen to disprove it—I defy them to point out a single instance to the contrary. Let them examine, and they will find invariably that whenever the duties have been highest, the prices have ultimately come down the lowest, and for a very obvious reason—high duties promote competition, and competition never fails to bring down prices. This effect is invariable and universal; but unfortunately the duties always run up as the prices run down; hence the frightful lists of duties exhibited by the Committee of Ways and Means, amounting to 200, 300, and 400 per cent. When first imposed these duties were but 30 or 40 per cent.; but now, owing to the reduction of prices, they have run up to 200 or 300 per cent. By way of illustration take the article of glass, on which a duty of \$4 a box was imposed at a time when glass cost \$12; this was then a duty of 33 per cent., but now when home competition, induced by this protective duty, has brought down the price to \$2 a box, the duty, owing to this reduction of price, is 200 per cent. instead of 33; the same is true of many other articles on which the duty, when imposed, did not exceed 20 or 30 per cent., but now, owing to reduction of price produced by home competition, they amount to 2 or 300 per cent. When four cents per pound duty was put on cut nails, the price was twelve cents per pound, and this duty, of course was 33 per cent.; but now, when the effect of this protective duty has been to reduce the price of nails from 12 to 3 cents per pound, the duty is increased to 100 per cent.; this is equally true of spikes, rods, wood screws, &c. Again, eight cents a yard was imposed on coarse cottons when imported at 20 cents, being a duty of 40 per cent., but now, when the price has come down to 5 cents per yard, the duty goes up to 160 per cent.

Sir, I could go on and enumerate more than twenty such instances where the duties, though moderate when imposed, now actually exceed the price of the article; yet we are told that in all cases the duty is added to the price, and paid by the consumer! That is, that the consumer pays \$4 a box duty on glass that he buys for \$2; 4 cents a pound on nails that he buys for 3; and 8 cents a yard on coarse cotton goods that he buys for 5. Such are the absurdities into which these stale anti-tariff theories involve their votaries; but suppose what they alledge were true in point of fact, and that the duty is really added to the price, the cost of cotton goods being 20 when the duty of 8 cents was imposed, add the duty, the price would be, of course, 28 cents a yard, and the duty only 28 per cent. instead of 160 as stated by the committee; hence, if you raise the price five fold, then the duty is quite reasonable, and there will be no objection whatever to its payment. Let the manufacturer, then run up his price from 5 to 25 cents a yard, and he at once silences all the objections of the Committee of Ways and Means, as this would fix the duty at 30 per cent., just what they want it. But suppose the manufacturer were to reduce his price to one cent a yard, then the duty being 8 cents, would be 800 per cent. Horrid oppression! who would submit to a duty of 800 per cent.? Who could then refuse to go with the Committee on Ways and Means for reducing such enormous duties?

## ABSURDITIES OF THE REPORT.

But the Committee of Ways and Means say that the object of this bill is to increase the revenue by reducing the duties; yet, in the very same paragraph, they say, that should the revenue be found redundant, to avoid the horrid evils of deposits or distribution among the States, the duties should be instantly reduced, so as to reduce the revenue to the wants of the Government; at this time, the committee say, there is not revenue enough, and they propose to increase it by reducing the duties; but should it turn out that there is too much, then they say reduce it by reducing the duties. Thus a reduction of duties is alike effectual with the Committee for a reduction or for an increase of revenue. Excellent disciples of Dr. Sangrado, who had but one remedy for all diseases, "bleeding and warm water." How such a palpable contradiction is to be reconciled or explained I am at a loss to conjecture.

The committee proceed next to say that it is the true policy of every interest in the country, except manufacturers, to advocate the proposed reduction of duties, and they especially name agriculture. Now, sir, in my opinion the reverse of this proposition is true; agriculture is

much more interested in the maintenance of the present protective tariff than the manufacturer, and for the most obvious reasons; high protective duties are calculated to induce increased investment in manufactures; the effect of this is clearly to increase the demand for the raw material and bread stuffs produced by the farmers; and the necessary consequence of this increased demand is to increase the price of every thing the farmer has to sell, and, by increasing the quantity, reduce the price of manufactured goods. Thus the protective policy enables the farmers to sell higher and buy lower; while, on the other hand, increased competition obliges the manufacturer to sell lower and buy his supplies at higher rates; yet it is asserted in this report, and in every anti-tariff speech, that high protective duties are imposed for the benefit of the manufacturer at the expense of the farmer. Now I submit whether practically the opposite of this proposition is not the truth; and whether such is not the necessary and unavoidable result of the great laws of demand and supply which regulate and control prices throughout the world.

But agriculture is still further benefited by the protective policy. By increasing manufacturers, it withholds a portion of the capital and hands from agriculture, and converts them into customers instead of producers, into customers instead of rivals; thus diminishing the quantity and increasing the demand for agricultural supplies, and at the same time increasing the supply and reducing the price of the manufactured goods which they get in exchange. Thus, in every point of view in which the subject can be considered, the farmer is more benefited than the manufacturer by the adoption and maintenance of the protective policy. By way of illustration—suppose in a village there is one manufacturing establishment of woollen goods; here the surrounding farmers sell their wool and other agricultural supplies; the manufacturer, having a monopoly, regulates his own prices, as well as those of the farmers—he demands what he pleases, and gives what he will; but suppose a high protective tariff on woollen goods is passed, and instead of one woollen factory there springs into existence five or six in this village, the existing monopoly is at once destroyed; there is six times the demand for wool and provisions, and the price of every thing the farmer has to sell, and by glutting the market with six times the quantity of woollen goods the price is necessarily reduced. Such are the plain and obvious benefits of the protective policy to the farmers; yet politicians would have them believe that they are oppressed and ruined by this policy, which can alone render them prosperous.

## MR. VAN BUREN'S OPINIONS ON THE TARIFF.

And here, sir, it may not be improper to remark, that Mr. Van Buren entirely concurs with the Com. of Ways and Means. In his letter to the Indiana convention he says: "The great body of mechanics and laborers in every branch of business, whose welfare should be an object of unceasing solicitude on the part of every public man, have been the greatest sufferers by our high protective tariff, and would continue to be were that policy persisted in, is to my mind too clear to require further elucidation." But he further says, what is much nearer the truth, that high duties are injurious to the manufacturers themselves, for whose especial benefit we are told by the committee these high duties are imposed. Mr. Van Buren says:—"Excess of duties, which tempt to an undue and ruinous investment of capital in their business, is injurious to the manufacturers;" and how—by promoting competition, and reducing prices? but is not this for the benefit of the consumers?

But this is not all Mr. Van Buren says against the protective policy—he says, "the period has passed away when a protective tariff can be kept up in this country," that the tariff "increases the poor man's taxes in an inverse ratio to his ability to pay," and that direct taxation is a more equal and just system of revenue than duties on foreign goods. These, sir, are Mr. Van Buren's opinions upon the tariff, as proclaimed to the world in his Indiana letter.

But let us look a little into the details and practical operation of this bill on the great agricultural, manufacturing, and mechanical interests of our country.

In the first place it greatly reduces the duties on wool and woollens of all kinds; three-fourths of the duties, and more, are taken from coarse cottons and calicoes; lead is robbed of more than nine-tenths of its protection. But Pennsylvania seems to be singled out for destruction. Her iron, her coal, her glass, her paper, her salt, and leather, are all struck down together, and we are to go to England for iron, coal, glass, &c. Yes, sir, in 1842 we imported more than four millions of bushels of coal, under a duty of \$1 75 per ton. This bill reduces it to one dollar. Of course you must double, and doubtless you will triple the quantity imported; and for what? To increase the revenue. A few days ago Pennsylvania passed a resolution unanimously instructing us to go for protection "without regard to revenue." Yes, sir, these are the words, protection "without regard to