

sufficient only to give the necessary strength, elasticity and softness; but the selfish and short-sighted American wool growers try to arbitrarily prohibit the importation of Australian wools, and thus they lose the opportunity to supply any of the wool used in the manufacture of most of the good woollens worn in this country. Because of the lack of Australian wool or its equivalent here, at a reasonable price, most of our better woollens are made in Europe, and imported here. Yet the wool growers pay no higher wages to the little human help necessary to raise wool than the same or any other farmer pays to those who help him raise wheat or corn or hogs. The protection that the wool tariff at first gave to the wool growers, caused them to be independent and negligent in the feed, shelter and care of their sheep. The breeds and their wool deteriorated, and east of the Mississippi river, the number of sheep has steadily decreased since soon after the adoption of the high tariff of 1856. The state of Michigan had 4,028,707 sheep in 1867; in 1882, only 2,320,752. It is not always the robber class that is the most prosperous in the long run. The wool growers with their high tariffs, may be compared to the average easy-going young man born with a silver spoon in his mouth—often an unfortunate circumstance that does not prompt to any energetic effort except to get more of the spoon. The wool-growers instead of improving their breeds of sheep—as the free-trade Australians are obliged to do—are now banding together for more of the tariff spoon. They want more pay for the sheep's labor in walking about and eating grass. There is certainly very little human labor in growing wool. Michigan has gained little if anything by the high tariff on wool, but she has lost her natural position as a great commercial state by forced disuse, under tariff conditions. The great lakes that almost surround her are but little more of value to her now than a Chinese wall. In consequence of tariff protection, commerce, except with the States, is substantially barred out. Free-trade, that has made this country what it is (I mean absolute free-trade among the States), is only at the south and west of Michigan. If good when coming from the south and west why not from the north and east—from Canada?"

Mr. Sargent touched upon a number of other protected industries, treating them in an equally forcible manner. He then gave a history of free trade in England, and concluded as follows:—

England's foreign trade (exports and imports) increased, in the first twenty-five years of free trade, from \$30 per each inhabitant of England to \$90; an increase of three-fold. The foreign trade of the United States is now almost exactly, per inhabitant, what England was, per inhabitant, at the beginning of free trade. Ours is \$30 per inhabitant, including

exports of breadstuffs, provisions of all kinds, cotton and petroleum, and all exports and imports. Manufactures increased five-fold. Prior to the passage of any tariff-reform measures in England, the working population were kept so much in idleness, and their earnings were so small and irregular that there was much suffering, among even the able-bodied, temperate and frugal, from the want of the bare necessities of life, which were kept at a high price by protective tariffs. But the circumstances of the workingmen were gradually but rapidly improved by the tariff reform measures; and at the end of the first twenty-five years the yearly earnings doubled, and the cost of a better living had decreased to half what the poor living had cost twenty-five years previous. Pauperism had diminished more than half. Convictions for crime had diminished from one in 800 to one in 1,800 of the inhabitants per year. Under free trade in vessels and navigation, the merchant marine increased in tonnage a million tons, and changed largely from sails to steam. Education has kept pace with the material prosperity of the people. England has no advantages over us except in the enlightenment of her statesmen. We have many natural advantages over her which we suppress by high tariffs. We are able to cope with England in manufacture and commerce, if on the same free trade basis, and would get our share of the present commerce of the world, and of its enormous increase under a rivalry between the two nations.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—These are the opinions of Mr. J. B. Sargent.

HON. MR. PLUMB—Who is J. B. Sargent?

HON. MR. McCLELAN—He is a prominent manufacturer in the United States who addressed an audience in Detroit the other day. The hon. gentleman must know where Detroit is?

HON. MR. PLUMB—Yes, I know where Detroit is, but I do not know who Mr. Sargent is.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—He is a manufacturer, and expressed his ideas very clearly and to the point, and I am sure that they cannot be controverted by the hon. gentleman from Niagara. I have produced facts here in the same line with those referred to by Mr. Sargent, as to the trade relations of the different countries; as to the expressions of opinion of prominent men, and as to deposits in savings banks not being evidence of prosper-