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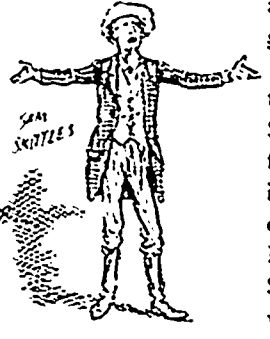
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## LIGHT ON THE LUMBER QUESTION.

By "JOSIAH THE TRUTHFUL."

"Yes, sir, we're a-goin' to expand—we've busted our narrer limits same's my growin' boy Jake has busted his last year's coat—and we're a-goin' to spread out, and take a hand in the gin'ral affairs of the world, 'long with the other great powers, and don't you forgit it. W'y, I see by the paper t'other day thet deown to Washin'ton they're a-tawkin' beout buildin' a be no palace for the president's residence, jest as it was every way as what Queen Victorey or the King of Roossia lives in, and turn the old White House into a work-shop. That's right, too. We got to git up and put on some style, to let the hull of creation un'stand that the cry of expansion hes got here. Ef we don't hev things in reg'lar sure enough royalty style, sose our President kin set 'em up and intertain in a manner becomin' to the leadin' nation on top of earth, w'y, we haint in it, that's all. It's our distiny, and everything goes!"



So ran the peroration of Mr. Sam Skittles's speech before the assemblage in the corner grocery of Squashville, Mass., on a recent Saturday night. It was generally conceded that Sam was the greatest orator in the village, and as a man with a good command of language is always a centre of more or less influence, Mr. Skittles had a considerable following, notwithstanding that in other respects he did not count for much, being fonder of talking than of working, and as a consequence, having a distinctly low rating in the local Bradstreet's credit list. The sentiments quoted above, with which he concluded a lengthy harangue delivered with much effective gesticulation, were received with great applause by the miscellaneous audience gathered about the stove. But Demosthenes himself did not carry all the Athenians, and there was one unconvinced auditor in Sam's presence.

"But haint it a-goin' to cost like thunder?" piped up the tremulous voice of old Deacon Smithers. "I see it in the Bosting paper thet we'll hev to pay 'bout twice as much es them folks in Yurrup does to keep up army and navy and all like of that. I don't believe in it. I hick to old George Washin'ton. We'd orter go on jes' mindin' our own business; that's how I look at it."

The growl, a dissent which greeted this view, brought Sam to his feet once more—he had taken seat on a convenient biscuit-box at the close of his oratorical effort.

"I haint got nothin' agien George Washin'ton on gin'ral principles," he began. "He was a right good man, and done fust rate fer them fur

back times, but the world is a-movin', and this kentry hes growed bigger'n George Washin'ton ever hed any idea it would, so his harness don't fit things es they is to-day. Yes, gentlemen, the hour has struck, and the word is 'expansion'. These United States is a-growin'. We've took in Haywayee and Port Ricco and the Phillipines es a part of the Union, and we're agoin' to foller our destiny ef we hev to annex colonies all round the airth!"

During this supplementary burst an additional auditor had arrived, in the person of Sol. Wheatcroft, and glad-some anticipations of a lively argumentative scrimmage at once filled the breast of the collected idlers.

"What hev you got to say to them idees, Sol?" asked Deacon Smithers, as soon as Mr. Skittles had finished his period.

"Expansion is all right," replied Sol, taking his pipe from his mouth, "so long as it haint got no Dingley nonsense in it."

"Dingley nonsense!" echoed Mr. Skittles, greatly shocked, "what do you mean?"

"I mean what they call protection," promptly replied Sol. "I don't believe in takin' in a lot of foreign parts and puttin' a high fence round 'em to keep out everybody but ourselves."

"Well, I swan?" exclaimed Mr. Skittles, "I didn't expect to live fer to hear Sol. Wheatcroft go back on his kentry like that—I really didn't. I spose you will next argy thet we'd dorter low them Canady fellers that is down to Washin'ton to send lumber in here free es they're askin' fer."

This fine stroke called out a roar of applause.

"As to that pint," replied Sol, with a guileful air of reconsideration, "of course I draw the line somewheres, and I guess we can't stand free lumber over here, not jes yit, anyhow."

"Well, I'm glad you got some sense left, after all, Solomon," said Sam, approvingly.

"I calklate I hev, neighbors, and I try to make use of it, es fur's I kin," responded Sol. "My sense tells me, fer instance, that when we fetch lumber over from Canady we

do it jes es a neighborly act to the Canucks, jest to oblige 'em, and as a matter of Christian kindness, but es they don't belong to the union, we haint bound to treat 'em that way less we've a mind to. So, of course, when they send some of their leadin' fellers to Washin'ton to ask us to let 'em send lumber in here right along free of duty, we haint a-goin' to do no sech a thing, 'cus that would be 'bleegin' us to ack neighborly whether we liked it or not. Haint that sound sense?"



There was a general murmur of assent.

"You're buildin' a new dwellin' house jes now, I believe, Elder Simpson?" resumed Sol, turning to a weary looking citizen on his left.

"Not yet I'm a thinkin' of it, but lumber's too dear. I'm waitin' fer a fall in the price," replied the Elder.

"Oh," commented Sol, "lumber's too dear jes' at present, the Elder says. I s'pose he wants white pine, and that is dear 'cus it got to be brung 'way down from Min'soty and Michigan an' round thar', and its pooty scarce even thar', I bleeve."

"Scarce?" put in the grocery man. "W'y, I've allus ben told that's a thick wooded kentry up yender."

"It haint now, though I guess it was at fust," replied Sol. "You see we've went right along cuttin' it deown and sawin' it up fer years, 'thout ever takin' eny thought fer the future or plantin' more trees like the Canady fellers hev, and now in Michigan we've got 'bout to the lenth of our rope. Fer years past the mills up thar has bin kep' agoin' on logs brung over from Canady, up 'round Georgain Bay, but that can't be did no more as the government up in Ontario hes stopped it by passin' a law to make everybody that cuts logs over thar' manufacture the lumber on the spot."

"W'y, blame my cats!" interjected Sam Skittles. "I never knowed all this afore. Do you mean to say we hev run out of lumber ourselves, and yit won't let Canady send it in to s'ply our wants?"

"Not 'thout \$2 a thousand duty on to it that's the Dingley tariff, you know. And thet's why lumber is so dear thet the elder can't go on with thet buildin' of his, and I guess there's thousands more folks all through New England in jes' the same fix—would like to build if they could git cheaper lumber."

"I'm beginnin' to think they hain't so much of a statesman 'bout Dingley es I had s'posed," remarked Sam.

"Hold up, there, neighbor!" cried Sol; "it's agin the law to raise eny question 'bout the wisdom of Dingley. He's a true patrit, and is bound to protect his kentry agin free lumber not like them Canady statesmen thet lets lumber go into Manitoby free fer the benefit of farmers and so forth up thar they buy 'bout 20 million feet from our side of the line every year. But Dingley don't b'lieve in such foolishness. He can't see why the United States should suffer from free lumber jes' to oblige a foreign kentry."

"I'm willin' to stand some sufferin' along thet line fer one," said Elder Simpson.

"You he?" cried Sol, turning upon the little man with simulated scorn—"What! air you a

