

120,919 German immigrants. In the years 1880-4 920,215 were landed. The Danes and Swedes have added largely to our working force. This admixture of the most vigorous, intelligent and ambitious of the workers of all other civilized nations with our own native stock, and by the skillful management of employers combined into one harmonious and homogeneous whole, has produced a working force nowhere equalled for intelligence, skill, industry, willing endurance and ambition. There is no tariff on imports of European labor and never can be. Here every workingman knows he is a part and parcel of the community in which he resides, and of the nation, with equal rights to advise, and help direct in the local and national welfare. He can take a part in deciding who are to make or change the laws. He can take a part in deciding the amount of revenue to be collected and in indicating the purposes for which it shall be expended. He can take a part in shaping the policy in regard to educational and religious questions, and in all these matters he knows that his vote is as weighty as that of any man. He knows that all avenues leading to education, to wealth, to high social, civil or military positions, are as open to him as to the proudest in the land.

Farming in this country is the great regulator of the rate of wages. Factory wages will not long remain below what can be earned on the cheap and fertile lands of the great and seemingly ever increasing West. Employers of mining or factory labor may cut down wages and hold them down temporarily in dull times, but soon so many will go to farms of their own, or to farms owned by others, that the ranks of the factory worker will be so thinned out that wages will return to or above their normal rate. Till our lands are all occupied in farms and worn out, till our forests cease to grow, till our mines are exhausted, till intelligence ceases in the land and the people cease to rule, labor in this country will enjoy advantages over European labor so long as Europe remains politically and socially as now. Labor here needs no protection and gets none.

Of European labor with which American labor would have, under free trade, to compete, Mr. Sargent said, it was physically inferior by reasons of wars and immigration; European climate, in the manufacturing belt, is not so favorable; there is no land held by the poor, and European workmen are kept on scanty subsistence, of necessity, because wages are low. These are the competitors that protectionists warn American laborers against. They warn giants against trials of strength with pigmies. I would rather have one average immigrant worker from continental Europe, after being combined into our American labor-force and practiced in our methods, paid with our pay, fed with our food, and filled with our freedom, than an average three of those who remain there under all conditions in which they exist, and will exist, probably, for many generations. We can afford to pay them here

twice as much per day as they got at home, and then get rich out of their labor, provided we can have raw materials, free of duty, to enable us to sell our surplus merchandise in the non-manufacturing countries of the world.

The pauper labor of high-tariff continental Europe may need protection from us. We do not from it. There are other classes of inferiority in the quantity and quality of the product of labor in Europe. The management there is less energetic and less exacting; work is not pushed forward with so much zeal and constancy, and more resting time is taken during the hours of employment. The condition and efficiency of labor in England are much better than on the continent. Many causes that stimulate it here, do so there. Wages are thirty to sixty per cent. higher per day than on the continent, and workmen do more and better work, making them cheaper to their employers than on the continent.

This is the opinion of a disinterested manufacturer in the United States, a very intelligent gentleman living in a country where information is so generally diffused. He has examined carefully the condition of the laboring classes in Europe; he was a master mechanic himself, and his conclusion is that not only are the English workmen better fed, but the wages paid in England are higher.

HON. MR. PLUMB—Higher than in the United States?

HON. MR. McCLELAN—I am speaking of wages in Europe, and the hon. gentlemen who is clear headed certainly ought to follow the line of my argument. Mr. Sargent continues:—

“In some departments, we are hardly up to the English in cheapness and quality of machinery and in economy of management. But free trade in iron and textiles would remedy both these. American factory labor produces more in proportion to the wages paid it than any other factory labor in the world.”

Mr. Sargent then discussed the common fallacy that low wages are cheap wages. He then turned to the wool tariff, of which he said:—

The wool raisers with their high tariffs, averaging on clothing and combing wools over fifty per cent., repress the manufacture of the better qualities of woollen goods, by prohibiting the importation of the better and necessary wools of Australia, except at more than fifty per cent. higher price to the American manufacturers than the English or Belgium manufacturers pay for them. The American manufacturers would use only a portion of Australian wool in their mixture,