

mechanics, are taxed to the full extent under the direct taxation system. The following extract bearing upon the subject, is taken from the report of a Commission of the State of New York, appointed to enquire into the operation of the direct taxes, of which Commission Mr. David A. Wells was chairman:—

“They would also recall the opinion authoritatively expressed in the constitutional convention of 1868, that *thirty* citizens of the State could be named whose aggregate wealth (mainly personal) was very considerably in excess of the valuation for that year of all the personal property of the entire state. But without again entering into details, the Commissioners would now say that another year's experience has led them to this general conclusion, that the authorities of the state, under a law (professedly executed) requiring the assessment of *all* personal property at its full value, do not, in fact, succeed in assessing a proportion equal to *thirty* per cent. of the recognized *low* valuation of the real estate; or more than *fifteen* per cent. of the real and true value of all such property immediately located within the state, and as such subject to the state authority.”

Direct taxation prevails in the United States, and as a result the farmers are everywhere in revolt against the system. Not a year passes without the farmers of New York meeting in convention to devise means of removing the inequalities of taxation, which are found to press heavily and often ruinously upon the poorer classes, while the rich escape with a payment altogether insignificant in proportion to their wealth and income. If the policy of unrestricted reciprocity were to go into operation an army of tax-gatherers would almost immediately thereafter be appointed, whose salaries would greatly increase the public expenditure, and who would go about the country every year exacting a payment in hard cash from every male adult. The capitalist with an income of \$10,000 a year would not begrudge giving \$50 out of it to the Government, but the farmer, the mechanic, and other wage-earners with an income of \$400 or \$500 a year, would be ground into misery and distress if he had to pay \$50 of his earnings into the public treasury.