

weighed and reliable information. The tariff cannot be kept out of politics, but it can be made subject to criticism by intelligent public opinion if the issues are not obscured by party catch-words and misrepresented because of inadequate and misleading information.

It is possible at a time like this to engage upon a policy carefully framed to advance national and imperial interests. Private benevolence may deal best with the problem of individuals, but when whole classes of society are concerned the causes are economic rather than personal, and the subject is for public rather than private investigation. If it is found that much of the wealth produced by millions of workers has hitherto been dissipated in expenditures which are neither wholesome nor necessary, and that the same wealth otherwise distributed or conserved might have built up an economically independent and efficient people, strong measures should be devised to bring about requisite remedies. For national rather than social reasons taxation must be made to fall largely upon luxury and less upon the narrow margin of earnings above living necessities; for national rather than charitable reasons productive ability must be encouraged by a more generous recognition.

Social progress has no obstacle to overcome equal to that arising from the misuse of capital. When the public clearly understand the effect of private luxury and public waste, and the individual as well as national advantages which result from thrift and the conservation of capital for productive purposes there is little doubt that the government would be supported by strong public opinion in the enforcement of an advanced economic and social policy.

In such a policy the tariff plays an important part: Imperial relations can be strengthened; production can be stimulated or handicapped, and can also be guided into desired channels; foreign trade can be secured or discouraged; taxation can be made to bear with some degree of even fairness; new enterprises can be developed; luxurious spending can be discouraged; ample public revenue can be collected; and a large measure of control exercised in regard to the condition and payment of workers.