

And again: We can not buy to advantage abroad that which, being bought abroad, leaves whole classes of our people to famish at home. For instance suppose one hundred millions of garments are made by the women of this country yearly, at an average price of twenty-five cents each, and these could be bought abroad for two-thirds of that sum: Would it be wise so to buy them? Free Trade asserts that it would—that all the labour so thrown out of employment would be promptly absorbed in other and more productive occupations. But sad experience, common sense, humanity, say Not so. The truth is very different from this. The industry thus thrown out of its time-worn channels would find or wear others slowly and with great difficulty; meantime the hapless makers, no longer enabled to support themselves by labor, must be supported in idleness. By indirect if not by public charity they must somehow be subsisted; and our citizens will have bought their garments some twenty per cent. lower from abroad, but will be compelled to pay another price for them in charities and poor-rates. Such is the effect of "Buying where we can buy cheapest," in a low, short-sighted, miserly Free Trade view of cheapness.

14. *Self-Interest—Public and Private.*

But why, it is asked, should not a Nation purchase of others as freely as individuals of the same nation are permitted to trade with each other? Fairly as this question would seem to be put, there is a fatal fallacy lurking beneath its use of the term "nation." A nation *should* always buy where it can (in the long run) "buy cheapest," or most advantageously; where that may be is a question for the nation, through its legal organism, to decide. The query mistakenly assumes that the immediate, apparent interest of each individual purchaser is always identical with the interest of the community, which common sense as well as experience refutes. The lawyer or clergyman in Illinois may obtain his coat of the desired quality cheaper (for less money) from Paris than it can be fabricated in Illinois, yet it by no means follows, that it is the interest of Illinois to purchase her coats or cloths from Europe—quite the contrary is the fact. Nay, it would be easy to show that the real, permanent interest of the lawyer or clergyman himself—certainly of his class—is subserved by legislation which encourages and protects the home producer of those articles, not only because they improve in quality and are reduced in price under such a policy, but because the sources of his own prosperity and income are expanded or dried up as the industry of his own region is employed, its capacities developed, and its sphere of production enlarged and diversified.

15. *The Plow and the Loom should be Neighbors.*

Let us illustrate this truth more fully: The State of Illinois, for example, is primarily grain-growing, producing a surplus of five millions of bushels of Wheat and Indian Corn annually, worth in New York four millions of dollars, and requiring in return ten millions of yards of Cloths of various kinds and