

than any English steel we can buy, and we have been steel consumers for fifty years. We now only make for our own consumption, and we have no disposition to cheat ourselves."

We are aware that it is claimed by the advocates of the policy of British trade domination that low prices in protective periods are not produced by protection—that they are due to other causes. It is to be remarked that this plea is made by the very same persons who constantly insist that prices are always *increased* under protection—that the duty is always added to the price, and that the consumer pays the duty. The two theories are not harmonious, but conflicting, and may be permitted to destroy each other. If prices are uniformly cheapened under protection, there must be a cause for it, and if that cause is not protection, who has shown that it is anything else? If prices are *not* cheapened under that policy, but increased, then the prices of Collins's axes, Disston's saws, cut nails, and Bessemer rails should have advanced after protection had encouraged the investment of capital which made their manufacture possible. But did they? Did the purchaser of cut nails at three cents a pound pay a duty of five cents a pound in addition to a fair price for the nails? Does the purchaser of American steel rails at \$55 a ton pay a higher price for them than when the English rail-maker had entire control of our market? The duty on steel rails is now \$28 a ton, equal to \$32 currency. If this duty were wholly repealed, is it within the bounds of probability that English rail-makers would supply our railroads with steel rails at \$23 a ton in currency? The duty on silks averages fifty per cent. of their foreign value. Instead of the price of silk goods having been increased by the amount of the duty, it is a fact that they never were so cheap in this country as they are to-day, and that their use was never so general as now.

It is clearly the tendency of protection to decrease prices, and of the denial of protection to increase them, as has been shown. But if protection did not affect prices either way, exercising no influence upon them whatever, it is certainly true of it that it fosters the development of the national resources, and thus provides employment for our own people. It supplies a market for the skilled labor of our countrymen and a market for the farmer's produce. It gives the home market to the home producer, preferring to foster his industry rather than that of the foreign producer. In accomplishing these patriotic and manly purposes, protection largely adds to the national wealth and increases the prosperity of all classes and their ability to buy at any price.—*From The American Iron Trade in 1876.*