

## Jimmie's Infant Industry

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be forced to take up the question in response to the popular will.

When Congress met, the old man called Jimmie into his room. "You might as well go over to Washington a spell," he remarked. "Things are going all right, but it won't do you any harm to look on and learn, maybe."

So Jimmie packed up and hied him to Washington and sat through the slow hearings before the Ways and Means Committee of the lower House, the first preliminary. Foote was there, in the background, but marshaling the forces. Many of the faces Jimmie recalled from the memorable meeting in his father's office weeks before. These men were experts in trade and industry, and were cheerfully bearing witness before the committee to the benefits of an adequate tariff on bananas. The amendment to the existing tariff act would place a tariff tax of thirty-two cents apiece on each banana—this amount having been decided upon as sufficient to afford the ordinary leeway.

It was a foregone conclusion that the bill would be reported favorably out of the committee, as finally it was.

Then came delay, though the bill was advanced as rapidly as possible on the House calendar. Its advocates knew that a few chronic malcontents might oppose it on the floor, but its passage was assured; in the main it was recognized by its party sponsors as an opportunity for some oratorical efforts that might come in handy back in their home districts.

When the Banana Bill, as it was popularly known, was moved, a flood of minor oratory broke forth. Faithfully Jimmie followed it from his seat in the gallery. It was the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee who was to make the closing speech. When it was known that he would speak, the old man himself came over and sat next to Jimmie. It was Jimmie's own business that was being launched; it was the old man's last project—he knew it; and to have this foremost orator speak in this case was, in a way, like his delivering the salutatory for the opening of Jimmie's career in commerce. Therefore the old man was on hand.


The chairman began with a review of the history of this country; he read the minds of the early fathers of the Republic and praised their transcendent wisdom. Those first early taxes on imports, he explained, were but the indication of the finger of Providence in our destinies.

"In those early days of struggle, Mr. Speaker, our country was poor; they dealt thriftily in small figures and had but faintly grasped the full principles of national prosperity. And I call the attention of the House, Mr. Speaker—and also of that small, unpatriotic minority who oppose progress and prosperity—to the indisputable fact that our country is more prosperous today than it was then; I further emphasize the fact that our tariff taxes were small then and are greater now. Never was the relation between the tariff and prosperity more clearly evident."

"As we have increased our tariff taxes so has our welfare thrived. Our great West, our vast natural resources, our inventive skill, and our industry—what are these but tributes to the genius of the tariff tax! Standing before the solemn altar of History, I say to you that those qualities do not make prosperity. It is the tariff."

"In past decades of timid tariff taxation it used to be apologetically stated that the foreigner paid the tax. We are a proud people, Mr. Speaker, and today we meet the issue squarely and say that the foreigner does not pay the tax! With a proper pride and self-respect we pay our own taxes—we ask no one to pay them for us. We have taxed ourselves rich and, as new fields of prosperity are pointed out to us by the great captains of industry, we should be proud of the opportunity to put our shoulder to the wheel of taxation."

"It has been alleged that this tariff on bananas will raise the cost of the banana to the American people. What of it! Is it to be said that an American is ashamed to buy expensive things—he, the highest paid worker on the globe! For this argument of cheapness I have the least patience. As that great states-



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