

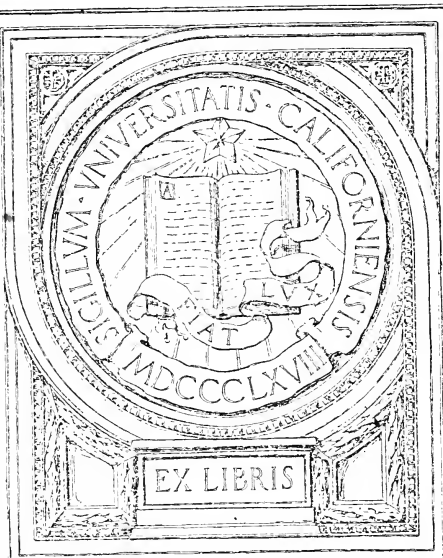
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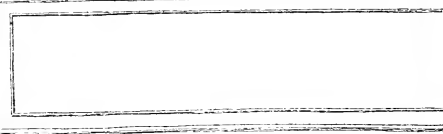
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THE
AGRICULTURAL BLOC
ITS CAUSE AND REMEDY
BY THOMAS WITHYCOMBE.



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**The
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ITS CAUSE AND REMEDY

BY THOMAS WITHYCOMBE



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**THE
AGRICULTURAL BLOC
ITS CAUSE AND REMEDY**

BY THOMAS WITHYCOMBE
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the memory of my beloved mother, Mary A. Withycombe, a very spiritually minded Christian woman who gave up a fine home with cultured environments to bring her four sons and one daughter into a pioneer country, in a foreign land, where she could see them grow up into business around her, one of whom, James Withycombe, became the Governor of his adopted State, and died during his second term. At a memorial service held for our War Heroes and the Governor at the Oregon State Fair, 1919, Circuit Judge Stapleton said there ought to be another gold star in the flag for the Governor, as the war work brought on his death. George A. White, Adjutant General of Oregon, in writing in *The Oregonian* of the world war, said some kind things of Governor Withycombe, as follows: "There was always to be found firmly behind the right the unflinching support of James Withycombe, then Governor of Oregon. Not once in all the mobilization and later draft did he ask for a single favor or exception, although the power of arbitrary was in his hands and he might have done otherwise. Time and again he was sorely pressed by the insistent pleas of politicians who wanted to traffic in the solemn trust that sends one man's son into battle as the leader of other men's sons. But

not once did the Governor accede. When his own son, Earle, decided to volunteer for the army, Governor Withycombe sent him to me with a note asking merely that I inform the young man what to do. I sent him to Captain Cicero F. Hogan, in charge of the state's central recruiting station, and Captain Hogan enlisted the young man as a private of engineers. The examining surgeon turned down the enlistment because of defective eyesight, but Earle went on to the next recruiting station and was passed by the surgeon there as a private soldier, in which worthy grade he served through the war."

No incident that might be chosen more clearly measures the rugged honesty of James Withycombe's patriotism and character. Such was the man who held the helm of state throughout Oregon's war emergency. In Governor Withycombe's character is to be found the staunch foundation of justice and fairness that is credited to Oregon's early war preparation.

So every man that received a commission was from the enlisted ranks of Oregon's citizen army. In the formation of the new units the captains were elected by their comrades from among the ranks of the new unit and these new captains in turn appointed the lieutenants from the ranks. There can be found no single exception to this procedure. Had it been otherwise—had the leadership of units been political—

who can say how much larger Oregon's casualty list would be today? Certainly a heavy added toll in human life was claimed in the world war by incompetent leadership. Oregon has no such murders upon her conscience..

Shortly before they sailed for France with the Forty-first Infantry Division late in the fall of '17, one hundred Oregon officers procured a large silver loving cup at the port of debarkation, had engraved upon it the record of their esteem and sent it to Governor Withycombe. I have been told that he treasured this beyond all possessions and had it near him when the end came at Salem, soon after the armistice. Some day, doubtless, Oregon will follow the example set by these 100 officers and erect a lasting memorial to that most estimable, honorable and useful citizen, James Withycombe.

I have written about the sadly neglected rural economic life of our country for over 40 years and having been asked to write a booklet on the subject by some of my friends I have offered this to leave my impressions for others to scan.—**Thomas Withycombe.**

When I first came to America and our population was only about one-half of what it is today and the amount of lands available for cultivation so immense that any plan of conservation of our fertility seemed almost impossible; but now after 50 years have elapsed and our population has increased almost to the point under existing conditions where we consume nearly all our own production of raw materials, we can by a proper adjustment of our tariffs work out a problem of conservation that will immensely benefit our country, both socially and financially. The subject is of such an immense area that it will be necessary to take it up in sections.

The first effort I really made to bring my views to notice was in a letter I read before the late President Roosevelt's Shipping Commission in 1904, of which Senator Gallagher of Massachusetts was chairman, which was printed in the report of that commission and is as follows:

STATEMENT BY THOMAS WITHYCOMBE

The Chairman—Is there any other gentleman present who desires to say a word?

Mr. Withycombe—Mr. Chairman, it may be presumptuous for me to address your honorable body. When I was a boy I served as an officer in the English merchant ma-

rine. My father emigrated here in 1871, and I transferred my lot to the American merchant marine. Since 1874 I have been engaged in farming. I am here now in the interest of a bounty; that is to say, I take exception to the gentleman who said that our tariff can be reduced. I do not think that can be done with safety. For instance, let us take the Wilson free wool. We saw how it operated here on this coast. I watched the foreign market and the home market. When the free wool was inaugurated Oregon wool was 8 cents per pound below the European market. When the McKinley 10 cent tariff was put on our wool immediately jumped 8 cents above the European market. That showed the merchant in Boston had failed to look after our interest. I think the tariff's helping the United States in very many other instances.

I have a very short letter to read. There are two things I think that can not be helped by the tariff under our economics, and they are suffering; these are the shipping interest and the wheat. This has worked great hardship on our people.

Portland, Ore., August 1st, 1904.

To the Honorable Merchant Marine Commission.

Gentlemen—As you asked for opinions and ideas of how to restore the American

merchant marine, and having written and talked on that subject for the last fifteen years, I would like to submit a few ideas on the subject.

The body politic and the human body are in some respects alike. If any part becomes atrophied or vice versa and circulation is not equal, suffering is bound to come.. Although I am a loyal Republican, I believe the Republican party has made a terrible blunder, either through ignorance or selfishness of its men in office in allowing the once grand and numerous American merchant shipping to be swept from the face of the seas and on a parallel with the ships, they have committed just such a terrible blunder in not putting an export bounty on wheat. The two are about the only industries that have not been helped by the tariff; in fact, the tariff has swept the ships out of existence and reduced the American wheat raiser to abject slavery and acute mental suffering in many instances, for he has seen his farm slip from his own and his posterity's hands to fall into the hands of the hard-working classes of Europe. The pioneer merchant has shared the same fate in many instances, and all this has happened on the most fertile soil the world knows.

ENGLAND HAS GOT IT BACK

After the Civil War England had to pay the United States \$15,000,000 for allowing

the Alabama to fit out; this was for ships that were of no value to us, but since that time the people of America have allowed England to make back that sum a hundred times over by carrying nearly all our foreign merchandise, all because no wise statesman saw fit to inaugurate a bounty to keep our own merchant marine in existence. We have been used to hearing the expression, What of it? If they can do it cheaper than us, let them do it. Why tax others to do it?

But does this condition not exist? The merchant marine is taxed out of existence and the American farmer to slavery on account of the tariff. If the party will grant a bounty to ships and wheat commensurate with the tariff protection to our other industries, then all classes shall be protected equally and the meaning of our Constitution will have been abided by. The fitting out of those merchant ships will take an immense amount of our products from the farm and range and much other trade that we do not get now. The land owner will then, through prosperity that would come of that needed bounty, improve the condition of his land and home to such an extent that a trade of at least \$500,000,000 a year will be created for our own people.

The principle followed in the past has

been sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, whereas it ought to be the God-given injunction: "Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days."

THOMAS WITHYCOMBE.

Gentlemen, how in the world can we make free ships pay? We had the ships after the war and by thousands they rotted at their anchors. If we had them, what good would free ships do us? They would do us no good whatever.

Representative Humphrey—We have several on the Sound now tied up.

Mr Withycombe—I have had experience. If a man would give me a thousand-ton ship today as a free gift and tell me to operate her in the foreign merchant marine under the American flag, I would decline to take her. I would not have her except to sell her or transfer her to the coasting business. If I transferred her to the coasting trade I would make money. I know that to be a fact.

Recess.

President Roosevelt saw the need of helping the American farmer and he took up the work of correcting some of the means whereby the farmer was being unfairly exploited; one was fair treatment by the railroads; also he forced the meat packers or as it was then known the Beef Trust, to pay the producers of cattle more nearly their share of the worth of the cattle they raised, and that was the first wave of real prosperity that spread out over this great country. Before Mr. Roosevelt did that, the banks were becoming insolvent in the best farm-

ing districts. Immediately when the stock raisers got a fair price for their animals improved farms jumped from \$50 and \$100 per acre up to \$150 and \$200 per acre, the banks became full of money and the middle west became very prosperous and at present after 15 years of such prosperity the best farms in the middle west are worth \$400 per acre. But at the same time lands further east which had been drained of their fertility in the years previous to Mr. Roosevelt's help are still depleted and almost worthless. Under our existing conditions, it is only the lands containing virgin fertility that have become high priced.

What is necessary for our national prosperity is to extend the system of protection to all our raw materials so that a fair margin of profit will remain to the grower with which he can build up the fertility of those exhausted lands. I will now insert a copy of another letter I read before President Roosevelt's Country Commission, of which Dr Bailey was the chairman

To the Honorable Country Commission 1906)

One of the greatest crimes in the history of the world has been committed against the American farmer .

This is a severe arraignment, but a great wrong needs it. Secretary of Agriculture Wilson has made a statement that the

American farmers, who constitute only 35 per cent of our population or about 25 million of souls, have produced in the last 10 years wealth equal to one-half of the total wealth of our great commonwealth's production in three centuries. Yet the American farmer has not been allowed to enjoy the fruits of his labor.

The products of his farm have been taken by the speculator, railroad and other corporations to become wealthy upon, and he has been allowed to suffer most acutely. His crops and herds have been filched out of his hands, and he has not been allowed to have anything near his share of its worth to our great nation.

But God in His providence has raised up for us President Roosevelt, who is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ, and who is working hard to lift up the oppressed and to bind up the broken hearted.

One of the most cruel measures enacted against the American farmer is to force him to pay for protected labor, machinery, in fact, everything he makes use of, and force him to pay for it with the price of a free trade bushel of wheat. The American merchant marine has been wiped out of existence from the same conditions. This seems to any reasonable person an act of tyranny that so far exceeds the cruelty of the Egyptians to the children of Israel when they forced them to make bricks

without straw, that the latter wrong sinks into insignificance when arrayed alongside the first mentioned, for the American farmer could soon devise a way to make bricks without straw, but he has found it impossible to pay for protected labor and buy protected everything with the money received for a free trade bushel of wheat. Experience again and again has taught us that protection is our watchword. We saw how free wool was nearly the entire destruction of our sheep industry. Free cattle made bankrupt thousands of cattlemen. Under the McKinley law in 1890 with a duty of \$10 per head the cattle business flourished, but in 1894 when the tariff was reduced to 20 per cent ad valorem, Representative Noonan of Texas before the Ways and Means Committee of the 54th Congress, January 5th, 1897, said the present tariff has practically placed horses, cattle, sheep and goats on the free list, and it has resulted in great loss to the breeders of stock, many of whom have been bankrupted. Numerous ranches have been abandoned or have gone into decay and millions of acres of good grazing lands are unused and the grass wasted because the business does not justify stockmen in raising animals for market at present rates. As a consequence all their industries are languishing from the effects of Mexican competition. Nearly half a million of cattle have been imported from Mexico

into the United States since the repeal of the McKinley law.

Placing hides on the free list in 1872 caused a great hardship to the stockmen without any benefit to the leather user.

On January 1st of this year our farm animals were valued at \$3,675,389,442 as compared with a valuation of \$1,655,414,612 on January 1st, 1897, the last year of the Gorman-Wilson tariff.

This is achieved with only partial protection of the farmer. If the Federal Government will protect the farmer's bushel of wheat equally with the protection granted the other industries, then the farmer will be relieved of one of the worst oppressions ever imposed on a civilized race of people. I write this not in the spirit of selfishness, for I raise no wheat to sell. I raise products that are protected and which bring a good price, but I know that wheat is the unit of value of every article raised on the farm to a certain extent, and if an export bounty of 25 cents per bushel were paid the farmer for every bushel of wheat exported and a commission appointed to see that the farmer, and not the shipper, received that bounty, then the products of the farm would be increased in value to the amount of 25 per cent, or in round numbers our wheat would be worth \$150,000,000 more than at present, our corn \$300,000,000; hay \$150,000,000; oats \$75,000,000; potatoes \$30,000,-

000; barley \$12,000,000, or in all on these crops \$717,000,000. This money would mean a clear profit to the American farmer which he would have to spend in trade, building roads, churches, schools and beautifying our great and glorious country. This sum would mean at least three billions of dollars of internal trade for our own people more than they get at present. Our cities are at present to a very great extent being built at the expense of the country. Then our cities would grow indescribably beautiful as the cause of natural wealth flowing from the country into them.

Our total foreign trade in exports for 1905:

\$523,000,000 to England,
 \$194,000,000 to Germany,
 \$141,000,000 to Canada,
 \$ 76,000,000 to France,
 \$ 53,000,000 to China.
 \$ 73,000,000 to Netherlands,
 \$ 52,000,000 to Japan,
 \$ 46,000,000 to Mexico, or \$1,148,000,000.

Our imports were:

\$176,000,000 from England,
 \$118,000,000 from Germany,
 \$ 62,000,000 from Canada,
 \$ 90,000,000 from France,
 \$100,000,000 from Brazil,
 \$ 86,000,000 from Cuba, a total of \$632,-
 000,000, or a total of \$2,112,000,000.

We export only 200,000,000 bushels of wheat, which at 25 cents export bounty would only cost the Federal Government \$50,000,000, or just one-third of the amount paid in pensions to the war veterans. Yet it would accrue an addition of \$3,000,000,000 of trade to our own people, a sum more than equal to the amount of all our foreign import and export trade.

We owe it to our country's welfare to see that this just relief is granted the American farmer, as under present conditions we are reducing our country to a barren waste as fast as we possibly can, as there are whole counties of abandoned farms in some of our once best agricultural states, but under the fostering care and protection our lands would receive, if the needed relief was granted the farmer, our lands would be increased in value threefold, which would mean added wealth to our nation that would reach into several billions of dollars.

In comparing values here and in England we may get a good idea. In the city of New York land value that is worth \$1000 a foot frontage, the same kind of property in the city of London is only worth \$400 per foot frontage. Agricultural land that here is worth \$50 per acre, in England is worth \$150 per acre.

The English farmer gets \$1.00 for a bushel of wheat. The English baker retails that bushel of wheat in the form of bread

to the consumer for \$1.50. The American farmer gets 70 cents for his bushel of wheat; the American baker retails that bushel of wheat in the form of bread for \$3.00. Between the English farmer's price and the consumer of the bread there is 50 cents per bushel. Between the American farmer's price and the consumer of the bread there is \$2.30 per bushel. This difference to a certain extent corresponds to the inequality of the land values in city and country in the two countries.

England's wealth is in her lands. She sends her ships to the remotest corners of the earth for all the fertilizer she can procure. We are forcing our farmers in a great measure to reduce our lands to poverty, and it behooves us to see that this wasteful method stops before it is too late, or before we reach the 200,000,000 population mark we may be confronted with famine. Our lands should be owned by intelligent and scientific agriculturists and not mere tillers of the soil. Of the thousands of young men who are educated in our Agricultural Colleges a very small per cent ever return to the farm; the inducements offered elsewhere are better. With an export bounty of 25 cents per bushel on wheat this would change. I have traveled all over the world and one of the most beautiful sights I have seen is in the city of Portland—to see the Jewish people riding in the finest

carriages, dressed in the most costly clothing and wearing the richest furs and jewelry, living in the finest houses and taking the most prominent places in finance and municipal government of the city. This is as it should be, for we got the best things we ever got from the Jews—namely, Christ and the Bible. And the fact that they can rise to their opportunities is a proof of the liberty granted to American citizenship independent of nationality.

One of the saddest sights I have beheld is to see the grand old pioneers who braved hardships to come here and who hewed out fine homes by hard work and industry. Those fine people, a race typical of Western America only, those uncles and aunties of pioneer times, whose latchstrings were always out, the passing of whom will leave *ne plus ultra*. When foreign competition drove the bushel of wheat so low in price, it vitiated their very existence, drove them from their homes and their children from their heritage. In many instances the hired man owns the farm.

The Eastern manufacturing centers have taken from the agricultural districts of the United States an unjust proportion of wealth, and all classes have suffered in the agricultural districts with the farmer. The East owes the West millions of dollars. An export bounty of 25 cents on a bushel of wheat will bring about the only equitable

adjustment. The farmers of the Middle West have organized a Society in Equity to force wheat to one dollar. This is illegal according to Federal laws. The Federal Government should come to the farmers' aid.

THOMAS WITHYCOMBE.

The following are letters I received from gentlemen to whom I sent this communication to ask their opinions: First one from late Honorable J. Gaston, and is as follows:

Aug. 17th, 1906.

Mr. Thos. Withycombe,
Hamilton Bldg.,
Portland.

My Dear Sir:

I have read with great interest and attention your very able paper on the value and importance of an export duty on wheat, and now herewith return the same with my thanks for giving me the pleasure of reading this expression of your views.

It seems to me very important that you bring this matter before the people for discussion by either publishing it in the Daily and Weekly Oregonian, or printing it in pamphlet form for general distribution among intelligent farmers. These reforms move slowly, and won't move at all without public opinion to push them.

Very truly yours,

J. Gaston.

Following is a letter received from the late Honorable Judge T. G. Hailey:

State of Oregon Supreme Court,
Salem, August 31st, 1906.

Mr. Thos. Withycombe,
Room 8, Hamilton Bldg.,
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Mr. Withycombe:

Enclosed herewith I return your article in behalf of the wheat grower, which I have read with interest and which contains much of value, but I can hardly agree with you upon your remedy for farmers' ills. I think there are other means by which the farmer can receive benefits than giving him a bounty from the government. The publication, however, of your article would doubtless awaken the interest of many people who have not thought of the matter, and it is only by litigation of such matters that good results can be obtained, and I think it would be well for you to give the matter some publicity as it might result in good to the farmer and good to the farmer means good to everybody * * *

Yours truly,

T. J. Hailey.

In April, 1908, the Oregonian printed the following letter:

Portland, Oregon, April 9th, 1908.

To the Editor:

The Oregonian in many respects stands pre-eminently in the advance of modern newspapers, but in some things I believe it to be grossly in error; in this morning's editorial it says wheat has dropped two cents in Chicago, and says, Oh where, oh where is the American Society of Equity, etc. A saying much endorsed is, "The voice of the people is the voice of God," and the American farmer is asking relief; surely he needs it; under our present system we are slowly and surely reducing our great and glorious country to a state of exhaustion and famine, and it behooves our statesmen to sit up and take notice before it is too late. Only a short time ago the Oregonian printed a letter from a gentleman who had lately returned from the East, saying farms were so exhausted in the once best districts that they were being practically abandoned. Protection is America's Banner of Onward and Upward progress. And non-protection is the retrograde that brings her to a point of degeneracy. The American people live on a higher plane than the balance of the nations of the earth and protection is the only thing that makes that possible, but in justness and righteousness of Christian Equity all classes ought to be treated equally; but the American merchant marine has

been wiped out of existence because our statesmen failed to protect it and American ship owners have become citizens of France and are building up the French merchant marine under the protection of the French ship subsidy. Twenty years ago only an occasional French ship came here, all were British bottoms. Several times this winter the majority of the ships en route and here were flying the French flag and instead of breaking up the French nation they have become the bankers of the world. If ships and agriculture were to receive the same protection that iron and steel does, the wealth of our great nation would be increased billions of dollars and the farmer instead of being scoffed at, a shrivelled socially, shunned creature, would expand into a cultured and much sought after companion. It would bring us beautiful cities and rural districts and instead of exhausting our wealth would make it more productive. When we were in the throes of a panic in the nineties through the low price of farm products, the Hawaiian Islands under the blessings of reciprocity with the United States and consequently having the benefit of protected sugar, sugar stock was selling 300 above par and the Hawaiians were able to place 75 to 100 dollars' worth of our fertilizers on one acre of land at one application, at the same time the American farmer could not afford to use 15c worth.

To explain my views fully would take up too much space in your valuable paper and tire your readers, but I will say in conclusion, for years my heart has longed to see the American farmer and his noble wife and family put on a plane with the rest of this great nation. Putting on a high protected tariff without putting on a graduated income tax is like building a steam engine without a safety valve, and whenever I read of Mr. Carnegie's and J. D. Rockefeller's magnificent gifts, I want to know why they are allowed to bestow this wealth according to their own whims which rightly belongs to the American people at large.

Thomas Withycombe.

Feb. 20th, 1920.

The present administration has succeeded in having the income tax instituted, and that is high above every other measure inaugurated by the administration. The late beloved Theodore Roosevelt tried his level best to get the income tax inaugurated but failed. William Jennings Bryan said Mr. Roosevelt was stealing his thunder, but the difference between Mr. Bryan's income tax and Theodore Roosevelt's income tax was very wide. If Mr. Bryan had been elected with his free trade schemes there would have been no incomes to tax.

Fifty years ago Senator Hatch of New England saw agriculture was declining, and

he succeeded in getting the Hatch Fund started for Schools of Agriculture, and today we have the finest and most elaborate Agricultural Colleges in the world, and yet agriculture has been steadily declining and our country from the Atlantic to the Mississippi is practically exhausted, and the high protection of manufactures for the cities as against practically free trade for our products of the farm has so concentrated our wealth in the cities that the city of New York alone has the same assessed value as the seven Western States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Colorado and California.

At the same time in the State of New York are thousands of beautiful farms abandoned, and thousands can be bought for less than half of what the buildings cost and that condition exists even up to the Mississippi River. The farmers always were loyal to the Republican party, because it is the only party that has brought them any degree of prosperity. Besides our fine Agricultural Colleges, the Grange, Farmer's Union, American Society in Equity and several other organizations have attempted to lift our rural life and have been completely baffled. When the Grange first started when I was just out of my teens, in 1871, they undertook to take into their hands the selling direct to the consumer and buying direct from the wholesaler, and they forced

bankruptcy on their best friends, the storekeeper and his family, who had even shared their hardships with them, and were made the goat; but they were soon glad to come back to the storekeeper and ask him to set things again on a trade basis, and the Grange settled down to a quiet, ethical and social institution. Then the American Society of Equity sprang up and undertook to deal direct to the consumer and buy direct from wholesaler, but they ran up against the same snag and were glad to ask the old line business men to pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them. Lately another lot of agitators have persuaded the farmers to form a political party called the Non-Partisan League to take over all business out of the hands of the regular dealer, and already we are hearing the farmer say they have found out that they have jumped from the frying pan into the fire. I cannot help thinking if we had such statesmen as our great George Washington or Abraham Lincoln contemporary with such a condition they would have set our national economic condition in order. One thing we know our beloved late Theodore Roosevelt started to do the thing and got all the information together ready to take up the question when he was superseded by a party who was diametrically opposed to his efforts. I was pleased to see an article printed in one of our daily papers from a

speech uttered by Major Leonard Wood, who was always an admirer of Theodore Roosevelt and his ideals, as follows, in the Oregonian: Farm Decline Menaces. Wood Advocated Protection to Agriculture. Statement Declared Most Candid Attitude Any Presidential Candidate Ever Took. Chicago, Ill., Feb. 17.—(Special.)—The need of measures destined to correct the decline of agriculture in the United States were emphasized today in a statement by Major General Wood, candidate for presidential nominee on the Republican ticket. Political leaders who read Major General Wood's statement this afternoon pronounced it the most far-reaching and candid attitude on agricultural problems that any candidate for president has yet adopted.

The decline in agriculture is one of the greatest dangers to our civilization, Major General Wood declared. The farmer has a right to expect from every national administration the biggest sort of co-operation and encouragement. He makes up a third of our entire population and is the backbone of the nation. He must be given a square deal and I propose to see he gets it if ever it lies within my power to act in his behalf.

Salient points in Major General Wood's statement were:

“The farmer sacrificed much during the war. We owe him a debt of gratitude.

“Education for farm children should be as easily accessible and on as high a plane as that of city children.

“We must give the rural districts good roads.

“There must be a department of agriculture in full and intelligent co-operation with the farmer and the great farm organizations.

“Hoarding of food supplies should be rigorously suppressed.

“Secure provision should be made to enable the farmers to get adequate credit to extend farming interests.”

William Jennings Bryan in describing what the Democratic platform would stand for said: “I think it safe to say the party will declare against a return to the protective tariff. This is very misleading. We know the product of the farms are free, that is, wheat, oats, barley, corn, beef, butter, eggs, wool but there is a 35 per cent import duty on manufactures. This is a rank injustice to the American farmer.”

I will insert another letter of mine published in the Oregonian.

Portland Ore. April 17th, 1908.

To the Editor:

In this morning's Oregonian in an editorial citing the low rates granted American shippers in foreign ships, it certainly

is astonishing, but that does not advance the correct position for America to take. As long as our best customer, Great Britain, who takes from 500 million to nearly one billion dollars' worth of our produce, and from whom we take less than 200 million dollars' worth annually was carrying the goods, it helped make the principles of reciprocity possible between the two countries, but now under the subsidy the French Government is giving her merchant marine, a large part of our carrying trade goes to a country that only takes about 80 million dollars' worth of our produce and of whom we take 100 million dollars; the trade balance is greatly augmented in France's favor. And because the foreign merchant man carry freight from Portland to China 75 cents per ton cheaper than the American ships can carry it to San Francisco from Portland does not signify that we ought to let the foreigner have it, unless he was granting us some return reciprocity. The Oregonian has had a little experience on that line. The Daily Journal has been sold on the streets at two cents per copy, which every one believes to be at a loss under the principles of high protection. The leading daily papers in the city of London, England, are now sold for one cent per copy on the street. Would the Oregonian thrive brought into competition? No, not any more than the American merchant ship

owner has been able to compete with the freight of free trade and subsidy fed ships. The idea of allowing America to have her ships built in foreign countries is unpatriotic. We have the men and the material and we ought to do the work ourselves.

The pound loaf of bread is sold in England after the wheat has been transported from Portland, Oregon, there, at the low price of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound loaf. This is under free trade. Whereas the pound loaf of bread in the city of Portland is sold for 5 cents—this is under protected tariff—but the scale of civilization in America is proportionately 100 per cent higher than it is in England, and protection is the cause of it. Do we want to retrograde? God forbid—let us go higher.

Thomas Withycombe.

Another letter I sent to the Evening Telegram might be of interest to my readers.

Portland, Oregon, Jan. 10. 1919.

The problem of placing our returned soldiers and sailors in profitable occupation is now of great interest to every one, and in this line I realize there is a great work to be done. We must advance; we cannot go back to the old pre-war conditions and be safe.

It is time for every true American citizen to give up working mainly for self and selfish interest and to see to the well-being

of his neighbor. When I was a boy I went to school in France and many times have I inscribed my name on beautiful crumbling Grecian columns covered with moss and ivy, the relics of once beautiful mansions owned by the wealthy patrician class. But the peasant class became so abjectly poor and without homes that the French Revolution broke forth with an awful fury, and these wealthy land owners were slain with the guillotine, the land became divided in small holdings and the largest portion of France became tillers of the soil or agriculturists and ever since that abandonment of the law of primogenitor caused by the revolution the land has been subdivided into very small holdings and the very tenacious way the French people fought for France during this war is partly because nearly every soldier was interested in a small piece of land that was his own home. We hear of people wanting to place our returned soldiers on the land either on reclaimed land by irrigation or cleared off stump land or large holdings bought by the government and parcelled out to the returned soldiers and sailors

But here is a great problem to solve: The people already on the land are not nearly as prosperous as they should be, and in spite of the fact that the Hatch Bill was passed about 45 years ago with a view of improving the condition of our farmers, the

land has steadily become depleted until more than 20 million acres of lands are abandoned and beautiful houses and farm buildings are going into decay with no other occupants than the rats and mice.

I will give a few illustrations of conditions as they have come to my notice. A neighbor of mine who came from Ithaca, New York, several years ago, went back a few years ago on a visit. I questioned him regarding conditions in the country around there. He said he had a cousin who owned a 100-acre farm and said when he first left Ithaca it was worth \$100 per acre, but when he returned on a visit he was trying to sell it at \$8.00 per acre and could not. He said he went down to Lake Cayuga to visit a cousin who owned a fine 200-acre farm. He said his cousin told him he used to raise the finest of crops and lots of cattle and horses on his farm; that he had tried to build up the fertility of his land; had spent \$30 per acre for fertilizers but the prices he realized for his produce would not pay for artificial fertilizers so he had to give up farming his land and all he could do was to graze a few sheep on his once fertile 200-acre farm.

Another friend of mine went back on a visit to his old home in Maine, and it was occupied by his brother. He had just had bad luck and lost his house by fire, and he asked him when he was going to build a new house. He said he would not build a

new house because he could buy the adjoining farm with a good house on it and get the farm buildings and all for half what it would cost to build a new house.

Another friend of mine had sold his farm in Washington county, Oregon, and took it into his head to go back East and look over the abandoned farm situation. He was so well impressed with a beautiful farm in New York State and the low price he could buy it for that he bought it and ordered his things shipped out from Oregon, but in the meantime while waiting for his things to arrive he found out the conditions of the adjoining farms. He never unloaded his things but had them shipped back to Oregon and his farm stands there without an occupant.

I write these items into this article to illustrate what I want to convey to the minds of my readers. I find out whenever I speak on this subject my hearers let their minds go to purely local conditions and think of the people who are living on the most favored spots of production. We know of wheat raisers in Eastern Oregon and Eastern Washington's best sections who are immensely wealthy by wheat raising, also we know of sheep men and cattle men who are favorably situated who have become immensely wealthy.

Returning again to France, the dividing of the land into such small holdings has not

placed France is such a prosperous condition as it would be if the holdings were larger. The amount of capital used in the operation of such small holdings does not admit of the highest state of production, and France with her 20 million acres of wheat lands far superior as regards soil and climate only averages about 17 bushels of wheat per acre, whereas Great Britain with her larger units and consequently more available cash for operating expenses averages about 33 bushels per acre. Under our present conditions of protection on manufactures while all our raw materials are practically on a free trade basis, I feel sure is the cause of our depletion of soil fertility and if the Federal Government would put on an adequate protection on agricultural production, it would become a very easy matter to place all our returning soldiers and sailors in very profitable positions.

By way of illustration I will quote a few conditions. Take the suit of clothing I wear. As a farmer in the United States I have to produce and sell 15 raw materials to buy this one suit, whereas in France or England I should only have to produce and sell five raw materials to buy one of these suits.

Instead of the American farmer getting an average of 25 cents per pound for his grease wool he should get 50 cents per pound for it. Then he would only have to

produce and sell eight raw materials to buy one of these suits. And take Oregon alone, she would soon have 10 millions of sheep instead of only two millions at present, and the cost of the suit to the purchaser would only need be increased 7 per cent of \$3.00.

Take the loaf of bread. Under ordinary conditions the American farmer has to produce and sell the raw materials for five loaves of bread to be able to buy one loaf, whereas in England and France the farmer only has to produce and sell one and two-thirds raw materials to buy one loaf. If the Federal Government would place a \$30 per ton import duty and also a \$30 per ton export bounty on wheat the American farmer would become immensely prosperous and all those depleted, worn out farms would soon be refertilized and made worth \$300 per acre, but Federal control of the farmer would be necessary. All large holdings should be sold to the government at a fair assessed value and sold in 100-acre tracts or more to bonafide farmers. All the farmers should be forced to go on a four year's rotation, that is to say, they should not be allowed to put their land into wheat only once in four years; then under the stimulus of a \$2 bushel permanent price for wheat and everything else in proportion we should have 60 millions of people on the land as against 30 millions at present. The immigration laws would have to be made

very stringent as nearly half the capitalistic classes of Europe would want to come to the United States of America. To make a long story short, let me illustrate the returns of the average 100-acre farm in the Willamette Valley now as compared to what it would be under that needed protection on raw materials.

100 acres at present:

30 acres in wheat, yield 16 bushels, at \$1 per bushel	\$ 480.00
30 acres in oats, yield 40 bushels, at 40c per bushel	480.00
10 acres in hay for working stock	
10 acres in grain for working stock	
20 acres in miscellaneous crops at \$30 per acre.....	600.00
	<hr/>
	\$1560.00

Contra expenses:

Taxes	\$ 75.00	
Casual labor	300.00	
Repairs	400.00	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$775.00	\$ 785.00

Living and clothing for family of seven persons, or \$112.04 each.

Conditions that would exist if proper protection were put on raw materials:

100 acres in Willamette Valley:	
25 acres in wheat, yield 40 bushels, at \$2	\$2000.00

25 acres in oats, yield 60 bushels, at \$1	1500.00
25 acres in animal husbandry at 100 per	2500.00
23 acres in miscellaneous crops, at 100	2300.00
2 acres for hired men.....	
	<hr/>
	\$8300.00

Contra expenses:

Taxes	\$ 300.00
2 hired men by the year with one acre of land, with good cottage each, cow, chickens, hogs, each \$1000 per year	2000.00
Fertilizers	2000.00
Cost of work horses' keep	600.00
Repairs	1000.00
	<hr/>
	\$5900.00

Balance of \$2400 for family of seven people, or \$342.86 each.

Twelve people in farm cottage each with \$166.66 would be better off than the farm owner under the present system of one-sided protection.

Look at Cuba. With favorable conditions see the amount of wealth per capita. It has made my heart ache so these many years to

see the poor clothing the American people have worn, especially the poor farmers' families as a rule. They have shivered in poor cotton cloth when they ought to have the finest all wool clothing.

The automatic destruction of America's once grand merchant marine and no one to help because people object to subsidies or bounty when in fact the import tariffs were subsidies and bounties pure and simple, only called another name.

The cause of the Agricultural Bloc in the Senate and House this A. D. 1921 began 50 years ago and has taken all this time to assert itself. The action of excluding aliens has been made necessary because of the wrong economic conditions. Labor has been made master of the land, whereas with the proper protection labor would be greatly in demand steadily without any vacation and farm labor would be hired by the year. **(It ought to be done. It can be done. It should be done.)**

Jan. 1st, 1922.

Had agriculture received the same protection that manufacturers did when the tariffs were put on, the United States today would be worth 200 billions of dollars more than now and have a population of 200 millions of people, happy, contented and prosperous. One-sided protection has created suspicion and distrust between the city and

rural population and has been the cause of co-operative societies for self protection by the rural class which have not protected, and never can do much good till agriculture stands on the same plane as manufactures. The Man of Gallilee who said whosoever giveth one of these little ones a cup of cold water in My name receiveth his reward. How shall this great nation carry out that Divine injunction? By dividing its people into two classes the patrician or city rich by protection and the plebian or country poor by non-protection. We hear of universal peace. The carrying out of the above injunction both in spirit and letter will only bring permanent peace to any nation and finally the world. We saw the utterly selfish and cold indifference to the suffering world by the idle rich during the World war. It was only the noble minds of America made so by the constant battle with the errors of our surroundings that came to the call for help. We should wake up and see where we are drifting. The Roman Empire broke when opulence smashed it. Let every American citizen learn what it means to give a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in His name. It reaches into the highest places of state and right away along the line to the lowest branch of American citizenship. Any American citizen who works for selfish interest, either personally or politically, is an enemy to lasting

peace. Selfishness brought on the French Revolution, the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution. They all came very slowly and gradually, but they came. Let us profit by the past and make for our beautiful America a glorious future. We are dissipating the wealth of our arid lands that rightfully belongs to our posterity. These lands would hold their latent wealth for generations if the water was kept off of it. The lands already under cultivation have lost billions of dollars' worth of fertility by erosion through poor methods of agriculture. The rich Red River Valley has lost millions by erosion. The Willamette Valley has lost equally as much. The reason of such deplorable waste is found in the inequitable tariff protection to our manufacture and to the production of raw materials. The import duty imposed on imported goods is a bounty on American labor and American manufactures, and although it is very evident such tariffs are absolutely necessary to keep up the standard of American life, the protective party has been sadly remiss in not putting on corresponding export bounties on raw materials which we export to other countries in competition with the cheap labor, and thereby forcing our producers to sell free trade raw material to protected interests.

Let me illustrate. We have 35 cents per bushel protection on wheat and we export

wheat in competition with the world; that 35 cents tariff excludes any wheat from coming in, but it does not raise the price of wheat to the American farmer; it is only a margin created for the speculator to gamble upon, and several times capitalists have tried to corner it and put that margin in their own coffers. If a corresponding 35 cents export bounty were also placed on the wheat then the price would immediately be raised up 35 cents per bushel to the American farmer.

The same way with cotton. An import duty of 10 cents per pound; and also a corresponding export bounty, because we export cotton in competition with the low paid labor of other countries, it is necessary to put on a corresponding export bounty to raise the price to the American grower. See what Representative Aswell, Democrat for Louisiana, said in the House of Representatives, Washington, D. C. He said the Southern farmer would not consent longer to toil 12 months a year in the cotton fields unless he could set a fair price for his product. "If he is not permitted to grow it at a profit," said Mr. Aswell, "the world problem of the future will not be how to get cheap cotton, but how to get cotton at any price." Mr. Aswell said the Southern farmer for 50 years had received less than one-half the actual cost of producing cotton; by placing 10 cents per pound import duty and also a

corresponding 10 cents per pound export bounty will relieve this very, very sad condition.

Mr. Aswell in saying for the last 50 years dates his beginning when the tariff for war revenue was put on. Think of the suffering imposed on a branch of our American citizens! The wheat raiser has been placed in just such a predicament only he has had the virgin fertility of rich new land to exhaust, but this ought to stop, and the only way our nation can place the American wheat raiser in a position capable to improve our nation's social fabric is to place an import duty of \$30 per ton on wheat and also an export bounty of \$30 per ton, and in order to stay in the world's trade it will be necessary to place a ship bounty of \$10 annually per ton register on every foreign-going American merchantman.

Professor R. V. Gunn of the Oregon Agricultural College spoke during Farmers' Week on the cost of producing a bushel of wheat on 40 Sherman county farms. He said the cost ranged from \$1 to \$2.80 a bushel. I may say that most agricultural crops have been raised at a loss for the last 50 years. And when Senator Hatch instituted Agricultural Experimental Farms he saw the effect and not the cause. Had our statesmen placed enough protection on agriculture the Agricultural Colleges would have come automatically and they would have functioned

with the farm, whereas they have never yet properly functioned with the farm. In fact, they have been a grand avenue of escape for the poor farm boy from a life of slavery and drudgery, and have given America a grand army of business and professional men. A story is told as follows by a Mr. Russell Hawkins, a merchant, of the sale of 100 bushels of wheat by a Dakota farmer for \$100 that finally reached the consumer in bread for which the consumer paid \$749.10. The 100 bushels of wheat made 7491 one-pound loaves which retailed to the consumer for 10 cents per loaf. The farmer got 1.33 cents, the miller .66 cents, freight to railroad .24 cents, baker 6.40 cents, retailer 1.5 cents per loaf.

If an export bounty of \$1 per bushel was paid the American farmer the cost of the bread would be only \$849.10, or just 1.33 cents more per loaf, or 11.33 cents per loaf. This small difference would change a decadent agriculture to a progressive, prosperous agriculture.

The hundred bushels of wheat at \$1 per bushel in Europe would reach the consumer for \$200 in bread or for less than 3 cents per pound loaf. The difference of cost to the consumer in America is caused by tariff protection. American labor is three times as high as European labor in normal times and city rents are just about in the same proportion. The only salvation for the

American farmer is to place an export bounty on his wheat so he may have a square deal. The same thing is true of the cotton grower of the South. It is also ruinous to make the importation of any raw materials from foreign lands free or nearly free.

Take, for instance, free wool. It forced the price of American wool so cheap that to buy one suit of all wool tailor made cost the price of two bales of wool, or 36 raw materials to buy one finished suit; with the low tariff formerly placed on wool it compelled the wool raiser to bring 15 raw materials to buy one suit of all wool tailor made clothing in normal times, whereas in Europe it only cost the wool grower five raw materials to buy one finished suit..

The tariff or import duty on grease wool should be 50 cents per pound. The rural population should be able to pay just as high scale of wage as the city and then the evil of aliens coming here and amassing fortunes in operating a few acres of garden land near our city and getting the prices of our protected city stores would be eliminated entirely.

A good index of how this works was published in a Honolulu paper as follows: Professor Y. Sakon, Aoyama Gakuin, a Christian institution in Tokio, who recently passed through here on his way to the mainland, believes not only in the annexation of

Japan to the United States, but in the establishment of an international cabinet with headquarters in Jerusalem to rule over the world regardless of nations or races.

“One would think that Japan would be lost by annexation to the United States,” he said, “but I believe the Japanese people through annexation would eventually come to own the United States and that they would gain by it.”

If the proper tariffs and bounties were put on American agriculture the alien would not be able to come here as I have stated previously and amass a fortune in a short time. During the war the sugar countries made immense amounts on sugar. One Honolulu, T. H., paper states the enormous bonus paid by sugar plantations during the past months has enabled many of the common laborers to save an average of \$150 per month. Japanese live frugally and as the plantation provides house rent free, their only expenditures are on clothes and food. Some of the Japanese laborers who have resided here for years have over \$30,000 in the banks to their accounts. This prosperity is caused by tariff protection of sugar.

The cause of the Agricultural Bloc in the Houses of National Representatives started 50 years ago when a one-sided protection was placed on American industry and it has had a far-reaching effect on our national

life. I cannot help but think if the hundreds of millions of dollars paid for irrigation schemes had been paid the wheat and cotton grower and the foreign going ship owner in bounties, we should now be worth at least 200 billions of dollars in actual wealth we do not now own, and have a happy, contented, prosperous nation of at least 200 millions of people. We have lost more fertility which has run into our rivers from our cultivated lands than have been taken out of our irrigation lands, because the price received by the American farmer has been entirely too low to keep our agriculture up to the proper standard. Then we should have all the mass of latent wealth in our arid lands in a perfect state of conservation for our future generations. Whenever things come to an equitable basis in the farm with the city and the status of the farm is lifted 300 per cent higher, then these irrigation schemes are going to clash because they are going to make the cost of production entirely out of proportion. We have enough abandoned lands when brought back by placing the farmer in his right financial condition to supply this nation and leave a lot for export for the next 100 years without touching and drawing on our arid land's fertile wealth.

I learned from two New York gentlemen in one week in the First Congregational Church, Portland, Oregon. One, the Rev.

Mr. Wirtz of New York, in his sermon said, they tell us we should move the church down among the business sections of the city. How could we do that? Why last week, he said, property in the business section of New York city sold for 35 million dollars per acre; that is seven times its value in the city of London. And during the same week at a Brotherhood Luncheon we were asked to become acquainted with our next neighbors. I introduced myself to a gentleman on my right, and saying I was interested in country property. He said, my name is——. I have been superintending the building of schools at Binghampton, New York, but I went on a farm. All around me were abandoned farms and the one I was on had just as well be abandoned as it was completely exhausted.

When I was a young man I had charge of a fine Merino sheep ranch in Alameda county, California, and I saw the hoboos before they were real hoboos. They were young men from good eastern homes who would work on the wheat ranches for \$2 a day as long as they were wanted and then discharged at a minute's notice. They used to come by carrying their blankets, out of work and looking for something to eat. I made arrangements with the owner of the ranch so I could measure up some pole oak for them to saw for a meal. This was caused by high wages and low priced wheat. The

farmer could not afford to keep his labor steady and those poor men became hobo's, drifting from Oregon to California with the seasons. When I look back I remember about 30 years ago just at sunset, I was gathering my little brood for evening prayer. I looked out west towards my potato pits. I saw a poor hobo quietly walking towards the pits. I never let him know he was seen and no doubt he got a chicken as well, but I had a heart full of sympathy for him, because I knew he and millions of others were the victims of one of the cruellest acts of vicious national legislation ever imposed on a civilized race of people. I had seen things differently back in the State of Ohio, where I lived among a happy and prosperous rural people not yet affected by the tariffs. The hired men were hired by the year and had steady work. The married men were furnished a house and only \$20 per month, but when one-sided protection forced the price of unskilled labor to \$2 per day the farmer had to skimp along with casual labor and in the meantime the laborer either went into the city or became a wandering tramp. I think I have shown very conclusively in a previous part of this booklet where that condition can be completely cured. I attended a lecture by the noted Miss Ida Tarbell on the cause of unemployment. She seemed totally ignorant of the vital facts and never once alluded to

the out-of-balance condition of our rural life. During a drive for the poor starving Armenians I took a section among the working people with a gentleman who was a Harvard graduate from the East, lately engaged in business in this city. When we got back to the Portland Hotel, our headquarters, he gave me his cheque for \$25 and I gave him my cheque. He said, Mr. Withycombe, I had no idea there was so much poverty in the city of Portland as we have seen today. This conditions is almost entirely caused by the conditions I have explained and I fear for our America if some wise and strong statesman does not adjust our national economics, so our homes, both rural and city, shall become happy and prosperous. Under the prevailing conditions our farms are being treated like a piece of merchandise, used as long as profitable and then thrown aside like an old shoe. Sixty millions of people placed in our rural homes with permanent prosperity will safeguard this nation better than 10 millions of trained soldiers.

In my boyhood days I saw the American merchant marine before it was hit by the protected tariff. Several American ships were in the English Expedition up the Red Sea to Annesley Bay to carry commissary stores and troops to the Abyssinnia war, when Great Britain spent 50 millions sterling to recover her ambassador and his staff

from the hands of King Theodore. That ambassador was Mr. Grant and he saved his company from execution by Theodore by his Scotch wit. He told Theodore that Queen Victoria was a widow and if he would send a message that Mr. Grant would write by a courier he thought he could arrange a marriage. Of course Mr. Grant sent a secret code and apprised the British Government of their predicament, and the first thing King Theodore knew elephants with breech-loading Armstrong cannon lashed on their back were battering down the walls of Magdala. One American ship, the Boston, lay alongside us for seven months. She had 1000 tons of baled hay. She was not required to unload one bale and when she returned to Bombay with her cargo it was in the rainy monsoons, she was given her cargo of hay because the hatches could not be opened. The captain took his cargo to the Maritus and sold it for \$30 per ton. The Boston earned \$65,000 for her eight month's work.

About 30 years ago Germany sent 40 wise men all over the world studying trade conditions. They visited our state and all of America. They saw our mistakes. On their return to Germany, Minister of the Interior Delbenck had put 55 marks per ton import duty on wheat and the same ratio on meats and other farm products. That increased Germany's yield of wheat from 23 to 33

bushels and at the price of an average of \$1.50 per bushel when our wheat was only 70 cents per bushel and made the German farmer so prosperous they were enabled to buy large quantities of potash from the government and they increased their crops of potatoes till they could raise 400 bushels per acre. They brought up agriculture so that they were enabled to raise 85 per cent of all the food consumed by 65 millions of people on an area the size of Texas. And that was one of the factors that enabled her to fight a world war. To keep 15 millions of tons of foreign merchant marine ships prosperous the United States would need to pay the ship owners \$10 per ton register annually. To make the American farmer really prosperous the United States would need to pay the farmer \$1 per bushel export and place an import duty of \$1 per bushel bounty on his wheat, and to make the cotton grower equally prosperous the United States would need to place 10 cents per pound import duty and 10 cents per pound export bounty on cotton. Or summarized: 15 million tons of merchant ma-

rine would cost	\$150,000,000
100 millions of export wheat....	100,000,000
2 billion pounds export cotton....	200,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$450,000,000

The income tax of the United States

equals three billions of dollars per year in round numbers or six times as much as the above bounties would cost. Yet in ten years at an outlay of four billion five hundred million dollars the United States would have added national wealth of 200 billions of dollars instead of losing billions in the exhaustion of her lands. Her city trade, which is about 10 billions of dollars per year, would be increased to 15 billions of dollars per year, and her rural trade, which is about three billions of dollars per year, would be increased to nine billions of dollars per year. Her 15 millions of tons of merchant marine, which at present is nearly valueless, would be worth three billions of dollars. Her agricultural lands, now worth 50 billions, would be worth 150 billions. Her cities would be worth at least 150 billions more than now.

Minister of the Interior Delbruck of Germany said a small import duty on raw material for 10 years added two billion five hundred million to Germany's national wealth, gave permanent employment to her people and entirely suspended emigration of her subjects, which had been forced to leave the country by 300,000 a year previously. I feel certain if our statesmen will look into the utterances of this little book they will find out what is printed comes very nearly to the exact truth.

THOMAS WITHYCOMBE.

432 Twelfth Street,
Portland, Oregon.

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