

## FREE TRADE SCIENTIFIC.

From an Address Delivered by Byron W. Holt at the Annual Dinner of the Free Trade League, in Boston, April 29, 1909.\*

In discussing the subject, "The Significance of a Sound Physique," at a meeting of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Dr. Dudley A. Sargent of Harvard said: "Man's success in self-development has been greatly aided by the division of labor and the ability to co-operate with others."

This statement of a scientific deduction furnishes a key-note, it seems to me, for similar conclusions in regard to trade and commerce. "Division of labor and ability to co-operate with others" tells the whole story of the world's economic progress—that is, of civilization.

There is, perhaps, no better index of civilization than is provided by the extent of the "division of labor and ability to co-operate with others" that is found in any country.

The savage has but little division of labor and co-operation. He makes his own crude hunting, fishing, mechanical and farming implements, and with them fashions his poor shelter and clothing and provides his uncertain food. As we proceed upward in the scale of civilization we find greater division of labor and more co-operation with others—that is, more exchange of products. In the highest civilization of to-day fully half of the people have ceased to produce food, clothing and shelter first hand,—that is, from land, water, forest and mine,—and are engaged in manufacturing and transporting materials, supplies and goods.

It is through the greatest possible division of labor, and the greatest possible co-operation in the production and distribution of goods, that man will attain the greatest amount of goods and comforts and most fully satisfy his wants.

This means that the reward of labor *should be* highest where there is the greatest division of labor and the most co-operation.

Generally speaking, it is true that wages and salaries *are* highest where there is the greatest division of labor and the greatest exchange of products. That is why wages are higher in this than in any other important country. In no other country is there as much labor-saving machinery, as much co-operation in producing and distributing goods, and as much freedom of exchange of products, as there is in this, the greatest free-trade country on earth.

Our forefathers may not have been well versed in the theories of political economy, but they had common sense, and they saw that freedom of trade between our States was better for each and all than was tariff-restricted trade, with meddlesome

custom houses on all State lines. It is really because of their broad statesmanship in this matter that these United States are to-day the greatest producing and consuming nation of the world. Had they all been McKinleys, Dingleys, Paynes and Aldriches, we should now have about fifty politically united but commercially dis-united and warring States; and probably their trade disputes and wars would have made continued political union on impossibility. Each would be trying to enrich itself by taxing its neighbor. Each would be crying out against the pauper labor of the other States, just as our States are now crying out against the pauper made goods of Canada and Europe. How different if Canada had been made a part of the United States!

What folly, all this protection talk that we have been hearing since most of us were born! How unscientific; how uncivilized; how contrary to nature. How much better would be absolute free trade—"the international common law of the Almighty," as Richard Cobden once wrote.

Either science, that is, division of labor, co-operation and free trade, is wrong; or protection is wrong. If economic science is right, there is no sound reason for protection in this country at this time.

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## OLD TOM HARDER REMARKS THAT—

A Monologue With a Subsidiary Flavor.

For The Public.

"Yes! Tomkins has a worry growin' on him. It ain't a real hard one, but is some like a soft corn that makes it so hard to smile an' look pleasant on a hard road. I sent him a big 'DON'T WORRY' card to put over his desk an' had him most cured, but he got hold of an article about the desperate condition of our merchant marine and had a bad relapse.

"He thinks in millions, and dreams of endless processions of subsidized steamship lines carryin' the American flag an' owned by the United Steel-Pierpont Morgan-Standard Oil Corporation, Limited—limited in everything but dividends and liberal government subsidies.

"He says that we are way behind the procession. The English and the German and the Japanese an' all the other governments that look out for the welfare of their workin' people by taxin' 'em high an' keepin' 'em from gettin' sassy by too luxurious livin', have tremendous big merchant ships that draw comfortably sized amounts from the state treasury every month or so, to make good the losses on their ordinary legitimate trade, an' so flourish like a prize heifer bein' fattened for the county fair. All these processions of treasury-fed merchant ships worry Tomkins most to death. An' all the rest of the Tomkinses in the

\*See The Public of May 7, pages 434, 435, and 449.