

Politicians of both regular parties in all places are especially indifferent, except on election day, to one class of the citizenship upon whose votes they depend for power. They take infinite pains between elections to conciliate, to please, to attract every other class, but the loyal of both parties they disregard. Loyal members of the opposing party do not interest them, because these cannot be attracted; loyal members of their own party do not interest them, because these need not be conciliated. The loyal members of a regular party will vote for its candidates, no matter what it may do to displease them or what the opposing party may do to please them. What sense, then, is there in wasting energy, thought or official positions on loyal partisans? None. And this is the secret, not alone in Chicago, but throughout the United States, of the neglect of Negroes by Republican politicians. Most Negro voters are loyal to the Republican party anyhow.

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If the Negro voters of Chicago, of Ohio, of any other locality where the vote of their race is large enough to turn an election, were to utilize it as a balance of power, casting it for one party or the other as its conduct pleased or displeased them respecting their race—even as our German, Irish, Italian and Scandinavian voters largely do—they would soon find themselves in a more salubrious political atmosphere. Instead of being neglected by Democrats because their vote is inevitably hostile, and by Republicans because it is unflinchingly loyal, the Negro race would be courted by the politicians of both parties as assiduously as other races are courted now.

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Congestion in New York.

Congestion of population in New York City is a subject to which no one in the whole country can afford to be indifferent. One consideration alone—the wide distribution of clothing made in New York “sweat shops”—is enough to make us all “sit up and take notice.” Even the “superior” men and women who never wear “sweat-shop” clothing are concerned, for they cannot live their daily lives without coming in contact with the “inferior” people who do wear it. Why does this concern them? Because “sweat shop” clothing brings disease up out of congested places. We good people may afford to be indifferent to the sufferings of the miserable creatures whom God in his wisdom and mercy—perhaps because he loves them so, perhaps to punish them for the sins of their ancestors, perhaps to afford us a field for the display

of philanthropy, but more likely because he is a God of order who cannot maintain equality of opportunity among a stiff-necked generation which insists upon nullifying the equality of opportunity which he ordains—we may afford to be indifferent to their sufferings, but not to our own. We may afford to pity them and let it go at that; but we cannot afford to ignore the fact that the disease germs which their sufferings breed among them are scattered broadcast among us. And so the congestion of population in New York, partly an effect and partly a cause of disease-breeding “sweat shops,” is of vital concern to everybody.

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Yet very few of us—even residents of New York, to say nothing of the rest of us—realize the monstrous congestion of population in that city. We should be exceeding grateful, therefore, to the New York committee on congestion of population for its efforts to spread information on this subject. In one of its bulletins this committee shows that in 1905, according to the State census, there were 122 blocks with a density of at least 750 persons per acre, and 30 blocks with a density of at least 1,000 to the acre. These densely populated blocks were spread all through Manhattan Island, up and down, on the east side and on the west; and in most of them the density of population increased in most blocks from 1900 to 1905. Many of those blocks have coralled five and six tiers of “sweated” humanity. In those conditions standards of decent living are impossible. Then there is Brooklyn, once regarded as a handy place of escape from the congestion of Manhattan—Brooklyn has suffered a similar fate.

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The committee on congestion of population have taken the initiative in organizing a group of civic organizations to prevent this congestion. Nearly 50 organizations with a total membership of over 60,000 have been enlisted in the effort, and a vice-president has been elected from each of the five Boroughs of the city to co-operate in the effort. They are conducting a campaign of education, part of which contemplates a commission to be appointed by the Mayor, to consider and recommend a plan to relieve the present and prevent future congestion. It is not to be hoped for that this commission will see, what every one with half an eye ought to see, that the wicked congestion of population in New York is an inevitable result of making houses dear by heavy taxes on building, and house sites dear by light taxes on forestalling. But this will work itself out in

time, and such movements as that of the committee on congestion of population will help in the work.

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THE TARIFF HUMBUG.

From some points of view the interesting bunch of statesmen now in session at Washington furnish an amusing spectacle.

Some of these gentlemen call themselves Republicans; others call themselves Democrats.

But let it be understood that in order to be elected to the national legislature a man must affiliate with one of these groups. The majority of the people are tied to the superstition that there are two great political parties in the United States, of diametrically opposite principles. As a matter of observation, this is not the fact. There is only one great political party at the national capital, and this is the party of the Interests.

The deception lies in the label on the party bottle. These different professionals are working in the same interests. For illustration, the recent gas corporations of the city of Chicago,—the "Ogden" and the "People's,"—one under Republican and the other under Democratic control—are now united into one corporation. But the above remarks allude especially to the tariff discussion in Congress.

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The poet hath said that "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." The tariff makes criminals of us all by making that a crime which is not a crime.

The right to trade is a natural, inalienable right. It is as natural for a man to trade as it is to eat. Why then should it be made a crime for men to trade freely, whenever, wherever and with whom they please?

It is tacitly admitted, nay, it has always been generally accepted, that trade is the greatest promoter of civilization. Indeed trade is the origin and genesis of civilization. To quote an eminent authority: "To find an utterly uncivilized people we must find a people among whom there is no exchange of trade. Such a people does not exist and so far as our knowledge goes, never did. To find a fully civilized people we must find a people among whom exchange of trade is absolutely free and has reached the fullest development to which human desire can carry it. There is, unfortunately, no such people."

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Nobody really believes in a tariff. If the most rabid protectionist would honestly analyze his feel-

ings he would have to admit he desires absolute freedom to trade for himself and wants restrictions only for the other fellow—so strong is the notion that a successful trade can only be accomplished by forcing another to make a poor one, in other words, by injuring him.

The most persistent protectionist will not hesitate to smuggle provided he can do so without getting into trouble.

The "courtesy" of the Treasury office is a well known custom extended to influential officials and politicians returning from abroad.

The ordinary person is pleased if he may be made the recipient through the kindness of a friend traveling abroad of some article of value escaping the custom house tax. Such a person as a rule will be found accepting the protective idea.

The rich heiress is limited to only as many trunks full of costly wearing apparel as she may claim she has worn, perhaps once, before embarking from the foreign port. Such a person is more than likely a beneficiary of the tariff.

What a mean advantage this, to take of the forced-to-stay-at-home public.

On the other hand, let some simple-minded individual who instinctively feels he is committing no crime be caught with a few small valuables in his possession while crossing some imaginary political line, and lo, here is a criminal of deep dye. Compare him with those "eminently respectable" financiers, the sugar barons, whose greed so grows upon what it feeds on, that, not satisfied with the liberal protection secured to them, they are caught defrauding the revenue. Well might we exclaim, "Oh, Respectability! what crimes are committed in thy name!"

JOSIAH EDSON.

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THE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF RISING PRICES.

Advance in price of iron is generally heralded as a sure sign of growing prosperity.

While it is true that a sustained advance, coincident with maintained or increasing output, signifies increased purchasing power on the part of the public, this is of minor importance compared to the economic significance of the price-advance in itself. For, is it not an axiom of political economy that increased productivity tends not toward higher but toward lower prices?

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Rising prices for iron may indicate increased general affluence, but we should not lose sight of the further fact, that it may also indicate a power