

# DYING FROM THE TARIFF

## DECLINE OF THE HAT INDUSTRY IN THE ORANGES.

RAW MATERIALS TAXED UNTIL THE  
IMPORTED MANUFACTURED ARTICLE  
UNDERSELLS THE DOMESTIC PROD-  
UCT—HUNDREDS OF MECHANICS  
THROWN OUT OF EMPLOYMENT.

ORANGE, N. J., Aug. 13.—In the Oranges and vicinity there are over thirty hat factories, and a large proportion of the mechanics of this city and the surrounding townships depends entirely for a livelihood upon the different branches of the manufacture of soft fur hats.

For years this business has been recognized as the backbone of Orange's prosperity, and the large number of neat and comfortable homes of the mechanics, the rapidly-growing business centres, and the thriving condition of all trades in the city in the past have been directly due to the prosperity of this one industry.

Since the introduction of a higher tariff under the McKinley act, however, this has all been changed, and the thirty factories or more in this district have not, for nearly two years, had enough work to keep in employment one-fifth of the 30,000 men and women who have depended upon the hat shops for their livelihood.

The present season especially is the dullest which has ever been known in the hat industry, and this despite the agricultural prosperity.

It is to the farmers that the majority of the hats made in Orange are shipped, or were shipped, in former years. This year the factory drummers report that the Western farmers are wearing imported hats.

Under the working of the McKinley law the foreign hat manufacturers' trade is increasing, and the home industry, taxed exorbitantly on the raw materials imported for hat manufacture, is decreasing and dying out. Men who formerly were able to earn excellent wages at different branches of hatmaking have in many instances been obliged to engage in other pursuits to make a living for their families.

The reports of the Orange Hat Finishers' Association show that from May to November, 1891, 260 men in this one branch of the industry left the business because of the difficulty of finding employment at their trade.

Many of the proprietors of the largest factories in the Orange district are Democrats, as are a majority of the hands, and they are loud in their denunciation of the Tariff bill and an Administration which has so nearly killed their business. Under the existence of the present tariff laws American hatters have gone abroad with American machinery and introduced it together with American methods of making hats, and the product is handled by the American jobber at a lower rate than the raw material and labor can be procured for in this country.

The McKinley act made the duty on manufactured hats 55 per cent, and on the component articles used in their manufacture the duties are: On furs for hatters' use, 20 per cent, and on silk and satin linings, sweatbands, silk trimmings, &c., the duty ranges from 30 to 60 per cent.

The foreign manufacturer pays but 55 per cent on his manufactured hats in bringing them to America ready to place on the market, whereas the American manufacturer now pays 60 per cent on his material, and must, after paying this duty on a necessarily imported article, pay the cost of labor entailed in manufacture in his factory.

The duty on sweat leathers, cut fur, and trimmings was increased by the McKinley bill with the intention of establishing factories for the manufacture of these goods in this country. Two or three such factories have been established, but their products are inferior, and have only succeeded in rectifying to an insignificant degree the disadvantages under which the American hatter has been placed.

Perhaps in no part of the country have the direct results of this law, which prohibits the American workman from entering into successful competition with the foreign manufacturer, been felt as acutely as in Orange.

Out of about three thousand mechanics there are barely a thousand who have employment, and there is no prospect of anything better in store for them in the near future. In a few hat shops owned by Republicans a cheap grade of hat is being turned out in quantities of about one-third the capacity of the factory when on full time.

The wages have been so reduced during the last year that with some the question of how to live is only solved from day to day. In localities where two years ago the houses were occupied by a thrifty class of mechanics "To let" signs now stare one in the face in all directions.

One landlord told a TIMES reporter that during this two years of dullness he had lost over \$2,000 in uncollected rents. His principal tenants had been hatters, and when they could not secure employment he did not feel that he could take the money for rent which they needed for bread. This man is a hearty supporter of Cleveland and Stevenson, and says that the hatters of Orange will be solid in November for tariff reform.

Several Republican hatters, who are at the heads of manufacturing firms, were interviewed, and although they bravely defended the McKinley act they did not deny that the hat industry was in a worse condition than ever before and that the prospect for the hatters was very poor, "unless business picked up."

T. F. Brennan of the firm of Brennan & Carr, said that their shop was not being run on full time nor with a full force, nor had it been for some time. He was in favor of Grover Cleveland and tariff reform, because he believed that such a change would prove of great benefit to the hatting industry by removing the restrictions which now prevent the American hatter from successfully competing with the foreign manufactured article.

The firms of Austin, Drew & Co., C. B. Rutan & Co., McChesney & Fischer, Harrop & Gist, and several smaller firms were seen and all agreed in pronouncing the McKinley bill the deathblow to the hatting industry in America, and all declared that developments by November would show that the hatter knows on which side his bread is buttered and that Grover Cleveland would carry the entire hatting trade.

Mayor Lawrence T. Fell, who for many years conducted a hatting business in Orange, and than whom there is no one better posted on hatting topics, said: "It is an undeniable fact that during Grover Cleveland's Administration the hatting business flourished in this vicinity as it had not for years."

"It is an equally well-known fact among those informed on the subject that at the present time only a very small portion of the great number dependent on the hatting industry here are able to obtain employment.

"No more certain sign can be produced of the dullness of trade, which has existed since the passage of the McKinley bill, than the lifeless condition of business complained of by local dealers, the untenanted houses, and the unemployed men walking our streets. The claim made by the Republicans that the high tariff has fostered the manufacture of domestic sweat bands and silk trimmings will be disproved by any fair-minded hat manufacturer.

"There are some hands and trimmings manufactured here, but in very small quantities and of an inferior quality. The claim that the fur-cutting industry has been greatly promoted is also untrue. There are only two or three of these fur-cutting establishments in the United States, and the amount they manufacture goes but a very short way toward supplying the trade, besides being of less value than the imported article."

Mr. Fell was shown a paragraph from the Tribune stating that "Up to three years ago there was hardly a hat trimming, band, or sweat leather that was not imported. To-day, owing to the McKinley act, there are several establishments where these articles are made."

Mr. Fell said that he had used domestic sweat leathers to some extent twenty years ago, and that there were but few more used now than at that time.

M. J. McKeirnan, Vice President of the Orange Hat Finishers' Association, was willing to talk when the reporter called, and gave some interesting figures showing how the McKinley act had affected the hatting interests. Mr. McKeirnan is a hat finisher by trade and works at the bench. He said:

"Since I commenced to work at the hatting trade, twenty years ago, there has never been a time when the Orange hatters have been driven to such extremities to make a living. Men are leaving the business and seeking other work. The Hat Finishers' Association of Orange in 1890 numbered 830 members; in May, 1891, there were 782; in November, 1891, the number had decreased to 522, and since then it has fallen off still more. This decrease does not include dead men.

"During the Cleveland Administration the hatters of Orange enjoyed plenty of work and good wages. At that time the average wages for an average finisher were \$12 per week, whereas but few are now averaging \$5. In the sizing departments of the factories men are now glad to earn \$9 per week who four years ago earned \$20 every week. Pouncers will now average \$4 per week, as against \$18 weekly when the trade is good, and finishers, who are girls, consider themselves fortunate to make a dollar or two per week, whereas during Cleveland's term they earned as high as \$10 and \$12 per week. In addition to the starvation wages the hatters are getting, you must remember that only one-third of the Orange hatters are able to find any employment.

"From 1885 to 1888, during the height of the Winter and Summer trades, the factories in Orange Valley employed several hundred men from Newark. At no time since 1890 has there been any lack of men seeking employment. So poor has the hatting industry become in this country that at the annual convention of the International Hatfinishers' Association held in New-York in May last it was decided not to recognize, for the present, the union cards of any hatters from Europe, in order that the American hatter might be protected to some

extent. The Republican hue and cry over European pauper labor is another bugaboo which the hatters have now ferreted out and found to be a dummy dragon.

"In the cities of Newark and Orange the hatters are being driven out of employment by the Polish Jews. In many shops in Newark these men are finishing hats for 6 1/4 cents per dozen which American workmen have always been paid 25 cents per dozen for finishing.

"This country is twenty-five years in advance of any other on the face of the globe in the manufacture of hats, and with a law which would enable the American manufacturer to obtain his raw material without an exorbitant duty, there could be no competition from any other country damaging to the American hatter. The hatters realize this and 90 per cent of the hatters in Orange will cast their votes for Cleveland and Stevenson.

"In 1888 there was a German Hatters' Republican Club. This year two German Hatters' Cleveland Clubs have been organized among the same men."

## HORSES DYING FROM THE HEAT.

### LARGE MORTALITY IN THE THIRD AVENUE AND OTHER STABLES.

"I hope that the worst of the hot weather is over," said a veteran driver on the Third Avenue line yesterday, pointing commiseratingly at his stumbling, almost exhausted team of horses. "I have been on the road a good many years, but this Summer has been worse than any in my experience. The weather has been hotter, and the effect on live stock has been disastrous. There are on our road 3,000 horses. Of these 600 have died within the last two months. In addition there are now 300 horses in the hospital, a considerable proportion of which are liable to die. So, you see, the hot spell has cost our road a large sum of money.

"Averaging the horses at \$100 each, which is a fair estimate, the 600 horses were worth \$60,000. It requires a good many five-cent cars to compensate for that loss. So great has been this Summer's mortality that the company has been compelled to lay off fifty cars through sheer inability to obtain horses to take the places of those that died. Never before did I know more than ten cars to be laid off in the Summer from this cause. Of course the road could easily buy 600 horses, but the trouble is in breaking them in. A green horse cannot be broken in in hot weather, or, if broken in after great trouble, can make only half a trip, and the cost of breaking it in is more than the experiment is worth. Hence the cars have been laid off.

"Some of the extreme mortality among our horses is undoubtedly due to the hauling of those of our open cars which have wire netting at the sides and two long seats, back to back, running from one end of the car to the other. These cars weigh about two tons each, and we call them 'horse killers.' But everything goes when the company is trying to make money."

There is one other surface road in this city which has laid off about fifty cars—but from an entirely different cause—and this is the Madison Avenue line. This is the gilt-edge line of the town, and is patronized chiefly by the thrifty aristocrats along the route above Forty-second Street. The line is noted for short riders, and a car is calculated to average three distinct loads going each way. In the Summer the rich folks go out of town, and travel on the road declines to a very considerable degree. Then the cars are taken off. The Summer travel on this road is mostly to and from Central Park. Most surface roads are busiest in the Summer, in the season of enticing open cars. The Madison Avenue line does not unbend its dignity to the extent of open cars, and its busiest period is midwinter.

There has been a very heavy mortality among the live stock on all the roads, although the loss on none of them is as great as that on the Third Avenue line, where one-fifth of all the stock has succumbed. On most of the lines the "schedule" has been dropped and the cars run on "any kind of time," in railroad parlance. In the Summer the teams are allowed to jog along, and the drivers to a large extent stop their pernicious and horse-killing scheme of going slow over one portion of the route in order to pick up traffic, and then rushing their teams at a gallop the rest of the way with a heavy load.

This practice has of itself killed thousands of horses, but the companies have not been able to find out any way to stop it. Among railroad men the practice is known as "crowding the leader," and the object is to pick up a carload. In this way an honest conductor is enabled to turn in a good card, and the dishonest conductor finds his chance to "pinch" fares.