

Egypt in the markets of Europe. Our wheat fields have to compete with the plains of South Russia, the steppes of Siberia and the peasant farms of North Hindoostan. Our meat products are sold side by side with those of the Argentine Republic and Australia, and there is scarcely an agricultural product of ours which has not to fight for its footing as never before."

"As to manufacturing," Senator Manderson continued, "within the past few years a new Richmond has entered the field. The Japanese, the Yankees of Asia, have become manufacturers to a startling degree. They are already competing with our cotton and silk goods, and the cheapest rugs and matting now sold in our markets come from Japan. I understand that an American watch factory has lately been established there, which makes copies of American watches with interchangeable works, and I met a man a few days ago who said that a friend of his had bought a silk hat in Yokohama of one of our best makes so closely imitated that you could not tell it from the original. Such a hat here costs \$8. It cost in Japan the sum of 60 cents, and it was copied to a hair, even to the putting of the name and trademark of the American manufacturer inside it. The Japanese are the most wonderful imitators of the world, and I believe that they have inventive genius as well. I heard of an instance of their wonderful skill from General Capron, the man whom General Grant sent to Japan at the request of the mikado to teach the Japanese our science of agriculture. He was, you know, at one time at the head of our bureau of agriculture. Well, he made the journey, and upon his return he told me some interesting things about the Japanese. One, I remember, was as to some carpenter's tools which he carried with him. Among these there was a very fine set of augurs. Now the Japanese had never seen anything of this kind. They had cut square holes instead of making round ones, and they looked upon the augurs and their work with admiration. The general was building an American house and the Japanese were watching him very earnestly. One night the full set of augurs mysteriously disappeared. General Capron was in great distress over their loss, but a few days later he found his own tools in the proper places uninjured and by their side there was another set of augurs, copied exactly, even to the scratches upon the handle. This gives some idea of what the Japanese can do. Their ability is not confined to fans, pottery and textile fabrics. They are equally good workmen in iron and steel. Their wages are so low that they can undersell us in every branch of manufacture. When you remember that unskilled Japanese labor brings from 5 to 15 cents a day and that their skilled workmen receive from 15 to 40 cents a day you can see the difference. When you reflect that there are forty millions of Japanese you will realize the enormous competition which may come from that country alone."

"But would not a protective tariff keep such products out of the United States?"

"It might as to some things, but not as to all," replied Senator Manderson. "We should have to make the tariff so that it would be prohibitory and the result would be that it would cut off our revenue. Again, you know Japan is on a silver basis and business is done there

upon that standard. I believe the result will be that we not only have protective tariffs here, but also in Europe, and that connected with them there will be a bimetallic agreement which will regulate the use of silver the world over. England will be loth to enter into any such agreement, but the other nations of Europe and the United States will adopt it and the English will have to come in."

"The Japanese phrase of the question," Senator Manderson went on, "is, however, only a small part of the possibilities of Asiatic competition. The great giant of the far east is China. It has more than 400,000,000 people, and it has been through its punishment by Japan rudely aroused from its slumbers. China will now enter the world's markets as the greatest of the manufacturing nations. Wages in that country are cheaper than in Japan, and their natural resources are even greater. Li Hung Chang, the greatest of Chinese statesmen and perhaps the most progressive man of the empire, is now in Russia, where he has gone to attend the coronation of the czar. He will soon leave there, and will travel through Europe. He will visit the United States and will go home across the Pacific. This is the man whom General Grant called the Bismarck of China. He has already a number of modern factories in China, and he will be quick to see the possibilities of his people in making goods for the foreign markets. His return to China will probably start a revolution, which will flood the world with cheap goods of all kinds."

Senator Manderson and myself visited Cuba some years ago as the guests of Senator Sherman. This was shortly after the death of Vice President Hendricks, and Senator Sherman, according to the then laws, was the acting Vice President of the United States. During the trip a plot was made by some Cuban brigands to kidnap Senator Sherman and party, which only failed through a late change in the plans as to a certain excursion. I referred to this, and asked Senator Manderson what he thought the United States ought to do as to Cuba. He replied:

"I believe that the Spanish rule in Cuba has been one of terrible oppression and outrageous injustice. Havana has for years been suffering under the heel of a despotism that is ruinous. The streets of the city are filthy, and the reason for this lies, I am told, in the fact that the municipal taxes are taken by the Spanish officers and sent to Spain instead of being used for the improvement of the city, for which purpose they were collected. I don't think much of the character of the native population of Cuba. It is to a large extent a mixture of the Indian, the negro and the South American, and it does not seem to be made up of desirable material. As to the present revolution, however it may turn out, there is no doubt in my mind but that Spain is bound to lose the island. She ought to lose it on account of the way in which she has misgoverned it. Cuba should be one of the most fertile and productive countries of the world, but its industries have been destroyed, its lands have been devastated and its people have been ruined by this war, caused by Spanish oppression."

"Suppose Spain should lose Cuba—where would it go?"

"I can tell you where it ought to go,"

replied Senator Manderson. "It ought to go to the United States. Cuba is the key to the Gulf of Mexico and to all our southern coasts. The islands of the Caribbean sea stand like outposts to the Gulf of Mexico. We must in some way or other obtain some of them, and we should get them if possible by peaceful means. As it is, there is no European power, however insignificant, that does not own one or more of these islands. England, France, Germany, Spain, Denmark—each have their outposts there, which in the event of war would form their coaling and victualing stations. Cuba is the most valuable of all the islands, and it is of vital strategic and commercial importance to us. If we had it it would soon be entirely changed by means of Yankee enterprise and Yankee money, and I have hoped that the policy to be pursued would be one that would result in our purchasing it."

"As Cuba is today, its population is such that we might not wish to admit it to the Union on an equality of statehood. It could be given a safe provincial government, however; I mean a government something like that of our territories, or it could be held as an outlying district, as we today hold Alaska. It strikes me that Spain might be glad to sell it, and it would be far better for us to buy the island than to acquire it in some other way. If Cuba should obtain her independence and establish a republic capable of maintaining itself under the protection of the United States, that perhaps might be desired. But in such a case she would probably soon ask for admission into the Union as a separate state, and it would be difficult to resist her appeal."

"Speaking of war, Senator, all the great nations seem to be going about with chips on their shoulders. To what do you attribute this war spirit?"

"It is difficult to find a reason for it," was the reply. "It seems to be found everywhere. Europe is in a state of ferment. The aggressiveness of the different powers in seeking commercial supremacy in different parts of the world, and especially in Africa, is very likely to cause international conflicts. I believe that some of the great rulers of the world would be glad to wage war. Such a war spirit is not strange, however. If you will look at history you will find that the desire for war springs up periodically the world over. After twenty or thirty years of peace there always arises among nations an inclination to fight somebody, and this inclination generally breaks out in war. It seems to be one of the rules of the development of nations."

"Do you think a war between the United States and England a possibility?"

"I don't think there is a probability just now of any such event," said Senator Manderson. "There is always a possibility of our having war with any power. It is always the unexpected that happens as to war. There may come matters of insult or aggression that are beyond the reach of apology or reparation. The honor of a nation is like that of an individual. It is easily touched, and insults which are not appeased by proper apologies and by quick reparation are sure to bring about war. I doubt much whether such differences will arise between us and the English, for while our interests are in many respects antagonistic, we have so much in common that there will always be mutual sacrifices to prevent it."