

TARIFF TEACHERS CROSS-EXAMINED

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Tariff Teachers Cross-Examined by George Brickett

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GEORGE BRICKETT

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Yours truly
George B. Richett.

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PREFACE

THE purpose of "Tariff Teachers Cross-examined" is to attract the attention of the reader to the injustice of a law which the majority of voters instructed our representatives to enact.

It is not the intention of the author to express a word against the Congress and the president who enacted "The Tariff Act of 1909," or against the advocates of a protective tariff who advised the Committee of Ways and Means in preparing the various schedules.

There is no new truth, but, by a homely presentation of old tariff truths, it is hoped that some reader may be led to see his error in instructing Congress to "protect industries with a reasonable profit" to their owners.

GEORGE BRICKETT.

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THERE are twenty million voters in the United States who say they do not understand the work of a tariff, and more than fourteen million of them in November, 1908, voted to revise the tariff of 1897. Why should they vote to revise a tariff whose work they did not understand? It is assumed that they had been led to believe that the tariff was costing them too much, and they voted to reduce the cost, which they thought might be done by revising the tariff downward.

Two pledges for immediate revision were offered. The Republican party declared: "In all tariff legislation the true principle of protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with a reasonable profit to American industries," and the Democratic party promised to reduce import duties and gradually "restore the tariff to a revenue basis."

By a plurality of 1,200,000 we voted to maintain protection, and, as we live under an agreement to abide by the will of the majority, Congress revised the tariff in obedience of our instructions.

Since the revision of the tariff of 1897, many who voted with the majority in 1908 have expressed dissatisfaction with the revision. Why are they dissatisfied?

During the campaign of 1908, the sentiments expressed by the press and by speakers who favored protection impressed voters that the revision of the tariff would be downward, and the dissatisfaction seems to be for the reason that Congress obeyed the votes of the majority rather than the persiflage of campaign speakers. By our votes we directed Congress to maintain protection "with a reasonable profit to American industries." Congress spent weeks in revising the tariff of 1897 and maintaining protection. "The Tariff Act of 1909" is the revision.