

**RECONSTRUCTION: INDUSTRIAL,  
FINANCIAL, AND POLITICAL:  
LETTERS TO THE HON. HENRY  
WILSON, SENATOR FROM  
MASSACHUSETTS; PP. 3-75**

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**H. C. CAREY**

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LETTERS

TO THE

HON. HENRY WILSON,  
SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS.

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BY

H. C. CAREY.

PHILADELPHIA:  
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.  
1867.





You will find herewith the Letters of HENRY C. CAREY to the Hon. Henry Wilson, Senator in Congress from Massachusetts. Mr. Carey gave these Letters only a very limited circulation, owing to their special character. Some of his friends, however, have deemed it proper to place them in the hands of a wider circle of those deeply interested in the topics to which they relate. If Mr. Carey's language is strong and earnest, his facts and arguments are not less strong. It seems right that those who can appreciate the faithfulness to public interests, and great ability with which these subjects are treated, should have the opportunity. It is not expected that the sharp tone and plain dealing of Mr. Carey will be approved by even all of those who may in the main accept his views, but no one can read these Letters without being stirred up to a new interest and a better comprehension of the true industrial policy of the country. While they may not be suited to general circulation, they cannot fail of being useful to the narrower circle whose opinions and movements are most effective in determining the course of our domestic policy. The pungency of Mr. Carey's remarks indicates rather the great earnestness of the writer than any settled ill feeling towards that portion of the manufacturers of Massachusetts who enroll themselves upon the side of English free traders.

PHILADELPHIA,

December 4, 1867.



## LETTERS TO THE HON. HENRY WILSON,

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS.

### LETTER FIRST.

DEAR SIR:

In the recent Address at Saratoga your hearers were told that you were "accustomed to take hopeful views of public affairs;" that "during the darkest hours of the war" you had had "faith in the country, faith in our democratic institutions," and had "never doubted the result;" that, "since the close of the war," we had had "trials quite as severe," but you had "never had any doubt" that that result was "to be a great and united nation." Continuing on in the same direction, you spoke as follows:—

"We have passed through a bloody struggle. I am among those who believe that it was inevitable—that it was one of the great wars of the human family. It was a struggle on this continent between the democratic ideas of the Declaration of Independence and the system of human bondage, and in such a contest there could be no doubt of the result. We who stood by our country, and the cause of liberty, justice, and humanity, have triumphed. We have triumphed at a fearful cost. We are proud and strong; we have lifted the country toward the heavens; we are a greater people than ever before. We have destroyed human bondage; we have subjugated and conquered a brave and heroic portion of the country, and now the great work is done, I am for welcoming them back with warm and generous greetings, trusting that the causes of all our troubles have passed away forever, and that hereafter in the future we shall be friends and brothers as we were in the morning of the Republic."

The anticipations here presented are most pleasant and agreeable, and gladly would I accept them as likely to be realized were it possible for me so to do. That I do not, is due to the plain and simple fact that sad experience is now teaching the farming and mining States that for them the only "result" thus far recently achieved has been that of a change of masters, Massachusetts having, so far as regards material interests generally, taken the place of South Carolina, and New England at large, in reference to some of high importance, that of the States so recently in re-

bellion. Power has gone from the extreme South to the extreme North, and the sectionalism of to-day is likely, as I think, to prove quite as injurious as has already proved that of the past.

This, I pray you, my dear sir, to believe, is said in no unfriendly spirit. No one more than I respects the great mass of the people of Massachusetts. Few have given more full expression to their admiration of the estimable qualities by which New England people generally are so much distinguished. It is because of my respect for them, because of my desire for their continued happiness and prosperity, that I desire now, through you, to ask consideration of the facts, that they now exercise a political power wholly disproportioned to their numbers; that the State in which I reside, with *two* Senators, has a population nearly equal to that of New England with *twelve* Senators; that, as a consequence, the Senate, as regards economical questions generally, is now in frequent conflict with the House; that the day is at hand when there will be a dozen States, each one of which will outnumber all New England; that abolition of slavery has removed the difficulties which so long had stood in the way of union between the Centre and the South; that of all the States there are none that, for that reason, should so studiously as your own avoid suspicion of improper use of power; that to enable the East to maintain its present political position there is needed a most discreet, most careful, most magnanimous exercise thereof; and that, for want of that care, for want of that discretion, for want of that magnanimity, the Union is to-day, in my belief, more endangered than it had been in the years by which the war had been immediately preceded.

That you will *now* believe this I do not at all expect. Neither did I expect Mr. Dallas to believe me when, less than ten years since, in answer to a question as to when the Capitol would be completed, I told him that it would be "just about the time when the Union would be dissolved." "Nothing," as I then added, "could stand against a system which, like that of the tariff of 1846, made Liverpool the centre of exchange among ourselves and with the world at large, and made of our railroads mere conduits to be used for carrying to Britain the soil of the country in the form of wheat, corn, tobacco, and cotton. It would," as I continued, "ruin any country of the world." Of this he did not *then* believe a single word. Nevertheless, two years afterwards, when *too late*, he did believe it. So, as I fear, will it be with your constituents and yourself. They will believe nothing of the danger until the ruin shall have come, as, without a change of policy, come it must, and before the close of the next decade.

An enlightened foreigner, one who had had abundant opportunities for studying our people, said of them, but a few years since, that "none so soon forgot yesterday." Nothing was ever more truly said. Rarely, if ever, do we study the past. We never, in any manner, in our public affairs, profit by experience, whether our own or that of others. Be the question before us what it may,

great or small, it is treated precisely as if none such had, here or elsewhere, ever before arisen; and hence it is that our movements so much resemble those of a blind giant, daily forced to look for advice to the one-eyed dwarfs by whom we are surrounded. Were it otherwise—could our people, North and South, East and West, but be persuaded to study a very little of *their own* history—could it, do you think, be made to pay for Britain to employ so many of her people, Irish and English, Christian and Hebrew, in the work of teaching them the advantage to be derived from maintaining and increasing their dependence upon a country whose movements were becoming daily more irregular and uncertain; whose power for self direction was diminishing with each succeeding year; one that to-day had not, outside of this Union, a friend on earth; one that had already passed its zenith, and for the reason that the societary ruin by which she was surrounded was in the direct ratio of the reliance of others on her friendship? Seeking evidence of this, let me beg you to look to Ireland, the land of “popular famines;” to Turkey, with which she has for centuries been in close free trade alliance; to Portugal, once the most valuable of her customers; to India, in which the millions who formerly were occupied in the cotton manufacture, are now “festering in compulsory idleness;” to China, brought to a state of anarchy by means of wars made for maintaining the illicit opium trade; to Japan, likely, according to Earl Grey, soon to be reduced to the condition in which China now exists; to Australia, now little more than a great sheep walk, whose occupants, in default of any market for their products, are now again converting their flocks into tallow; to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, both abounding in coal and ores, while compelled to import all the iron they use; and finally, to Canada, whose population has for the past few years been steadily passing to the land of the stars and stripes, seeking there the *protection* denied to them at home. Look where you may, you will find prosperity to exist *in the inverse ratio of the connection with Britain*. Look even to France and see that loss of position before the world has gone hand in hand with her adoption of the British system. Seeking evidence of these decaying tendencies, you may with advantage turn to the last *Edinburgh Review*, finding therein a proposition for military alliance between the two countries as the *only* mode of preventing further loss of caste.

Britain has been long engaged in building an inverted pyramid; but at no period has her progress in that direction been so rapid as within the last twenty years, the free trade period. The important-class of small landholders so much admired by Adam Smith—that class which so long had constituted the right arm of British strength—has now almost entirely disappeared, half of the land of England being owned by 150 men, and half of that of Scotland by a single dozen. So, too, is it in regard to all industrial pursuits, a perpetual series of crises having crushed out the smaller