

A Short Talk to New York Workingmen.

[From the New York Sun, May 27th, 1888.]

There is only one country in Europe in which the wages of labor are within a half of what they are in this country. That is Great Britain.

Wages in Germany, France, Belgium, and Switzerland are not one-third of what they are here. Those of Italy are not one-quarter.

One duty of government is to protect the labor of its citizens. Last year cheap foreign labor was imported into the United States in the shape of manufactured goods to the value of \$202,312,768. This was a great wrong to American labor. In that immense amount of imports, permitted by our insufficient and defective tariff, the labor of women employed in the Manchester, England, cotton mills, whose wages do not average \$99 a year, came into competition with the higher priced labor of our Southern and Northern cotton spinners. In that mass of imports was the labor of German factory workmen averaging less than \$115 a year, and that of women averaging less than \$50 a year.

Munich is a gallery and centre of art. German women with as many as six children saw wood in its streets for 15 cents a day. May a merciful God sink the United States ten thousand feet under the sea before the hideous spectacle shall become an incident of our civilization!

Nearly seven hundred million dollars' worth of the starvation labor of Europe in the form of manufactured goods imported into this country last year! That which came from Belgium in bales and boxes represented the wages of 25 cents a day for women and 45 cents for men; and the highest priced labor in loose cargoes of Belgian steel and iron represented wages less than 80 cents a day. Compared with these, the wages of Carnegie's men at Braddock are the incomes of princes.

Italian labor in Italian merchandise was imported into this country last year, in competition with American labor, at prices that should fill sensitive souls with horror, and alarm the thoughtful for the future of the human race. The pay in the cotton factories of Naples is 20 cents a day; of the Neapolitan marble and granite cutters, from 40 to 50 cents a day, according to skill; of coachmen, 30 cents; of women in lace factories, 15 cents, and girls, 7 cents; of soldiers, in the army, \$2 a month. Of all the workmen in the glass works of Italy, only the skilled blowers receive as high as a dollar a day, and laborers on farms, hoeing or making hay, from 15 to 18 cents a day, working from sun to sun. God save America from such wages!

In the Swiss silk goods which came into our half-protected country last year in those seven hundred millions of imports, was the skilled labor of men at 41 cents a day, and of women at 29 cents, both competing with the silk weavers of Paterson, New York, Philadelphia and Cheney. Glasgow, in Scotland, is the steamship factory of the world, and its blast furnace owners and iron rollers howl for free trade day and night. Of the families in that manufacturing Sodom 41,000 out of 150,000 live in one room, and half of the men and women in the city are chronically out of work. That one room for a family of father, mother, daughters and sons tells what wages are in Scotland, and how they drag humanity down into beastliabity and misery.

Brothers! the Mills bill to reduce the tariff is the first step to that one room for an American family. Fight it without delay, and fight it to its death; and then make your tariff so protective as to shut out cheap foreign labor in the form of manufactured goods.