

productive of better feeling among our professional brethren in France. I remember too keenly the difficulty which I experienced the last time I was there in convincing them that we, who owe so much to France, were not secretly in sympathy with the tax. The prospect of being able to bear to them from an eyewitness the description of our coming effort is a large factor in my decision to be present at the congress, and to spend the necessary time there while trying to crowd six weeks' work into the two weeks which elapse before my departure for Paris. With all good wishes for our success,

I am, most respectfully, yours,

WILL H. LOW.

And here's that clever editor and author who once passed a summer in a garden:

BROOK FARM, HARTFORD, CONN.

I expect to go to Washington soon, but doubt if I can get there for the meeting on the 17th. I am with you, heart, soul, and mind in the abolition of the tariff on art. It is just a relic of barbarism and an advertisement of national ignorance. I should think an art association might do good in turning public sentiment to demand the repeal of duties. I should also think an annual exhibition of pictures good means of education anywhere, and especially needed in Washington.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

It goes without saying that His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, favors our movement:

It is only by bringing foreign works of art into competition with our own that we fully recognize our shortcomings and are aroused to emulation. I am willing to join your association, and regret that my engagement will not permit me to attend your convention on Tuesday.

Faithfully, yours,

J. CARDINAL GIBBONS.

CHICAGO, May 10, 1892.

Like most artists I am for free art and always have been. I deeply regret that I can not attend the Second National Art Convention, as I am one of the few survivors that acted in the first, held in Washington in 1859. Considerable interest was manifested by Congress. The Hon. Humphrey Marshall, of Kentucky, was chairman of the committee that had this matter in charge. A national art commission was appointed, consisting of H. K. Brown, the sculptor; Kensett, the noted landscape painter; and G. R. Lambdin, of Philadelphia. These gentlemen were for one year in power and salaried, and made a report on national art. The outbreak of the war swept the entire matter into oblivion. Hoping that success may crown your efforts,

I am, yours, very truly,

PETER BAUMGRAS.

NEW YORK, May 14, 1892.

I regret extremely to lose the pleasure and the honor of joining with the members of the National Art Association on an occasion so important for the advancement of art in our country. The watchword will surely be "free art" and I heartily wish success to that generous idea. Any action which will tend to the instruction of our citizens in the principles of true art, or to the founding of schools or museums for such a purpose, should be hailed with delight by all who would add to the refinement, the enjoyment, and the wealth of the masses of our people.

The National Art Association should be a center of influence in all such ways. Confident that it will so prove, and wishing it all prosperity, I am,

Sincerely yours,

D. HUNTINGTON.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., *May 14, 1892.*

It is needless to state my own position on the subject of free art, which will come before the Congress. Together with all artists I can but feel a sense of shame at the false position we have long been kept in through the unjust and unreasonable tax which has been put upon works of art entering this country. Such a duty as at present imposed can only be regarded in the nature of a fine. It has for some time seemed to me that if the true object of a tariff on foreign art works was to foster American art, that some systematic efforts should be made to that end. If we must have a duty on pictures, I would suggest that the revenue derived from it be set aside for the purpose of establishing some art institution of a broad character, a national art school or museum, for instance, or let it form a fund for the founding of student scholarships or for the purchase of foreign pictures as a species of poetic justice.

If an act of Congress making such a plan possible were passed, it could at least be said in favor of the present tax that an infant art was being fostered alongside of an infant beet-sugar industry. But perhaps my own views are not of so much interest as some sort of a statement would be concerning art here in the West, and the effect that the removal of the tariff would have on its development.

There is a certain quality in bad painting, much abhorred by artists, designated as "woolly." This disparaging epithet is also very often applied to the section of the country from which I address you, though in this particular we consider ourselves several miles east of west. As a matter of fact, since the free wool agitation, we claim no monopoly in this article. Seriously speaking, however, the awakening interest in art in the East is making itself felt throughout the West in various channels. In all newly developed country there is a tendency to regard art as a luxury, and not as an educational or humanizing necessity. Until recently our Western statesmen, as well as those from other sections of the country, have been far too inclined to take this view of art, but I have noticed a change of sentiment in this matter of late which is most encouraging. The leading papers here have also, without regard to party politics, been very outspoken and hearty in their advocacy of free art.

The argument is often advanced that the country would be flooded by poor and cheap pictures were the duty to be removed; but the fact is overlooked that the comparatively small duty on a cheap picture acts as no bar to its admission, while any duty must have a tendency to keep out of the country a high class of pictures such as would be of the greatest benefit to us. Let us look for a moment at the material side of the question. It is a truth not to be disputed that competition in any department of the arts and industries is productive of the highest results, and such results command the quickest and largest returns. Let art be free, and have it known that the artists of this country have taken the stand they have in favor of it, and picture collectors and people in general will look upon American artists in a new light; for it will show that instead of needing protection they rather court competition. I am convinced that the art congress, at which I had hoped to be present, is but the outgrowth of a sentiment which will ultimately take the form of some national recognition and encouragement of art.

One link in the chain of achievements of France is made mighty by the fostering care she bestows on her arts. Such a link in our development, I believe, is being forged by the body now assembled; and a golden one it will be in more than the baser sense of the term. The throwing open of our portals to the art of the world is an event which must surely come. For as some one once said, "Time is on our side." With my greatest respect to you, and the body you represent,

I am, very cordially, yours.

DOUGLAS VOLK.

NEW YORK, *May 14, 1892.*

I regret not being able to get to Washington to assist personally in the festivities of the art congress you have so ably worked for, and I sincerely hope it will result in bringing about the entire removal of tariff on works of art, and to cause our representatives to consider more seriously the claims and uses of the art of our country.

Thanking you for your able and persistent labor in our cause, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

R. SWAIN GIFFORD.

NEW YORK, *May 15, 1892.*

At this (almost) last moment I find that I will be unavoidably prevented from making one of the party which leaves New York to-morrow to further the good cause of abolishing the tariff on art.

I regret this the more as I heard yesterday that many painters in France still

doubt that we artists here really wish the duty removed. So many of us have been on record for years as favoring free art that I would like to ask you, if it were possible, in some way through your widely circulated Washington, to give the list in full of the artists in favor of free art. These formidable numbers might impress the painters abroad, and put on record many who, although heartily favoring the movement, may be unable to attend the congress.

With sincere wishes that the purposes of the convention may be realized, believe me,

Yours very truly,

FRANK FOWLER.

BALTIMORE, May 16, 1892.

I wish it were in my power to be present at the National Art Congress, but unfortunately my engagements prevent. I feel the deepest interest in the work you are doing, and have great hopes of your ultimate success.

The present law is, as you justly say, most oppressive, and a discredit to us as a nation. American artists must look to the Old World for inspiration and education. I feel sure that the artists, those who are artists in reality and not in name, those whom this law is supposed to protect, would be among the first to repudiate it. They have, many of them, gained their knowledge in foreign schools and galleries, and must realize the unfair attitude in which America is now placed.

With all good wishes for the success you have so fairly inaugurated, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

MARY F. GARRETT.

Mr. Lodge advised members of the National Art Congress to appeal to the press. The press needs no conversion. It has championed our cause for the last two years. Here are two editors who have joined our association, one of them being no less than our late minister to France.

OFFICE OF THE PRESS, New York, May 14.

I join the association with pleasure.

BRADFORD MERRILL.

NEW YORK TRIBUNE, May 16, 1892.

I am glad to become a member of your association on your invitation and to cooperate in any way I can in your effort for free art. I firmly believe, as I had occasion to say at a recent chamber of commerce banquet, that for a nation which wishes to reach the market of the world for the best, and therefore the most profitable things, free art is as vital as free air.

WITELAW REID.

Mr. BIERSTADT. I will now introduce Mr. J. Carroll Beckwith, guest of the National Art Association and president of the Free Art League.

STATEMENT OF MR. J. CARROLL BECKWITH.

Mr. BECKWITH said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I represent here an organization which to-day has a registered membership of 641 American artists and artisans, and those interested in art and the production of pictures, who have banded themselves together for the purpose of securing the removal of the duty on works of art. We have started with that object and we are going to work for that end.

Our work will not end until we have obtained the removal of the duty on works of art. We are artists, and not rainbow chasers. We are practical workers in this matter, and we propose to act upon practical methods.

We understand readily that you gentlemen will undoubtedly, after you fully understand the matter, agree that art should be free. The

American artists desire no protection whatever. They know that the tariff is not for a revenue duty, it being so small. Art is educational, and I want to tell you why: Ever since the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 there has been growing in this country an art industry, such as the manufacture of carpets, wall paper, oil cloths, prints, and calicoes, and other industries which require a high character of special designs. The designers in those industries are imported almost entirely. Through the efforts of a number of art schools scattered throughout the country, and which are growing, we have been able to put designers into these factories.

This morning I had a conversation with Mr. Fuller, one of the largest manufacturers of wall paper in this country, regarding the establishment of special schools for the teaching of design in wall paper. Instructions in all these branches are now being given by the schools all over this country. The artists can not deal with those people, unless they can educate themselves. We can not do that while you keep a wall around us. We must have works of art in this country if we want to improve.

Mr. BRYAN. You are not in favor of free wall paper?

Mr. BECKWITH. We know, after the experience we have had, that it is the desire of you gentlemen to express the will of your constituents more or less and, therefore, we are going to make our work tell; we are going to work for votes. Hundreds of art students come from the West and South and go into these different schools throughout the country; and schools are maintained sometimes through gifts, but generally through their own contributions. The idea that has been promulgated is that works of art should be classed as luxuries. This is one of the fallacies that is only used to start people wrong. Any man who stops to think a moment will realize that works of art with their manifold results are not to be classed with champagne, laces, and silks, and the idea is not prevalent. It is not prevalent among the parents of the families of those students.

I have in my school in New York 140 students from all parts of the country. Do you suppose that the parents of those students are in accord with that? If we have got to carry on a campaign of education on this subject we are going to do it right. We are going to insist upon it being put where it belongs; that is, it must be made an educational measure.

Who is it that wants the duty removed from works of art? It is the artists. They are the ones who have something at stake.

Mr. COCKRAN. Are you in correspondence with the libraries and educational institutions throughout the country in relation to this matter?

Mr. BECKWITH. The Free Art League has several college people among its members.

Mr. BRYAN. You want foreign as well as American art free? Do you know the amount of revenue derived from the art tariff?

Miss FIELD [handing Mr. Beckwith a paper]. Here is the information. I think it is on the bottom of that page giving the receipts for the last year.

Mr. BECKWITH. Under the 15 per cent rate of 1891 it was \$287,807.19. Under the 30 per cent rate it was \$235,000.

Mr. BRYAN. It has been larger under the 15 per cent rate than under the 30 per cent rate?

Mr. BECKWITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. BRYAN. Have you any idea of the average value of the pictures?

Mr. BECKWITH. It is difficult to state. They are brought in at very high figures, sometimes.

Mr. BRYAN. What is the highest in value?

Mr. BECKWITH. The highest in value was that of Rembrandt. It was bought for \$50,000.

Mr. BRYAN. For whom was it purchased?

Mr. BECKWITH. Mr. H. O. Havemeyer of New York.

Mr. BRYAN. What is the next largest?

Mr. BECKWITH. Mr. Henry Hilton brought in one, which is now the property of New York City.

Mr. BRYAN. Works of art for public purposes come in free now.

Mr. BECKWITH. When absolutely owned by public institutions, they come in free, I believe; but if an individual imports a picture, he pays the 15 per cent duty, although he may have declared his intention of giving it to a museum.

Mr. BRYAN. If he imports it himself, he has to pay; but if it is for a public institution, it comes in free?

Mr. BECKWITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. BIERSTADT. I would like to introduce Mr. William A. Coffin, appointed to represent the Society of American Artists:

STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM A. COFFIN, OF NEW YORK.

Mr. COFFIN addressed the committee; he said:

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: We want you to feel that we are in earnest about this matter, because we are American artists. We live here. We do not want to go to Europe to stay. We are going to stay in New York and the other cities. We are interested in our business. We are convinced that the tariff on works of art is a direct impediment to us and that the tax takes money out of our pockets. It is from that selfish point of view that we base some of our claims and we base the others on public good.

I suppose you all remember the exhibition of works of art in the Centennial of 1876. There was no duty on the pictures exhibited at Philadelphia. Since that time there has been a great interest in fine arts developed in the United States, and whatever may have been the condition of the fine arts before that exhibition, it is beyond dispute that it has grown so much and become so important that it can scarcely now be neglected. Anyone who is conversant with the history of the fine arts in the United States knows this. People have told me in Europe that they considered that there was a most remarkable development of the fine arts in this country; that they were not surprised at the inventions of various sorts in this country, but they did not see how we had gotten along so fast in art. They see that in times to come that probably instead of art coming from them to us it will go from us to them. At any rate the point I wanted to make is that it is a subject in which a vast interest is being taken and in which schools are being begun which will afford opportunity for education, not only in the eastern cities, but throughout the country. To these schools young people are coming from all parts of the country, and there is a widespread interest in them.

The duty on works of art is not a protective one. I do not know why that duty was ever put on. The artists did not want it. The question of competition in works of art does not come in in that case as it does in manufactures because when a man goes into a picture shop to buy a

picture, he wants one by John Smith. If he can not get the picture he wants, he will not buy one by John Brown and pay \$500 for it. He wants a certain picture because he knows the reputation of the man and he wants that particular work. A man going to buy a piece of silk may want a certain make, but the merchant can easily convince him that another piece is just as good and if the merchant will sell it a little cheaper, the customer will buy it. The merchant can not do that with a man who wants a picture made by a particular artist, and therefore I say that sort of dealing can not be done in our business.

It is always urged by those opposed to us that the tax on works of art imported into this country is a tax on luxury and that therefore the rich can afford to buy pictures and the poor can not. That, if we took the duty off works of art it would necessitate leaving it on articles which the poor use or consume. This is a mistake. We hold that works of art when they are brought into this country, must be brought in by people who have the money to pay for them. These works come here, and they are owned, it is true, by wealthy men for a time (who are the only persons who have money to buy them), but in that way they get into museums. They are kept in the cities, in the large public institutions, and being seen in that way, by both rich and poor, become educative. The poor people would never see them if they were not brought in by the rich.

Another thing that we hold is that it is plain that art is not a luxury for it can not be consumed. Champagne can be drunk and silk can be worn out, but they are luxuries. A picture is not drunk or worn out. When it comes, it comes to stay. When a man is done with it, it is sold to somebody else. It is not put in a bag but is always on view and everybody sees it. We hold that pictures are educators, and consequently the tax on works of art is a tax on education. It is an impediment to education. That makes it more important that the duty should be removed; for the people at large get an educational benefit from it, although it is initiated by the rich.

American artists do not represent any coterie or clique. They do not want this tax on art. We hold that this duty on foreign works puts us in an undesirable attitude. The buyer does not think. It costs more to get the foreign pictures into the dealer's hands. The dealer goes so far as to say, "Here is a picture that cost me 100 francs. It is a small price, but I paid a duty on it and I have got it for sale." The buyer might buy an American picture just as well, but the dealer will say, "We have got some American pictures, but these are much better." If we did not have this hanging over us I think we should not suffer as we do.

It has been said that the removal of the duty would cause a vast influx of bad pictures, and that the duty keeps them out. I do not think so. I do not think there would be any more market for bad pictures than there is now. We have bad pictures by American artists. In buying a work of art people want a particular thing for a particular reason, and if they can not get it they do not feel compelled to buy something else. If art were free, the advantage from a financial point of view would be incalculable.

I wish we had some statistics about the value of manufactures in France. I think if art were free it would tend in a decided way to increase the quality of designs in American manufactures of several kinds. The point is that we do not get designs by the establishment of industrial schools. We must educate the public taste. You must have the tastes of the people so cultivated that they can not endure

the sight of an ugly chair, a bad piece of furniture, or an ugly building. That state of cultivation can only be obtained by encouraging the fine arts, painting and sculpture. The other things will come afterwards.

STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN ARMSTRONG CHANLER.

MR. CHANLER said: There has been a movement in art within the last year or two looking toward the education of the public schools, not schools in which training in art is taught alone, but the ordinary public schools. The men interested in this movement are getting together to furnish money for this purpose. The authorities who have control of the schools have accepted this proposition, and state that it will be a great educator. More than that, I can say that the cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cincinnati are all interested in this movement, not only in an educational point of view, but for free art. I have visited all of those places, with the exception of Cincinnati, and I shall go there on Saturday, in connection with education in art. For the last eighteen months \$60,000 have been spent by citizens of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia for the purpose of sending pupils to Paris. Two men are now in Paris, one from Boston and one from New York. This shows the interest in art as an educator.

Such institutions as the National Academy of Design, in New York, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Cincinnati Museum of Fine Arts are all interested in this. They are all undertaking to send men abroad. The men are sent according to competitive examinations, and these institutions decide who shall be sent.

MR. BIERSTADT. We will now hear from Mr. Edward E. Simmons, of Massachusetts.

STATEMENT OF MR. EDWARD E. SIMMONS, OF MASSACHUSETTS.

MR. SIMMONS said: I think the only reason why I have been asked to address this committee to-day must be because I have been away for a great number of years. I have been thirteen years in France, England, and Spain, and, consequently, I do not know very much of what has been going on over here. It seems to me, however, that something might be said by way of comparison with what has been done in England, France, and the other countries upon this subject.

France is an imitative nation, and I think she has increased her power of imitation. Consider the commercial value of art as such! The words, "artist," "art," and "artisan," are somewhat misleading. They simply mean the ability of a man with his head and hands to make things that are pretty to look at. Those are principally embraced in literature, music, and the fine arts. France does not encourage literature or music to the extent which she does the fine arts. Musicians and writers are constantly complaining of that. They say we get the lion's share; and complain that we get \$30,000 a year for services and various other advantages. The musician is left entirely alone until he has made a reputation enough to cause the public to pay him.

The French people say that a poor writer uses only a few quires of paper a year, and brings no money into the country. The artist does; the poorest painter brings the most. His colors cost just as much, and the canvas costs more, because he wastes more of it. It is this man-



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