

THE "DECAYING INDUSTRIES" OF NEW ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—The article of Mr. Moberly, in THE WEEK of November 15th, contains a reference to the "decaying industries," "deserted factories," "ruined foundries," "shrinkage in farm lands," and "loss in population" of the New England States.

Within half a mile of where I write are the mills of three large cotton companies which employ altogether about 6,000 hands. They all pay fat dividends, and, from their surpluses, are every year erecting new buildings and adding new machinery. The largest of them pays seven per cent. half-yearly, and a few months ago declared an extra dividend of forty per cent. to relieve its plethoric surplus.

I have before me the report of this year's dividends declared by the cotton companies at Fall River, Mass., the largest cotton manufacturing centre in the United States. There are thirty-three cotton companies located there, with a total capital stock of \$18,558,000. The dividends paid to stockholders this year amount to \$1,850,700, or 9.97 per cent. upon the stock. Last year the dividends of the same mills amounted to \$1,710,790 on \$17,358,000, and the year before to \$1,427,990. One company this year paid twenty per cent. upon its capital, another paid twelve, two paid twenty-four each, two seventeen each, one fourteen, and so on. Moreover, the report says that the dividends represented but a fraction of the earnings. New machinery was paid for, new buildings erected, debts cleared off, and large sums charged off to depreciation. Of course, this is an exceptional showing, but I do not know of any industry in New England that is not prosperous, unless possibly it may be some branches of the iron trade, though just across the river in Biddeford there is a large foundry and machine shop which is, and has for years been very prosperous.

As to the shrinkage in the value of New England farm lands, that was inevitable after the railroads had cheapened transportation from the great grain area of the west. The same influences reduced the value of the farm lands of old England, and would have a similar effect upon France and Germany, but for the protection tariffs of those countries.

The sons of New England preferred the cities, or big garden farms on the prairie, to the rock-ribbed hills of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Under these circumstances farm lands in the poorer sections of New England, and especially in the States mentioned, have depreciated in value, and some of the towns have actually lost in population, though on the whole, the advance in population in New England has been steady, and, in at least three of the States, rapid. In the less-favoured localities farms have been abandoned, and are gradually turning again into forest, from which, indeed, they never would have been reclaimed by a less hardy and thrifty race than the early New Englanders, the same stock to which Ontario owes so much of her intelligence and thrift.

But a point to be noted is, that the sons who have left the farms of New England for other occupations and localities, have not left the country. They are to be found on the Pacific slope, they swarm in the cities of the great central plain, and even the south responds to the magic of their energy and enterprise. They have not been obliged to go to Mexico or Canada to better their condition. They are fortunate in that the necessities of their surroundings did not force them to expatriate themselves. They are still Americans. Maine's loss is New York's gain, or California's, or Minnesota's, or Alabama's.

The only other thing to be noted in connection with this movement of young New Englanders is, that the places of those who leave are eagerly taken by Canadians, showing evidently that in the opinion of the latter, the conditions even here are superior to those of their birth-place. Every train brings them across the line. They come from Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The mills are filled with French-Canadians, who are everywhere distinguishable by their *patois*, of which they are as tenacious as in Canada. They number 6,000 or 7,000 in Biddeford, and some of the larger manufacturing cities have two or three times as many. The expatriated Blue Noses are only discoverable by investigation. They mingle with the native stock, and become as good Yankees as those to the manner born.

The value of these few dry facts is in the application thereof. W. E. RANEY.

Saco, Me., Nov. 22.

TRUE TALE.

THE evolution of a smart black-coated city canvasser of strongly American tendencies from a Cockney market-gardener happened in this wise:

Robin Goodfellow—in reality, the name of the individual, and no mere literary trick—was at one period of his existence a fine typical colonial Cockney. His accent was of the purest London description, and his entire personality one that by no endeavour could long be disassociated from London stones and London streets. Of medium height, small, keen, pleasant blue eyes, sandy complexion, and a good red skin, rosier on damp days, as if true to the prevailing foggiest of his native isle (he was a Wandsworth man, and came out, leaving six brothers and a sister behind him), you knew him for an Englishman long before you spoke with him. And when you did speak

with him you were answered deferentially yet without lapse of self-respect, and a pleasant almost inviting jocularity animated every sentence. The man with bared red arms, a blue cotton shirt, and an old pipe oftener than not in his mouth, served out greens and healing herbs, plants, bulbs and seeds, with unflinching good temper and the utmost conscientiousness. Living, as he did, in a small though superior Canadian town, he had customers who remained with him year after year, for the very sufficient reason that he uniformly treated them well and gave good stuff for the money. His house looked at the back upon a small garden, every inch of which, however, was made to tell, being under unflagging cultivation. His two children (he was a widower) assisted in the gardening, but the brunt of the work, and all the thinking, was assuredly done by Goodfellow himself. What asparagus could be compared to his, or whose pansy-beds, or whose boxes of mignonette? As for his early potatoes there was an annual scramble to get them, since the patch was small but the quality superior. A wonderful charm appeared to follow everything he touched, and Goodfellow, it might be said, was on the way to fortune.

Alas! no. Poor Robin! He had a grave fault. He did not wear the blue ribbon. There were days when his two daughters kindly waited in the little shop instead of himself, and watered the sods and weeded out the beds at the back. On these occasions Goodfellow was rarely seen by the townspeople and never by his customers, for he had a very strong sense of personal pride about him. Yet, for all the latter, this superior market-gardener could not overcome his fault. Gentle, industrious and virtuous, he had yet within him the fatal germ of a habit, which as yet had left few traces, although no friendly fiction could altogether consign it to oblivion. As "father" who could be kinder than poor Goodfellow? When you heard the two girls talk it was always of "father," and scores of people could tell you dozens of stories about the simple good-nature, the genial charm, the unflinching temper, even, of the blue-shirted vendor of herbs and vegetables. No Hodge, but rather a Tom Pinch behind a counter, there was hardly a fault to be found with him. And if he were kind and sympathizing to inferiors, crippled old men, rheumatic old women, deformed children, cast-off curs—even a lame and impotent cow which he kept in a neighbouring common—how respectable and proper his easy, charming deference to superiors?

One day Robin, softly whistling to himself among his pots and bags and tools, in an outhouse leading from the shop, looked up and saw before him a well-dressed stranger in whose hard, clean-shaven features however he recalled something belonging to his life in the Old Country. The man put out his hand and clapped Robin on the back, and, at the sound of his voice saying "How are ye?" in mixed Americo-Hibernian accents, he recognized him. It was a coarser-monger of Irish descent he had once known quite intimately at Wandsworth. Robin's simple surprise was not much greater than that of the Irishman, Dennis McGinn.

"I shouldn't have known ye," repeated Goodfellow, brushing the earth from his trousers and shirt, and following his visitor back into the shop. "I shouldn't have known ye."

Dennis complacently took a stool and opened his light flash overcoat. A checked cheviot of hideous pattern adorned him, and tie, hat, boots, linen and jewellery were all new, of imposing if not æsthetic hue and style, and he presented altogether an unmistakeably prosperous and knowing air. As for Goodfellow, he surveyed him with admiration quite free from envy. But Dennis, noting the small dark shop, the bags and bundles of herbs and seeds, the general poor aspect of things, and Goodfellow's coatless, tireless self, shook his well-oiled head, and looked steadily at Robin.

"Ye're just the same," he said. "An' ye'll never be any better. Neither no better nor no wurrse. I'd have little patience wid ye if I was here to see ye, meddlin' all day with weeds and potions, like to an old witch beyant in Ireland. I moind her well—she was a McGinn too. Ye wouldn't have known me, did ye say, Robin Goodfellow? It's slow ye always were, but I don't wonder at ye." And Dennis stood up and displayed his important person, magnificently arrayed in cheap tweed and flash jewellery.

Still, the market-gardener was above envy. It was not until McGinn questioned him about his habits that his face fell and his heart sank within him.

"I see," said Dennis, mournfully shaking his head and beginning to light a monster cigar, "It's the same wid ye here as it was in the ould country. Come—why don't ye fight it down, live it down, give up this pokin' along ould business and start out in something fresh and be a man?"

Goodfellow made no decisive reply, hardly an audible one. He rather changed the subject by taking up the two large port-folios which his friend Dennis McGinn had left upon the counter, and opening them was much impressed by the magnitude and beauty of the books, engravings and chromos therein contained. Dennis lost no time in displaying these to their fullest advantage, and actually succeeded in talking poor Robin into purchasing two gigantic chromos, one of Lake Geneva, the other of the Capitol at Washington. They were unframed, but highly glazed, richly coloured, and as Dennis put it "all ready for framing," and as for the cost of the latter essential, Goodfellow could of course take his own time.

Now, during this interview one of the market-gardener's girls had come into the shop for an onion or something,

and had been as much struck by the dashing exterior of McGinn as the susceptible Milesian was by the vision of an English-checked lass of eighteen with yet a colonial neatness and superiority of apparel that heightened her natural charms of figure and complexion. McGinn, to be brief, stayed longer than he intended, both on that occasion and subsequently, and Goodfellow fell more and more under his influence.

The shop began to be neglected, not for convivial reasons, for the Irishman was superior to all temptations of the palate, but from the long conversations that Robin held with his friend, which were always to the effect that Goodfellow should give up his business as a slow-paying, dismal, old-time concern, and go in with McGinn. To do the Irishman justice, he was anxious that Robin—a prospective father-in-law—should reform, and to this end he laboured assiduously.

Finally, the result he wished for came about, and Goodfellow, shamed out of his weakness and almost entirely cured, left his Canadian home with his daughters to seek a new fortune in the United States. His savings, quite a considerable sum, went with him, and once in the West, Dennis procured for him new clothing, a good position as a canvasser and soon married the eldest daughter.

Behold, two years afterwards, when Goodfellow is once more in his old Canadian home, the change! He is grown stout, even portly, wears his sandy hair combed straight back and allows it to curl low upon the back of his neck. His clothes are black, and new and comfortable. His boots shine, and rings glitter upon either little finger. His hat is tall and shining, and worn a trifle to one side. He walks with a prosperous, yet somewhat cunning air. He wears a complacent, self-satisfied, broad and somewhat triumphant smile. His accent has changed, so that you would never dream of his being an Englishman born. He is not so kind to his daughters as he used to be. He is a trifle rude to inferiors, especially street-car conductors (presumably inferiors), and is patronizing and cringing all at once to superiors. He is perfectly steady, temperate, a reformed man. He makes a fair living and has grown abnormally fond of money; hides it and secretes it, his girls say. "Father is not what he used to be," they sometimes say, then reproach themselves for saying it.

Has he improved?

ART NOTES.

L. R. O'BRIEN is expected to return to Toronto shortly. He sails from England at the close of this month, and writes that he will bring a collection of water-colours, depicting the picturesque scenery of England, with which he has been much occupied.

THE Art Students' League have been showing their summer's sketches at their rooms, over the Imperial Bank, on Wellington Street. The work shown is mostly good, honest study from nature, and the league is deserving of encouragement and success.

THE exhibition of pictures opened at the new Toronto Art Gallery in connection with the Academy of Music, on Friday evening last, is the most important collection of paintings that has been exhibited in Toronto for some time. A notice of some of the principal pictures will appear next week. The gallery is open daily.

THE Ontario Society of Artists are busy preparing their plans for carrying out the scheme of erecting a building in Toronto for art purposes. They are meeting at the office of Mr. Gagen every Tuesday for this purpose, and expect shortly to proceed with the practical part of the undertaking. Their plans will shortly be made public. TEMPLAR.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

MRS. LANGTRY means to signalise her management of the St. James Theatre by an early Shakespearian revival, and the play is to be "As You Like it," in which she will, of course, appear as Rosalind. Mr. Arthur Bouchier has been engaged for the character of Jaques.

MR. HENRY GADSBY is writing a cantata for Queen's College, Oxford, to be performed there in May next. The libretto is founded on the story of Ulysses and the Cyclops. He has also just completed a ballad for chorus and orchestra, the words of which are selected from the eleventh poem of Longfellow's "Saga of King Olaf."

IT is hard to see just where a prominent London banquet comes in—certainly, not perhaps, in "Music," or in "The Drama," but as entertainments of a special kind, which of course they are, they may not be very far removed from the usual matter of this column.

A BANQUET was given at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, on Wednesday evening, to celebrate the centenary of the existence of the well-known firm of A. & F. Pears, the occasion being made memorable by the presentation of a handsome testimonial to Mr. T. J. Barratt, the managing partner of the firm, in recognition of the great services he has rendered to printing, artistic, and kindred enterprises, by the active part he has taken in the development of advertising in all its branches. The idea of the presentation originated in the mind of a well-known London newspaper proprietor, and no sooner had the suggestion been made than it was warmly taken up, and began to assume practicable shape by the formation of an influential committee. The chairman for the occasion was Sir Algernon Borthwick, Bart., M.P., and the company was a distinguished one. Over 200 guests sat down to the ban-