

INDUSTRIAL WORLD

AND NATIONAL ECONOMIST.

DEVOTED TO HOME INDUSTRIES, COMMERCE, FINANCE, INSURANCE, RAILROADS AND MINING

Vol. I—No. 6.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 1880.

\$3 PER ANNUM.

THE Industrial World

AND NATIONAL ECONOMIST

Published every Thursday, by the INDUSTRIAL WORLD PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Subscription, per Annum, in Advance, \$3.00.

OFFICES: MONTREAL, OTTAWA, TORONTO.

Communications, and all letters, must be addressed to INDUSTRIAL WORLD PUBLISHING CO., P. O. Drawer, 1019, OTTAWA, ONT.

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THE COBDEN CLUB DINNER.

The annual dinner of the Cobden Club took place at the Ship Hotel, Greenwich, on the 10th of August, the chairman on the occasion being Earl Stanhope, a member of the Gladstone Government. A cheerful tone prevailed then at similar gatherings the last two or three years, in fact it seemed the Cobdenites had recovered their spirits somewhat and were mustering courage for fresh attacks on the holds of Protection. About this time last year they appeared to have touched the bottom of despair; the speeches having a melancholy tone, not fitter for a funeral solemnity than for a requiem in honor of a progressive and conquering Government, or whose fourteen members were members of the Cobden Club or for other reasons. The speeches were active and aggressive in character and threatening to Protection the world over. The chairman addressed himself mostly to a statement and defence of the present Government's policy and left it to other speakers to expand upon the theme of the evening. One thing, however, he affirmed very confidently his belief that the United States has suffered and is still suffering severely in consequence of adhering to Protection. He appeared to base this belief on some extracts given in a recent publication by Mr. Chamberlain, a new Free Trade champion in which figures do not come down later than 1878. As the business revival in the States had not until 1879, having scarcely been much revived that year had slipped away, it may be that any case resting on figures coming later than 1878 will have to be re-considered. Mr. M.P. was jovial enough to remark that

he was not an independent speaker on the occasion, being merely "Mr. Fortnes man Friday," but no man speaking on his own hook" could have been more content and self-assured on behalf of the cause. It was he who stated that twelve out of fourteen Cabinet Ministers were members of the Club, and that seven of them had presided at its annual dinner. He said that since the last banquet the Club had been actively at work. Prizes for essays on subjects akin to its object had been given at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Bombay, Yale, Melbourne, Harvard and London—a statement which brings before us one particular method of influencing public opinion which the Cobden Club employs. At home and abroad 77,000 copies of nineteen works had been circulated, and Mr. Atter's *Mozambique* little book called "Free Trade and English Commerce," had been so successful that while large numbers of it were in course of gratuitous circulation at home, in the Colonies, in America, and on the continent, upwards of 30,000 copies had been sold in a few weeks through the ordinary channels of the bookselling trade. An equally interesting pamphlet by the same author, entitled "The Western Farm of America," had just been issued by the Club. From all this it may be gathered that the Club is really making a great effort at this time, and meant to give Protectionists in many countries something to do to "hold the fort." Other countries having been liberally favored with the Club's missionary efforts, we wonder that Canada, whose recent "persecution" from the faith has attracted so much attention in England, has not been harder pressed with Free Trade literature than we know of, so far. But perhaps our time is at hand, and the deluge will shortly be upon us. One remark made by M. CHALLENGE-LACOUR, the French Ambassador, has been commented upon, as suggesting where English Free Traders are not sufficiently practical and alive to the needs of the time "God forbid," said he, "that I should ever be disposed to forget or neglect the least legitimate interest of my own country." To speak of any "interest" as being likely to suffer from Free Trade is to your thorough-going English Free Traders the same as waving a red rag at a bull. They utterly refuse to consider either this "interest" or that; if any "interest" whatever is going to be killed by Free Trade, then it has no right to live, and should get the "happy despatch" as speedily as possible. One journal points out that the dominant school in England has been too apt to scoff and make light of the various interests, in this or the other country, that may suffer from Free Trade and that to the extent to which they remorselessly press their theory, regardless of certain very unwelcome results, involving the failure of occupation for those who lose what others have gained, they are acting the part of visionaries rather than of practical men. Full well does M. CHALLENGE-LACOUR understand that in his country even the "least legitimate" existing interest must be respected; and he advises his English hosts that, Free Trader as he is, he does not advocate what would destroy any such. In other words, the Ambassador is a French Free Trader, something very different and far apart from an English Free Trader, and he evidently wished it to be understood that he knows the difference, and appreciates it. English Free Traders will yet have to learn—what experience ought years ago to have taught them—that the people of other countries cannot easily be got to see things through their spectacles. Had Mr. BAXTER been more impressed with this fact, he might have been less confident in his anticipations. Several of the London papers have articles on the subject, and the extracts elsewhere given will be found interesting reading. It will be seen that the *Times* does not share Earl Stanhope's comfortable belief that the people of the United States are about to see the error of their ways and to abandon Protection. However sound his arguments must be pronounced, from the Free Trade point of view, the leading journal thinks him mistaken in anticipating any very speedy conversion of Protectionists in America, and, with proper regard to the speaker's high position, treats his "great expectations" from the United States with what we may call respectful ridicule. The fulfilment of the long-standing prophecy of America's conversion to Free Trade it sees no sign. The frank admission of the *Times* on this important point should teach moderate and diffidence to Free Traders in Canada, who, against the clearest light of events, persist in their far too long-standing prophecies of the triumph of their cause over the border. One remark occurring in the paragraph we have copied is especially worthy the attention of working men. The object of American statesmen, says the *Times*, "is not to secure the largest amount

of wealth for the country generally, but to keep up, by whatever means, the standard of comfort among the laboring classes." True, the *Times*, as in duty bound, holds that this end is best to be attained by Free Trade, after all; but its admission as to one important object which Protectionists have in view is worth something. The *Standard* puts much meaning into few words when it says that two of the leading facts of the day are the temporary eclipse of Free Trade and the wars and rumors of wars that one hears everywhere. And it adds that had the chairman been candid enough to discuss the position and prospects of Free Trade as seen by the light of experience instead of by that of hope, he must have told his hearers quite another and a truer tale. The concessions made to Lancashire in the matter of Indian import duties on cotton goods have already been carried to the verge of danger, and at all events, may go no farther. The idea of Free Trade as a living issue in France is put to rest by the deliberate adoption there, the other day, of an extreme system of bounties to French-built shipping. While some German professors write learnedly in favor of Free Trade, *Herzog*, so says the *Standard*, considers that a policy of Protection is alone possible for the present. Why a statesman of his capacity should think so is something upon which Free Trade doctrinaires in any country might deeply ponder, without sacrifice of their personal dignity. The *Daily News* directs attention to the "surprising conflict" between the sweeping generalizations which passed unopposed among English Free Traders in Congress and the cold hard facts of current history. The late JOHN STUART MILL saw the conflict coming on, and in his later works, under the light of closer reflection and longer experience, made important modifications of his earlier opinions. *Times* has vindicated his foresight, so the *Daily News* intimates. What was before a speculation of the chamber is now a conviction of the market place. It is obeyed—may, let us add, it must be obeyed—in legislation, before it is intellectually recognized. Modern necessities imperatively forbid that contraction of the sphere and duties of government which was once the dream of Free Traders generally, and which is still dreamed of by some of them, notably by that most accomplished dreamer among them all, Mr. HERBERT SPENCER. These latter are not the words of the *Daily News*, but they fairly convey its meaning. We fall back on its own words when we add that, whether Mill's later doctrines as to necessary limitations of the freedom of contract are sound or not, "they are dominant and constraining facts." So "constraining" are they, indeed, that eminent English writers, whose training and prejudices are altogether against Protection, are now hard at work giving reasons, both philosophical and practical, why the old theory of Free Trade must be modified to suit the hard, growing necessities of the present time. And yet the theory which is already rapidly becoming antiquated in England, is still clutched hard and fast by Free Traders in Canada, who talk as if only the triumphs of their system were worthy of being recorded, and as if the history of its decline and fall during the last ten or fifteen years were a blank. While directing attention to the suggestive remarks of English journals on the position and prospects of Free Trade, we may even have the audacity to offer a word of counsel to the gentlemen of the Cobden Club. They are cheerily telling of the expected irresistible attacks which they are making on the strongholds of Protection. Are they sure that they may not ere long have to defend their own forts? While planning vast campaigns abroad, do they see no signs that many years have passed they may need all the ammunition they have at home? So far the world knows not Free Trade, properly so called, but only Free Trade on the part of England, with Protection everywhere else, except in a limited portion of Western Europe. Turkey and India may be added, but there, what Free Trade there is, exists, not by the will of the people—but from it—by the dictation of England. Now, of this one-sided Free Trade, which only we have any very extended experience of, may it not be said, more truly than Prince Arker said of representative institutions, that it is still upon its trial? The British workman, whose vote now pulls down one government and sets up another, is no admirer of this one-sided Free Trade, and in fact feels that it works grievously wrong to himself. What if before the next general election he should take it into his head that the injustice has gone far enough, and must be stopped? We submit that the contingency is by no means a very remote one, and that it might even now profitably engage the attention of the Attack and Defence Committee of the Cobden Club.

INDUSTRIAL INSTRUCTION AND MUSEUMS.

In a late issue we referred to the National Exhibition in France which was to be opened to the public in 1797, but prevented in consequence of the decree of the Republic. In the following year, 1798, the war being brought to a termination, and Napoleon having achieved great victories in Italy, it was happily suggested to the Government that an industrial exhibition would glorify the occasion. The next official exhibition was held in a temporary building in the Champ de Mars. There were 110 exhibitors, who represented the State industries and manufactures of France. Napoleon seized upon this occasion to celebrate his triumphs by a procession exhibiting the spoils of his conquest. It was headed by emblematic chariots with a display of agricultural implements, seeds and grain, miners', tropical plants, wild and domestic animals, etc. Art was represented by the famed bronze horses from St. Mark, at Venice, which for a time decorated the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel, but were afterwards restored to Venice; also the celebrated statues of the *Lycosagony*, *Apollo Belvidere*, *Dying Gladiator*, and other rare and valuable specimens of sculpture, together with Raphael's *Transfiguration*, and the masterpieces of Titian and other distinguished painters. The exhibition was very successful, and excited a spirit of emulation between the manufacturers, and gave a stimulus to the production of new designs and better workmanship. To the managers of the exhibition is due the inauguration of the system of awarding prizes by juries, and its success was considered so much important that the Government issued orders to the prefects of departments, informing them that exhibitions would be held annually, and directing them to form local committees to decide upon the selection of the goods to be exhibited. Although at this time France excelled England in artistic design and skill in some branches of the manufactures, the productions of her looms were not equal to those of England. This induced them to offer at the next exhibition one gold and twenty silver medals to those who would successfully compete against the textile manufactures of England. This had a good effect on mechanics by giving them an incentive to progress, and it is a remarkable fact that at the next exhibition, which did not take place until 1801, JACQUES, a stay hat manufacturer, exhibited a loom of his own invention for weaving figured silks, which previously depended upon the skill of the weaver. Napoleon was so much delighted with this invention that he took Jacques to the hand and said, "You are a noble citizen," and gave him a pension of a thousand francs, which he subsequently raised to six thousand francs. The second official exhibition in 1801 was held in the grand court of the Louvre. Over 220 exhibitors competed, being double the number of the first exhibition. It was very successful, and gave a healthy stimulus to national industry. Napoleon fully realized the great advantages likely to accrue to the country by securing the co-operation of the industrial classes at these exhibitions, and invited the recipient of the gold medal to dinner. The jury were practical men, who foresaw the great results to be gained by exhibitions, and stated in their report that "there is not an artist or inventor, who, once obtaining thus a public recognition of his ability, has not found his reputation and business largely increased." In granting the awards they likewise paid special attention to the best means of diminishing the cost of production. In 1802 the third exhibition took place, with 540 exhibitors, when great progress was shown in the application of machinery and chemicals to manufactures. It is not necessary to refer to all of the French exhibitions but only to direct attention to the rapid progress which France made in her arts and manufactures from the time of the introduction of official industrial exhibitions. At the first exhibition, in 1798, the textile manufactures were inferior in quality to those from other countries, in 1801 the designs were most exquisite and the beauty of the dyest unsurpassed. At this exhibition limitations of Cashmere shawls, cloth, cotton, lace, etc. were far superior to any that had been previously exhibited. In this year (1801) there was only one foundry in France. In 1819 the proprietors of several tinaces sent specimens of their work for exhibition. In each successive exhibition the advance in the manufacture of metals could be noticed. Another good result was the introduction of machinery into the manufacturing departments, thus diminishing labor and the cost of production. A French writer of this time, referring to applied machinery, says: "Spun and woven goods, tools and furniture, began to find their way into the houses of the humble, thanks to the genius which directs