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TURN OF THE TIDE IN ENGLAND.

It is scarcely worth while to look for so much of protectionist movement in England as shall reverse the policy of thirty years' standing. The interest of England in persuading other countries to adopt Free Trade to a greater or lesser degree, as may seem possible of achievement, is of such vast magnitude that it cannot afford to imperil the force of her persuasions by coming to have lost faith in them herself. This is the real secret of the strength of Free Trade among English statesmen to-day, on both sides of politics. It is that, for Free Trade to live and be strong, it must have at least the appearance of being steadily sustained at home. If English advocates of their faces to blanch before the rising storm of demands of foreign National Industry, which they mean for each nation its own National Policy to determine, how can they, as we may say, "show any more?" If they "weaken" on the principle, the principle itself is weakened throughout the world. It is thoroughly consistent, Cobden's doctrine must be held to—that any nation gains by giving Free Trade, whether she gets it in return or not. Others refuse to buy cheaply from you, but no matter, still gain by buying cheaply from them, if you do. The interest of the seller is nothing; that of the purchaser is everything, and should control the commercial policy of nations. Such is the prevailing view in England, and it has so prevailed as to be adopted by the chiefs of the two political parties actively. On this question a revolution of opinion took place thirty years ago or more. Gladstone followed Peel in accepting it, after he had opposed it for, say, twenty years; Disraeli accepted it ten or twenty years afterwards, and his latest speech in the House of Commons on the subject asserts that England has taken to it and cannot go back. Advocates of Protection to-day need no more ask Lord Beaconsfield to back them than Mr. Gladstone. In a certain sense, or to a certain extent, the question is settled for England. It will not go back to Protection, for the very strong sensible reason that she would thereby weaken the influence of Free Trade all over the world. We are shown that she had lost faith in her own economic doctrines, and had ceased to practise them, her fabric of Free Trade precisely for the world to tumble like a house of cards. That British industry suffers by the free import of foreign manufactures is unquestioned, but against that is placed the fact that Britain still exports twenty shillings' worth of shilling's worth imported. Shall the twenty shilling's worth be jeopardized for the sake of the shilling's worth? The question. Public opinion in England will not be left to fight its way, rather than that the shilling's worth should be endangered by a "fight" on the general question. Once British Free Traders concede the main point, what ground is left to foreign Free Traders to stand upon? It is conceded, by a consensus of British statesmen—

ship, on both sides of politics, that Britain has an immensely larger interest in possible Free Trade abroad than in possible Protection at home. It will be as well, therefore, not to look for any near triumph of the reciprocity agitation in England. The interests opposed to any disturbance of the existing system are very strong, and very well organized besides, while the interests seeking reconsideration have no organization at all. But it would be rash to presume that the latter have no chance of obtaining a hearing. The reversal of the British Free Trade system may be deemed an impossibility, but its amendment in important respects is not chimerical. Men are now beginning to make themselves prominent upon the public scene who say that, even if Free Trade be a true policy for Britain, only the half of it is realized, through the adverse policy of other nations. And what they hold is, that the plan should now be tried, not of treating the whole outside world as a probable Free Trade world, soon to be converted to British views, but as a very mixed and variable world indeed, to be dealt with according to circumstances. It is within the limits of probability that British public opinion may after a while declare itself in this fashion. We do honestly think that Free Trade is the best all round—for us, it might be added, *sotto voce*. But we have tried it for over a quarter of a century, and now it appears that foreigners, instead of becoming converted, are less disposed than ever to accept our views. It may be that now circumstances may dictate a reconsideration of the old policy to a certain extent. And although it may be absurd to speak of a revolution of public opinion in England on this question, it does appear as if a reform of considerable importance were in sight. With this prospect it may be as well for us to hold on to what progress we have made in Canada. It is already a certainty that old country opposition to our policy is weakening.

LETTING THEMSELVES DOWN EASILY.

The New York World refers in a leading article to Mr. Whitney's report upon Professor Hux's charges. It says: "Sir CHARLES DIXIE, the Under Foreign Secretary, said in the House of Commons the other day that the British Government had referred Professor Hux's charges respecting the alleged forged and falsified statistics used before the Halifax Fishery Commission to the Dominion Government, and that the Foreign Office did not consider them 'worthy of serious attention.' The reference of these charges to Ottawa is easily understood. The Foreign Office was represented before the Commission by Mr. CLARE FORD, who acted as agent of the British case, and Mr. BARON, who discharged the nominal duties of secretary of the tribunal; but it was notorious that these officials were simply figure-heads, and that the actual manager of the British case was Mr. WHITNEY, Commissioner of Fisheries at Ottawa, assisted by Mr. DODD, Mr. THOMSON, Mr. DAVIS and other counsel. In fact the gentlemen of the foreign office took no active part whatever in the conduct of the case, and knew little or nothing of its merits, although both shared in the honours and emoluments distributed by the British and Canadian Governments when the verdict was won from Mr. D'ARROSSA. Under these circumstances the Foreign Office was in a measure compelled to send Mr. Hux and his formidable indictment to Ottawa, where, if his charges were true, the figures were forged, the statistics cooked and the plot for befogging Judge Foster and beguiling Mr. D'ARROSSA laid and consummated." The World finds it inconsistent that Sir CHARLES DIXIE should consider these charges unworthy of serious attention, when the Canadian Fishery Commissioner was asked to refute them. We think this apparent inconsistency can be readily explained. Sir CHARLES DIXIE's statement evidently has reference to that part of the charges affecting the table of fishery statistics, which he very properly considers groundless and incredible. An able journal like the World cannot help perceiving that an erroneous table, based on original returns which were falsified and discussed, could not possibly influence the matter. But when it is considered that the errors it contained were favourable to the American side, and therefore unfavourable to the British case, what possibility exists that, in the words of our contemporary, "they were deliberately committed with the intent of cozening the United States?" Professor Hux tries to use the errors in both ways. Mr. WHITNEY points out the palpable absurdity of supposing that anything fraudulent could be connected with these errors. The charge refutes itself. Doubtless this was the view taken by Sir CHARLES DIXIE. Professor Hux's chief accusations apply to the statistics of trade, in which discrepancies exist that he tortures into "fraud and forgery." This part of his

formidable indictment was at the time probably unknown to the Under Secretary. The fact of these differences being common to both the Canadian and United States returns, which were used interchangeably, ought to satisfy the World that any deception was simply impossible. It is clearly proved by Mr. WHITNEY's report that no purpose whatever could be served by such "falsifications" as Professor Hux alleges. If, however, as we have said before on a former occasion, the United States authorities think these charges deserve more serious attention, by all means let them be investigated. Congress has published them at length in the pages of the Congressional Record, and presumably accepts the responsibility of either proving or disproving them. The professor's voluminous papers were laid before the Canadian Parliament, and were not considered worthy of being printed. We would cheerfully transfer the whole record to our neighbours.

THE IRON INDUSTRY IN ITALY.

The following statement respecting the iron industry in Italy, from the *Iron and Coal Trades Review*, will be perused with interest. "The Italian Government are offering to let on lease for three years the iron mines in the Isle of Elba, as well as the works of Follonica, Cecina and Valpurga. Offers were to be made recently at Rome, Leghorn and Genoa. The security in the first instance is 300,000 lire, while the final will be 1,500,000 lire. The concessionaire will have to pay a royalty of so much per ton on the mineral exported from the isles of Elba or Giglio, and on that utilized in these islands. In any case this royalty, which will be payable half yearly, will not be less than 500,000 lire per annum. The exports shall not exceed 200,000 tons per annum. The following is the maximum quantities yearly to be extracted from each mine: Rio Mine, 15,000 tons; Vigneria, 20,000 tons; Rio Albano, 30,000 tons; Terra Nera and Capobianca, 15,000 tons; and the Calanitta and other mines, 20,000 tons. In order to encourage native industry the price to home manufacturers shall be 10 per cent. less than that charged to other countries. The following returns of the production and exports of iron ore from the Isle of Elba will be interesting:—

	Production.	Exports.
	Tons.	Tons.
1851-52	22,014	22,563
1852-53	39,060	25,994
1853-54	62,968	49,262
1854-55	64,807	60,539
1855-56	60,625	61,418
1856-57	68,494	72,875
1857-58	61,329	50,279
1858-59	56,883	44,010
1859-60	38,487	35,690
1860-61	40,687	51,449
1861-62	63,548	67,739
1862-63	99,447	100,572
1863-64	98,468	101,625
1864-65	104,678	114,484
1865-66	110,467	98,417
1866-67	82,867	72,584
1867-68	64,550	60,047
1868-69	58,713	55,077
1869-70	53,458	60,162
1870-71	50,802	47,765
1871-72	120,046	127,187
1872-73	201,091	173,573
1873-74	223,138	219,153
1874-75	194,374	174,617
1875-76	197,540	202,912
1876-77	196,220	182,645
1877-78	155,155	180,740
1878-79	172,177	202,966
1879-80	274,323	297,863

The production during the last 29 years has thus been 3,027,158 tons, of which 1,999,793 tons were raised from the Rio mine, 360,065 tons from the Vigneria, 206,761 tons from the Rio Albano, 235,557 tons from the Terra Nera, and 164,979 tons from the Calanitta. Of the quantity raised 1,489,642 tons were ordinary ore, 1,506,082 tons washed ore. From 1752 to 1801, and from 1819 to 1851, the exports amounted to 1,189,816 tons, or an average of 14,335 tons per annum. Estimating the exports between 1802 and 1818, for which there are no returns, as being equal to this, the total quantity shipped from 1752 to 1851 was 1,433,500 tons, consisting principally of Rio ore. The price of the ore to national works, which was 15 2/3 fr. per ton in 1851-52, rose to 15 1/4 fr. in 1853-54, but fell to 8 2/8 fr. in 1876-77, and advanced to 12 1/8 fr. in 1875-76, while in 1879-80 it was 12 1/7 fr. When sold abroad in France 11 fr. per ton was asked in 1851-52, but fell to 6 2/3 fr. in 1890-70, while in 1873-74 it rose to 13 1/2 fr., a price which it has since nearly maintained. When sold to English consumers 8 2/5 fr. was paid in 1855-56, 6 fr. in 1859-60, 21 1/2 fr. in 1873-74, since which time it has gradually fallen to 8 1/2 fr. in 1879-80. The average cost of raising was 6 1/8 fr. per ton in 1851-52, and during the last ten years it has been 18 1/2, 2 60 fr.

1872, 2 50 fr. 1873, 2 58 fr. 1874, 3 23 fr. 1875, 3 56 fr. 1876, 3 50 fr. 1877, 1 1/2 fr. 1878, 4 51 fr. 1879, 1 79 fr. 1880, 3 28 fr. The net profits of the mines and of the foundries of Toscana reported by the Administration to have been 2,000,000 fr. in 1879-80. The following are analyses of the ores:—

	Large.	Medium.	Small.
Peroxyde of Iron	410	81 2/3	81 2/3
Silica	11 60	4 70	11 00
Alumina	1 50	1 25	1 75
Lime	traces	traces	0 85
Loss by Calcination	4 00	2 25	6 00
Sulphur	0 00	?	0 12
	100 00	89 15	90 90

The railway rolling stock works of Mac-see Rollin & Co., at Savignano, have received an order for 600 waggons for the Upper Italian railways. These works have been exceedingly well occupied, and have recently received contracts which will keep them going for a long time.

"HOG CHOLERA."

Not long ago the British Vice-Consul at Chicago made this announcement: that during the year 1880 there were 700,000 head of swine lost in the State of Illinois through the disease known as "Hog Cholera." This statement raised a great outcry amongst those interested in the pork trade, and a doubt was thrown upon the correctness of Mr. WARRACK's figures; but the press and various Board of Trades questioned their correctness. That gentleman, however, furnished Sir EDWARD THORNTON, the British Minister at Washington, with the grounds for and authority on which he founded his statement, being nothing less than the returns made by officials of the State of Illinois, to whose representations, Sir EDWARD says, he had a right to give faith. The matter has been communicated to the United States Secretary of State, and the British Minister emphasizes the whole by stating that the statements sworn to have been fully justified by the officials' returns. Mr. BLAIR, United States Secretary of State, had previously telegraphed to American Ministers and representatives abroad that the statement was without foundation. It only now remains to be seen whether he will supplement his despatches with the real facts of the case.

CUSTOMS SEIZURES.

We are informed that the Customs Department recently confiscated a quantity of goods imported by a Toronto firm, who were charged with undervaluation and making out false invoices. In addition to the confiscation the parties were compelled to pay the full amount of duty and a heavy fine in addition. A similar offence has been discovered in London, Ontario, and the case is now under consideration. From what we learn the confiscation of a large quantity of English and American importations will be the result. We understand the Department is enforcing the clause of the law which imposes a fine of three times the value of the goods seized. This, with the costs of a suit in the Exchequer Court, before which such cases go, should have a detrimental effect upon merchants of smuggling proclivities.

PROGRESS IN JAPAN.

Japan is steadily marching along the road of progress. The *Contemporary Review* points out that in 1871 the European system of postage was introduced. Prior to that time, it says, there did not exist any national system of postage, owing to the feudal disposition of the country. If anyone would wish to realize the primitive condition of the Post Office Service in 1863 they may turn to a picture in the "Capital of the Tycoon," of a postman in native costume—that is with a loin band only, to leave his limbs free, running along the road at high speed, and a small box slung by a pole over his shoulders; and, in case of his falling lame or other accident, he is accompanied by a double, to take on the package in his place to the next stage. The Government used to dispatch such messengers, and occasionally private firms. The comparison with what now exists carries us back many centuries, though only the work of five years. There are now mail routes of more than 30,000 miles in active operation, and 691 post offices, besides 124 receiving agencies, 838 stamp agencies, and 703 letter boxes. The number of letters forwarded in 1876 was 36,000,000, being an increase of 64 per cent. over that of 1874, according to Mr. MORSE's "Report on the Finance of Japan." The postage of an ordinary letter in the large towns is one cent (1/2) and two cents (1/3) for the rest of the empire. Post cards are carried for one-half these charges. And in 1875 a money order system was adopted, and within two years there were 310 post