

selling at reduced prices in the Canada market—and that they are, in consequence, sacrificing their goods, for it is well known that they did so ten years ago, when money, after the war, was plentiful, trade brisk, and labour and materials high. How then, under such unfavourable circumstances, do they manage to sell a superior article to what we manufacture and at a lower price? We answer from the *perfection of their machinery* and from the numerous *inventions and contrivances for labour saving*, used in their factories and workshops, which enables them to turn out better work, and in less than half the time that we take to do the same. These labour-saving contrivances not only economise time, but the machinery is made so perfect and true that they are enabled to utilize every piece of wood, and scarcely any goes to waste; whilst we throw enough of it away to pay in itself a profit; therefore, until our manufacturers cease to jog on in the old fashioned way, and with old fashioned machinery, the field for the sale of manufactured goods, which are particularly adapted to our population, will be held by the United States, although we possess labour and the raw material at rates altogether in our favour.

We of course speak in a general sense; there are some exceptions to this rule, and where these are to be found, success has been very marked. The intelligent and enterprising shoe manufacturers of Montreal and Quebec—are a striking example of what energy and enterprise can do for a country.

A warning has appeared in an English paper, the *Northampton Mercury**—from a correspondent on his side of the water—in relation to the boot and shoe trade:

“While you shoemaking chaps over the sea in Northampton are squabbling and fighting, the Yankees are taking your trade away. Eastern men have had consultations and meetings about the best means of obtaining (with a strong view to keeping) the whole South American trade. Men have been sent down to Brazilian ports, to Buenos Ayres, to prospect; sample cases of goods are now travelling after their heels, at figures that would make Northampton manufacturers' hair stand on end, and good shoes at that; and I guess I can tell a good shoe from a mud turtle, or a bad one from a flap-jack, as well as any other unsainted Crispin. The goods are not as nice shoes for the market as I have seen sent to the same destination from Northampton—not as nicely fancy-stitched as Northampton 'gals' can stitch 'em; still, they are well fitted, well bottomed (both cable screw and machine sewn), well finished, and good stock to boot, and at very low figures. Another set of these uneasy Massachusetts 'Yanks' have sent samples of boots, kip split and calf, good kip boots, pegged and cable screw, and brogans (blutchers) to German and Austrian commission agents, for them to try and bring the European army trade this side the Atlantic. How is it done? Well, we had a panic that you know we haven't got over yet; and we have so much machinery here—*machinery to crimp the stiffenings to shape of last*, machinery to *last*, machinery to *block out sole shape*, machinery to *rivet* (cable screw successfully, too), and machinery to *trim* (this too is a success) *heels and foreparts*, machinery to *burnish* (ball off), machinery to *buff and sandpaper*, and finally put on the firm's coat of arms and motto, legend, or whatever they illustrate the shoe bottom with by way of trade-mark. All this powerful use of the 'machine' is steam-driven in a hundred factories in this land. We don't break windows here whenever a new machine is put up in the factory, and we have as many lean, hungry-ribbed shoemakers here as you have at Northampton; lots of 'em ready to work that machinery, whether it be upon orders by the thousand, the hundred thousand, or the million.”

The *Leather Trade Circular and Review*, in commenting on this article, has the following:

One result of the Philadelphia Exhibition has been to impart to the more intelligent class of employers and employed in

* Northampton is one of the principal, if not the largest, of manufacturing towns for boots and shoes in England.

this country some idea of the enormous extent to which labour-saving contrivances are used in the factories and workshops of the United States. A considerable portion of the boot and shoe manufacturing machinery with which English operatives are now familiar was known to Transatlantic Crispins long before it had found its way into this country, and even now, if we may trust the assertions of recent visitors to America, we are far from being acquainted with all the improvements by means of which, rather than by the protection system, which is everywhere regarded as doomed, the shoe manufacturers of the United States hope to defy European rivalry. This is not at all unlikely, but it is prudent on the part of English manufacturers that such ignorance in matters so directly affecting their interests should be possible! In the great industrial competition we are somewhat unfairly handicapped; our American rivals are kept well-informed respecting every mechanical invention or improvement introduced here; but we are not in such a state of enlightenment respecting their doings. If our various trades unions had the interests of their members really at heart, they would expend a portion of the funds at their command in obtaining information of such vital importance, instead of wasting them in fermenting disastrous quarrels between masters and men. There can be no question that, with a revival of trade, the force of American competition in foreign markets will be felt more keenly than at any previous period, and we ought to be prepared to hold our own.

Whether the writer be a Yankee or not, there is plenty of sound, sober truth in what he says, and the members of the English leather trades would do well to carefully ponder on the unsolicited advice thus boldly, but apparently sincerely, proffered them.

The alertness of the United States boot and shoe firms to carry their manufactures into England, is expressed in the above article in quite a tone of alarm. We believe, however, that the Canadian shoe manufacturers were the first in the English market with their goods. But the writer to the *Northampton Mercury* seemed to fear competition to English manufactures from the United States alone, and supposed that nearly all those valuable machines and new inventions, to which he alludes, were the offspring of Yankee brains. We have much pleasure, however, to be able to state the contrary. The most important of the machines alluded to were invented by a CANADIAN, MR. LOUIS CÔTÉ, of St. Hyacinthe; and, as an act of justness to Mr. Côté, we consider it our duty to make the same known in the columns of the CANADIAN MECHANICS' MAGAZINE, and as an encouragement to his countrymen to use their inventive faculties (in which they are as fruitful as Americans) to improvements and perfection of machinery, and thus while realizing, perhaps, a fortune to themselves, benefitting thousands of their fellow-countrymen by new forms of employment.

The success of our Canadian shoe manufacturers is an example to our manufactures of other goods (better favored than the shoe trade) of what enterprise and energy can do; take, for another instance, the improvements made last fall in the manufacture of rubbers by the Quebec Rubber Co., since it has fallen into more energetic hands; their rubbers are now quite equal to American and up to the times. The fact is that unless some of our manufacturers give over their old fogginess, they can no longer hold their own against more enterprising and intelligent firms. The shoe manufacturers of Canada are now carrying the war of competition into the very centre of the largest manufacturing country in the world, why cannot others do the same in their own lines of business, in which they have greater advantages?

We have in the foregoing correspondence a striking acknowledgment of what machinery can do to create wealth and employment in a country, which enables