

instead of six months. Nor is the farmer during that time by any means restricted to indoor occupations. During the time of sleighing he has his hay to draw in from the hay marsh, where it was stacked when cut in the month of July; he has rails to draw in for new fencing, or logs for new buildings; he has wheat to draw to mill or market; he has wood to haul to the city for sale, and he can fill up his spare moments with the feeding of thirty or forty cattle which during the summer months can wander on the prairies and grow fat without the slightest care or trouble being exercised over them by their owner. Surely with all this to do the winter months cannot prove *altogether* an idle time.

Having thus treated of the various charges against the North-West contained in the pamphlet to which I referred in my first article, I shall hope in No. III. to present to the readers of the SPECTATOR some considerations as to the value and prospects of the North-West, which may, perhaps, induce them to take a somewhat more cheerful view of the future of Canada than that advanced by the able writer to whom I have had occasion so frequently to allude, and from whom, at least as far as the North-West is concerned, I am obliged so widely to differ.

Canadian.

MODERN PROGRESS AND THE TRADE QUESTION.

The discussion between Protectionists and Free Traders is not always confined to the main question: Which of the two systems is the best for any particular country, or for the world in general? A point frequently recurring in debate is: Which of the two is gaining or losing as the years roll onward? which of the two is destined to be the victor in the strife? Looking for it that there will be a survival of the fittest, which of these two opposing systems is likely to be the survivor when the other shall have been crushed out and shall have passed away? On which side are the most remarkable forces and products of modern civilization working? Let us name, for example, the steam engine, the ocean steamers, the locomotive, the telegraph, the printing press, and then ask: Are these working in favour of Protection or of Free Trade? Upon the answer to be given to this question much depends; for, as I have before stated, if it be shown that the current Free Trade assumption be true, and that the chief factors going to make up modern progress are working in favour of that system, then is Protection surely doomed to extinction, like the strange animals of far-back geological ages. On the other hand, if it be shown that these characteristic influences of our time are working in favour of Protection, then we already see the handwriting on the wall giving warning that Free Trade, however fondly cherished by a band of able and resolute supporters, is marked out for swift decay and inevitable extinction. Free Traders scarcely deign to argue this question of fact at all; they assume it is a matter of course that they are sailing with the stream, and that on the vast moral current of modern progress their system is being carried forward in triumph. That this assumption should come out in Free-Trade speeches is nothing new, for with the orators on that side it is always recurring; but the fact that Mr. Blake in his recent speech dwelt somewhat upon this favourite view of the Free Traders is worthy of notice. He did not deal much with details, but dwelt more upon general principles, and he appeared to rest with much confidence in the conclusion that, come this year or next year what may, the *general* working of modern progress must be in favour of Free Trade. Those who think with him admit present victories for Protection in Canada, the United States, France, and Germany, and a slight stirring up again, even in England, of a question that yesterday was supposed to have been settled there once for all. But all this is merely the temporary backward sweep of a single wave, which itself is part and parcel of the advancing tide. In a few years after this, if we take actual measurement, we shall see that the Free-Trade tide has been rising, not falling, as appeared to unskilful eyes. Great and widespread commercial depression has made the people of many countries uneasy and discontented, and they have rushed eagerly for the quack remedy of Protection, through which it was promised them that relief would come. Soon, however, they will discover their mistake, and will reject the nostrum with which they have been imposed upon. Meanwhile the steam engine and the telegraph (let us take these two as standing for modern improvements generally) are constantly and powerfully working in favour of Free Trade as a system. Such is the view of the matter which Free Traders delight in, and we note that so able a man as Mr. Blake, when giving reasons for his belief with regard to the main question, appeared to find none so sweeping and so conclusive as this one.

Human progress has been by some writers distinguished into these five stages,—the savage, the pastoral, the agricultural, the commercial, and the manufacturing. A people who have learned agriculture are more advanced than they who depend upon their flocks and herds only; and commerce is certainly an advance upon agriculture, though it may not safely supersede the latter, or attempt to stand apart and on its own bottom. It appears just as certainly that manufacturing, which is named last of the five stages, is an advance upon commerce. Savages the world over are eager to “trade” for guns, beads and looking-glasses,—articles the making of which is beyond their power. They

can buy these things, and they quickly learn the use of them, too; but as for *making* them, that is a stage of progress to which they cannot attain. If ever they do attain to it, then they have ceased to be savages, and are become civilized men. Semi-civilized peoples, of inferior development, may ride on railway trains, and may have knowledge enough of money matters to pay their proper fares; but they cannot build a locomotive, or produce a steel rail—these are products of the highest civilization only. Let us take a glance backwards at the various stages of progress through which these provinces have passed. In the early days the clearing of the forest, the raising of crops and the making of roads employed the whole energies of our working people. The dwellers by the sea, Britons as they were in their turn for maritime affairs, naturally took to building ships, to sailing them, and to fishing. Then everything sold in the stores was imported, and the custom carding mill was considered about as great an advance in manufacturing as it was worth while to attempt. Duties of from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. were levied, for the sake of revenue only; such a thing as Protection for the development of home manufactures had not yet entered into Canadian heads. But the demand for protection came at last, and, mark the fact, it came with the progress of the country. When the country was as yet far behind its present position, there was no talk of Protection in these Provinces, any more than there is now in Jamaica, or in Brazil. Only in a progressive country, or let us say in a country that *has* progressed to a considerable extent, does the demand for Protection arise at all. At Rio, or even at the Cape, among our own people, with whom progress has not yet reached the manufacturing stage, you will hear nothing of Protection; but you will hear much about it in Paris, Berlin, New York and Montreal. That England is the first commercial and manufacturing nation in the world is admitted, but who comes next? France, Germany and the United States are, of all great nations, the nearest to England in commercial and manufacturing development, and there are certain materialities of modern civilization in which one or the other of them is in advance even of England. Account for the fact that these three great nations, standing in the very front of modern progress, have all adopted Protection. It is no mere coincidence that we have here, but real cause and effect. Protection is wanted by the most progressive peoples on earth, because they want to progress still more. A non-progressive people have no “hankering” after Protection, any more than a savage has for the exercise of a demonstration in Euclid. An unambitious people, content to stay where they are, do not agitate for “protection to home industries.” Does not the light of facts seem to show that Protection and progress go together, that they are going on the same track, and in the same direction?

It is an argument with Free Traders that the world will be best served by division of labour, not between individuals, for that is conceded, but between nations. England should manufacture cotton and iron for all peoples; France should devote herself to the production of silks and wines, while the United States should drop manufacturing altogether, and be content to remain the granary and provision store of Europe. But national ambitions will not be thus confined. France wants to manufacture cotton, and the Americans will not content themselves unless Pittsburg be as smoky as Sheffield. And now we are coming to a bit of philosophy, but of an extremely hard and practical kind. Let us name again these wonderful modern agencies, the locomotives, the ocean steamers, the printing press, and the telegraph. What one grand characteristic is it that pervades them all, giving them one common, general action and tendency? I answer that they are above all things agencies of *diffusion*. Their action is to spread and scatter, to convey, to send to the ends of the earth what would otherwise have remained localized, confined to particular places only. Exactly so, some Free Traders will say, the ocean steamship is a means of diffusion, most certainly, it renders it possible, and even convenient, for the Illinois farmer to exchange his corn for Manchester cotton goods, or Birmingham hardware. This is to be admitted; we see that the locomotive, the screw propeller, and the compound marine engine have cheapened immensely the cost of carrying merchandise over long distances. If this were all, the prospects for Free Trade might be passably good. But it is not all; there is something else to be observed that greatly alters the case. It is not only *products* that are diffused, but also the labour, skill and capital which create the products. There are instances. The discovery of the Bessemer steel process in England is followed, almost immediately, by the establishment of the manufacture on the Continent of Europe, and in America, and already there are in the United States Bessemer furnaces enough to make steel rails for the whole Union. The manufacture of nitro-glycerine and its compounds, at first the specialty of one or two, did not take long to spread to many countries. Scientific associations, scientific periodicals, “trade” journals, and the daily and weekly press quickly make known to the civilized world this or the other new discovery that turns up. The steam-engine, the printing press and the telegraph are great diffusers. A hundred cities to-day wait for the intimation that the electric light has been made an economic success; were this ascertained for a fact, Montreal, and even Melbourne, far away on the other side of the globe, would not be long behind London and Paris in utilizing it. The power of climate has to be acknowledged; we know that the highest civilization must keep its seats within the temperate zones. Within these zones, how-