

make some improvements in the direction of cheapening the rate, and carrying larger parcels, it would be a great boon to the public in general and the jewelry trade in particular. We think the time has come in Canada, when a ten and twenty cent parcel post might be introduced with advantage to the public, and profit to the department.

The charges made by the Express Companies, who have a monopoly of the small carrying trade, are so exorbitant that it would be but a simple act of justice on the part of the post office department, to deliver the public from their clutches in this particular at least. We understand that Mr. Fawcett, the English postmaster general, is introducing a cheap parcel post system in the English post offices, and, as the mother country leads the van in all such economic reforms, it is to be hoped that, if the experiment is successful, a similar system will be tried here. In the jewelry trade, such an arrangement would be highly appreciated, on account of the many small and valuable parcels that are continually passing between the wholesale and retail merchants, and it would at once form a safe and inexpensive method of transit for such parcels, that they do not now possess. The present rate of express charges, from twenty-five to forty cents, is a decided imposition, and the only way we can see of putting a stop to it, and giving the public a fair show, is for Government to take some such step as we have suggested above.

ENGLAND'S MANUFACTURES OF SILVER.

It is somewhat of an anomaly that a free trade country, such as England is supposed to be, should have clinging to the ship of State, such a barnacle as the duty or excise which is levied on her manufactures of sterling silver.

Not only is such a tax a direct violation of England's free trade principles, but it is a drawback to this branch of manufacture of the most serious description. Indeed, so seriously has this tax affected the plate trade, that Mr. Gladstone recently proposed the gradual abolition of the duty, year by year, until it was entirely extinguished. This proposal has been the cause of several meetings of the principal silver manufacturers of England, the result of which has been that acting in accordance with their representations, Mr. Gladstone has agreed

to withdraw the measure entirely for the present. The conclusion reached by these gentlemen, and in which the Premier seems to have concurred, was, that the gradual remission of the tax would prove unjust in its operation and incidence, both as regards the manufacturers and purchasers, whilst, at the same time there need not be the slightest difficulty either in granting a proportionate annual rebate, or in abolishing the charge at once and finally. The latter course, they all think to be the fairest and most advisable course to pursue, but, as Mr. Gladstone could not see his way clear to abolish it altogether, they preferred to have it remain as it was, to have any tinkering with it. One brief glance at the figures below, compiled by Mr. E. J. Watherson, of London, the well known advocate of the freedom of silver plate from taxation, shows that that trade is on the decline:

"The drawback, we may state, is allowed on plate exported. Prior to year 1710 no duty was paid on this class of plate, so that antique plate properly so-called was in no degree depreciated by the proposed alteration. From 1719 to 1758 the duty was 6d. per ounce. From 1758 to 1784 it was free. In the latter year the 6d. duty was reimposed, and was raised to 1s. in 1797, to 1s. 8d. in 1801, and to 1s. 6d. in 1825, since which time it has remained stationary."

Year ending March 31	Weight on which Duty was paid	Weight on which Drawback was allowed	Year ending March 31	Weight on which Duty was paid	Weight on which Drawback was allowed
	Oz.	Oz.		Oz.	Oz.
1855	911,260	124,410	1875	664,492	120,240
1856	663,423	120,453	1876	470,247	104,612
1857	504,707	141,240	1877	738,206	109,261
1858	663,440	165,147	1878	783,131	83,345
1859	601,640	116,146	1879	740,259	85,121

A further serious decline is shown by the returns to March, 1880 - viz., to 688,023 oz.; and Mr. Gladstone's statement in the House of Commons from which the amount of silver which has been paid to March 31, 1881, is 601,000 oz. Hence, therefore, in 22 years the amount of silver plate has fallen by 400,000 oz., representing a wholesale trade of about 200,000l. per annum.

Comparing this declining exhibit of the silver trade in England, with the healthy and increasing trade of the United States, where the manufacture is free, we are forced to the conclusion that the time honored policy of England in regard to a government tax, and stamp,

is not only worthless as a guarantee of quality, but a serious drawback to the manufacture, without adding much to the revenue.

It has been fully demonstrated that under the American system, professional pride and self interest, are as reliable a guarantee as to quality, as any government trade mark in existence, while its freedom from taxation has given it an advantage over its English competitor, in the open market of the world, by cheapening the cost of production, that American manufacturers have not been slow to take advantage of. If English manufacturers even expect to be able to compete with their American competitors in this branch of industry, they will not only have to have the tax abolished, but to adopt a more modern system of manufacture and keep abreast of the times. If they can succeed in accomplishing these two things, they may expect a revival in their silver trade, for it is an established fact, that a country's consuming power for fine goods increases with its wealth, and, there can be no doubt but that the wealth of England is steadily increasing.

THE LONDON HORROR.

The terrible accident at London on the Queen's Birthday, by which nearly two hundred and fifty souls were hurried into eternity, is an event so appalling as to call forth at once our sympathies for the bereaved families, and our maledictions upon the avaricious wretches whose greed of gain made such a dreadful calamity possible. Both in respect of the number killed, and the dreadful circumstances attending their death, this London horror stands unparalleled in the history of Canadian accidents, and while it is our melancholy pleasure to offer our sympathies to the grief stricken mourners, it is also as much our duty to demand that justice be done upon those whose carelessness caused the bereavement, and that the law be so amended as to prevent as far as possible such an occurrence in the future. From the accounts given thus far, it is quite apparent that a great want of foresight was shown, or intentional risk was incurred in allowing so small a vessel to leave her dock with almost double her registered number of passengers.

In this respect the "Thames Navigation Company" are pretty much like all other corporations of a similar kind,