

ities in the South Wales coal field ; just as it has given new importance to places in Cumberland and Furness, which are near to the English sources of hæmatite in the lake district, and the Irish supplies from Antrim. And one result of this change in the steel trade has been to transfer industries, like the making of steel rails for railways in recent times, from the Yorkshire centre to the west coast, by which the double saving has been effected of railway charge for conveyance of the raw material to the place of manufacture, as well as that paid for carrying the manufactured goods to the place of shipment.

Year by year all kinds of raw material show not dissimilar changes in their geographical relations, and variations in manufactures are introduced owing to utilization of what had been waste material, or introduction of new products. These changes are so rapid that it would not be easy without Government aid in publication to ensure that teacher and pupil should be kept aware of the daily progress of this aspect of commerce.

I need only draw attention to the changes which have taken place in recent times in the sources of food supply for this country, to show that more favourable conditions of climate, of tenure of land, of machine cultivation, and value of labour, have enabled many distant parts of the earth to send to Britain their corn and cattle, not to mention the less important foods, at prices which are driving the English agriculturists into town industries ; and seem likely at no distant period to further diminish and vary the producing areas of the home-grown supplies of food. The food industries are exceptional, because the raw produce requires such long-continued labour to bring it to perfection, that such cultivation has almost the aspect of a manufacture. And under comparatively heavy rental and tithes, and

rates thrown on the land, and the augmented cost of agricultural labour, and higher railway rates, home produce cannot compete with foreign importations which are not thus weighted.

The areas from which such and such like articles of trade are obtained, being dependent on climate and especially on summer temperature, and soil, at first sight have the aspect of falling within the scope of physical geography. But while that subject is occupied with laws of nature under which mineral produce and animal and vegetable produce occur in different parts of the earth, commercial geography only concerns itself with them when they become profitable articles of commerce. So that the two subjects have much the dissimilarity of theory and practice, and are altogether unlike in their principles.

The balance between British and foreign manufactures is governed by complex conditions of politics and political economy. The American civil war by affecting the region which had been the main source of supply of raw cotton, was the means of stimulating the growth of cotton in Asia and Africa. The Franco-German war, by interrupting the manufactures of Germany and France, greatly augmented the demands for English goods. Such conditions of change in producing areas can never be permanent, unless the country which is placed temporarily in such a position of advantage, is able to sell better and more artistic goods at a less cost than the competing nations which endeavour to recover the trade. And in commercial geography it is necessary for every industry to extend its output, if it is to continue to exist ; because population increases. The new generation has to be won over to support it, and without this support it must decline. These fluctuations in industries are commonly spoken of as waves of national prosperity ; when they are