

was only after long puzzling and poring over the matter, that one of them—a little wiser than the rest—suggested the propriety of actually trying the experiment, and seeing for themselves whether the living fish really added nothing to the weight of the tub. The trial being made, it quickly appeared that the fish, alike whether living or dead, increased the former weight exactly by its own. It is to be supposed that they drew a good long breath when they saw at last the solution of the puzzle.

Now we have wise men of Gotham in our day, who gravely affirm the fact, as they call it, that what is called "Protection," is dying out in the world, and that civilized nations are rapidly becoming converted to Free Trade. This affirmation is so constantly dinned into our ears, that many people believe it from the mere force of reiteration. We are asked to believe in Free Trade, because, say its advocates, if it were not the right doctrine, the eminent statesmen and great political economists of the day, with the nations whose opinions they lead, would not be found adopting it. When you see the civilized nations of Europe coming round to it, you must concede that it is the only sound and rational policy; the policy of the future, as distinguished from that of time past, when people knew nothing about political economy and the laws of trade. This is the argument which, more than all others combined, sways the popular mind in favour of Free Trade. Free Trade is the growing, the winning, the advancing side: it is, therefore, folly, to stand up for a "lost cause," such as that of Protection. But it is high time now to call upon the Free Trade men to weigh their fish, tub, water, and all—to show the proofs that their favourite system *is* advancing in the civilized world, ere they ask us to found our belief in its soundness on the fact of its advance.

I venture to take the bull by the horns at once, and to meet the logic of the Free Traders with a fair and square denial of their minor premiss. I maintain that, as a matter of fact, Free Trade is *not* advancing among civilized nations generally: nay, further, that by an inexorable law of the industrial and economical progress of nations, it must in time to come lose most of the ground over which it unquestionably has advanced during thirty years back. We do not see its advance in the United States, certainly. There is a cry amongst our neighbours for relief from existing burdens, but