

Let us suppose for a moment that the Hague Conference had succeeded in abolishing armaments, and that duties were no longer necessary for revenue. Would anyone seriously suggest that they should be imposed in order that by the imposition of barriers Commerce might be improved? Germany does not suppose she would improve trade by erecting barriers between Saxony and Prussia. Why, then, between Germany and Switzerland or Austria? Across the Atlantic no one would propose to improve the trade of Massachusetts or New York by imposing duties between them. Then why between them and Mexico or Canada?

We know the ideal of Free Traders—viz. that each country should produce those commodities for which it is best suited, and with them purchase the products of other countries.

But what is the ideal of Protectionists? Suppose they succeeded in protecting all industries by sufficient duties. Of course that is an extreme case, but in such an economical paradise nothing would be imported. We should grow or manufacture everything for ourselves. Instead of Spanish we should have hothouse oranges, for those who could afford them; cowslip wine instead of claret or champagne, and so on.

Imports are the price we receive for our exports. They are the price at which we sell them. But, if we get nothing from over the water, how