

MANUFACTURING REVIEW.

OCTOBER.

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THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1862.

When the proposition to hold an International Exhibition in London, in 1851, was first put forward, the greatest obstacles to its successful accomplishment were found to consist in the prejudices of the great mass of the British people. The manufacturers and machinists dreaded the exposure of all the best specimens of their skill to the inspection and imitation of foreigners; others loudly condemned the folly of permitting their own countrymen to see and examine the finest productions of other lands, and thus inflicting a grievous injury upon the home trade. Every argument, in fact, that could be suggested by ignorance and jealousy was urged in opposition to this project. But at last the few who gave themselves up to the task, succeeded by their untiring energy and zeal after appealing to the common sense of the community, in removing such obstacles, and had at length the satisfaction of finding their efforts crowned with pre-eminent success. At this time, however, such prejudices no longer exist; all agree in acknowledging that so far from an exhibition of this kind proving an injury to the country, it is calculated to confer upon it an almost inestimable benefit. Already has this feeling been substantially manifested; a guarantee deed to the amount of £414,600 has been signed by nearly 1000 persons connected with or interested in Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, a sum amply sufficient to carry out the enterprise without risk of loss or failure. Such an array of names indicates most clearly the general conviction that great good resulted from the exhibition of 1851, and that a suitable time has again arrived for testing and comparing the progress of all nations in Arts, Manufactures and all other departments of industry. It will be well then to consider briefly the grounds upon which the expectation is founded, that the exhibition to be held in 1862, will prove worthy of the age, and show that such an advance has been made in industrial processes as to warrant the promoters in deciding upon ten years as the proper period for the recurrence of such undertakings. First then let us refer to the progress of the nation since 1851.*

The population of Great Britain has largely increased. In 1851 it was 25,108,564, and in 1862 it will probably be 29,000,000. In London there will be next year half a million more inhabitants than in 1851. The people are better employed, and their social and intellectual condition is improved.

Railways have been extended from above 6000 to above 10,000 miles.

The electric telegraph has become universal, and in every direction facilities for communication have been increased. The duties on soap and paper, the only manufactures the prosperity of which was then thwarted by excise restrictions, have been repealed. All taxes on the dissemination of knowledge have been abolished, and increased facilities have been afforded for the circulation of knowledge by post. The import duties have been repealed, or very nearly so, on raw materials, the produce of foreign countries. The manufactures also of foreign lands have been admitted, free of duty, to compete with those of the country; old industries have been stimulated and improved. New industries have arisen.

In fine arts, painting and sculpture, it is hardly possible, except in very extraordinary periods, that a marked change can be observed in a single ten years; but this country certainly holds its own, as compared with the productions of other countries.

Photography, hardly known in 1851, has developed itself, and has become an important branch of art and industry, used alike by the artist, the engineer, the architect, the manufacturer, the merchant and the magistrate.

In the preparation of colours for printing and dyeing, most important discoveries have been made. The recently discovered and most beautiful and brilliant colours, called the "Aniline" series, are produced from coal and its products, and the facility of their application is so great that a complete revolution is taking place in the processes of dyeing and printing.

In the manufacture of glass great economy has been introduced; and the process, just perfected, of transferring photographs to glass, and permanently fixing them by the action of

* Condensed from an article in a recent number of the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, London.