

enormous, and the facilities for transport so great, that predictions of bad harvests are very hazardous. We have been expecting one with some anxiety since 1870, but it has never come, and is less likely now, to a degree that would seriously affect us financially, than it was ten years ago, so that people are not likely to incline to a low tariff by way of preparation for this particular contingency.

The great difficulties in the way of free-traders in this country are three in number: one is the name itself, and another is the deep-seated belief of the average man that free-trade cannot be carried on across political boundaries, with profit for both parties. The term has become synonymous in his mind, even when he is not a hereditary Whig, with foreign hostility to American growth, and largely because free-trade has meant, during the greater part of the tariff controversy, free-trade with one power, and that one particularly odious to the generations which managed American politics and business down to the outbreak of the civil war. It was always understood that when the lowering of the tariff was called for, it was in order that British goods might obtain easier access to American markets. It was with British rivals almost exclusively that American manufacturers, in the three great fields into which they were most attracted, the iron, cotton, and woollen industries, found themselves obliged to contend from the very earliest days of American industry. So that it was not surprising that free-trade should have almost from the beginning been known as "British free-trade"—that is, a device of British contrivance for British profit—and that Henry C. Carey and Horace Greeley found it easy to accuse free-trade orators and writers on this side of the water of being stimulated by "British gold." So true is this that we doubt very much whether to this day ten per cent. of the Americans who think about free-trade at all, think of it as anything but unrestricted commercial intercourse with England only, in which Englishmen—or in other words, the old enemies first of American independence and then of American growth and progress—would reap all the profits. In fact, the term "free-trade" connotes in the popular mind of America to-day, even among those who have not been brought up in Whig traditions, some kind of degrading dependence on England; so that the question of free-trade is in this country by no means a purely fiscal or commercial question, as most English propagandists are apt to imagine; it is half political, and you may get the best of the economical argument ten times over and still leave the stronger half of the protectionist case untouched. If it were not for this there would be something a little ludicrous in the impression which the very mention of free-trade produces on a great many Americans, who are in all other fields fond of general ideas, and are attracted by all movements which seem to make for universal peace and the reign of human brotherhood. It sounds to them like a proposal that they should engage in piracy or smuggling, or some other venture of great profitableness but undoubted criminality; and the effect of this is heightened by the free-trader's claim that his dogma is a direct offshoot of the fundamental rule of Christian morality.

The second difficulty in the way of the free-trader here is the enormous size of the area which is given up to free-trade under the American Constitution. As a matter of fact no government has as yet established free-trade between so many people as the American Government, and it has so happened that this American free-trade covers a greater variety of soil and climate and national product than the free-trade of Great Britain; and, what is more, it is absolute free-trade, not partial. This has really made Americans perfectly familiar with all the elementary principles of the free-trade gospel. They know and practice over the area of their own country nearly all Bastiat's theories. No Northerner ever thinks of asking for protection against the products of Southern heat and sunshine. The Pennsylvanian iron-master and coal-master know well that they must take their chance against the mineral wealth of Missouri. The Eastern farmer submits without a murmur to be driven out of the markets by the wheat and fruit of California, and the corn of Indiana and Iowa. The Massachusetts spinner has nothing to say when he hears of successful mills springing up in Georgia and Illinois; he is as mute and resigned as John Bright or Richard Cobden could wish. So that really there is no American who does not possess complete acquaintance with free-trade as an economical theory by actual practice before his eyes. No European has had the same opportunity of witnessing its working. The trouble which it is bringing on the British farmer and by which he is at this moment so dazed, is one with which the American farmer in all the Eastern States has been familiar for over twenty years, or ever since the railroads began to tap the prairies. Moreover, the American home market for everything grows with unexampled rapidity. The manufacturer witnesses every year an enormous increase in the number of farmers he has to clothe and supply with tools and wheels, and the farmer finds wherever he settles that within a few years he has a large town population within easy reach to buy his produce. The great influx of European capital, too, into American railroads ten years ago did a great deal to prevent the rise of interest in foreign free-trade among the agricultural population. In the natural course of things the Western farmer ought not until now, if even now, to have had the means of access to European markets. The railroads which have for ten years been supplying him with it could not have been built on a purely commercial basis. They could not and did not pay when constructed. But they were built largely

with foreign money, under the influence of an immense delusion, and have been working diligently for a good many years at a heavy loss, which has fallen mainly on foreigners. The result has been tantamount to the payment of a heavy bounty on the export of American produce. It has enabled American farmers to reach markets which no change in the tariff could have enabled them to reach, and relieved them of all necessity and of all temptation to think or talk about free-trade.

The one remaining difficulty in the way of free-trade, here as everywhere, is the notion that trade carried on across political lines is less advantageous than, or not so advantageous as, trade between people living under the same government. That the wonderful success of free-trade between the several States of the Union has not destroyed this notion, and has not, for instance, created an overwhelming opinion in favour of the admission of Canada, at least, to a customs union with us, seems strange at first blush; but it is, we believe, accounted for by the fact that the country which has always been associated most closely with free-trade in the popular mind has, as we have said, been one to which popular antipathy was very strong, and whose eagerness for anything made the advantage of that thing to the United States seem doubtful. But it is a prejudice which is still very deep-seated—witness General Grant's belief when President (and on matters of this sort he may be considered an average man)—that we lost heavily by trading with San Domingo while it was foreign soil, but would make much money by trading with it if annexed. Nothing will do so much to eradicate it as the multiplication of commercial treaties, and the formation of large Zollvereins, such as Prince Bismarck proposes, including several independent states. These things will furnish the actual experiment which, in a question of this sort, has more popular value than any number of books or lectures. There is probably no country in the world so interested now in throwing down all barriers to commercial intercourse as the United States, owing both to their wonderful and now easily-accessible natural resources, and the remarkable bent of the national genius towards both trade and invention. In open competition it is very difficult to say what nation will be able to find a market here thirty or forty years hence for anything but tropical products, and just as difficult to see what markets Americans can then be kept out of.—*New York Nation*.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

It is generally admitted that it is the duty of the State to provide for the comfort, the intelligence and virtue of its subjects, and there are likewise few who deny that any method of accomplishing this duty which ignores the necessity of a system of public education can result otherwise than in ultimate failure. But a further question is presented to modern educationalists and economists, viz.: Whether the State is justified in providing for its youth anything beyond what is called an ordinary education, and whether it should not attempt to fulfil its duty of providing for the comfort, intelligence and virtue of its subjects by developing capacity for self-support through technical education. Of this at least there can be no doubt, that the State should impart an education which will benefit its different subjects in an equal way. The State can be no respecter of persons. But I think it can be shown that at present all classes of the community do not receive equal benefits, that technical education is required to remove the inequality, and that many advantages to our country would result from its introduction.

The question is sometimes asked, viewing the diverse occupations in which mankind engage, whether there is any one kind of education which the State could adopt as being exactly suited to the right demands of its subjects, favouring none, and extending equal privileges to all. The friends of the public school systems of the United States and Ontario point each to their own in illustration of the affirmative. But it can be fairly said in reply: Your systems do not benefit all classes alike; your system of High Schools and Latin Schools, into which you invite and encourage all to enter, prepare your boys to be lawyers, ministers, literary men, &c., but do comparatively nothing, and indeed unfit for their proper sphere, those who are to form part of the great majority that live by hard work. If it be advisable to train boys in High Schools and Latin Schools so that they may be prepared for the learned professions or for commercial life, then why not prepare those who are not about to enter the so-called learned professions or mercantile business, but who desire to enrol themselves in the ranks of that great band who live by the sweat of the brow, but who none the less contribute to swell the glory or exalt the name of their country.

The *Educational Weekly*, of Boston, the official organ of New England teachers, is disposed to deny the duty or right of Government to teach our youth industrial or mechanical arts, and asks, with an air of triumph, if the State is bound to do this, for our children, is it not bound to furnish them with work when they become men; but this logic turned upon the logician would maintain that, seeing the present system is devoted chiefly to storing the minds of pupils, in the first stage, with facts and knowledge which are rudimentary, and subsequently, with an education almost wholly commercial, that therefore