

A Paralyzed Industry

LOST IRON AND STEEL EXPORTS.
By G. WARD BRICE

Harm as great as would be caused by the loss of a Dominion has come upon Great Britain in the past two years without the nation realizing its disaster.

The iron and steel industry of North-East England is as good as dead, crushed out of existence by the high costs of production and the competition of cheap foreign manufactures.

A feeble show of activity still remains, but it is fed by the vitality drawn from reserves formed in bygone days when this was the most important trade in the United Kingdom.

Many of these great works, which till ten years ago were shipping pig-iron and steel rails to the whole world from the banks of the Tyne, are in the grip of a creeping, but a galloping, paralysis.

Of all the men in the industry with whom I talked, from the heads of firms who are as famous wherever in the world a river's hammer has yet rung, down to workers in the furnaces and rolling mills, not one is to-day able to hold out a hope of preventing this British trade—vital both to national prosperity and national defence—from passing into the hands of foreign competitors favoured by cheaper labour and lower taxation.

First-Line Trenches.

The iron and steel trades were the first-line trenches of British industry. They have fallen to the attack of that new foreign economic competition which threatens our national existence as surely as German military ambition threatened it before the war. The fault does not lie with the men who held them. Both employers and workmen are meeting the trials of the present and facing the rule of the future with co-operation, self-sacrifice, and courage.

They have been let down by their own fellow countrymen. The iron and steel industry is an unheated trade, exposed to the direct attack of world competition. The reason why it is being overwhelmed is that the sheltered trades on whose co-operation it depends are charging too much for their services.

High wages on the railways and at the docks, together with lavish governmental and municipal expenditure, have heaped upon the iron and steel trade burdens greater than it can bear in its unprotected fight against the competition of tariff-defended foreign nations in the open markets of the world.

Desolate Scene.

I wish anyone who may think this is an exaggerated account of the situation in the iron and steel area of North-East England could have been with me recently when I accompanied the mayor and councillors of Middlesbrough along the River Tyne. A few years ago that eight miles stretch of water was a scene as compact of prosperity as any in the world. Today it is a place of desolation, a depressing avenue of extinguished furnaces, empty shipyards, and deserted wharves.

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"His Masters Voice"

DEATH OF PAINTER OF A FAMOUS POSTER.

Mr. Francis Barraud, the artist, who died recently in St. John's Wood, N.W., was the painter of the picture "His Master's Voice," which shows his fox-terrier "Nipper" sitting at the horn of a gramophone of an early type.

Mr. Barraud first used a black spaniel here, but afterwards went to the Gramophone Company to borrow a brass one, and this led to the purchase by the company—more than twenty years ago—of a picture which is known over half the world.

The price paid for the picture was £100, but three years ago the artist was given an annuity of £250 by the "His Master's Voice" company.

The picture of "Nipper," which the Gramophone Company secured, had been offered for exhibition at the Royal Academy but refused.

Our New Submarine

Submarine L28, built at the works of Messrs. Vickers and Company, Barrow-in-Furness, and installed with machinery at Chatham Dockyard, has been commissioned for her acceptance trials. This new addition to our underwater craft has a displacement of 600 tons on the surface, and 1,500 tons submerged, and is designed to travel at 17 1/2 knots per hour on the surface and 10 1/2 knots submerged. The armament consists of one 4-inch gun and a torpedo equipment.

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