

lar more than 3 p.c. cheaper than they could get silver to make a silver dollar ; and that as the country had exceedingly heavy coin obligations to meet, it was wise to provide for the coinage of gold alone."

Then came the law of 1878 requiring a monthly minimum silver coinage of 2 million dollars with a maximum of 4 millions. But to the disgust of silverites who wanted the government to settle all its obligations in silver the administration wisely limited coinage to the minimum. Such an example to the world, silverites boldly exclaimed, would have been so wholesome and so commanding that the world would have followed it, and they add, the existing inequality between the value of the two metals as well as the injurious depression in prices would have been corrected.

And we are told how commodities have increased after the gold discoveries of Australia and California until a commercial crisis produced a reaction. But it is not said, as it should be that the reaction, was the result of, over-production, overtrade, over-credit and speculation, elements which generally follow the entry, into the greater marts of the world, of every important addition to the supply of specie.

And now it is asserted that the demonetization of 1873 reduced the price of commodities and produced a scarcity of gold which enriched the wealthy and therefore that the parity between money and production is lost. It is a curious fact to notice that in 1873 the gold production in the United States was 36 million dollars and that since that date, that is to say, during the past 23 years the same average was maintained though the world's production more than doubled during the same period.

In endeavoring to thus attach the responsibility of lower prices on legislation silverites allege that the depreciation is local rather than universal. They instance the price of Indian wheat which they say did not fluctuate of late years. I had no time to look up

statistics as to this, but I believe that India produced as much as ever but exported less for want of a market, and that notwithstanding the fact that freights, by ship or rail were lower than ever. Hence consumption was no greater than usual and therefore the wheat of India like that of the Mississippi valley and like that of our own North-West evidently had its erratic turns and is not now worth proportionately more than American wheat, And it should be remarked that the production of Russia and of Argentine has more than doubled the past few years.

Let us not imagine that the general decline in prices of late years has no cause of a wider range. Who can doubt that throughout the world every product of human energy, of nature and art, have fallen in value in response to forcible causes originating in the marvellous and astonishing development of progress, science and arts, the wonders of which not even the most imaginative of men could have ventured to predict? And underlying these money, credit and banking have operated wonderful changes. Another cause of the decline is to be found in the reaction which set in civilized countries after the opening of new avenues of production and of commerce brought on by the building and equipment of over 420,000 miles railway and the construction of miles upon miles of canal work, wherein hundreds of thousands of wage-earning men were employed the greater majority of whom have since sought life in agricultural and other pursuits. If we take all these things into consideration it is impossible to conclude that abundance or scarcity of silver could alone cause an increase or decrease in the general value of commodities.

Unrestricted coinage, in countries where silver mines are so abundant and productive as in the United States and Mexico would be like opening mills to the free manufacturing of flour regardless of the needs of consumption.