

Great Britain, which is now the fad of *The Globe*. But Britishers do not thus view the question; and we commend to *The Globe* and its free trade friends a careful perusal of the following article reproduced from a representative British journal, the *Macclesfield Courier and Herald*. That paper says:—

Are cheap goods a boon to the producer? In other words, is free trade a blessing or a curse to a nation of manufacturers? In these parts the subject has been so fully and freely discussed that it seems as if nothing new could be said on the question, but it is one of those topics which so vitally affect us all that we cannot have too much insight into it. The question has been raised by Mr. Blatchford, author of "*Merrie England*," whom that young and smartly-written periodical, *To-day*, describes as "a gentleman with beautiful ideals but childishly impracticable methods," and proceeds:—

"In arguing this question of free trade, Mr. Blatchford has, beneficially for his cause, put his Arcadian dreams behind him, and has dealt with this world of strife and struggle as he finds it. Free trade, half a century ago, was the panacea of all human ills. Under free trade everybody was to be happy, healthy, wealthy, and wise. To even now hint a word against it is considered rank blasphemy by the older school of political thinkers. But the young men everywhere are asking themselves if we have not given the drug sufficient experiment, or, at all events, whether the surroundings have not changed and the conditions altered to an extent sufficient to render a new treatment advisable.

"Cheap food is excellent if you have the money to buy it; but a threepenny loaf is of very little value to a man with only three halfpence in his pocket, and of less value still to the man who has nothing. Free trade has given us cheap goods, and it has taken away employment from English workers to an alarming extent. If we were all consumers, living on an income derived from an investment in consols, free trade could not be too highly praised; but our political guides forget that we have to earn our income as well as to spend it, and many of our leading industries are being completely killed by the unchecked competition of countries where, living being cheaper, labor is content with a much less wage.

"Is the measurable future it will be a question whether any English manufacturer can pay his way, and then what is to become of our army of workers? To offer them 'a free breakfast table' will be no answer to a man looking for employment. Free trade has practically killed agriculture already, and made us of necessity a land of coalpits and smoky factories. That may be very good as far as it goes, but what is to become of us when free trade, having rendered it impossible for us to grow our own food, also renders it impossible for us to earn our living by manufacture? To save a few pence on our wife's print frock we pay the price of thousands of out-of-work operatives in Lancashire. We hold up our hands in horror at the hard-hearted farmer, but it is we, my good friends, with our cheap loaf made from imported corn who have driven the agricultural laborers to swell the useless swarm of unneeded life in our great towns, and who pay the few remaining on the land a starvation wage that does not enable them to keep themselves and their families from actual daily hunger.

"I shall be told that all this has been thrashed out years ago; that the thing has all been settled and done with. But who are the people who have so kindly 'settled and done with it' for us? and will the members of the Cobden Club give me some proof of their superhuman wisdom that will force me to believe that when once they have considered a thing there is no further need for thought upon the subject? Catchpenny phrases invented to bamboozle votes from fools are our stock political argument. The big free trade loaf stuck on the end of a pole can win an election,

but it does not fill the bellies of our unemployed thousands. Free trade has been of immense benefit to the political wire-pullers. It is time now that the subject was considered from the point of view of the nation."

We most heartily endorse every word uttered by *To-day* on the subject, and so must the poor silk weavers of Macclesfield and Congleton, whose industry has been so severely hit by the one-sided system of free trade—a system which enables the foreigner to come into our markets and ruin our trade while he hedges his own with a high wall of prohibitory tariffs, and practically shuts us out from anything like fair competition. And the lamentable thing about it all is that the commerce of the country is the very last thing that Parliament will address itself to. This was shown by the miserable tactics of the Government on Tuesday night, when they tried to count out the House on a commercial subject on which they had ultimately to eat humble pie. Time after time has the hon. member for Macclesfield division (Mr. W. Bromley-Davenport) tried to bring the depressed condition of our staple industry and the inequalities of the present fiscal system before the House of Commons, but the Radical Government has successfully prevented him being heard—the appeal of the suffering thousands dependent on the silk trade is nothing to Lord Rosebery and his satellites—the welfare of the commerce of the country has to "play second fiddle" to such absurdities as Home Rule, Welsh Disestablishment, Local Veto, One-Man-One-Vote, etc. How long will the constituencies be content to tolerate this iniquitous condition of things? The trade of Lancashire is being hit hard, and Lancashire is calling out with no uncertain voice. We have always felt in regard to this question that when the great cotton industry was attacked the silk trade and other industries would be heard in the great appeal to the nation. It is coming. "What Lancashire says to-day, England says to-morrow," Lord Beaconsfield once declared. He was prophetic in many important utterances, we trust he was in this.

#### AS TO ARCHITECTS' PLANS.

The Customs Department has decided that the duty on architects' plans, either original drawings or copies for use as original drawings, shall be 2 per cent. on the estimated cost of the building to be erected in accordance with them. If accompanied by details the duty shall be 3 per cent. of this estimated cost. Additional sets are to be valued for duty at \$5 each, in addition to the original estimate of the cost of the building. According to this decision an imported set of plans and details for a building to cost \$20,000 would be taxed \$600, which is by no means a modest impost. The Ministry must have discovered in architectural designing the lost industry which could not operate without encouragement. The weak spot in that theory, for all such theories have their weak spots, is the fact that Canadian architects were doing as well and better before the introduction of the National Policy than they are doing now.—*Toronto Globe*.

There is no good reason why the Government should ever be benefitted to the amount of one dollar by duties collected upon architects' plans imported into Canada. The country is well supplied with architects thoroughly competent to make plans for any buildings which it may be desired to erect, and as this industry is entitled to tariff protection as well as any other, that protection should be extended to it. It is true there are those in Canada who imagine that nothing really good can be produced at home and therefore must have the plans of such buildings as they may desire to erect made abroad; and these are the ones who object to any duty being imposed upon their plans. But generally such buildings are for residential purposes, where the wealthy owners can well afford to pay the duty