

PREFACE TO CANADIAN EDITION.

The gratifying manner in which an edition of this work, published in the United States, was received by eminent economists and statesmen, as well as by the press, in the various countries of Europe and in America, induces the issue of an edition in the native land of the author.

As the information in regard to Europe was chiefly obtained in 1872, (when the author visited Europe as a delegate to the International Statistical Congress at St. Petersburg,) and through correspondence brought down to 1875, the rates of wages given in the following pages are somewhat higher than those which now rule. The decline has, however, extended to all the leading countries of Europe as well as to America, and the relative prices of labor at the present time are not essentially different from those herein presented. The prices of provisions have, however, declined less in Europe than in America, thus rendering the condition of the workpeople of the Old World less favorable than that of their fellow-toilers in the New.

It is scarcely necessary to refer to the difficulties which obstructed the prosecution of the inquiry into the rates of wages, the cost of living, and the condition of the working classes in European countries. These difficulties were numerous and formidable, but the success of the work undertaken demanded that they should be met and surmounted. The disinclination of many employers of labor to make known the rates of wages paid by them in the different branches of their work, was overcome in some cases by a judicious presentation of the subject, and a due exercise of tact; but there were instances in which it was necessary to exercise no small amount of determination and persistence in order to obtain the information desired.

The readers of this report will probably notice the omission of any formal comparison between the conditions of labor in the various countries of Europe and corresponding industries in America, or of any conclusions as to the relative advantages possessed by the Old World and the New for the prosecution of manufacturing industry. This omission is intentional; because it would be difficult if not impossible to avoid discussing the effects which Customs-tariffs have had upon the United States, or may have upon Canada. Although such a course might with entire propriety have been pursued, yet it is probable that the advantage thus gained in logical completeness would be more than neutralized by the loss of confidence which a work of this character would necessarily sustain, if affected by a partisan bias. It was as much the inclination as the duty of the author impartially to gather, collate, and publish facts, leaving it to others to deduce therefrom such conclusions as from their respective points of view may seem legitimate.

He does not profess, however, to be without opinions on economic matters, or fail to take a lively interest in any governmental policy whereby the prosperity of his native country might be affected.

Ottawa, April, 1879.

E. Y.