

condition. The settling of the walls, or the yielding of floor beams, should not be forgotten, and the fact that the shafting was true once should not be accepted as a perpetual guarantee that it is all running as it ought to do.

A large per centage of the total power of any factory is absorbed by the shafting and gearing, and in some localities, where fuel is expensive, a handsome profit might be made by giving skilful attention to this one item of expense.

THE APPRENTICESHIP QUESTION.

While it is in a general way true that Protection develops home manufactures, it would be a great mistake to depend upon Protection alone to do the business for us. Capital, skill, business management, and several other things are necessary besides. In the United States, where very high Protection has been on trial for twenty years, the system works well on the whole, but unequally, in some cases even badly. Where our enterprising neighbors of the high tariff persuasion have been most successful has been in the making of heavy textile fabrics, machines of many and various kinds, and articles which can be made by machinery without any great nicety of skill on the part of the operatives. In heavy cotton fabrics, for instance, for which neither taste, nor design, nor any extra skill is necessary, the Eastern States actually beat Lancashire to-day. If anybody doubts this statement, here is the proof. For several years before the change in the Canadian tariff, when the duties were low, our imports of such cottons from England were falling off, while our imports of American cottons were rapidly increasing. As each paid exactly the same duty, the Americans were actually beating the English, in certain staple lines of cotton goods, in the neutral market of Canada. As far as such goods were concerned, leaving our market virtually open was a gain to the States far more than to England. Canada lost, but England did not gain; it was the States that gained instead.

In other lines of manufacture, however, there is a different tale to tell. In the higher grades of fabrics the American factories are far behind Europe; these classes of goods have still to be imported, and why? For the reason chiefly that there are few American workmen who have the necessary skill for making such goods. An American paper thus explains:—

"Why is this? Simply because the American craftsman has deliberately barred out his own sons from his trade and left the door open to foreigners. The printers in a certain community, for example, refuse to admit American apprentices, in order to keep up the price of their work; whereupon foreign printers step in to supply the demand, or the publishers import the sheets of their finer publications from London, ready for binding; while the sons of the printers go without capital or craft to Western cattle farms to earn their living, complaining that the trades and professions are full. 'There are no skilled American weavers;' and \$22,000,000 of gold go to pay foreign manufacturers for the clothes we wear, while American weavers are turned out of the closed mills. It would be hard to find a more complete circle of fatuity. The textile manufacturers show at least one gleam of sound sense. They propose to establish a school for skilled weavers, dyers, etc., in order to compete with the French and English looms."

In Canada we are looking forward, should the N.P. be sustained, to an extensive development of *new* industries; of manufactures finer and more advanced than those in which we have made our beginnings. At first we shall have to import skilled operatives from other countries, but next comes the practical question—shall Canadian youth be allowed to learn the more advanced branches of manufacture? There is room for some plain speaking on this point.

The tyranny of employers of labor is an old story, and no one can say, either, that it is not "founded on facts." Part of the story is so old, however, that it does not so much apply to our own times as to times gone by. Still, much yet remains to be done, and we hold it to be for the interest of our manufacturers to welcome and to promote really practical factory legislation, adapted to the country's circumstances. We think it as well, meanwhile, that the Factory Act lies over for another year; we need a little more time to consider the first legislative effort of the kind ever made in Canada. Employers will be well advised if they frankly accept the situation, take factory legislation as the inevitable accompaniment of extended and prosperous manufactures, and lend their influence to the promotion of a suitable measure. This much conceded, there is something else to be said on the other side.

Throughout current newspaper literature, both serious and sensational, there runs a deluge of protest against a certain alleged evil. All our boys want to be "clerks," so it is said; they despise the work of the mechanic, and want to stand behind the counter, or get into something which is dignified with the name of a "situation." Farmers' sons forsake the plough, and try to get into stores. As regards the farmers' sons, that is an evil of old standing in Canada, but it is being rapidly cured by new circumstances. The unfortunate results of too much storekeeping in time past, and the brilliant prospects of agriculture in the Canadian North-West now, are working a wonderful change. Not only in Canada, but in the States as well, the rage for going upon land is so great that the cure referred to stands good for many years to come, and on a large scale. But boys who will not or cannot take to farming are still obliged to seek for "situations" of various kinds, mostly very poorly paid, because they cannot get into the trades. Let any man having a boy ten or twelve years old try to get him apprenticed to-day, so as to make a shoemaker or a moulder of that particular youth. He would find it easier to get him into the Civil Service without political influence, and that is saying a good deal. In other trades the barriers are not quite so strong, but they are still strong enough to keep out all but a favored few. Suppose it admitted that factory legislation we must and shall have in Canada, because the new circumstances of the time require it, we say, in addition, that an emancipation act for boys is also required, so that they may be enabled to learn what trades they choose. It will not do to have things all on one side. Was it not Burns who said that one of the most discouraging spectacles on earth was that of an able-bodied working man asking of his fellow-worm leave to till the soil for bread? In that one idea of the Scottish poet's there are volumes of land-league speeches. But is it much better when a boy, or his father for him, has to ask leave of the Union to learn a trade? There was an emancipation act for the black race half a century ago; let us consider whether one for the white race be not needed too. We want no Chinese labor in Canada, but the question has still to be asked—is white labor really free?