threatens them, with the same weapons. Among themselves they can combine and put up or put down freights so as to prevent ruinous competition with one another. But they have no other means of standing against the competition which menaces both them and the New York canals from Canada, than by making their rates low enough to prevent the diversion of business. It follows, therefore, that every desirable thing which could be accomplished by Congress, if Congress had constitutional power, is equally certain of accomplishment by the same business laws which are forcing upon the people and the Legislature of New York a reduction of the cost of canal transportation as the paramount question of State policy.—*New York World.*

How to Increase Trade.

Probably more than one of our readers were surprised to notice, in a statistical table of the world's commerce printed in our columns a short time ago, that the little kingdom of Belgium stands next to the United States in the aggregate amount of its imports and exports. It is possible that Zollverein Germany would a little surpass Belgium in the amount of its trade, and take rank next to the United States, if the true amount of German exports were known. The table does not give these, probably for this reason, that as the Zollverein does not tax exports it keeps no accurate account of them. German imports in 1872 were slightly in excess of Belgic imports; and consequently, if German exports were known and added, Germany and Belgium might change places in the table.

But, taking the table as it stands, there is cause enough for astonishment on the one hand and for serious thought on the other, in the fact that the little circumscribed spot of earth called Belgium, having, all told, an area of only 7,275,612 acres, and of these less than 5,000,000 acres in cultivation, should almost equal in the amount of its commerce these United States, which have a land area (excluding Alaska) of 1,926,636,800 acres. The total commerce of the United States in 1872 was $1,164,000,000; of Belgium the same year $999,400,000. The population of the United States in 1871 was in round numbers 39,000,000; of Belgium the same year 5,100,000.

One or two further comparisons will show in a clear light how amazingly inferior, in the matter of trade, our country is, relatively to Belgium. The estimated area of Massachusetts is 4,992,000 acres. This is more by 12,000 acres than the cultivated area of Belgium, but less by 2,283,612 acres than the aggregate acreage of Belgium. The kingdom of Belgium is not a great deal larger than the state of Massachusetts. The state of New York contains 32,332,160 acres, or four and one-half times more than Belgium has: and the population of the state of New York is already nearly equal to the population of Belgium—the difference may be at the present moment 400,000 in favor of the latter; and yet the comparison in our statistical table is not with Massachusetts, or New York, but with the whole United States.

Is there anything in the history and policy of Belgium that accounts for this remarkable eminence of industrial and commercial position? There is something that accounts for it. In the first place, the perfect free trade, which the Low Countries enjoyed up to the time of their revolt from Spain, towards the end of the sixteenth century, gave a great impetus to their industry and commerce. As early as the fourteenth century, their linen and other woven goods were held in the highest estimation all over Europe. The famous revolt from Spain, which ended, after eighty years, in the acknowledgment of the independence of the Dutch Provinces, and in the imposition of the yoke of Spain upon the neck of the Belgians; the fact that for the next century the Low Countries became the battle-field, the "cock-pit," of Europe; and the subsequent passing over of Belgium as an adjunct to the house of Austria, interrupted and well-nigh destroyed the industrial developments of Belgium.

In 1792 the country was conquered by the French, who applied to it till 1814, when Bonaparte was overthrown, the protective system, so-called, with extreme rigidity. But from 1814 to 1830 Belgium was united to Holland, and the two had in common a customs tariff based on a maximum duty of three per cent. on raw materials and six per cent. on manufactured goods. It was during this interval that the modern manufactures of Belgium were brought into existence; the lace of Brussels and Mechlin, the linens and damasks of Cambray and Liege, the woollens of Ypres, the manufactures of carpets, hosiery, cotton goods, machines and fire-arms became thoroughly established; and a national exhibition of industry in 1830, just before the separation of the two kingdoms, demonstrated an astonishing progress.

But the foreign commerce at the Belgian ports, chiefly Antwerp and Ostend, suffered by the connection with Holland for the benefit of Amsterdam and Rotterdam; and a difference in race, language, religion and traditions gave rise to a violent revolution in 1830, which separated the Belgians from the Dutch probably for all time. The Belgians reimposed upon themselves a "protective" system with such results in revenue and trade and industry that Mr. Frere Urban, the Minister of Finance, came forward in 1851 and declared his intention gradually to remove from the tariff every duty that could be called "protective." In this view, a new tariff went into operation in 1855; and another, actually fulfilling that intention, in 1866; so that now a low tariff is maintained solely for revenue, and an almost universal public opinion finds fault with it, not that it is so free, but that it exists at all. Belgium is the most advanced country in Europe, probably, in its ideas and practice on the freedom of trade. We find in this one fact one great reason why the smallest monarchy in Europe stands fourth in its commerce among the leading nations of the world—England, France, and the United States alone surpassing it.

At the last Cobden Club dinner, Mr. Laveleye, a Belgian, spoke as follows: "As for Free Trade, the cause is as good as won, notably in Belgium, where the Chambers of Commerce are demanding not only the reduction of the tariff, but the complete suppression of all the custom houses, which would make our country a free port—a mart free to all Europe."—*Evening Post.*

Interesting Statistics.

Following are some interesting statistics, condensed from the New York *Bulletin*, showing the trade of the eleven great nations of the world. (The amount in dollars is the total value of imports and exports):

	TOTAL COMMERCE. 1872.	POPULATION. 1855.	POPULATION. 1872.
G. Britain.	$3,043,000,000	27,620,000	32,000,000
France	1,429,000,000	35,750,000	36,100,000
United States...	1,164,000,000	27,090,000	41,000,000
Belgium	999,000,000	4,580,000	5,100,000
Germany implied only.........	500,000,000	33,500,000	35,400,000
Austria...........	447,000,000	36,500,000	35,900,000
Russia in Europe.........	515,000,000	65,000,000	71,000,000
Italy.......	518,000,000	18,850,000	27,000,000
Spain	139,000,000	15,600,000	16,370,000
Netherlands....	444,000,000	3,433,000	3,650,000
Sweden	73,000,000	3,660,000	4,100,000
Totals	$9,276,000,000	271,433,000	311,620,000

The United States shows the greatest increase in population, 14,000,000, ane Italy the the next greatest, 8,000,000; Austria has lost 600,000.

Messrs. Call and Miller, of Newcastle, N. B., have received a subsidy of $2000 a year from the Government of New Brunswick, to run a steamer twice a week between Newcastle, Chattam and Indiantown on the South West Branch of the Miramichi, and Red Bank, on the North West Branch; and have purchased the steamer Andover for $10,000. It will take some delicate navigation to get a side wheel steamer drawing two feet of water round to Miramichi.

A PETROLEUM FLEET of iron vessels is about to be constructed at Philadelphia for the purpose of the better transit of petroleum oil to Europe, where the demand is very large. At Antwerp great iron tanks are being constructed to receive the oil, where it will be held in store until required for use.