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EDITORIAL

TWIDDLEDUM-TWIDDLEDEE.

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THE *Free Trade Broadside* is the title of a publication started in Boston. The April issue of the paper teems with poetry, maxims of freedom, “immutable principles of right”—and free trade logic(?). Here is a sample.

In one place the pronouncement occurs: “We stand for the prosperity of our nation, not as antagonistic to other nations, but in harmony with them”.

In another place the statement is made that American tools can be bought cheaper in Germany than in America.

The second utterance knocks out the first.

If, despite the tariff upon the ingredients of the tool, and despite the freight charges to Europe, the tools now produced in America can be sold in Europe cheaper than in America, it follows that, when the tariff is removed from the said ingredients, the said tools could be sold so much more cheaper in Europe that the European producer would be ruined. It takes a free trade hypocrite, or visionary, to reconcile his pretenses, of harmonious relations with other countries, with his purpose to undersell them.

“Harmonious relations” and “anti-antagonism” are words that have a place in the code of free trade as little as in the code of protection. The wolf, at home, can not be a lamb abroad. Free trade, as well as protection, is planted upon class antagonism at home. The protectionist protects the capitalist class at home against the “pauper labor” PRODUCTS of the foreign capitalist, but he leaves the working class at home wholly unprotected against the “pauper labor” of foreign countries, by doing all he can to import such “pauper labor” free of duty in the largest shipments possible; the free trader, on the other hand, protects the capitalist class at home against the foreign capitalist abroad, by lowering the price of goods at home, thus finding a pretext also to lower the price of the merchandise labor-power, and,

consequently, being able to sell his own goods, abroad and at home, at prices that would ruin his foreign competitor. Accordingly, closely scanned, the protectionist is a free trader in labor-power, the free trader is protectionist of the capitalist class—with nothing between the two but a choice of rotten apples for the working class.

When a free trader opens wide his mouth to snort Mackay hymns of Freedom, or a protectionist thrums with his scaly fingers on the strings of Prosperity, the performance is an economic Punch and Judy show, the political counterpart of which is seen when the Tsar pietistically kneels down to pray for the “welfare of his beloved people”, or when the MacDonalds and Goodings roll up their eyes in devotional concentration for “the sanctity of the Law”.

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