

from this symptom an ultimate failure of the supply began to be apprehended.

The manner in which the laboratories of nature supply this article, is the most interesting part of our subject. It appears to be one of the choice ingredients which nature has reserved with peculiar care; for it is evolved only in a very few volcanic regions, and from its limited accumulation even there, would seem to be the product of comparatively recent and local volcanic action.

The Tuscan boracic region covers some thirty square miles of wild mountain land, where the heated and undermined crust trembles to the boiling and rumbling of the waters beneath, and breaks open in numerous fissures, giving vent to jets of steam impregnated with the vapors of sulphur, boracic acid and other minerals.

Borax Lake, in California, occupies apparently the crater of an extinct volcano, elliptical in form, and about three quarters of a mile in mean diameter. It is situated on a peninsula embraced within the waters of Clear Lake; a sheet of water about twenty miles long, situated in the Napa valley, about one hundred miles north of San Francisco.

REPORT OF THE REVENUE COMMISSION.

The report of the Special Commissioner of the Revenue, DAVID A. WELLS, is a document which every intelligent citizen of the United States owes it to himself and his country to procure and study. It is not a newspaper article, to run the eye over among other things.

We would gladly give the report to our readers entire, did space permit. We can only glance at the main features, in the hope of inducing some of "the plain people" who govern the country at last, to make it their business to get and digest the whole.

It appears that the \$50,000,000 lost to the revenue by the whiskey frauds and cognate operations which have pervaded the whole liquor business of the country, have not been saved to the drinkers, but have mostly gone into the pockets of manufacturers and knavish revenue officers.

The tax on carriages, watches and plate, is condemned as too inquisitorial, annoying, and expensive to collect, in proportion to the revenue derived therefrom.

cents per pound on raw cotton, is recommended to be retained. The general tax of five per cent on products and sales of manufacturing industry, should be reduced to three per cent, with a proportional reduction of the specific taxes.

The taxes bear an excessive proportion both to the population and the public debt. The amounts for the late fiscal year were: Internal Revenue, \$310,906,984, currency, and customs, \$179,046,630, gold; a total of \$561,572,260 in currency.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that taxes in Great Britain are levied in such a manner as in the least possible degree to enhance prices—all of the ordinary forms and products of industry being exempt from taxation; while in the United States the exemption of any form of capital or process of result of industry is the exception rather than the rule.

In respect to the tariff, it is shown that the average of duties is now 48.58 per cent, and 43.19 per cent on everything imported, not excepting gold: a very high average of rates, but so distributed in many cases as to tax our industry oppressively for its raw materials, while admitting the products of competing foreign industry on terms favorable to the foreigner and ruinous to ourselves.

The foreign commerce of the United States is being, as it were, swept from the ocean. No voyage with an American vessel can be planned at the present time from the United States to any foreign port with a reasonable expectation of profit.

Contraction of the currency is forcibly advocated. The circulating medium does not advance in the same ratio with the exchanges which it serves to carry on. In the State of New York, in the ten years from 1850 to 1860, the capital of banks increased 101 per cent, loans and discounts 75 per cent, deposits 113 per cent, and specie 141 per cent; while the circulation increased only 15 per cent.

We reluctantly forego republishing Mr. Wells' masterly argument with the producers of crude commodities, that their interest, with that of all classes, demands the encouragement of manufacturing industries around them.

ADVANCE IN PRICES.

A somewhat extended investigation respecting the advance in the prices of the leading articles of consumption and of rents, indicates an increase of nearly ninety per cent, in the year 1866, as compared with the mean of prices during the four years from 1859 to 1862.

with the price of commodities, although numerous exceptional cases might be quoted which seem to indicate the contrary.

ADVANCE IN WAGES FROM 1860 TO 1866.

Table with 2 columns: BRANCHES OF MANUFACTURE and PER CENT. Lists various industries and their wage increases, such as Agricultural implements (55 to 60), Bookbinding (37 1/2 to 50), etc.

[From our Foreign Correspondent.]

AMERICAN BREECH-LOADERS IN EUROPE.

BERNE, Switzerland, Dec. 3, 1866.

Permit me to tell you some things officially about gun matters in Europe, feeling that you will be interested in anything which concerns the introduction or adoption of American breech-loaders in European countries. I was present at a trial of arms in the month of October last before the Commission appointed by this Government to select guns for adoption, and found there Remington's, Spencer's, a variety of American systems for the transformation of muzzle-loaders, also a number of Swiss models for the same purpose, and some English (including the Snider), German and Prussian patterns, also the French Chassepot gun; in all some forty different arms: I presented the Winchester repeating rifle, formerly the "Henry."

The rifle was loaded and fired from the magazine 15 times in 41 seconds, including time of loading; and used as a single-loader, they found it could be handled with more facility than any other arm; in fact, taking the Prussian position for firing from the hip, the soldier need not look at his gun to load and fire it, but can constantly keep his eyes upon his enemy.

As an instance of the expertness of some of the Swiss riflemen, I would say that I have seen one of them with the Winchester military rifle, fire off-hand ten successive shots 583 yards, and the average variation of the shots on the target was only twelve inches from the center.

The papers contain various rumors of the adoption of various arms by different governments; but, as far as I can learn from official sources, they are entitled to very little credit.

[Our Foreign Correspondent.]

UNDERGROUND RAILWAYS.

ENSWORTH, ENGLAND, Dec. 7, 1866.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I have no practical engineering knowledge, therefore I must claim your indulgence if my note is somewhat confused. I had prepared a letter for your perusal on the subject of underground railways, but postponed sending it, and since then I have been repeatedly in the underground railway, and all the disagreeables which had been raised against this mode of conveyance I soon found to be entirely