

Tidings from Britain.

Our own correspondent.

LONDON, October 20, 1880.

The dead season is upon us, and our trade is at a standstill. Closed are our senate houses, those huge mills of law and learning, light and liberty; vanished the last bright rays of the summer sun, which we, alas! so seldom see; fled are our summer friends, the flitting swallows; and dead is that last sweet spark of by-gone joys, the last rose of summer. But their places are filled by dismal black fogs and chilly mists, easterly winds, rain, hail and sleet, to say nothing of the fearful black, greasy mud through which we in London have continually to wade. Walking is well-nigh impossible, and we place our feet carefully on the treacherous slime, every moment anticipating to be laid low. In short, this is truly the winter of our discontent, and right wretched are we in consequence.

Trade, as is usual at this period of the year, is woefully depressed, and inglorious inactivity is the rule, where it should prove the exception. However, I must not growl too loudly, for, taking it all in all, the summer trade has been rather above the average of the past three or four years, so that wise men have been able to lay in a good stock of nuts for winter use.

At last the home trade appears likely to look after colonial orders a little more actively, for I hear of more than one firm which is making arrangements for representation in Canada, with a view to competing with the American trade.

Twelve months ago, we were deep in the question of "Reciprocity," but the qualities are now no longer argued in public. The question has not, however, been entirely dropped, for I have recently noticed signs of an early renewal of the discussion, and, judging by the unanimity displayed in certain quarters, it seems very improbable that England will continue the practice of the theory of Free Trade she has so often—but fruitlessly—expounded to her contemporaries.

"Providence helps those who help themselves," is, doubtless, a very trite proverb in certain cases; but I am dubious as to its applicability to the case of a youngster who helps himself—to his employer's type or stereotype metal. There have been several such cases here of late, I am sorry to say; but I noticed that, in each case, policemen, magistrates, and prison warders, all combined to secure for these youthful

students of "Self-Help" a sure and certain means of freedom from the cares and annoyances of the world for a time.

I never could enjoy Tennyson's poems—though, as a schoolboy, I tried hard to master them. Once or twice since then have I tried to read them, and now, having again laid down the book, in despair, I am forced to the conclusion that laurels and logic don't seem to travel on the same track. That recent terrible infliction, "De Profundis," I have buried deep under a huge pile of pamphlets and parliamentary bills, trusting I might never catch sight of it again. I would fain destroy it, were it not for the fact that I purchased the copy of the magazine in which it appeared, and would like to have something for my money, even though I may be afraid to read it.

The Court of Bankruptcy has been rather busily engaged in filing petitions from those connected with the printing trade here in England. A short time since, Messrs. Salisbury & Taylor, the printers' auctioneers, liquidated, and were immediately followed by those well-known engineers and machinists, Messrs. Conisbee & Son. Then several small concerns went to smash, whilst the Lanham Roller Company voluntarily wound its affairs up, and transferred its business and stock to the *Daily Telegraph* people, the virtual editor of which, Mr. Lloyd, will in future attend to the wants of the trade in this respect. The change was, to a certain extent, rather sudden; though the question of winding-up has been discussed by the board for some little time. In fact, Mr. Lanham and Mr. C. G. Squintani were in constant communication, and it was, at one time, thought that this latter gentleman would have taken the affair in hand. But some hitch arose, just when things began to look most serious. Mr. Wm. Blades, having lost over three thousand pounds in the enterprise, refused to assist in carrying on the concern; negotiations with Mr. Squintani came to an abrupt end, and, in the extremity, Mr. Lanham made what terms he could with his old clients, the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph*, the Fleet street offices of the company being at once closed. I was very sorry to hear of this affair, for, during an extended social and business connection with Mr. Lanham, his business capacity has often struck me as being above the average, and I had hoped that, notwithstanding the nature of the up-hill