

the districts mainly affected, but of the nation at large. The metropolis will doubtless long continue the great financial centre of the world; but even here immense changes have been witnessed of late years, principally since the introduction and development of the telegraph. By means of cable transfers, trading financial operations have been quite revolutionised, and those banks which used to do a large discount business for firms having a foreign trade now find themselves deprived of a very lucrative source of income.

An instance of what has come about by the institution of cable transfers was lately stated in this city. A local firm, which does a large Eastern trade and turns over some four million pounds sterling annually, used to receive payment therefore by paper remitted home. On that paper the negotiator in London and here reaped a fair commission. But now the whole thing is done by means of cable transfers; funds at once come into play on the amounts credited being announced from the outports, and the charge is little more than the discount for the time the bills took to come home and the usance. Bankers and financiers so far find an occupation gone, but the trader and the consumer are the gainers, and capital is made to go much farther. Touching, however, the trade of London for last year, our contemporary remarks:—"Whether the volume of trade, or the proportion of profits realised thereon, be considered, the results have been almost without exception disappointing. As a port, London is losing ground. For the last two years the total tonnage entered and cleared from Liverpool has exceeded the figures of London. Latterly there has been a slight recovery. The silk trade, which formerly centered in London, has almost entirely left the country. The practical monopoly which the city used to hold over the indigo trade is its no longer, and the movement of colonial produce generally is decidedly adverse to its continued centralization in the hands of the merchants of Mincing Lane. Nor is, perhaps, the condition of the port of London and of the river Thames such as to be worthy of the leading city. It is somewhat of an open question how far the dock accommodation and the dock rates meet the requirements of trade or the facilities and prices offered by competing ports. The condition of the bed of the river is such that large steamers can only come up with the tide, and when they reach their wharves are in most cases positively unloaded by manual labor. There is surely room for much and early improvement in such a state of things.—*Herald*."

THE FUNCTION OF A BOOKSELLER.

An Intellectual Barometer, is what a writer in the *Publishers' Weekly* calls a book store. This writer, Mr. O. F. Richardson, asks the question whether book-stores are fewer and less influential than they used to be, in proportion to the population; and he declares that one cannot give a decided "No" to it, in spite of the prevailing idea that public intelligence is steadily on the increase. "In too many thriving towns, where there is a showy drug-store, a large furniture establishment, and several elaborate clothing-houses and fancy-goods stores, there is either no book-store at all, or a small concern chiefly devoted to the sale of periodicals and stationery. A stock of candy would seem to be a better investment than a stock of good books; for people who can afford to buy plenty of caramels or ice-cream do not feel able to indulge in the luxury of a book a year." Giving an instance of a town of 8,000 inhabitants where in 1830 there were three book-stores and where now there is but one—a library of 5,000 volumes having arisen there in the meantime—he asks:

Is the comparative smallness, and fewness of

book-stores the fault of the proprietors or the public? and replies:—"I believe it to be the fault of both."

"A book-store ought, in a sense, to be a public library. It ought to be a sort of intellectual head-quarters and starting point. It should bestow its benefits upon the community in which it stands, and that community should regard it as something worthy of pride as well as of support. Its proprietor is, of course, a business man, who wants to make money. But the higher his idea of his function, the more money he ought to be able to make. More intelligence is needed in the reading of books than in cobbling shoes or weighing sugar. Everybody must be clothed and fed, but the bookseller must find or create his market. He should be the right-hand man of the minister, the editor, the school-teacher, the lawyer, the physician. He should take counsel of the educated and well-to-do classes in the community; should put on his shelves the books they want, and should welcome them to his place of business. He is himself a teacher and preacher, whose moral and intellectual influence makes his business an ethical as well as a commercial one. He has a "high calling" and ought to take a becoming pride in it. If he sells paper-hanging, stationery, bronzes, and knick knacks, he should remember that these, however remunerative, are but side-shows. The variety-store can beat him in cheap lines of goods, but he can beat the variety-store in an intelligent catering to the mental wants of the community. If he covers his windows with flash, illustrated journals or staring lithographs, he shows that he has no confidence in the intellectual part of the town, and no power to make himself attractive to it. Is it all a mere matter of profit? By no means; but if it were, the bookseller would not sell any *less* paper-hangings or knick-knacks by selling a hundred good books where he now sells ten. And in these side-show lines more money as well as more reputation is to be got by working for the best and wisest and well-to-do classes than for the Saturday-night purchasers of the story papers. And in our communities—fortunately for the nation—he is speaking of the United States, it often happens that among the poorer in purse are the richer in brains, who themselves would like to patronize, and save money for, a good book-store.

"Ways and means of building up a book-store differ, but the constant endeavor should be to cultivate taste and raise the stock and the public to higher and higher levels. Buyers should be made welcome; should be allowed to see and handle the books; should receive courteous attention, but not be vexed with officious suggestions, nor be watched like thieves in embryo. A visitor to a store comes because he wants to come, and this is especially true in the case of visitors to book-stores. The most probable buyers are the very ones that want to be left alone; but there are others who would be offended at the same treatment. Tact and a loose line are needed to land this sort of fish; and many a book-seller fails because he forgets that one kind of tact is needed in selling a coat or ribbon, and another in selling the parchment Shakespeare or the new edition of Tennyson.

But the public, I fear, is more at fault than the bookseller. It has its own duty in the matter and should not neglect it. Every man and woman of intelligence ought to be a frequent visitor at the nearest good book-store. He or she ought to keep track of the fresh arrivals of books, and of the advertisements and reviews in the newspapers and magazines. We buy food and clothing when we must, we buy books when we are tempted to do so; and we ought to put ourselves in the way of being tempted. The bookseller is trying to sell wares which not all

want; if you feel that you belong to the more intellectual part of the public, you owe a duty to him, and should see to it that his wares do not go unbought—or at least unnoticed. A reader ought to buy according to his ability; a book a week, or month, or year, or once in ten years. Do not wait for the subscription-agent to come along with a flaring monstrosity at double price. Do your own selecting, if you know enough to do so, or think you do. Encourage the good and discourage the bad; there are plenty, perhaps, to buy the cheap or mean pamphlet, but you are the one who ought to buy the standard book.

Then, again, whatever may be the truth of the idea of "protection to home industries," the local book-store certainly ought to receive a certain amount of voluntary protection at your hands.

No kind of store will sooner die without deliberate cultivation than a book store, and it is worth protecting, even at the cost of a little inconvenience, for the sake of the good it will do to you and others. It is, in fact, a local thermometer, which tells whether the intellectual soil and temperature are warm and fertile or cold and non-productive. Are you proud of your local book-store, or ashamed of it? If the former, you deserve credit for some of its glory and good work, if you have done your duty. If you are ashamed of it—dare I say that you ought to be just a little ashamed of yourself?"

WASTE IN THE WORKSHOP.

On the practical subject of waste in the factory or mill, an English technical journal has an article in which the importance of little economies is made apparent. We quote: One of the most common amongst the many sources of every day expense incidental to the carrying on of an industrial business, and one most generally neglected by those whose duty it should be to prevent it, says the *Mechanical World*, of London, is that of waste in the workshop and amongst the employees. Although the amount in each particular case may be, and probably is, of small proportions, and is consequently considered of little or no consequence, yet in the aggregate it really becomes an expensive item, which tells heavily upon the debt or side of the ledger when accounts are balanced.

In some shops the quantity of small articles, such as screws, nails, panel pins, washers, &c., that may be seen lying upon the floor, kicked about by every passer by, is astonishing. There seems to be no idea of their value, either by the workman or foreman. If a man drops such a slight article he will not take the trouble to pick it up, and the result is that all around the ground is littered with them, they soon become covered with shavings, sawdust, and rubbish, and when the sweeper comes at stated times to clear up he as likely as not shovels half of them into his barrow, wheels them away to the fire, where the rubbish is burnt, or throws them in with the ashes and other refuse of the ballast heap. Even if he carries a box, as he often does, into which he may throw say one half of what is dropped, they become of very little use from the fact that nails and screws of all kinds and sizes become mixed and jumbled up together unless properly sorted into their various kinds, and this is just what is left undone in the majority of cases. We do not imagine that it would be feasible for a man to stoop down every time he drops one of the small articles in question, but he at least might be made to take that trouble occasionally, and put them back in their proper receptacle in his nail-box. As it is, whatever is once dropped may be considered lost.

Another instance may be mentioned in that of oil, which is often allowed to drip and fall from