

cerned they are in the front rank. An interesting article on the Scotch tweed industry appeared recently in the *People's Journal*. "Between two and three years ago, says the writer, 'the manufacturers on Tweedside began to experience keen competition from many quarters, and since then the trade as a general rule, has gone from bad to worse, although several firms have not been affected to any great extent. Labor is now plentiful, money is scarce, and privation was prevalent last winter, and may be again this one. Glancing at the general features of the industry, it has first to be noted that the border trade is what is known as 'high class.' 'Shoddy' is eschewed. The reputation of Border cloth has been built up through the use of first-rate material, and there appears to be a feeling that the district must stand or fall by that quality. The principal wools used are Cheviot, Australian, New Zealand, River Plate, and the English Down. Most of the manufacturers spin their own yarns although several, in addition to those who carry on the worsted industry, purchase their yarn in the markets. The finished article is generally sold in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Huddersfield, Leeds, and other large towns, while a considerable quantity is dispatched to the Continent and to America. In some respects it is an old-fashioned trade. For instance, several firms have few travellers. These mills supply certain merchants who deal in the high-priced qualities of cloths, and these merchants, on the other hand, refuse to accept goods from other mills, although the cloth may be cheaper. Of course, the merchants know that they are receiving a high-class article, and the manufacturers are aware that if their goods do not come up to the requirements further orders will be refused.

It is such manufacturing firms that have not experienced the depression, but it is said that one or two are now considering the advisability of running their mills on short time. Galashiels is the town that has suffered most from this dullness. It has nothing to fall back upon, as hosiery forms a very small trade. Hawick, however, has not been content with one industry, and has developed the hosiery branch so extensively that the depression in tweeds is not so apparent. In fact the hosiery is a wonderfully steady trade, ready markets being secured all over the country. Selkirk, again, is practically given over to the manufacture of tweeds; and, strange to say, it is almost the only town on the borders that is progressing. The reason for this is difficult to find. The town has a most delightful situation, and leucis can be easily secured; but these two factors do not altogether explain the prosperity, although one Galashiels firm moved to Selkirk because better ground could be had there. It is contended by some, however, that the Selkirk and Hawick manufacturers are not so conservative as their Galashiels friends, and, moving with the times, have introduced specialties that have kept them busy during the two years of slackness.

Every one on the borders has his own theory regarding the cause of the depression. The popular fancy is that fashion has changed, and that fact cannot be gainsaid. Scotch cloth does not make up so neatly as some of the English, and especially Yorkshire fabrics, which are now being largely adopted by merchants and tailors, and taste is also running upon plain goods. Cheviot cloth is soft, and the demand is for a crimpier fabric, which can be produced much better from English Down wool. Then, again, it cannot be denied that ready-made clothes are more popular now than they have ever been, and this likewise affects the Tweedside industry. Foreign competition is also telling against the prosperity of the border towns. Until recently a very large business was carried on with the Continent and with America, but the European countries and America are now supplying their own requirements to a large extent. On the Continent the border methods are now being used, a considerable number of Germans having been trained in the mills on Tweedside during recent years. It is also said that a mistake has been made through several

of the manufacturers endeavoring to compete with England and lowering the quality of the cloth, and several well-informed critics assert that in a large measure the present depression is solely due to over-production. New and powerful machinery, they point out, has been introduced, capable of turning out 25 per cent. more work than the looms could produce some years ago, and the demand has not increased in proportion. These are a few of the causes which are said to have brought about this serious and regrettable depression.

Why, some may ask, do not the Border manufacturers change their methods? The answer is obvious. The English worsted goods cannot be manufactured with the machinery in the Border mills. A well-known British commercial gentleman not long ago declared that he found it cheaper to sell all the machinery—good though it was—in his establishment and replace it with a new set, because several improvements had been adopted by his neighbors. Perhaps the same course might be profitably followed in some departments on the Border, but it is to be feared that even then manufacturers would be at a disadvantage in certain quarters. "Tell us the true cause of the depression," say the mill-owners, "and we will then do our best to remedy the deplorable state of affairs." At the same time they hold strongly to the belief that the real cause is a temporary change of fashion, which will soon change again in favor of the Border tweeds. Several of them also contend that the two-loom system which holds in Yorkshire, but to which the Scottish operatives strongly object, will have to be introduced. The prospects for the coming winter are not bright. Wages are being reduced in some quarters, the workers are being put on short time in others, and it is said that a Galashiels factory will be closed in a few weeks. Females earn higher wages than men, women are employed in the mills, while many men go idle. A change for the better would be welcome to the 16,000 persons employed in the trade.

SOUTHERN COTTONS.

BY J. E. MACGOWAN.

The cotton textile trade of the Southern States is one of the most interesting in the history of the country's industrial development. It began during the last ten years of the first half of the century. In 1850 the mills were of some account, in those days, commercially speaking. A few of these—they were small even for that time—were operated with slave labor, and results were satisfactory. In the decade, 1850-1860, there were some large mills built, the most conspicuous of these being the Eagle and Phoenix, at Columbus, Ga., and the Augusta mill, at Augusta, in the same State. Two of lesser size, but large for that era, were in Aiken County, S.C. Few, perhaps none, of the mills were destroyed during the civil war. They were all in fair condition, and, with trifling repairs, made ready to start up. Spinning cotton was naturally, therefore, the only one of the small industries then in the South to be promptly revived after the close of hostilities. Considerable additions were made to the spindle and loom capacity in the last five years preceding the taking of the eighth census, 1870. In that year the census statistical agents found in the South 147 big and little cotton mills, that contained 283,800 spindles; 6,310 looms, and consumed yearly 80,300 bales of cotton. The largest mills were still in Georgia. That State's spindles numbered 85,000, and these were all active. They then consumed about half of all the cotton spun in the South. In the decade, 1870-1880, the progress was only moderate. In 1880 the census returns show a total of 164 mills, 361,300 spindles, 12,329 looms; cotton consumed in the census year, 189,000 bales.

The most unerring indices to progress in a cotton textile trade, are the increase of spindles and the fining of yarns spun. Since 1880 the Southern spindles have increased 570 per cent.