

tries. It is said that the labor employed in railway construction has led to an enormous development of the productive capacity of the men. In a review of Mr. Brassey's work in the "Edinburgh" it is said that the English railways are in themselves "creators of laborers of a higher order than was to be found existent before their commencement, unless in so far as they were anticipated in this respect by our canals." The statistical details furnished by Mr. Brassey afford abundant evidence that the cost of work is not determined by the rate of wages. A very remarkable instance of the relative cheapness of efficient labor is given from Mr. Brassey's experience in Rio Janeiro. In that country it was found that the work of the free native laborer was little more effective than that of the slave, and it was found cheaper to engage European laborers at five times the amount of wages than to employ slaves. It may surprise our readers to learn on Mr. Brassey's authority that in Canada on the Grand Trunk, French Canadians received 3s. 6d. per day and Englishmen 5s. to 6s. and that the latter description of labor proved to be the cheapest. In England the wages of navvies rose from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 8d. in 1837 from 3s. to 3s. 6d. in 1871, and in special cases to 3s. 9d. to 4s. 3d. The important point is that the more highly remunerated labor was, as a general rule, the most profitable to the employer. A remarkable fact in support of this opinion is stated by Mr. Brassey. A comparison was made at Basingstoke between London and country bricklayers, without the knowledge of the men, and it was found that one London bricklayer, who was paid 5s. 6d. per day laid more bricks in a day than two country bricklayers who received 3s. 6d. each. Mr. Brassey was a strong advocate for piece-work, as we learn from the following passage in "Work and Wages:—"

"My father always preferred putting a price upon the work rather than paying by the day. Piece-work could not in all cases be adopted without some complications and difficulties, but my father always looked upon day-work as a costly game. On public works the differences between the earnings of the men doing piece-work and men working by the day were always remarkable. In the usual working days men working in butt-gangs would earn 4s., while others working on the day-work system would not earn more than from 2s. to 3s. a day."

The butt-gang above referred to is an industrial combination peculiar to the English navy. It is a partnership between a gang of workmen, who associate together, without capital or articles, and take piece-work from an employer at a price which

yields them pay much greater than the ordinary rate of wages. Mr. Brassey cites the case of navvies working in butt-gangs earning from 4s. to 5s. a day, and even as high as 6s., when ordinary wages were 2s. 6d. to 2s. 8d. One great object of Mr. Brassey's work is to establish the fact that low wages do not mean cheap work but the contrary; that long hours of labor do not imply rapidity in the execution of work, and that true economic results are best secured by enlightened co-operation rather than by competition. It would be well for both employers and employed in Canada to profit by the experience of the United Kingdom.

HOW OTHERS SEE US.

We always read with interest the article in the *Westminster Review* under the heading "India and our Colonial Empire." The notices of current events in the Dependencies of the Empire are written by one altogether unbiassed by that party feeling which more or less pervades those of local controversialists. We must, of course, make due allowance for occasional errors on matters of fact, which rarely, however, affect the value of the criticism. In the January number attention is called to the fact that the influence of the Colonies on English industries had been remarkable during the preceding autumn, causing an unwonted ferment of work in the iron industries. The greatest and first of the results of the present revival of trade, in the opinion of the Essayist, "is certainly the planning and carrying out of schemes of railway extension throughout the British Empire." Reference is made to the extensive railway projects in Canada, not only the Main line to the Pacific and the feeders, but likewise various local lines. In the West Indies, the Cape and Ceylon, great works of the same kind are in process of realization, while New South Wales, South Australia, and Queensland are rivalling one another in a vigorous prosecution of railway enterprises.

Canada, it is said, usurps to itself a large share in this rising demand for rails, it being estimated that within three years no less than one thousand miles of the railway will be in working order, "giving to the Canadian North-west that certainty and facility of communication, the absence of which has ever been the one great drag on the rapid development of new areas of fertile soil." The financing for this railway on the bonus and land grant systems has attracted ample capital from Europe as well as in America, which is not surprising in the face of the rare phenomena of the English funds at

par. We are, however, reminded that "the danger remains that this inflow of capital and population, and the consequent stimulus to enterprize drive matters hastily to the opposite extreme, and that the fated reaction consequently follows." We have entered on an era of prosperity under circumstances varying in no essential particular from that which commenced some ten years ago, England supplying capital for the construction of gigantic public works, as well in her own dependencies as in foreign countries, and thus causing an abnormal demand for her manufactures, notably iron; and, so long as the money is forthcoming, and the works are in progress, all will be well, but, most assuredly "the fated reaction" will follow, and among the chief sufferers will be those who are being tempted by bonuses to erect factories, which will more than supply the normal demand of our limited population.

In the April number of the *Westminster* the subject is resumed, and reference is first made to the large emigration of 1880. The report of the Board of Trade gives the emigration from the United Kingdom during thirty years at four and a half millions, three millions to the United States, one million to Australia, and five hundred thousand to Canada. These figures are pronounced misleading, because, it is said, "no one goes to Canada or Australia in order to go on elsewhere." This certainly is not correct as regards Canada. There is no reason whatever why emigrants whose destination is the North-Western States of the Union should not give the preference to the St. Lawrence route; and it is quite misleading to state that "the only railway routes at present open to Manitoba and the North West lie through the United States." It is to be observed that this has reference to emigration to United States instead of Canadian ports. An emigrant taking passage for the North West can be laid down at Chicago by Canadian steamers and railways, and we have very recently had a special batch of emigrants, brought out under the supervision of Mr. Whellams and to be followed by others, whose destination is Manitoba. We fear that the writer in the *Westminster* is in error in assuming that considerable numbers of the emigrants to the United States are destined for Canada, and that no one comes to Canada in order to proceed to the United States.

The writer in the *Westminster* observes that "the Canadian Dominion is just now priding itself, and with much justice, on its present prosperity," but he adds that "the usual popular fallacy rears its head at once." To that fallacy we have more