

of women are in regular work, some are working overtime, more are on short time, but there is also a proportion out of work, about as large as in an ordinary year of rather slack trade. So favourable a Report as this would not have been anticipated last August ; it could have been foretold that some industries would be very busy, and that enlistment would give some relief, but it was expected that there would be districts and trades where the raw material was seriously short (which is occurring only in the linen manufacture and in a few other not very important cases) or where the demand, whether for home use or for export, was so ineffective as to leave large numbers out of work, and elaborate preparations were made to meet the expected difficulties in the winter. The reasons why these forebodings have not been realized are threefold. First, no one had had any experience of war on so large a scale, and, even if it was believed that Lord Kitchener's larger demands would be met, it was hardly realized that an army at war in winter needs continual replenishment of supplies other than arms and ammunition, and that an army in training eats heartily and needs a complete outfit of new clothes as well as rifles. Secondly, the very great elasticity of our industrial system, supposed to be over-specialized and unenterprising, was not taken into account, nor the enormous advantage of drawing materials from every country in the world, which has enabled traders to increase their supplies from a great miscellany of sources and so replace those which are closed. Judging from the detailed statistics of external trade, we may even expect that the difficulty of manufacturers will soon be, not to obtain orders, but to find labour to carry them out. Thirdly, people had underrated the general industrial and social intelligence of the ordinary members of the community,