

oils, quicksilver, machinery for installation of electric plants or waterworks (except meters and electric fixtures), fire bricks and clay, wool-clipping machines, steam motors, gold and silver watches and plate, agricultural machinery and wool yarn. Under the 2½ per cent rate come cotton in bales, zinc in sheets, wood pulp, hops, rabbit hair, gelatin, etc. Specific duties are charged on provisions, drinks, tobacco, collars and cuffs, hats and hat felts, matches, kerosene, grain bags, playing cards, stearin, linseed oil, etc.

GERMANY'S EXPORT UNIONS.

England, France and other continental countries can not help comparing Germany's giant strides in foreign commerce with their own. An English writer in the *Bibliothèque Universelle* says the Empire owes much to her wonderfully well-directed export unions, and of these one of the very best is the Saxon Export Union, whose methods of doing business have served as a model for others. The yearly fee is twenty marks, a trifle less than \$5, for which one gets the union's publications, and a square meter of space at the union's annual exhibition in Dresden. Its agents are sent all over the world. They collect and send home samples, study goods, tastes, methods of transportation, systems of payment, credits, etc. No. are these agents sent out without any definite aim, or simply to see what is going on. First of all, the territory is investigated. If necessary, agents will be sent to reconnoiter, so to speak. For such purposes, 380,000 marks (\$90,440) were expended between 1886 and 1895. The first trip was to Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile; the next to eastern Europe; the third covered Mexico, Canada, the West Indies and Cuba; the fourth, Japan; the fifth, Africa.

All this is as true of other unions as it is of the Saxon. In Berlin, a number of unions work hand in hand with the Government to aid exports. Even the Central Union for Commercial Geography, a semi-scientific institution, works to aid German exports. There are export banks and export journals, and, more important still, the colonial societies, which have agents in many of the world's leading cities. There is a union for international markets that holds two meetings annually. To the work of the unions must be added that of the Government in aid of Hamburg, Bremen, Kiel, Stettin, Lubeck, etc. Hamburg alone does more business in a year, to-day, than did all the old Hanse towns in a like period of time. Only London, among European cities, surpasses Hamburg in the amount of its shipping.

The German agent is *sui generis*. If in Hamburg, he has huge houses full of samples. If a stranger comes to Hamburg he finds not only what he wants at the commission merchants,