

below that of the same quantity of the natural product yielding as much dyestuff in proportion. This method is observed, because so far only a portion of the world's demand of indigo can be produced by chemical process, and because, naturally, the factory which first succeeded in its manufacture is trying to make the greatest profit by the advantage it has gained over others. All this will be changed as soon as chemistry alone can supply the world's demand.

An important branch of the German chemical production is concerned in the manufacture of artificial dyestuffs in general. The endeavors of this branch are directed, generally speaking, to producing the organic natural products such as those of color plants, dye woods, insects, molluscs, etc., by artificial and even cheaper and purer means, and in a more serviceable form for dyeing; also to producing new colors, which not only approach in brilliancy and effectiveness the natural kinds, but even surpass them. Since the discovery was made in 1868, that the important dyestuff madder—alizarine—could be produced in an easy and cheaper manner from the carburetted hydrogen of coal tar, the use of dyestuffs obtained by coal tar distilling has gradually grown to such a degree, that in Germany about five times as many artificial colors are made as in all other countries combined. According to the last census on 14th June, 1895, there existed 25 factories for the manufacture of aniline and aniline colors, and 48 factories (with seven branches) for the production of other coal tar products (i.e., not only for colors, but also for other commodities, such as picric acid, etc.) The aniline works employ 7,266 hands, the latter factories 4,194; in all, 11,460 men.

THE RAW COTTON DIFFICULTY.

A Liverpool cotton broker enlightens the London Spectator on the cotton situation in the following letter: "Your article on the above subject in The Spectator of Sept. 22, is calculated to mislead the outside public as to the causes of the present embarrassment in the cotton trade. Briefly, the present scarcity of cotton is due to the simultaneous failure of last season's crop both of American cotton and Indian cotton; and the stocks of the world, relative to the consumptive requirements, have been reduced to a lower point than at any time since the American war. This scarcity is rendered more acute by the fact that the incoming American crop is a late one, and threatens to be again seriously short. A further aggravation of these untoward conditions was the recent devastating storm at Galveston, which wrecked the port and shipping, and delayed the shipment of the new crop of cotton to Liverpool. No combination of speculators could have exercised much influence apart from these natural and unavoidable causes. It is also very questionable whether the action of these speculators has been as malign as might appear, as the high price in Liverpool has attracted all the surplus stocks from all parts of the world, and yet there is an absolute famine! The writer of your article is not, apparently, acquainted with the trade, or he would not say 'one result of the present month's experience will be to develop the importance of other sources of supply, such as the Indian and Egyptian.' This country has almost ceased to use Indian cotton, not that the crops are smaller, but because we can more profitably spin American. The Egyptian cotton crop has more than doubled itself since the English occupation of Egypt, and the consumption of Egyptian cotton in this country has correspondingly increased. You further say: 'Surely it is not too much to expect that the leaders of the cotton trade . . . will take effectual steps to secure that in future the true character of the cotton crop in the United States shall be known to them and all concerned both early and accurately.' The Washington Agricultural Bureau announced

last October that the crop was a failure. This country did not believe it. The American spinners did, and secured their cotton. This country was left in the lurch. These are the undoubted facts of the present lamentable scarcity of cotton, and appearances indicate a straitened supply for some time to come. Some of us cotton people read your journal regularly for inspiration and guidance, and we may be pardoned for thinking it is quite excusable for a literary writer, in commenting on a large trade, not always 'to see it steadily and see it whole.'"

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—Regarding trade in the Manchester district The Warehouseman and Draper says: Business prospects do not improve in Lancashire towns, and short time and few days to the week is the order of things in most of the cotton manufacturing centers. The clothing trade reports badly of the orders taken for present delivery, and is particularly anxious for some "overcoat weather." Generally speaking, there is little fresh news to report concerning the staple industry of this centre. A good report of the cotton in the States is to hand, but notwithstanding it has affected the price of raw material very slightly. Yarns made from American cotton for home use have been in quiet demand. Spinners report few lines changing hands, except in odd instances. There has been rather more doing in the way of booking future orders, based, of course, on "future's" prices. In the cloth department considerable enquiry is going round for certain classes of goods, and, were it possible to arrange prices, there is no doubt that considerable business could be transacted. There is more going on for future delivery, and some lines of considerable magnitude have been booked. A feature of the market has been the revival in the enquiries from the Indian markets, and, though many lines have been placed, the bulk of the business offered has been at prices quite impossible to accept. It is reported that an alliance has been effected between the American Mercantile Company of the United States and a Yorkshire firm. The high price of cotton is causing a demand for some of the lower classes of wool and worsted yarns which are used in mixed fabrics. They are now as cheap and easily obtainable as the cotton warps, and give the satisfaction of being all wool.

BRADFORD.—The local industry continues to be in a very bad way, and there is no prospect of immediate improvement. The position is all the more regrettable, inasmuch as it is due, not to any change of fashion, but to an insane pushing up of prices at the close of last year. There was a good demand for stuffs made from botanics, and there being somewhat of a shortage in the supply of merino wools at the time topmakers felt confident that prices were bound to go up to at least 3s. a lb. On this basis raw material was actually bought in Australia, but the increased cost in the manufactured article, in consequence of the very rapid rise, turned the consumer against the goods, and throughout the whole of this year the demand for this particular class of article has been very small indeed. In the early months of the year there were those who confidently predicted that the falling-off would be only for a brief period, and they held out strong hopes of an almost immediate revival. Those who had accumulated large stocks of merinos also repeatedly tried to keep up values by withdrawing material from the market, but even these efforts to produce artificial values failed. The decline in prices has been not only sure, but also pretty rapid until to-day. Botany tops, which at the beginning of the year were quoted at 3s. per pound, can be actually bought at 19d. Nor is it considered by many that the bottom price has yet been touched. On the top of the difficulty in connection with botany has come the increase in the price of