

moment, it always ends in increasing the difficulties which it was intended to alleviate.

The examination of the witnesses before the Commissioner appointed to enquire into the outrage at Sheffield, has been a very interesting one. That great centre of the iron industry of the kingdom has been for a generation or two back distinguished by the terrorism which the Trades Union have exercised over both masters and workmen. In fact, the whole system has been an exceptional one, and it would be very interesting to know what are the causes which have produced in England in this century an organization which stops at no crime to attain its end. Unfortunately, for so far no light has been thrown on this. Some evidence has been obtained as to the crimes committed, and perhaps even as to the actors in these crimes: but of the social cause, the antagonism and hatred between classes, of which these atrocities are a symptom, no explanation has been rendered. In so far, however, the commission has been very ably conducted, and it seems probable that before it is closed much good will have been done, at least in breaking up the present organization.

The tailors' strike in London still continues, and I only refer to it now, for the purpose of remarking that no attempt has been made on the part of the men to start any co-operative shop. It would seem as if some such measure could be easily tried, but, for so far it does not even seem to have been thought of. The profit of the master tailors would appear to have been very large, supposing, of course, that they did not lose by bad debts, and undoubtedly if the men could start any system of working for cash payments, they would have an ample margin for profit. Indeed, one of the consequences of this strike is likely to be a reduction of our tailors' bills, and cash customers will, in future, look far more into price than they have hitherto done.

The following are the returns from the Bank of England compared with those of the preceding week and same time last year:—

	June 12, 1897.	June 5, 1897.	June 13, 1896.
	£	£	£
Public Deposits	9,894,000	9,193,000	7,127,000
Private Deposits	17,173,000	17,187,000	20,127,000
Government Securities	12,889,000	12,836,000	11,098,000
Other Securities	18,650,000	18,874,000	31,772,000
Notes in Circulation	22,758,000	23,179,000	25,906,000
Bullion	21,330,000	20,951,000	14,482,000
Reserve	13,613,000	12,776,000	8,516,000

Returns from the Bank of France at same periods:

	June 13, 1897.	June 6, 1897.	June 14, 1896.
	Francs.	Francs.	Francs.
Treasury Balance	33,927,000	92,127,000	136,070,000
Private Accts.	139,172,000	346,072,000	391,830,000
Commercial Bills	454,253,000	454,950,000	718,321,000
Advances	2,329,000	203,007,000	161,167,000
Notes in Circulation	1,042,331,000	1,035,081,000	878,839,000
Cash	803,419,000	860,755,000	618,083,000

June 15, 1897

[PER JAYA]

THERE is little now to report this week in trade. Although there has not been much change, or any great increase in the actual transactions the hopeful feeling which I have previously noticed still continues. The bullion in the Bank of England and the Bank of France still continues to accumulate, and in the money market the rates are downward. The publication of the report of the Brighton Railway Committee has had a depressing effect upon all kinds of railway securities, and owing to this cause, and to the usual reactions after so rapid a rise, almost every kind of public security has been a shade lower.

The most startling event of the week, and, indeed, one of the most extraordinary revelations ever made, has been made this week before the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Sheffield Trades Unions. The Commissioners had power to give full protection against all legal proceedings to witnesses who might make a full confession of their participation in any of the appalling crimes which have, from time to time, been committed in that town, and the result has been that owing to some bad feeling among the confederates in wickedness, an ample account of murders, maiming, and blowing up of obnoxious individuals or places, has been given. I have no doubt that very sensational reports will be published on your side as has been done on this, and that it will be represented that trades unions are simply a name for conspiracies to murder. It cannot, therefore, be inappropriate to remark that Sheffield has nearly always stood alone in these outrages, and that for so far, only one of the

numerous trades unions there has been shown to have been guilty of these terrible crimes. Nay, more, it is all but certain that only a very few of the members of this union either took part in them or knew anything of them. The Secretary, Broadhead, indeed, expressly states that he falsified the books so that the general body of the members might not know of the payments to the actual perpetrators.

I ventured last week to express the hope that the causes which produced this bad feeling between the employees and the employed, and led the men to go almost any length to maintain their fancied rights, would be investigated. As the subject has now become of very great importance, I think it right to refer to the most prominent of these causes, and I think when it is seen how exceptional they are, it will tend to do away with much of the general prejudice which has been created against trades unions.

In such an enquiry, it would be obviously superfluous to point out that in Sheffield there exists the same antagonism of interest as in other towns between employees and employed, and that this antagonism has probably been intensified by the exclusion of the better class of working men from the franchise, an exclusion which is now happily about to terminate. All this is true of many places and of many trades, besides Sheffield and its cutlery, and we must look for some special causes for a state of matters which has existed for more than one generation, and which, although confined to only a few trades, has existed among them so long as to be looked upon as the normal condition of that trade. There can, unfortunately, be very little doubt that whilst the actual crime has only been known to one or two, the general opinion of the trade is, at least, a silent acquiescence in the crime.

It will, I think, be found that it is the social condition of the workmen in these factories which makes them at once so anxious to preserve their high rate of wages, and so reckless of human life. The trade itself is in the very highest degree unhealthy, and the rate of wages is proportionately high. The dust given off for example from the grinders of steel is most injurious, and the average of life among the workers is very low. I have not got accurate statistics beside me upon the subject, but it is quite a rare thing for a man to live to middle life. Perhaps the strongest proof of the unhealthiness of the trade is to be found in the high rate of wages prevailing. One of the witnesses before the Commissioners for example, incidentally mentioned that in one particular week he had earned £6, and he added that some weeks he had made more, and there was no special skill required to learn it. In other words, for a trade not more difficult than that of a carpenter, the man could earn about four times the wages. In cases where great skill is required the wages paid seems to be still higher, and one man was mentioned who received £10 a week. It would seem also that as is usual in unhealthy trades, the habits of the men are not good, and repeated mention is made as if it was quite a matter of course for the men not to be at their work on Monday.

Now the mere statement of such a social condition coexisting as it does in England, with what is still a very low standard of education, and even of social comfort, would lead any thoughtful person to anticipate that the men would set no great value upon human life, but that they would attach great importance to their wages. It might be expected indeed that the maxim of "a short life and a merry one," would be carried out to its utmost extent, and I remember that some years ago, when an improvement was introduced which would have had the effect of removing the chief cause of the unhealthiness in one of the trades of Sheffield, the men deliberately refused to adopt it, and their chief reason was that they preferred the high rate of wages and an unhealthy trade, to a low rate and a longer and happier life. They literally take their lives in their hands, and it is not so surprising that men who do this should not think so much as other men do of the fear of the punishment for murder, and that they should lose much of that instinctive regard for the sacredness of human life, which is even more than fear the strongest restraining motion.

It would be easy to enlarge upon this topic, but I have at least said enough to show how exceptional is the social life of these Sheffield trades. Before passing away however from the question it may be worthy of notice that the men seem to possess peculiar facilities for committing these crimes. In many cases the obnoxious party works either in his own house or in some small factory, the access to which is very easy. It is therefore comparatively easy to rattle a man;

that is to steal some important part of the machinery with which he works. Of course the more complicated the machinery, and one of the peculiarities of the Sheffield trade seems to be that the machinery and tools are more than usually complicated, the easier is it to rattle a man. Another facility which seems to exist for the existence of at least the lesser class of crimes—the offences against property—consists in the familiarity of the men with tools of all kinds. As a rule they seem to have had very little hand in bread, and into any concern. I need scarcely add that these facilities would tend very much to build up the organization of the whole system of terror and coercion which occasionally culminated in murder.

I have waited to see if any light would be thrown upon another social question. Many of the masters are small employers of labour, who have themselves risen from the ranks. It would be a curious thing if any of the lawlessness of these Trades Unions could be traced to the want of respect which is so often felt for men who have been the architects of their own future. For so far nothing has come out which would throw any light upon the subject, but it is at least a curious one.

The following are the returns from the Bank of England, compared with those of the preceding week, and same time last year:—

	June 13, 1897.	June 12, 1897.	June 20, 1896.
	£	£	£
Public Deposits	10,500,000	9,804,000	7,288,000
Private Deposits	16,888,000	17,173,000	21,171,000
Government Securities	12,889,000	12,836,000	11,098,000
Other Securities	18,616,000	18,850,000	31,793,000
Notes in Circulation	22,758,000	23,179,000	25,107,000
Bullion	21,883,000	21,239,000	14,861,000
Reserve	14,150,000	13,653,000	8,711,000

The Bank of France returns are as follow:—

	June 20, 1897.	June 13, 1897.	June 21, 1896.
	Francs.	Francs.	Francs.
Treasury Balance	99,374,000	94,063,000	140,085,000
Private Accounts	335,510,000	339,204,000	590,162,000
Commercial Bills	479,806,000	482,906,000	708,876,000
Advances	24,249,000	201,679,000	162,237,000
Notes in Circulation	1,040,650,000	1,042,265,000	875,720,000
The Cash	870,423,000	873,653,000	627,423,000

June 22, 1897

H.

CANADIAN FLOUR IN TROPICAL CLIMATES.

(To the Editor of the Trade Review.)

SIR,—You have frequently hinted at the uncertainty of our exported Canadian flour keeping sweet in tropical climates. That flour does go down, arriving in a sound condition is certain. If foreign manufacturers can do it, we can. The process is plain and simple. Select the best fall wheat, be sure that it is perfectly dry, and free from must. After being ground, let the flour pass along a series of open troughs to expose it to the air, so that it shall cool thoroughly, barrel up and paint the head and bottom of each with common red paint. The philosophy of the thing is this.—Fall wheat contains more gluten and less starch than spring. If barrelled up at warm fermentation goes on to the acetous point, and the flour sours. The heads of the barrels being painted, they become non-conductors of damp. Let the barrels be perfectly seasoned, or they will shrink in a tropical climate and the flour will be lost. Canadian millers might take a hint from the method used in an English mill as described in the following extract from a speech recently made before the Toronto Corn Exchange by Mr. J. G. Worts.—

"At Messrs. J. & J. Colman's, where a very large business was done in grinding flour, mustard, &c., he noticed important improvements had been made since his last visit. This firm regularly employed twelve commercial travellers, to whom they paid each £50 a year and £1 per day travelling expenses. One thousand eight hundred sacks of flour were turned out daily. The wheat used was a mixture of English and Russian wheat. They had adopted in part the American bolt, having but one reed in each chest. It might be interesting to millers to know something of an expedient for keeping the flour dry or to overcome the effects of the murky nature of the climate. A wrought-iron shaft passed through the centre of the bolt, which was perforated with small holes, from which hot air was omitted. This improvement might be thought, be adopted with advantage to our flour in this country. In Messrs. Colman's establishment about 1,000 hands were employed and it constituted a little town in itself."

HENRY B. EVANS, M.D.

Picton, C.W., June 20, 1897.