

and Egyptians. But to put a band of material as cold as steel round the neck—the tenderest section of the human frame—in a Canadian winter, would be cruelty of the most wanton kind if it were forced upon us contrary to our will. But inasmuch as we bow like so many slaves to the dictates of fashion we suffer the willing martyrdom. And yet no doubt a vast proportion of cases of catarrh and throat diseases could be traced positively to the cold linen collar. A few Canadians do revolt from the thralldom, but they are in a minority smaller than Gideon's band or the Spartans who stood against the hosts of Persia at Thermopylae.

AN ODE TO CANADA.

Awake, my country, the hour is great with change:
Under this gloom which yet obscures the land,
From ice-blue strait and stern Laurentian range
To where giant peaks our western bounds command
A deep voice stirs, vibrating in men's ears
As if their own hearts throbbed that thunder forth,
A sound wherein who hearkens wisely hears
The voice of the desire of this strong North—
This North whose heart of fire
Yet knows not its desire
Clearly, but dreams, and murmurs in the dream.
The hour of dream is done. Lo, on the hills the gleam!

Awake, my country, the hour of dream is done!
Doubt not, nor dread the greatness of thy fate,
Tho' faint souls fear the keen, confronting sun,
And fain would bid the morn of splendor wait,
Tho' dreamers, rapt in starry visions, cry,
"Lo, yon thy future, yon thy faith, thy fame."
And stretch vain hands to stars, thy fame is nigh,
Here in Canadian hearth, and home and name;
This name which yet shall glow
Till all the nations know
Us for a patriot people, heart and hand,
Loyal to our native earth,—our own Canadian land!

O, strong hearts, guarding the birthright of our glory,
Worth your best blood this heritage that you guard!
Those mighty streams resplendent with our story,
These iron coasts by rage of seas unjarred,—
What fields of peace these bulwarks will secure!
What vales of plenty those calm floods supply!
Shall not our love this rough, sweet land make sure,
Her bounds preserve inviolate, though we die?
O, strong hearts of the North,
Let flame your loyalty forth,
And put the craven and base to an open shame,
Till earth shall know the Child of Nations by her name!

—CHAS. G. D. ROBERTS.

THE SWISS SILK TRADE.

The silk trade, which is the oldest industry in Switzerland, employs 59,000 persons, and thus ranks second in importance among the trades of the country. Silk spinning and weaving, which have been carried on as a home industry ever since the 13th century, are now fast becoming a branch of factory labor. The number of handlooms still in use is, however, very considerable, and only 27,819, or about 38 per cent of the total number of persons employed, work in factories. Silk is cultivated in the Canton of Ticino, where it occupies some 2,000 hands; the other principal branches of the trade are the manufacture of silk yarn and sewing thread, coarse spinning and weaving. Stuff weaving is carried on chiefly at Zurich and ribbon weaving at Bale. Switzerland produces, in proportion to its population, eleven times as much silk ribbon as

France and forty times as much as England. The majority of persons employed in the trade are women, and in the weaving and winding departments the proportion of females reaches 92 per cent. Weavers, both men and women, earn an average wage of 1 fr. 28 c. to 1 fr. 38 c., and throwers 1 fr. 06 c. to 1 fr. 31 c. per week. These figures include home and factory workers, and the average is reduced by the fact that the wages of old persons and children are included in the calculation. In 1882 the average annual wage of silk winders employed in factories was 354 fr., that of throwers 400 fr., and that of weavers 704 fr.

The following details with regard to the wages of silk-workers were given by Dr. Schuler in his report for 1887. He states that the general average of women weavers is 3 fr. a day, that of spoolers 1 fr. 50c. In one large factory, where a public agitation had been made about the low rate of wages, it was found that the fortnightly average for weavers was 32 fr. 80 c., warpers 30 fr. 59 c., assistants on "self-actors," 33 fr. 85 c., carders 25 fr. 64 c., spoolers 30 fr. 9 c., winders 24 fr. 71 c. woofers (mostly children with irregular work) 18 fr. 19 c.

Weaving is generally paid by the piece, and the total earnings therefore vary according to the skill and speed of the weaver, in the other department of the trade timework is the rule.

Silk-workers mostly belong to a comparatively well-to-do class. The women are the daughters of farmers, and when they marry they generally leave the factory. They are seldom obliged to depend on their earnings for a livelihood, and enter the trade chiefly because it is a clean, pleasant occupation, and because their earnings are of great assistance to the agricultural enterprises of their families.

The presence of oxide of lead in the jacquard weaving rooms was formerly injurious to the health of the workers, but this danger was removed by the Federal Circular of 1884.

"The future of the Swiss silk industry is regarded with considerable anxiety. The high rates of the new French tariff practically close the French market to many articles of Swiss manufacture, while the new treaty with Germany imposes a duty of £30 per quintal on silk tissues. The development of the silk industry in the United States will further tend to decrease the exports to that country, while the treaties recently concluded with Austria, Hungary, Italy and Spain are not considered by the trade as likely to advance their business relations with those countries."

COLONIAL WOOL SALES

At the London wool sales this month French buyers made large purchases. American buyers bid fairly, taking about 1,200 bales during the entire series. Prices at the opening of the series were on a par with those prevailing at the close of the December sales. Thereafter they became less firm. The prices of best merinos were unchanged, while the others were ½d. lower. The finer crossbreds were also a ½d. lower. Coarse crossbreds occasionally sold ½d. better. Cape of Good Hope and Natal wools were from ¼ to ½d. lower, with the exception of snow whites, which were ½d. higher. There were taken for export 140,000 bales. Home buyers took 89,000 bales, and 40,000 bales were carried forward. About 250,000 bales of Australian wool were offered and 25,000 were left on hand for the next sales, which will commence on the 27th inst. There was a good and large selection of New Zealand crossbreds. The following are some of the quotations for merino combings: Noorong combings, 9½d., W.W.V., 9d. to 10d. Combadell, 8½d., Eunonyharya, 9d., Broughton, 9½d. to 10d.; Elder, 10d.; Russell, 10d. to 10½d.; Gore, 8¼d. to 9d.; Welltown, 8½d. to 9d.; Terrick, 8d. to 8½d.; Lansdowne, 8d. to 8½d.; Ellangowan, 8½d. to 9½d., Queensland, L.D., 8½d., Hawker Bungaree (Adelaide), 8d. to 9d. At the Cape and Australian woolled sheep skins sale, values for combings were about steady, with a slight easing off for clothing parcels. The East India tanned sheep skins were generally 1c. down from last sales. The importations from America rather upset the market for tanned skins.