

## DEAD LETTERS.

Of the amount of work done by the United States postal department in its dead letter office, few people have any approximate idea. The report of the superintendent of that office for the year ending June 30th last has just been made public, and it shows a material increase (about five per cent) in the quantity of mail matter handled over that of any previous year. The whole number of pieces treated was something over seven and a quarter millions, of which about five and a half millions were ordinary unclaimed letters, and of these nearly two hundred thousand had been opened, addressed to the writers and, because the latter could not be found, again returned to the dead letter office. About eleven hundred contained articles that the law pronounces not transmissible in the mails, and thirty-six thousand did not bear any address whatever.

Of greater interest in the workings of this department are the figures giving the amount of valuables—in the shape of notes, drafts and money orders—which fail to reach their destination. Of course most of this is ultimately restored to its senders. *Bradstreet's* summarizes this feature of the report in question in the information that a total of nearly two and a half millions of dollars was found inclosed in dead letters during the year, not including about fifty thousand dollars in paid notes, receipts, etc.; and 37,735 letters contained photographs, two-thirds of which were restored to their owners. About five-sixths of the amount of drafts, cash, stamps, etc., was also restored; but after all had been done in this respect that could be, there was still enough left to make quite an addition to the profit column of Uncle Sam's ledger.

## BUSINESS ON THE ATLANTIC.

It is declared that there is a brighter outlook for transatlantic shipping interests; or rather, that the more favorable prospect which set in a few weeks ago is increasing in brightness. This is a very gratifying statement, especially when it comes as a result of computation so there can be no mistake made regarding it; for it is also no secret, as we are further shown, that during the past three or four years shipping has been more depressed in a general way than at any other period in the history of the country. Meager returns to ship owners are shown to have alternated with direct losses, and the hope is expressed that this era of depression is coming to an end, for it is gratifying to note that during the past ninety days, especially in our grain, general cargo and deal and timber trades, and also in the Baltic, Black Sea and Azov trades, there has been a very substantial advance in rates, and very considerable idle tonnage has been called into requisition. In this connection a recently published review of British shipping contains many points of interest. It states that at the commencement of the year 1893 no less than 800,000 tons of British steam tonnage was laid up at British home ports, in addition to a large

number of sailing vessels lying idle on the west coast of America and in India. This tonnage, says this report, is now practically all at work. This is no less satisfactory to the owners of goods than it is to the shippers who employ these idle vessels. Trade between Australia and Europe has been seriously affected by the financial upheavals of the colony, and shipping between that portion of the Pacific and England has naturally suffered.

It is a fact that the militant marine has engrossed the attention of the principal powers at the expense of the merchant marine. This disposition having measurably if not altogether succeeded, and building up rather than tearing down, being the order of the hour there is no reason why the coming season should not be one of the brightest on the great highways of nations that we have ever known.

[COMMUNICATED.]

## FORGETFULNESS OF MAN.

There is quite a tendency in man and communities to be fitful and spasmodic in action and in the pursuit of an end. Today some topic, or call, or duty, is uppermost; in fact "it is the one thing;" tomorrow this zeal cools off, the thought is supplanted by something else, valuable or otherwise as the impulse of the time may determine. There may be no harm in the new thing; the weakness consists in discarding the old, in forgetting it, irrespective of its necessity or value. So many a lesson has been lost, many a project been abandoned, and many a principle sacrificed. Inspirational ideas in this community have been numerous, clear cut, seen through, and deemed of vast advantage by the giver. They have fallen upon and tickled the ears of many in the beginning; duty has urged acceptance and active effort has been made, but there was a lack of heart and soul, the flame kindled was transient; it flickered awhile and died; there was no sublime faith, no warm love, no determined persistence; mechanical in the beginning, soulless in the pursuit, then unregrettable failure and forgetfulness in the end.

There are many pages of Mormon history filled with the Alpha and Omega of promise and enterprise. Machinery enough has been created to manipulate all our interests, financial and industrial; organization has succeeded organization, our lumber rooms contain those dust covered appliances for far too many a known or seeming want.

Because of this some have concluded that nothing could succeed, save that which was largely compulsory, like the exodus from Nauvoo and the settlement of Utah, to which we came willingly, as President G. A. Smith used to say "because we were obliged." So in the early days, the wool cards, the spinning wheel and the loom were home indispensables because we needed to be clad; agriculture was obligatory as starvation stared the majority in the face, and hides were tanned and

shoes made, failing in which many would have gone without. Z. C. M. I. would have been uncreated until now had not the people been placed between the upper and nether millstone, where dealers made a price for the farmer's produce and a price for their own merchandise as well. The great factories round about are idle in part, because cloth and clothing is imported, while every grist mill gets its share of trade perforce, because public necessity is in harmony with competitive possibility.

There are urgent reasons for the advocacy of community independence as far as this is possible. This climate, the habits of the people, their religious thought are all favorable to increased population. Save in times of epidemic the death rate among children is very low. The fact that so many are enrolled in our Sabbath and secular schools insists upon enlarged industrial opportunity. The fact that we have an increasing number of marriageable, but unmarried young men and women, demands the creation of increased or new avenues for remunerative labor. Three hundred missionaries in the field gathering Israel according to the commandment, are asking in tones of right and justice that some provision be made for the successful colonization and sustenance of their converts. Common honesty is supplicating for our best thought that "Zion may arise and shine," and that there may be "no poor in all her borders."

Much is said at times in regard to the support of the poor in this and other cities, but a few ask whether our charity is well managed, or whether it is not an evil where it might and should be a blessing. It is believed that there are more than a few who if transplanted into settlements which never receive an emigrant would be wealth producers, instead of dependents upon the liberality of those whose removal from the condition of the ones helped is simply due to greater energy and a dislike to obligations; the homeless at least would be far better off in the country with a piece of land, a few chickens and a cow. System is lacking in dealing with this element. There is a quasi-provision, but for the recipients there is no self-aided or other redemption.

We have not always "made haste slowly." The fires of improvement have been fierce at times, but soon exhausted. We have run as the hare, when the speed of the tortoise would have won the race. The example of the man who ran a mile so as to get a good start in jumping a wall is not an uncommon experience; the wall has been reached, but so weary was the jumper that he had to lay down awhile and rest.

Much is said in public and private once more in regard to home manufacture. Speakers at the Conference claimed this as a partial remedy for hard times; Z. C. M. I. issued a creditable circular calling public attention to home products thought and distributed by that famous institution. C. R. Savage devotes a special window to the exhibition of home-made goods; Grant Brothers, manufacturers of Beehive soap, advertise a great variety of similar articles as premiums to be