

trials of aged labourers of an independent spirit, settling down, not without many an unavailing struggle, into dreaded pauperism ; overwrought artizans avenging their sufferings upon their wealthy masters ; and poor friendless needle-women bearing long up against the evils of incessant toil and extreme privation, but at length sinking into degradation or the grave. We are made acquainted in tales and novels with the machinery and principles of strike-associations and trades' unions ; and introduced to the fire-sides of carriers, publicans, and porters.

There is a fashion in all such matters, that lasts but for a time ; and what we chiefly fear is, that the present disposition on the part of the reading public to look more closely than formerly into the state of the labouring classes, and to take an interest in their humble stories, may be suffered to pass away unimproved. Wherever there exists a large demand for any species of manufacture, spurious imitations are sure to abound ; and when the supply becomes at once greatly deteriorated and greatly too ample, there commences a period of re-action and depression. An overcharged satiety takes the place of the previously existing interest. It is of importance, therefore,—for there are already many spurious articles in the field,—that the still unblunted appetite should be ministered to, not by the spurious, but by the real, and that only the true condition and character of those classes which must always comprise the great bulk of mankind should be exhibited to the classes on a higher level than themselves, on whose exertions in their behalf so very much must depend. Nor would the advantage be all on one side : both the high and the low would be greatly the better for knowing each other. It would tend to contract and narrow the perilous gulf which yawns, in this and in all the other countries of Europe, between the poor and the wealthy, were it mutually *felt*, not merely coldly acknowledged, that God has