

probability that the Clyde may continue to hold its own in the face of the competition of other districts in the United Kingdom and of the German shipyards, depends not only on the talent and energy of the draughtsman and the works manager, but also on the comparative industry and skill shown by the workman and the rate of wages he receives for his work. In this latter respect the Clyde builder, so far as unskilled labour is concerned, is not so well off as Belfast, where wages are lower. The same observation applies to the competition of German and Dutch yards, though, from other causes, this disparity has until very recently been neutralised so far as British shipyards are likely to be affected. There is little difference between the Clyde and other British rivers so far as wages go. The men in the engineering and more highly skilled trades—unlike the shipyard ironworkers—are uniformly steady and industrious, and, having for generations been employed at work demanding skill and finish, they have acquired the traditions of high-class construction for which the Clyde has always been famed.

The Clyde Trade Unions are well organised. The principal ones are the Boilermakers, the Iron Shipbuilding, the Amalgamated Engineers, the Carpenters, the Joiners, and the Blacksmiths. Since the strike of 1897 there have been few disputes of importance, and as both workmen and employers are represented by strong societies and federations, better opportunities are now afforded for adjusting differences than was formerly the case. The result of the business-like footing upon which trade disputes are now arranged has been beneficial to the employers in enabling their work to go on without interruption, and has largely increased the prosperity of the unions by preventing needless calls on their funds. There have been several demands of late for an increase in wages in certain trades, but, having regard to the low prices at which