THE COTTON-SPINNING INDUSTRY IN JAPAN.

According to the latest advices from Japan the cotton-spinning industry in that country seems to have recovered from the period of depression that overtook it last year, when the factories were obliged to knock off night-work and materially reduce their production. The three million yen judiciously placed at the disposal of the industrials by Count Inouye, during his tenure of the portfolio of finance in the spring of 1898, seem to have proved most serviceable, and things are once more booming; so that competition to obtain expert labour has again become keen among the Osaka factories, and stories are told of very questionable practices resorted to by managers to entice away each others' hands. It is expected that the output this year will aggregate 1 million bales, 600,000 of which will be taken by the home market, and the remainder will go to China. It is claimed that the Japanese spinners, by mixing Indian and American cotton, obtain yarns exceptionally lustrous and durable, and that Chinese consumers recognise the superiority and are willing to pay a higher price by 2 yen per bale for the Japanese product. The prediction is that 70 or 80 per cent. of the yarn purchased this season at Tientsin, Chefoo, and Newchwang will be Japanese. As yet, however, it has not yet found favour in southern China, but the Japanese believe that this will come in time. In this connection it is interesting to note that the latest consular report shows an increase of 16,782 tons in quantity, and 143,748l. in value of raw cotton imported into Japan. Of this amount, British India supplied 54 per cent., slightly less than during the previous year; the United States came second with 32 per cent., more than twice as much as Japan procured from that country in the preceding year, while from China came only a little over half as much as in 1897, namely, 11 per cent. The import...