

Textile Tendencies.

The Woolen Market.

Canadian wool markets present a marked contrast to their situation a year ago. The season is now well advanced, and the bulk of the season's clip has passed out of growers' hands. In July, 1895, large shipments were being made from Toronto, Hamilton, London, Chatham, and other Ontario centres to the American markets, sales being made at prices ranging from 22 to 24 cents per lb. In July, 1896, the wool has got no farther than the hands of middle-men. The American market is stagnant. And yet affairs in the United States are not in the position to warrant ideas of approaching demoralization in wool and woolen goods. Statistics show that any deficiency in the receipts of new wool will be much more than offset by the big surplus of old wool carried over, and by the curtailed demand resulting from the depression in the manufacturing trade, which has caused a number of the most important mills to run only on halftime; but the surplus of old wool is not for sale at present market prices, and as it cannot at present be undersold by foreign wool, the holders have locked it up for higher prices. As an element in the present supply, the stocks of old wool are not a factor. The present condition of the market may, therefore, be epitomized as dull but very firm. There is practically no enquiry for Canadian wool as yet from the United States, and the few transactions reported have been made at very low prices. Toronto merchants are paying 20c. for good merchantable fleece, 15c. for rejects, and 11½c. for unwashed. Notwithstanding the low prices the wool came in readily, indicating that farmers were either in need of money or had no confidence in the future of the market. The clip will probably be no larger than last year. Wool growing in Canada is not taken up as seriously as it should be, although the returns reported in some cases are excellent. One farmer sold forty-six fleeces of pure Lincoln, weighing, unwashed, 746 lbs., for 12 cents a pound, bringing nearly \$2 a fleece. Another had 250 fleeces, Cotswold, weighing a little over 13 lbs. a fleece, which sold early in the season for 12½c. a pound. The Hon. John Dryden, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, had 130 pure bred Shropshires, which weighed 10 lbs. a fleece. He received \$1.20 per fleece. These clips are very creditable, and should give good returns to growers.

Cotton Markets.

The cotton goods situation shows signs of ultimate improvement. Many of the large mills in the United States have closed down in order to curtail production. However, large stocks are held; the Fall River mills alone hold over 2,000,000 pieces, and some time must elapse before the effects of the shut down are felt in the market. The English market is featureless and will be without change till the new cotton appears on the market. Canada, in common with the rest of the world, has experienced a sharp advance in thread prices since the amalgamation spoken of in another column. In

addition to the advance the Central Agency is making some changes in terms and dates.

CANADA FOR THE CANADIANS.

So much is heard of the superior advantages offered to residents of towns in the United States to those enjoyed by Canadians, that more than a passing interest will be taken in the contrast here drawn between life in a Canadian mill town and that in, say, a New England manufacturing centre. We quote a United States contemporary:—

"If there be an element of good society and culture in a manufacturing town it is not, as a rule, because of the mill operatives, but in spite of them. The operative brings trade, and consequently trades people to the town, and the mills may bring the families of the mill officials, and these together with the older families of the neighborhood, if the town be an old one, will form one or more 'sets' or 'cliques' in accordance with the plane on which its members have been accustomed to move; but the common operative is outside the pale of these sets, and is ostracized from any participation in their social events. In most cases the ordinary operative is looked upon as a necessary concomitant of the mill, and, therefore, an evil to be endured. That this should be so is not unnatural, for the operatives are almost entirely foreigners, herding together, and in many instances living amidst surroundings not conducive to the promotion of cultured taste. Education is not prevalent among them, and on account of their large families the children are forced into the mill at the very earliest age possible, thus depriving them of any but the most limited of public school advantages. Of course there are exceptions where some individual possesses more than a modicum of ambition, and by hard work becomes not only thoroughly conversant with the details of his trade, but also acquires a fairly liberal education, and is thus in a position to make a step forward into a better class of associates. This, however, is true only of the few, while the great majority struggle along as they best may with little or no ambition beyond the obtaining of the absolute necessities of life."

Read in connection with this the following paragraph taken from the January issue of THE CANADIAN JOURNAL OF FABRICS, which gives a brief description of life in what may be considered a typical Canadian factory town—Almonte, Ont.:

"The operatives are most intelligent and prosperous in their appearance. Many of them hold responsible positions in the town council, school boards and the managing bodies of the different churches. A large number of them who have been employed by the company for a long period, own their houses, and this is true not only of the men, but there are also property-holders among the women. The ordinary system of hiring people for what their work is worth, and discharging them when incompetent or wasteful, is followed; and there is absolutely no labor question in the town, nor has there been at any time.