

just now as the raw material is much dearer, and any advance for goods is difficult to obtain.

BRADFORD.—The course of prices at the present series of colonial wool sales in London has followed almost exactly the forecast given in this paper in the letter previous to the opening day's sale, and the rise in the values of fine merino wool has ranged from 5 to 7½ per cent. in advance of the rates at the conclusion of the last sales. In the Bradford market, however, the prices of wool and tops of this class had already been advanced to a point at least equal to the rates ruling at the London sales, and as many local authorities had looked for still higher prices in London, the market here for fine merinos has been only quiet, as consumers seem to think that they may be content in only supplying their immediate wants. There has been no giving way in the prices for fine wools; any advances which have been established in either yarn or piece goods are not nearly equal to the rise in raw material. Up to the present the Americans have not been in evidence in London as buyers of the finest colonial wools, and the demand from the States is also still quiet for fine worsted coatings and other soft makes of dress goods, but should serious buying set in from that quarter in any of these departments an improvement in the market must at once ensue. The demand for the lower classes of crossbred wools in London has been extremely languid, and the huge and increasing production of these cheaper wools seems likely to keep this department of the market quiet for the present, but it should be remembered that as the wool growers cannot profitably produce crossbred wools at the present rates, an upward reaction must eventually set in. A certain amount of speculative buying is still reported in pure lustre wool, but this has not, up to the present, affected prices to any appreciable extent, and all other classes of home-grown wools continue in very quiet demand. The mohair market, like that of the fine merino wools, has been quiet during the week, but it is a significant fact that whilst all other classes of wool have during the present year been receding in value, that the quotations of mohair and fine merino have been gradually creeping upward. These two similar movements have, however, been brought about by quite dissimilar causes, for whilst mohair has been forced up by an increased consumption, the prices of fine merino have been mainly influenced by a shortage in the supply. There is all the time a large business being done in mohair yarns, and spinners are not only well employed, but report that new business is coming to hand for both mohair crepon warps and for wefts for plain goods. The prospects for the next spring season continue to point most strongly in the direction of bright dress goods fabrics, and I hear of some good orders for plain mohairs which are in work for the United States and also that plain black mohairs of good quality will be largely sold in the home market. The Bradford coating costume cloths in mixture shades, which had such a good reception last season on account of the unalterable and unspottable finish have, I understand, been bought more than ever for the next spring season, and that although the wool from which these goods are made has greatly advanced in price, only a very fractional advance is being, up to the present, demanded by the manufacturers. Some very handsome styles of lustre crepons in black mohairs are selling well, both for the present time and for the next season's trade, and Bradford is now producing largely these high-class goods at prices which only a few seasons ago were quite unheard of here.

HALIFAX.—The following is contained in the Halifax Chamber of Commerce trade report for September: **Wool.**—The demand for merino and fine crossbreds has been good all through the month. Inferior crossbreds and English wools have only found a slow sale, without any quotable change in prices. **Woolens.**—Owing to the approach of colder weather, there is more business doing, and most manufacturers report

an improvement. **Worsted Yarns.**—There have been a few more orders placed during the month, especially for yarns made from merino and fine crossbred wools. So far, spinners are unable to get anything like a corresponding advance to that which has taken place in the price of tops and wool. **Cotton.**—The fall in raw cotton during the month has brought about business in two-fold 40's and 42's, stocks having been cleared at low figures. **Fustians and Ready-mades.**—Both these industries (particularly the latter) are busier and in a better position than for some time past, full time being again resumed. **Pieces.**—There has been more enquiry during the month for staple goods for foreign markets, and manufacturers are able to quote higher prices for fabrics made from fine wools. Merchants are not so willing to expend, consequently there are very few orders being given, but the trade is healthy all round. **Carpets.**—The demand during this month has only been of a sluggish character, owing to its being between seasons. **Spun Silk.**—There has been some little improvement during the month, but there is no change in prices.

KIDDERMINSTER.—Manufacturers are now turning their attention to the requirements of the coming season. The travelers are preparing for the road, and will be leaving home next week for the various commercial centres. The harvest has been an abundant one, the general trade of the country keeps good; and it is confidently believed that the travelers will find buyers disposed to place good orders for the season. An improvement has been experienced in the colonial demand, while the more settled condition of affairs in the Argentine Republic, as well as the more pacific policy evident in South Africa, where there is a large white population, cannot fail to give stimulus to the carpet trade. The troubled condition of affairs in the land of the Celestials does not commercially affect us, for the Chinese have not been customers for carpets to any appreciable extent up to the present. Just now the looms are employed on small orders from the home market, and in supplying the improved colonial and foreign demand referred to. Nothing like a spurt can be expected for the present. The wool market has shown considerable animation recently. At each of the sales held the quantity of wool offered has been large, and the buyers unusually numerous, visitors being present from France, Germany and America. Those who supplied their wools early in the week were the most fortunate, for as the sales progressed prices hardened, in the better qualities quite a ½d. per lb. advance being easily maintained.

NOTTINGHAM.—The cotton hosiery trade is dull; demand is small and prices are low. On woollen goods, quotations are going higher in spite of relatively few purchases, consequent upon the hardening value of wool, and manufacturers of hose, vests and combinations hope soon to be doing well. Fancy half-hose are moving in moderate quantities, and there is a limited demand for fancy silk and embroidered hosiery. In Leicester the hosiery industry shows considerable recovery as a whole, and manufacturers are demanding higher rates for all choice fabrics. Cotton stockings and socks were exported from this country last month to the value of £22,226, compared with £18,535 in August last year. Other varieties of cotton hosiery were shipped abroad to the value of £15,663, compared with £11,793, and all varieties of woollen hosiery to the values of £75,421, against £63,906. So far this year exports of woollen goods have totaled £497,324 against £576,201 in the same eight months of 1897, and £581,207 in 1896, while exports of cotton goods have reached £236,898, against £245,282 in 1897 and £315,205 in 1898. In May cotton hosiery ran to only £20,034 for all varieties and woollen hosiery to only £39,115. The improved demand from America since the conclusion of the war is the main explanation. British exports of lace are increasing, and the cotton varieties may now be said to have fully recovered from the slackness of the earlier months of the