

AUTUMN MILLINERY.

The autumn millinery season is now well opened. In both Montreal and Toronto the wholesale houses enjoyed a trade satisfactory in both the quantity and quality of goods purchased. Although cheap goods, as in former years, have been plentifully sold, the central idea of the purchasers was apparently to store up the more select and costly treasures of the milliner's art. Retailers in the larger cities and towns have already displayed their stocks to the public and have done a good trade, the colder weather of the past few days having been of material assistance to them. There never was a season in which fancy feathers played a more important part. Breasts, quills and wings of birds are the centre of attraction in the millinery world. As a trade authority points out this is of great assistance to the saleswoman who has an opportunity to emphasize the scarcity of any particular feather that takes the fancy, and conclude the sale, whereas in the case of staple goods the buyer is apt to defer purchasing under the knowledge that she can always get what she wants. The New York Economist in discussing millinery says: When you get into this market, or any other, buy all the fancy breasts and handsome quills that you can lay hands on for immediate delivery. Get good, full assortments of velvets in castor, brown, green, blue and black, with enough cerise, prunelle and new green to provide relief. Take hold of fancy materials liberally, and do not forget your ornament stocks. Start your season with a handsome array of banded Alpines and walking hats, as well as sailors for boys and girls, and such pretty military styles as you can find. Do not mind prices so much as styles. Remember that it is the pretty things at the beginning that the trade talk about, and the merchant who has supplied himself with them has an advantage over the merchant who has not.

THE LAST COTTON YEAR.

The cotton crop year in the United States closes September 1st. The total crop for the year just closed reaches 11,180,960 bales, while the exports are 7,532,615 bales, and the spinners' takings are 3,504,018 bales, leaving a stock on hand at the close of the year of 176,006 bales. The distribution of the crop is shown in the following table compiled by The Financial Chronicle:

	1897-98.	1896-97.	1895-96.
Receipts at shipping ports.....	8,676,407	6,816,525	5,394,875
Rail shipments to manufacturers	1,276,614	873,004	851,788
Manufactured South.....	1,227,939	1,024,482	915,810
Total bales.....	11,180,960	8,714,011	7,162,473

These figures show what an enormous crop was placed on the market in 1897-98. The total of 11,180,960 bales (weighing 5,667,372,051 pounds) as the crop for the year ending August 31, 1898, against 8,714,011 bales (weighing 4,383,819,971 pounds) as the crop for the year ending August 31, 1897, means that enormous expansion in consumption must take place if market prices were to be maintained.

The takings for consumption were distributed as follows:

	1897-98.	1896-97.	1895-96.
Home—			
North.....	2,276,079	1,862,565	1,670,744
South.....	1,227,939	1,024,482	915,810
Total takings for consumption	3,504,018	2,887,047	2,586,554
Exports—			
Total, except Canada by rail...	7,532,615	5,968,422	4,646,084
To Canada by rail.....	113,470	76,848	66,828
Total exports.....	7,646,085	6,045,270	4,712,912
Burnt during year.....	2,948	5,935	4,088
Total distributed.....	11,153,051	8,938,252	7,303,554

It may be well to call attention to the fact that the shipments of cotton to Canada by water do not appear in the above table. Cotton manufacturing in the United States has been very dull this year both for domestic and foreign purposes. The falling off in shipments has been quite general, but most decided as regards those to British North America, which record a

decline of nearly 50 per cent. Even the shipments to China via Vancouver, B. C., which do not appear in the Government returns, were much less than in any recent year, having been only 20,393 packages containing 12,270,600 yards, against 34,845 packages, or 24,574,600 yards, in 1896-97, 26,720 packages or 18,027,600 yards, in 1895-96, 21,230 packages or 13,398,000 yards in 1894-95, and 30,309 packages or 20,589,000 yards in 1893-94.

THE INDUSTRIAL FAIR OF 1898.

Has the Fair done good to anybody outside of Toronto, or has it resulted in business to any merchants in Toronto? Such questionings in different forms were to be heard last week. There is not much room to doubt that the Fair of 1898 was as successful from the standpoint of the out-of-town exhibitor as from the point of view of the city hotel-keeper or the street railway or the Exhibition treasury. At any rate we may give some expressions which the writer of these lines heard.

The representative of Wm. Gray & Sons, Chatham, said, referring to the firm's handsome exhibit of carriages and other vehicles: "Out of thirty odd vehicles shown here this year, we have sold all but five or six. We never had so good a show in Toronto, and are well satisfied with the result." The goods referred to went to customers in the States as well as Canada. "We had two car-loads of stoves on exhibition," said Mr. Carscallen, of the Hamilton stove firm, Gurney, Tilden & Co., "and we have not a dozen left. They sold well and our various Toronto agents are much pleased with the display we made." The testimony of Mr. George Clare, of the firm Clare Brothers, Preston, was that he had had "a very good fortnight, closed a lot of orders, and was busy up to the very hour he left."

It is true that there were complaints, and that all were not equally satisfied with those whom we have quoted; but this is only to be expected in an enterprise of such magnitude. People who want better places to exhibit in than are available grumble; people who get second prizes instead of first, or get none at all, grumble; people who are late at the turnstiles on a "Santiago" night, grumble because the grand stand is full. But a show which is seen by 450,000 people in twelve days is one which exhibitors are very likely to continue to patronize.

Doubtless it was largely the cheap fares on the railways that brought the unusual crowd. There will be an opportunity for the G. T. R. and the C. P. R. to compare their passenger receipts from September 25th onward, when 3 cents a mile fares are resumed, with those of the past months of low passenger rates. The more rates are cheapened the more people will travel.

The Steel Clad Bath Company people had an excellent position for their exhibit. It was the first thing that caught a man's right eye as he entered the main door of the main building on the ground floor. These handsome goods are having a great run, we are told, and must be well advertised as well as of satisfactory quality. An American, who lingered round the south door, was very skeptical as to the origin of the exhibit of the Toronto Carpet Manufacturing Company, near there. When told they were Canadian made he was hard to convince, saying that they looked just as good as foreign stuff. And so they do. Axminster carpet in four different qualities, Axminster rugs, Kensington art squares, Smyrna rugs and mats—whether in color or pattern or quality these goods are such as to reflect credit on their producers.

A cadaverous Scotchman, holding a little girl by the hand, stood in front of the Japanese booth of K. Ishikawa & Co., in the main building. "Where's the man that belongs tae this?" he asked, and the writer regretted that he did not know. "They're bonnie," he said, looking at the dress silks and embroideries, at the lay figures of Japanese woman and child and dog, all suitably costumed; "but, oh! to think that folk wha can mak sic things should be worshipping' idols." There was nothing for it but to agree with him. However, when it was pointed out to him that there were tartan ribbons in this exhibit, and that a lovely scarf suspended over our heads had Scotch thistles as large as life in it, he was full of admiration of their artistic cleverness.

For a number of years the products of the Oxford Manufacturing Company, of Nova Scotia, have been shown in the West. This year their agents, Messrs. Hutchison, Nisbet &