

OUR MONTREAL LETTER.

THE month's business in dry goods has been satisfactory and wholesalers have no reason for any serious complaints. The mild wet weather during the latter part of November interfered with the actual consumptive movement in some lines, but it was not without its benefits, for it led to demand for seasonable goods, and developed matters as it were for the advent of the cold weather, which closed November and opened up the present month. This led to a demand for winter goods of all kinds, and stocks in consequence began to show material signs of shrinkage. Now, however, all of the houses are stock-taking, and while this is in operation nothing extensive in the way of business is to be anticipated. Values generally are firm; the striking feature in this connection being the tendency of values on colored cottons, the sharp advance of which has been firmly maintained; while the position of the raw material has led to still further advances, the additional rise on the leading lines being about equal to 7 1-2 per cent. The prospects seem to be for higher values. Although there is no actual advance to note in the case of imported goods, the tendency in their case also is firm, while silk has firmly maintained the advance referred to in reports of last month. In the matter of payments, remittances were moderately good during the closing weeks of November, but since then some complaints have been heard, and at the date of writing there is room for improvement in this connection. The change, no doubt, was due to the fact that dealers in the country have been liquidating the more urgent of their interest-bearing debts, preparatory to the close of the year.

The demand for tweeds, overcoatings and other heavy lines of goods in the matter of gentlemen's furnishings has benefited by the colder weather. In overcoatings the favor is equally divided between Meltons and froizes, with the fashion leaning a little more in the direction of the former than the latter, but both have furnished a satisfactory volume of trade. Tweeds have been fairly active; in fact, the warm, mild weather of the early fall may possibly have been a benefit. At any rate heavy overcoats were not necessary until late, and the presumption is that more suits were ordered in consequence.

Knit goods and the heavier lines of woollen underwear were influenced by the weather, but, although the movement was restricted at one time it picked up again, and the movement on the whole was about up to the average. In fact the sorting up trade in these lines during the past few weeks was considerable, and one of the more active spots of the dry goods market.

Dress goods, both tweeds and serges, furnished business of a fair volume, although the weather operated against them to a certain extent.

Cloutings have shown considerable activity, and the big retail houses report a very active business both on city and country account, which has increased recently.

Fancy goods and millinery have not furnished a very active business, the wet weather being a drawback. The cold, clear days of December, however,

operated to produce some improvement.

Cotton goods have furnished perhaps the most notable features of the month owing to the marked appreciation in price which colored goods have exhibited. Throughout the month the goods showed an upward tendency, and the sharp advance in raw cotton made itself felt before the opening of the present month, as the combine took full advantage of the fact. Buyers attempted to repeat orders of several lines given in the early fall for spring delivery, but they were refused except at a considerable advance, and finally the flat-footed information was given during the first week of this month, that colored lines, such as cantons and linings had been advanced an additional 7 1-2 per cent on the rise noted in October. Grey and white cottons are very firm also at the date of writing, and the prospects point to higher values.

The demand for furs has been quite up to the average, in fact, some of the manufacturing firms report that they have been taxed to fill the orders of which they have been the recipients. Prices generally do not vary much from those of last year, except in some lines which went with a greater demand owing to the vagaries of fashion. The catch of south sea seal has been restricted owing to the Behring sea difficulties and this has stiffened prices on the already very expensive article. In fact, the high price has led to imitations being put on the market, other being the best adapted to the imitators' requirements in that direction. But seal is seal, and there is nothing else like it. At the sales held during the early part of November in London the advance in the price of seal was equal to 25 per cent. over last year and this in the face of the fact that last year's figures were exceptionally high. Dealers anticipate that such an appreciation as this will tend to check the call for the fur, and the feeling is that way already. Persian lamb and beaver have met a good demand, and values on them are about the same. Mink appears to be more of a favorite this year, while silver fox is too scarce to permit of any large volume of trade. In the cheaper furs there is a very good demand for Astrakhans and Australian furs. In fact, the former is quite the fashion in the undyed state for such articles as ladies' sacques and jackets, and also the trimmings thereof.

NOTES.

B. A. Boas, A. Boas, S. Davis and A. Hartz have applied to the Legislature for letters patent incorporating them under the name of the B. A. Boas Co., with a capital stock of \$100,000 to carry on the wholesale dry goods business in Montreal.

Mr. James H. M. Welsh, confidential counting house clerk for D. Morrice & Sons, for nearly 20 years, and widely known in banking and insurance circles, died recently at his residence, Mackay street. The late gentleman, who had suffered from heart disease and dropsy, had only been confined to his home for two weeks. He leaves a widow and two children.

Mr. E. A. Robert, manager of the Dominion Blanket Company, was married recently to Miss Shirley Foley, daughter of Mr. James Foley, of the Petroleum Oil Trust, Gaspé.

There have been rumors here during

the month that the colored cotton combine, which controls all the mills in Canada, excepting the Parks mill of St. John, N.B., had also secured control of the latter, thus making the combine complete. One of the leading directors of the Colored Cotton Co. said that matters were not actually settled but admitted that arrangements are in progress. They have probably been consummated, although nothing definite can be learned, but the visit of several leading members of the combine to St. John very recently is considered as signifying that the matter has been closed.

The annual meeting of the dry goods branch of the Board of Trade was held on the 15th. As usual the gathering was strictly private, and beyond giving the list of new officers to the press, Secretary Irwin had nothing to say. The officers are as follows:

President—R. L. Gault.

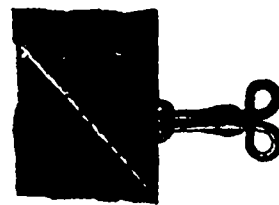
Vice-president—E. B. Greenshields.

Treasurer—Wm. Reid.

Directors—Messrs. Frank May, Geo. Sumner, Jas. Slossor, A. D. Thibaudau.

METAL LOOP HOOKS AND EYES.

Francis' Patent Metal Loop Hooks and Eyes were devised to fill the long felt want by those who make up ladies' and children's garments for a proper eye to work with the ordinary dress hook; When hooks first came into use many years ago loops of thread were



made to work with them; later on, eyes of bent wire, such as are now generally sold, were made, and, as no better article was to be found they were accepted, and the dressmakers have been struggling along as best they might with the thread loops and the unsightly eyes. The Francis device is an important departure from old methods, and, although a simple contrivance, is perfect in result, and



has the great advantage of saving time. When fitting a garment these loops can be adjusted in a moment with no bad effects to the fabric, and this is a great advantage. They are invisible when the garment is hooked and are more secure and slightly than thread loops or eyes. These goods are being well received by the American and Canadian trade.

The Government has been asked to place ramie fibre and the yarn or thread spun from it on the free list. The article is used as a substitute for silk in the manufacture of silk and woollen fabrics.