

dence and Boston, at the close of last week, was 2,330,000 pieces, against 321,000 pieces a year ago. The price a year ago was 3½ cents for extras; to-day it is 2½ cents. The increase in the stock and the decrease in values show a very unsatisfactory state of affairs in American textile markets.

At the colonial wool sales, opening on the 24th ult., there was an average advance in prices of about 5 to 7 per cent., while as a result of the competition of American buyers, descriptions of wool suited to the United States markets advanced 15 per cent. as compared with the closing rates of last sales.

Among the novelties for spring, writes the Berlin correspondent of the *Economist*, are seen Eton jackets in all possible effects and forms. In the back they extend no farther than the waist, but in front they show basques. As a rule they are made of colored cloth and are richly embroidered with cords or similar trimmings. Many of them show revers, occasionally with turndown collar and two rows of buttons.

It does not pay to put on sale a worthless lot of fabric gloves, no matter at what a reduction you may be able to offer them. One or two pairs of poor gloves will send a steady customer to a competitor quicker than any other unsatisfactory article.

The outlook for spring business in Magog prints is excellent. All the wholesale dry goods houses are handling these goods and the prospects are that the season's returns will show a considerable increase in the volume of business as compared with last year.

The color cards of the Paris houses issued for the spring trade are very strong in red, cherry, crimson and scarlet. Russian names abound, and a rich deep red of the Coquelicot series is called Tsarskoie-Selo, but will for obvious reasons commonly be known as Grenade. The new wine shade in this card is Africain, and a dark shade of the well-known Pivoine range is Romain. These dark, yet brilliant red tints have already appeared in smooth cloths and invite the opinion that a "red season" is fast approaching, such as has not been seen for several years.

The Toronto wholesale houses have not received the usual number of sorting orders incidental to the Christmas trade. This is due, it is thought, to the unfavorable weather that has prevailed in Ontario the past two weeks.

TANNERS' MEETING.

The tanners' section of the Toronto Board of Trade held its annual meeting yesterday afternoon. Previous to the business session the members were entertained at lunch at the National Club by Mr. S. R. Wickett, chairman of the section. Those present at the meeting were Messrs. S. R. Wickett, J. L. Breithaupt, A. R. Clarke, R. Bickell, C. Miller, Barrie; F. F. Davell, Aurora; J. C. H. Lang, Berlin; W. D. Beardmore, James Robson, Oshawa; C. Knees, Oshawa; W. H. McCordick, St. Catharines; T. D. Craig, Port Hope; J. Sinclair, Barrie; J. C. Demar, Berlin; W. H. Hecht, New York, and Jas. Acton.

Several subjects of interest to the trade were discussed. The probability of changes in the tariff was considered, and it was the opinion of everyone present that it would be very unwise to make any reduction in the duties on leather.

The question of the compulsory inspection of hides raised at this meeting, is not a new issue. For years the tanners have been attempting to secure this desirable reform. Under the present system the butchers have no way of checking the work of their employees. The hides are taken off the animals in a very careless way, and as a consequence a large percentage run No. 2, meaning a loss of one cent per pound to the butcher, a considerable amount in the course of a year's business. Compulsory inspection should mean uniform inspection and would be of benefit to butchers, hide merchants and tanners.

The officers of the association were complimented upon their work during the year, and the chairman, Mr. Wickett, received many well deserved expressions of praise for the hard work he has done in the interests of the trade. The officers were elected as follows: Chairman, George C. H. Lang; vice-chairman, A. R. Clarke; secretary-treasurer, E. A. Willis. Executive Committee—J. L. Breithaupt, W. D. Beardmore, A. R. Clarke, G. C. H. Lang and S. R. Wickett.

SOME SALES OF BONDS.

Six upper province firms out of a total of eleven were tenderers for \$40,000 worth of New Brunswick four per cent. bonds, redeemable at the expiration of 40 years. They were sold by tender at the Receiver-General's office on December 1st, to a Montreal concern, at a premium of 105, 96½.

The town of Yarmouth, N.S., has sold \$6,000 of four per cents., payable in six instalments of \$1,000 each every fifth year, until the

whole is paid. The offer of J. C. Mackintosh, Halifax, for these, ranging from 100.26 for the first instalment to 101.62½ for the last, was accepted.

A loan of \$22,000 on four per cent. bonds was offered by the city of Halifax the other day. The period was twenty-three and a half years. The following tenders were received:

Bank of British North America.....	\$22,757 00
J. C. Mackintosh, Halifax	22,664 00
J. A. Meldrum, Toronto	22,112 00
G. A. Stimson & Co., Toronto	22,033 00
H. O'Hara, Toronto.....	22,115 00

The offer of the Bank of B.N.A. was the one accepted. It will be noticed that it was the highest.

The Toronto firm of O'Hara & Co. purchased the other day \$20,500 of Middlesex county debentures at 105½.

ST. JOHN BOARD OF TRADE.

The annual meeting of the Saint John Board of Trade was held in that city on Monday last, 7th instant. A comprehensive statement of the proceedings of the board for the year was submitted on behalf of the council. The financial statement shows the expenditure of the year to have been \$1,277, and the surplus in bank \$428. An increase is shown in the membership.

An interesting report, bearing date 4th December, was made by a committee appointed to obtain information about routes and distances between British and cis-Atlantic ports.

W. S. Fisher was unanimously re-elected president.

FIRE INSURANCE MATTERS.

The Fredericton city council has authorized the fire committee to ascertain the probable cost of a fire alarm system for the city at once.

At a special meeting of the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association held in Montreal last week, it was decided instead of holding regular monthly meetings of the local branches in Montreal and Toronto, to hold monthly general meetings alternately in Montreal and Toronto.

Fifty thousand dollars of new stock is being issued by the Mercantile Insurance Company, of Berlin, and is being mainly subscribed for by the old shareholders. This addition will bring the capital of the company up to a quarter of a million. And behind this is the backing of the London and Lancashire.

A very agreeable announcement is made this week by the New York *Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin*, which says: The fire loss for the United States and Canada for the month of November amounts to \$5,211,800. The November record is remarkably light and makes certain a great reduction for the whole year 1896, as compared with 1895, unless some enormous conflagration takes place this month. The total fire waste for the year, that journal estimates, will be about \$115,000,000.

The *Berlin Record* says that the citizens of that place are, since the disastrous fire of a fortnight ago, much in earnest about the reform and betterment of the town's fire protection. Berlin's remarkable growth in manufacturing plants and homes has outstripped the system, and what was amply sufficient ten years ago, is inadequate now. That journal thinks the community should take another progressive step and put the important fire protection department into the hands of a live, yet economical board.

We observe that what is called the Methodist Trust Fire Insurance Company will apply next session of Parliament for power to carry on the business of fire insurance in all its branches in all parts of the Dominion. Do the promoters of this venture believe, then, that there is a fine profit to be made at the fire underwriting business? It would seem so. For particulars of the alleged profit enquire of the Agricultural Mutual, or the secretary of the Mutual companies, or the Grand Panjandrum of the Canadian Board of Fire Underwriters. Wonder the users of so fine a title did not go into life assurance instead.

An English journal, in giving an account of the destruction last month by fire of the extensive London works of Shand, Mason & Co., makers of fire engines, says the firm "must share the common surprise that such a complete disaster should have occurred at their works." In this case experience has been had of the way in which even a fire engine depot may be successfully ravaged by the fire fiend. Many fire engines and some 40,000 feet of hose were destroyed at this fire, which was an intensely hot one. Strangest of all is the fact, if we understand the *Spectator* rightly, that the premises were no better secured against this sort of disaster than, if as well as, hundreds of other works by superior construction or by appliances for fighting fire within. The books were saved, and the firm is favored, covered by insurance.

Within a week two serious fires have occurred, one on Sparks street, Ottawa, and one on Tuesday last on St. James street, Montreal, when