

DRY GOODS AND WOOLLENS.

It is not our present purpose to analyze the condition of the dry goods trade at wholesale, to show that it is done for the most part at too long credit dates, at too great expense, that "dating ahead" is rife, and that competition is occasioning the relaxing of good rules to as great an extent as ever before. We do not propose, we say, to dwell upon these things at the moment in this place, though they may well form the subject of some earnest articles, as they have done before. We have now to tell what sort of goods are selling and going to sell, and what is the attitude of factory men.

This feature strikes one readily, viz., that for the past two or three years there has been no surplus of woollen goods in manufacturers' hands, the demand has been equal to the supply and the market has never been glutted but often bare. The mills nowadays ask merchants to give their orders for spring goods in September where they used to buy in November. The reason for this probably is that they want all the time they can get in which to fill their orders. The goods they are turning out for spring trade, samples of which are now appearing in market and on the road, would be a credit to any country, and are greatly, ahead in style and color of former years. Whip cords and twists, diagonals, Scotch Saxony patterns and Cheviot effects, are among the newest products of Canadian mills. Another, and perhaps the latest feature is found in the Rosamond worsteds which are produced in good variety of samples and of very creditable finish. It is not at all surprising to learn that the demand for them far outruns the capacity of the factory. English and Scotch woollen goods for men's wear are in full supply. "Finished goods" are coming in for overcoatings, rather than the rougher and shaggier surfaces that have been greatly worn. Worsteds are, of course, always in request in fine diagonals, &c. In imported tweeds, Saxones will be more worn, we are told, as the Cheviots and the Bannockburns are "going out." A letter which we have seen, from a close observer of the popular taste, predicts that fine hair line stripes and small bright mixtures in English goods are going to be in strong demand in Canada this season.

It may be affirmed generally that "good stuff will sell more freely"; which being interpreted means that a better class of imported clothing fabrics, of finer wool and higher prices, are found within the reach of the fuller purses of the people, and are being sold largely instead of cheaper materials. English trouserings, for example, good beavers and pilots. The tailoring trade is good throughout the country. Merchant tailors and clothiers are not only busy, but they are ordering, and presumably selling, a better description of stock.

Cotton goods remain steady in value, but dress goods, black cashmeres and fabrics into which fine wool enters are looking higher. It is too early yet for full lines of samples in dress goods, but print makers are unusually early in the market this year. The print samples for the coming spring and summer are of extraordinarily bright and gay designs: Leaves and flowers are found in strong contrast on blue grounds, brown grounds, purple grounds, black grounds; while pink, buff, green and ashes-of-roses may be seen forming a back ground for delicate or gorgeous patterns worthy of organdie or cretonne. Small check prints are shown in blue-and-buff, brown-and-buff, navy-and-old-gold; indeed checks and flowers form the newest patterns. In the States very large checks of very gay hues, larger and gayer than ever, are quite the rage; and our merchants are not behind in the pronounced styles and colors of their calicos. Furthermore,

the *grenats*, *navies*, *myrtles* and *bronzes*, which have had so great a run in wool goods, are being worked into print patterns. Cretonnes printed, for curtains and for furniture covers, abound in color and in richness of design. One line of reversible cretonnes which we have seen, printed in diverse patterns on either side, is especially taking.

THE YEAR'S TRADE.

Desiring to feel the pulse of the business community, and to obtain an expression of opinion as to the results of the year's trade, we sent out circulars to a large number of manufacturers, merchants and business men in all parts of the Dominion, asking how they had found business during the year. We give below their replies or the substance of them; and it will be observed that they are generally very favorable.

MONTREAL.—A large brewing and malting house writes: "We have found business fairly prosperous during the year—certainly an improvement on recent previous ones."—From a wholesale clothing house: "Business has been remarkably good during the year."—Another house in the same line: "We are happy to state that business has been very satisfactory with us this year."—This from an importer of liquors: "Business with me has been very good this year."—A boot and shoe house states that "trade has been good in our line."—But a tanning firm in that city takes a despondent view of the situation, citing as unfavorable features the expansion of credit "now existing to a greater degree than ever; followed by its consequent evils, over-production and over-trading, and not only this, but in our line at least, and its branches, the business is to day carried on by its least responsible members." The letter concludes: "We expect that the tanning trade generally will write off a loss this year, a loss more or less serious."

QUEBEC.—The North American Rubber Co. states that they have found business good in 1882.—A leading hardware house write: "The year just closing has been very satisfactory."—Next we hear from a manufacturer of shoes, that "We have found business good, and remittances generally prompt."

HAMILTON.—The reply of a wholesale grocery house is: "Business with us during the past year has been very satisfactory."

LONDON.—A firm of woollens importers tells us that trade has been found satisfactory thus far. "The spring and summer trade was not quite up to the mark, owing to the wet and cold weather. While we have found the fall trade good up to the present month, continued mild weather and the low price of wheat have injured the sorting up trade. We find merchants backward about placing their orders for spring Canadian and Scotch tweeds, and we think them wise." * * * Light imports and caution in selling for spring should be the motto of all wholesale men."

OTTAWA.—A prominent hardware merchant writes that "business continues fair, and winter prospects are good."—Two merchant tailoring houses define business as fairly satisfactory, and a decided improvement on last year."—A firm of dealers in paints and oils "finds business very good indeed."

KINGSTON.—The following is the testimony of a clothier: "Regarding business, it is much in advance of last year, and we are handling a much finer quality of goods. So far, this year has been the best I have had since I commenced business ten years ago."—The well-known forwarder, Mr. James Swift, also informs us that he has found business good during the past season.

A long-established general dealer in Omeme, Mr. Isaac McNeely, laconically says, "Business good as we deserve."—These words from a Lindsay dry goods dealer: "Business 1st Jan'y. to 1st Oct. good; dull since then,—1882, on the whole, satisfactory."—From the Cedarvale Works, Oshawa: "Business has been very good during the year, and we have been pushed to our utmost capacity to fill our orders."—The Consumer's Oil Refining Co., Petrolia: "Business during the past year has been good; we have been running to our full capacity all the time."—Frost & Wood, makers of mowers, reapers, &c., Smith's Falls: "We have found business excellent the present year."—A retail dry goods firm in Whitby: "We are pleased to

say that we have found business remarkably good."—Belleville, 18th November: "Business with me, and I believe in this city generally, during the past year, has been very good." Thus, a dealer in provisions and produce.—A Brockville hardware manufacturing house writes: "This has been our most successful year since starting; largest sales and best profits. In 1881, we found a more eager demand than this year, but were then lacking in productive facilities to meet this. Otherwise, we think 1881 would have surpassed this year. During the last six months we have noticed an increase of failures among our customers, and more frequent requests for renewals."

CLOVER SEED.

A subscriber draws attention to the statement of exports of clover seed to the United States for the year ended 30th September last, given as per the Consulate figures, in our issue of 10th instant at \$41,867 worth. He thinks readers abroad may be misled as to the character and extent of the trade in this article by the publication merely of the value of a few lots sent to Britain via the States, which is all that can be meant by the figures above given, since we rarely send clover seed to the States. The duty charged there is 20 per cent. upon it, where we charge 15 per cent. on theirs. We are told that the value of clover seed sent abroad from Ontario during the twelve months ended with September, was not less than \$750,000, which at an average of \$5.25 per bushel, means an export of 142,800 bushels. We learn by enquiry at the Toronto Custom House that the declared value of clover seed exported at this port, between 1st October, 1881, and 1st October, 1882, was \$472,131.

Much of this, probably the bulk of it, went to the London market; a good deal went to Germany and France, and the quality and condition were found so satisfactory that an increase in the trade is reasonably certain. Ontario clover seed is better than the average United States article, and quite as good as the best New York State; and when re-cleaned in Toronto, as is now done by our exporters, it gives excellent satisfaction in the London market. Increased facilities are now provided by Toronto dealers for cleaning and storing the seed, and an increased area will likely be sown by Ontario farmers the coming season.

MANUFACTURERS' NOTES.

Messrs. Wm. Angus & Co., have purchased, says the *Sherbrooke Examiner*, 200 acres of land adjoining their pulp works, in Westbury. F. P. Buck, late of the Magog House, is associated with Mr. Angus in the pulp business, and they will invest some \$50,000 in this enterprise of making wood-pulp for paper manufacture. They control one of the best water privileges on the St. Francis river, and a siding connects them with the Quebec Central Railway.

Mr. George Matthews, of Lindsay and Peterboro has erected in the latter place a brick building 48x100 for a pork packing house, in which he will begin operations at once.

A knitting factory, to run on under-clothing principally, is being started at St. Charles de Stanbridge, Que. It is said that the engine and part of the machinery have already bought, and that a number of well-to-do farmers have subscribed \$500 each towards the project. Mr. Joseph Couture, who has been engaged for some years in the manufacture of woollens is the chief promoter and likely will have the management.

Another new pottery is being started in St. Johns Que. A large frame hotel is being gutted and adapted for the purpose, and will have in addition built to it to accommodate the *Kilm.*