

can be obtained before they buy. The shipments of spring goods, up to the present date, are not thought to be so large as those sent forward during January a year ago.

Cotton goods are selling at unheard of low prices, and in all probability will continue to do so for some time. As every one knows, the depressed state of raw cotton markets has brought about the present era of low prices in manufactured cottons. There are those whose interest it is to predict an advancing cotton market, but the cotton "bulls" are having a hard time of it nowadays. The New York Cotton Exchange is uniformly reported from day to day as "dull and dragging," and while the volume of Manchester trade is fairly well maintained, values are low and the situation uninteresting. In all probability planters will restrict their seeding operations for the next crop—raising cotton at present prices cannot be profitable—but even this consideration has failed to arouse the enthusiasm of the buyers in the cotton markets.

Woolens follow closely in the wake of cottons, if they do not pass them, in regard to low values. Knit goods, hosiery, underwear, and gloves, whether of domestic or foreign make, of inferior or superior quality, are selling at prices under those of last year. Tweeds were never lower. There has apparently been an over-production of blankets, and the failure of several manufacturing concerns has thrown stock on the market to be sold at bankrupt prices. Are improved conditions in woolens a probability of the near future? We fear not. The wool market is depressed, and even should it show improvement, since most manufacturers have obtained their raw material for the year at present low prices, the force of competition will prevent any marked advance being made in the price of woolen goods.

Flannels are nothing if not cheap. Since the great break in prices last fall brought about by the competition of flannelettes, prices have ruled low, and must now be dangerously near the cost of production. There is apparently little profit in making flannels, for some of the manufacturers, we understand, are turning their energies into other branches of the textile trade.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS IN MANITOBA.

A thorny question about Separate Schools in Manitoba has once more been brought to the front by a decision of the Privy Council, to the effect that the Catholics have a right of appeal to the Governor-General in Council. What the Governor-General in Council can do in answer to the appeal, if anything, no one seems to know. But it is quite clear that there are certain things in connection with Manitoba schools which they cannot do. Manitoba has elected to have only Public, to the exclusion of Separate Schools, and her right to take this position has been confirmed by the Privy Council, in last resort. The Dominion Government can act only within the limits of its constitutional authority; it cannot usurp legislative authority which belongs to the province. If it called Parliament to its aid, supposing it had power to do so, Parliament could not usurp functions which belong to the legislature of the province. The suggestion has been thrown out that it might pay a part of the Dominion subsidy receivable by Manitoba to the Roman Catholics for the support of Separate Schools. But what would be the nature of such a transaction? Would it not involve the assumption and the exercise of the right of the Dominion to appropriate a part of the revenue of the province? No such right exists. Could the Dominion divide between Common and Separate Schools the lands set apart for schools in Manitoba, lands which were given by the Dominion, and are now held in trust for

a specific purpose? This, presumably, would not the less exceed its powers. It is quite possible that the Dominion Government may find there is no way of meeting the appeal of the Catholics for aid to Separate Schools in Manitoba. A grant by Parliament for the purpose will scarcely be proposed, and, if it were, the result of a vote might not be favorable. It is difficult to see how the Roman Catholics can make their victory fruitful in securing the pecuniary aid which it is their object to obtain. There is an opinion abroad that the decision of the Privy Council may lead to a general election before another session of Parliament is held. In that case, the Government would find it necessary to go to the constituencies with a definite policy on this question, and whatever form it took it would be an inconvenient thing for an election issue. This Manitoba school question may to some extent overshadow and obscure the tariff question, if both issues should be presented to the electors at the same time. Whatever the Dominion authorities may do, or aim at, in the premises, there is no prospect that Manitoba will recede from the ground she has taken in favor of one system of Public Schools for the whole province. But the Dominion authorities are likely to wait till the province has an opportunity of acting or refusing to act, which will have the effect of causing further delay if nothing else.

THE A.O.U.W. AND THE I.O.F.

The January issue of the *Canadian Workman* returns to the attack upon this journal for commenting upon the difference between the Ancient Order of United Workmen and the Independent Order of Foresters, in the matter of the ages at which the members of the two societies depart this life. It says we have "vehemently opposed beneficiary societies for revenue, and made a deliberate false comparison between the A.O.U.W. and the I.O.F." But all the foundation it has for this charge that we are "deliberately false" is the very inconsequential fact that we happened to write *four* months, when we should have written *three* months, as the period during which 85 deaths occurred among the I.O.F. It was not a matter of the time during which, but the ages at which, the deaths occurred. Therefore, to make such a bluster about a trifle of that sort, or about age 20 having been mentioned instead of age 21, is only a waste of the *Workman's* valuable space, unless it does the "herring" duty for its readers. Such denunciation furnishes nothing to explain away the force of the figures we presented. Nor does its ludicrous charge, again trotted out, that this journal has been "stuffed by the I.O.F.," solve the problem with which the organ has been confronted—the why and the wherefore of so many old men being found in its list of monthly claims. Neither is its case helped any by saying "one-seventh" in its December issue, and in its January issue coolly assuming that it said "seven per cent." One-seventh of \$77.00, for example, is \$10.00, but seven per cent. of \$77.00 is only \$5.39. It seems necessary to be thus explicit, because the *Workman* now declares that it "made no error in its one-seventh." What it said in December was: "The A.O.U.W. has therefore a working expense of a fraction over one-seventh of its death payments." What it says in January is "our running expenses were a fraction under six per cent. of our death payments (not a fraction over seven per cent.) as against the I.O.F. with a fraction over fifty per cent." And thus it goes on correcting its own blunders of its previous issue, leaving the impression that they were ours. But since the *Workman* thinks it of so much consequence to have it shown that in *four* months there were more than 85 deaths in the I.O.F., we will now repeat the