

receive in the crabbing processes, in the steaming operations, and in the old boiling operation, which formerly was practised regularly on the higher and better grades of fine woolen cloths, all these operations are explained. They have the effect of developing and insuring a pleasant and agreeable feel or handle they increase and render more brilliant the rich full lustre of the wool fiber and they cleanse and purify the wool from all obnoxious and foreign materials. On the other hand, great care must always be exercised in the employment of the boiling process, since it so readily affects the fiber structure and also so quickly attacks colors, if colors have not been all that they ought to be.

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—In the cotton sections of the trade the advance in raw material attracts attention, but not alarm. The Stock Exchange manipulator is understood to be at work in New York. Spinners have advanced quotations, but it scarcely needs saying they are not getting the increase. In cloth the movement, as far as the shipping trade is concerned, displays no features of special interest, says *The London Drapers' Record*. China business has been put through where requests as to delivery could be complied with, and favorite makes of shirting for Japan have been in moderate request. But after all, the erratic movement of futures attracts much more attention than matters of this kind. A comparison of current rates with those prevalent in November is, in this connection, interesting.

LEEDS.—Among worsted coating makers there is a large production of summer middle-class specialties, with expectations that America will soon again become a good customer. Serges, vicunas, fancy tweed and cheviot coatings are in moderate request at former prices. The turnover of covert coatings has fallen off, but prices are firm. Common costume cloths are dull and cheap. There is little doing in army cloths, and orders are scarce for white blankets, with prices irregular.

BRADFORD.—There was a decided improvement in the tone of the Bradford wool market before the present series of colonial wool sales opened in London, and the values of all classes of raw material had commenced to harden; but when the sales opened it was at once evident that, with the assistance of continental and American competition, a still higher standard of values had been established in London than had been reached here, says the Bradford correspondent of *The London Drapers' Record*. The upward movement has gained strength at each succeeding day's sale in London, and the competition becomes keener, especially from the Germans and Americans; as the latter had been practically absent for some time past, their advent at this series has been a feature of distinct importance. The prices of fine merinos have more than recovered the ground lost since last October, and are to-day higher than at any time during 1898. Should the present rate of consumption increase to any great extent, considerably higher rates will be obtainable, as the supply, both on this side and at the sources of supply, is known to show a large shortage. As has been repeatedly pointed out in previous letters, the long downward course of the prices of the cheaper classes of colonial crossbred had certainly reached very nearly as low a level as possible in December last, and there were signs at that time that an upward movement might set in at any time. This movement towards higher values set in early in the New Year, but has been greatly helped by a very large and somewhat unexpected demand for combed wool tops of lower crossbred colonial wools for the Continent, where a very large quantity has been taken largely for hosiery purposes. The fact that the American representatives in London appeared

to be ready to absorb very considerable quantities of the cheaper class of colonial crossbred wools has also had a distinct effect on the market, the more so as their operations recently had been practically confined to fine merinos, and it was understood that the American domestic wool could compete successfully with all classes of lower crossbred colonial wools. As there has been an increased demand in the home trade for crossbred worsted yarns for the dress serge trade, and also in the export yarn trade for the same purpose, and for braids, the present position of the crossbred wool market will be seen to be much stronger than for some time past. In English wools of a pure lustre character there is a much better demand, and holders are asking more money, and are not at all forcing sales. In most other classes of non-lustrous home-grown there is a perceptible tendency towards hardening prices. Mohair continues very firm at the recent advance, and as a very large percentage of this year's clip is now in the hands of consumers, the course of the market will depend very much on the fact of spinners being well under order or otherwise. There is no change in the price of raw alpaca, but prices are quite firm. In mohair yarns the recent advances demanded by spinners appear to have to some extent checked business for the time being, but it is probable that users will have to pay these advances sooner or later. Spinners of worsted yarns have been compelled by the advances of raw material to demand a distinctly increased price for all kinds of both warp and weft worsted yarns, but great difficulty is found in getting either the home trade manufacturers or the export merchants to offer prices equal to the increased price of raw material. In piece goods, as far as dress materials are concerned, the winter trade may now be looked on as past, and the wet, open weather which has prevailed all the time has had a most adverse effect on that season's trade. The spring trade is opening out with great promise, one of the most hopeful factors being the improved demand and prospects of the American trade, where good-class crepons are in particularly good demand, and seem likely to hold the field for at least a season to come. Bradford manufacturers have certainly in the past few seasons been to some extent left behind by their continental competitors in the manufacture of such goods as all-wool bengalines and poplins; but a few of the leading makers here are now producing fabrics of this class which will bear comparison with any foreign goods, and as the finish is quite pure the wear must be satisfactory. All the leading makers of plain and figured mohairs are busy with home, continental, or American orders, and although blacks are most in request, there is also a fair demand for havy blues, silver grays, and creams. All the makers of fancy silk blouse and lining cloths here are very busy, and this trade has recently shown very great development.

HALIFAX.—The following are the Chamber of Commerce trade reports for January: Wool—The market has assumed a more confident tone, and has latterly been much more cheerful, business having reverted to something like the normal condition of things. Woolens—During the month there has been a good enquiry, and most manufacturers consider the situation more hopeful. Spun Silk—The past month has been marked by some improvement, and values have a tendency to harden. Cotton—Bundle yarns continue quiet and unchanged, and only very unimportant sales have taken place. There has been more doing in warps, both single and two-fold, during the month. Fustians and Ready-mades—These industries are fairly well engaged, and employment keeps good. Carpets—The opening month of the year has been marked by considerable activity, and there has been a largely increased production of goods. Pieces—Manufacturers have received more orders during the month. The advance of the price of wool seems to have stimulated buyers, who are now more anxious to place orders at the old