

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—As to the general turnover in the warehouses the demand has been satisfactory, and for the time of the year the rate of distribution may be considered encouraging. The idiosyncrasy of the rumors current during a war could not be better illustrated than by the statement circulated of late that looms have been stopped, owing to the abstraction of tonnage for war purposes, and the consequent lack of cargo-carrying space. In some sections of the New York trade a delay of a few days has occasionally been necessary, owing to the absence of big liners on Government duty, says *The Drapers' Record*. But as Lancashire has no market in New York worth speaking of, the fact has not interfered at all with the output of its machinery. There has been a steady movement in the woolen departments, but worsteds are rather quiet, especially on American account. The demand for mercerized yarns is on the increase, and there has been a further development in the uses to which this article is applied. In the silk sections of the trade looms are well engaged, and some good orders have been received from the United States and Canada. The advance in linen thread quotations announced by the Linen Thread Company has been expected for some time. The advance on prices of flax has compelled spinners of every number to raise quotations, and the rises in cloth have been numerous and important. Under the circumstances, the action of the Linen Thread Company is not surprising. The kindred association connected with the sewing cotton trade issued revised lists, it will be remembered, some time ago. The velvet cutters are to combine, with a capital of about £150,000. These amalgamations are, as a rule, influenced from one source in Manchester, and the surprising feature about them is that this city, the home of the Cobdenite free-trade idea, placidly allows such schemes to be formulated, and carried to a successful issue, without any attempt at organized opposition on the part of its merchants, who do not like the combination idea at all, seeing that it tends to reduce their profits seriously.

BRADFORD.—The first few days of the last series of colonial wool sales certainly showed a flatter tone than this market here was altogether prepared for, but already there are signs of recovery of tone, and there has been very little really good wool which has been purchased at rates much under those of the previous series at present, says the Bradford correspondent of *The Drapers' Record*. Neither combed tops nor yarns made from pure merino wool had ever been sold here to any large extent at rates equal to the highest point of the previous London sales, and even the best rates obtainable for merino wool piece goods were very far below a proportionate level to the price of wool, so that a much greater drop must take place in the quotations for wool before the prices of goods are affected, and thus the shrewdest authorities here are quite unprepared for. The position of the merino wool market is also strengthened by the fact that the Buenos Ayres wool market is up to the present quite unaffected by the flat tone of the Australian sales now proceeding in London, and holders of this South American merino refuse to believe that the check is more than temporary. Cheaper money is helping holders a good deal, and better weather, with the consequent reduction in the influenza epidemic, coupled with an improvement in the war prospects, would, I believe, quickly reinstate fine colonial wools on the late basis of prices, especially as stocks are unusually small in all departments of the market. There has been a certain amount of weakness in the competition in London for the lower classes of colonial cross-bred wools, but spinners are so extremely busy on old orders that it would take at least a few weeks of quiet trade to cause them to accept lower prices for

cross-bred wool yarns. It seems hardly likely that the demand for these cheaper crossbred worsteds is likely to fall off, as the goods made from them are especially suited to the use of the working and lower middle classes, and the purchasing power of these very large consumers must be greatly in excess of anything it has been for some years past, both in this country and abroad. As raw cotton has again advanced considerably during the past week, fabrics partly composed of cotton which compete with such goods as worsted dress serges are comparatively dearer and less able to compete, so that the Bradford all-wool dress serges are to day intrinsically the cheapest fabrics in the market. A very large proportion of the last year's clip of English wool has now passed into consumers' hands and consequently the market is now in comparatively small compass, and there is no change to report in reference to the prices of the small amounts of the various kinds of home grown wool which are at present changing hands. The prices of raw alpaca are quite firm, and, in face of the probable shortage of the clip of Cape mohair, a slight advance has recently been made on the few parcels of this class which have recently been purchased. With all classes of spinners extremely busy, and a quiet market for wool, the immediate business in worsted yarns has been reduced to a minimum, and a few offers from abroad for worsted yarns which were on the market, at rates slightly under those recently ruling, have had to be sent back for improvements in the price limit. After the great promise of improved business in Bradford dress goods, which the large orders at the end of last year seemed to foretell, there has been some disappointment at the quiet way in which business has so far opened out in the new year, but the great prevalence of influenza, and the general upset of business caused by the war have, no doubt, had the effect of delaying business in the home trade. It seems likely also that the irritation caused by the war in some continental countries is also preventing representatives of British houses having as cordial receptions from their continental customers as they otherwise would have had. As the style of fashionable dresses at the present time is altogether in favor of the use of such fabrics as plain and figured mohairs, and as there is every indication of blacks being much wanted, and makers are being pressed for deliveries, there is no reason to doubt that in bright dress goods, at least, there will be a very large business done in the coming summer. Some of the new styles of black mohairs in styles of invisible stripes are also meeting with a warm reception in very good qualities, and these look especially stylish when made up. For the autumn trade there still seems to be great uncertainty as to what will be wanted in high-class fancy dress goods, and there is a good opening for a novelty in blacks to take the place of the mohair crepons.

KINDERMINSTER.—Manufacturers are actively employed on all qualities of carpet. We hear in one or two quarters that arrangements are being made to run looms overtime in order to deal with urgent orders. In the worsted trade local spinners are in a very much better position than for some time past. Orders are freely coming to hand, and there is now a considerable trade being done with outside districts both in hosiery and cloth yarns.

NOTTINGHAM.—Most branches of the lace trade continue busy. Not for some considerable period has the outlook been more cheerful, and, judging from present appearances, there does not seem much probability of any immediate falling off in the demand. The higher prices of cotton have caused quotations to be increased. Naturally the enhanced prices have created some friction, especially in the shipping departments, but manufacturers are firm in their demands, and are determined not to make goods at the recent unremunerative rates. The fancy cotton millinery lace branches are in a very