

THE TEXTILE STAPLES.

High prices for wool and extraordinary small stocks of it characterize all parts of the world. Canada is no exception; dealers remember no time when there was such a small surplus of wool on hand. Prices continue high, and at about the same level as quoted a week ago; but they have, under present circumstances, but little significance, as the business being transacted amounts to practically nothing. Conditions in the United States raw wool market are described as follows by the Dry Goods Economist:—

“Despite the fact that no great amount of business has been transacted during the past week, the business done has been about up to the recent average. The prices, however, are showing a very distinct disposition to harden, and this disposition is growing stronger week by week. That manufacturers realize they cannot hold off is shown by the celerity with which they immediately take hold of any lots at particularly good prices that they can secure. Nor is this disposition on their part induced by a spirit of speculation. They realize that the supply is none too heavy, and that they are merely taking care of their actual wants in making these purchases. They are all well aware that the possibility of a considerable increase in prices before a great while threatens to become a reality. In the Boston market the situation remains the same. Prices there are very firm, and, while the demand is not over active, there is a good call for every class of goods. The supply is becoming rather limited, and there seems little chance of immediate relief. In the market this week have been some very large consumers, and the fact that the supply all over is short is well attested to by the presence in Boston of certain Philadelphia dealers.”

Wholesale merchants in Canada state that while the above situation naturally causes values of woolen goods to be held to very firmly, yet they are moving out well. The demand from all parts of the country evidently showing large consumptive requirements, whatever may be the prevailing prices. Heavy blankets and underwear are in particularly good demand, and so are winter dress goods, especially, we are glad to note, of domestic make.

From the British woolen centres comes word of increased activity consequent upon the Russo-Japanese war. There is said to be an astonishingly large demand from Japan for heavy woolen clothing, blankets, etc., to such an extent indeed that the manufacturers in Yorkshire can scarcely keep up with orders, and certainly have but scanty stocks on hand for home requirements.

In the cotton market, the situation shows no exciting features. Raw material is fairly firm, but seems to have become settled on a quieter basis than that which prevailed a few months ago. Buying does not appear to be especially brisk, there being such a wide divergence of opinion between the holders and the mill owners as to probable future valuation. The prices of made-up goods, however, continue quite steady, and a normally good trade without special feature, is being carried on throughout the Dominion.



CUSTOMS REGULATIONS HAMPERING TRADE.

We have heard it said by importing merchants that if a Canadian dealer wants to bring his goods into Canada at the lowest possible expenditure for customs duties, he must go to the Germans, they being the most painstaking and accommodating as to furnishing low invoices and all that this implies. Next

to the Germans, they declare, come the United States exporters or manufacturers, with consciences only a little less elastic; while the British are the most honest of the three groups. Such a sweeping statement must not be taken to include the whole of any country's traders, however, but only those who, for the sake of increasing their trade, are willing to get “on the windy side of the law” and make a more or less dainty compromise with the exact truth.

Among foreign exporters of this class, the officers of the Canadian customs have a difficult time, for it will go hard but conscienceless ingenuity will often get the better of departmental red tape and even of intelligent experts. We learn from the Montreal Gazette's last London letter that the British Chambers of Commerce are still much dissatisfied with the Canadian customs regulations. They are unanimously agreed in condemning the regulation that every British shipper must declare the value of the goods in this country, and the price charged to the Canadian importer. The view is held that “although ostensibly directed against unfair dumping, it means that the importer in Canada is to be fined for making a good bargain in purchasing British goods, and it also places British shippers under suspicion in a way they despise, for English traders, as a rule, do not readily submit to customs regulations, which imply that they are suspected persons.” Several British Chambers of Commerce have declared that the new regulations altogether are calculated to hinder trade between Canada and Great Britain, and they are expecting when the turmoil of the Canadian general election is over, (this was written on October 29th), “that whichever Government is returned, these obnoxious regulations will be reconsidered.”



HUMBUGGING THE ENGLISHMEN.

From time to time we hear echoes of the warnings which were addressed by this journal during 1902 and 1903 to exporters of the United Kingdom that they were being misled, and money obtained for advertisements dishonestly from them by a clever canvasser for two Montreal trade journals. We obtained from Ottawa last year, and printed, proof under the signature of the Canadian Minister of Justice of the bad faith of this man in professing to represent a journal subsidised and vouched for by the Federal Government, which was, however, never so vouched for. The “Shareholder,” of Montreal, and the “Canadian Manufacturer,” of Toronto spoke out roundly upon the dishonesty of the canvasser, and upheld the stand the “Monetary Times” had taken in the interest of decent journalism.

In the issue for October 26th of an important London weekly, the Commercial Intelligence, we find a letter pointing out at some length, that “British manufacturers are wasting thousands of pounds in bringing, or supposedly bringing, their goods to the notice of the Canadian buyer.” And instances are given where goods not used or likely to be used in Canada are advertised to no purpose; while expensive catalogues and circulars respecting English boots, articles of personal wear, and metal manufactures are being wasted in thousands on supposed Canadian buyers in other lines of trade. The whole upon the absurd belief, fostered by certain Canadian journals canvassed for in England by a person who dares not canvass any decent house in Canada, that trade with Canada can be forced by misrepresentation. Says the