

Ingersoll, Sept. 17th, 1896.

With ordinary prices for farm products the people in this section would have plenty of money, as crops of all kinds are good. As it is, the recent advance in cheese, this being a great industry in this county, is already felt and gives a slight stimulus to trade. I would consider prospects only fair, and until financial affairs are settled on a solid basis in the United States they are likely to remain so with us here.

Aylmer, Sept. 17th, 1896.

In reply to your circular would say as a whole, I think, trade is fairly good. Cheese and pork are looking better. Wheat was a poor crop and farmers complain of low prices. Our merchants seem fairly prosperous, but say collections are very slow. On the whole would say we have no reason to complain.

Niagara Falls, Sept. 17th, 1896.

Business (manufacturers of men's furnishings) during 1895 was very poor, and from Jan. 1st, 1896, about as bad. From July 1st, 1896, up to the present time don't desire it any better. Too many orders and everybody wants their goods at once. We are working overtime.

Listowel, Sept. 18th, 1896.

In regard to prospects of trade, I beg to say they are only fair, and customers are buying just what is absolutely needed. The merchants in consequence are giving close prices for inducements to buy. Collections are poor so far. No grain is coming into this market.

Walkerton, Sept. 18th, 1896.

The prospects are not bright in this county. Farmers were hopeful in June, but now their large crop of apples are left to rot, there is no sale for oats at 17 cents per bushel, and the best pears bring only 88 cents, with no wheat to spare. Cattle and sheep are very low in price. The majority of farmers borrowed all the cash they could last year to buy feed, and this year they have very poor prospects of paying what they borrowed, and no money left with which to buy new goods. I am not a pessimist, but I do think just now things are looking very blue, and there are no prospects for an immediate change.

Clinton, Sept. 23rd, 1896.

The prospects for fall trade in this vicinity are encouraging. The prosperity of the farmers is, of course, essential to this condition of affairs. The improvement in the cattle market, and the large amount of cash put into circulation through the shipment of apples, will go to assist matters in this direction.

Brantford, Sept. 17th, 1896.

The crops are very fair, but prices are so very low that we do not look for any improvement over last year. Cattle feeds are cheap and plentiful; they will save the farmers a good deal, as last year they had to buy all their hay, etc.

Brantford, Sept. 19th, 1896.

In reply to your post card, we beg to reply that in our opinion there will be little improvement on last autumn's trade. Crops are better but prices are lower, and combined with uncertainty as to the Government policy in regard to the tariff, there is an anxiety amongst manufacturers which will keep business in a doubtful condition for some time.

Hespeler, Sept. 17th, 1896.

Think a fair business will be done this fall, but will not be up to the usual amount in this district.

Berlin, Sept. 17th, 1896.

We look for a good fall trade in our business (leather), stocks being light and values in raw material appreciating in all the leading markets of America and Europe. For some years consumers have bought only for requirements as sparingly as possible, which they may do yet, but since stocks are low, there is no reason for further curtailment.

Galt, Sept. 17th, 1896.

Replying to your inquiry concerning prospects for trade this fall and winter, our impression is that the outlook is fairly good. We have had an average crop well secured. We have had an exceptionally fine season for fall seeding. While prices of farmers' produce is low, everything that is used by consumers is correspondingly low. Stocks in merchants' hands have been kept down, consequently many are in a good position to buy.

Berlin, Sept. 21st, 1896.

In reply to your inquiry, would say the past month or so has been quiet, but an improvement, we think, will take place with the cold weather. We are enlarging our store, which is nearly completed, and, of course, expect improved business.

Hamilton, Sept. 17th, 1896.

Received your enquiry in reference to the Fall trade. In our line (churns, washing machines, etc.), we have no reason to doubt but that our trade will be as good this Fall as in previous years, although the prices of farm produce are very low. Our goods might be called a luxury, but are yet a household necessity. Prices were never lower, but we expect to do an average amount of business, although, on account of the depression in the United States, very low quotations, indeed, are being quoted to the Canadian dealers for our line of goods at the present time; the larger market of American manufacturers enables them to produce this class of goods in larger quantities, and they can be sold at a smaller margin of profit than our limited output would allow us to do. We fully believe that our Fall trade will be equal to, if not in advance of, any former ones.

Owen Sound, Sept. 21st, 1896.

Replying to your circular, re prospect for Fall trade in our locality, we would say that, as we do very little local work, we are not in a position to state what the prospects are in this section of the country. We may, however, mention that the prospects in our line (machinery and marine repairs) are very good. We are busy, and expect to be so, until winter sets in. We had a lull during the late elections, but work is coming in pretty freely now.

Barrie, Sept. 17th, 1896.

Although the prices of all farm products are ruling exceptionally low at the present time, local merchants are more hopeful, considering that the bottom has been reached, and any change must be for the better, although they do not anticipate any very marked change until after the presidential election in the United States.

Orillia, Sept. 18th, 1896.

Trade is as steady and favorable as last year, but prospects at present are not so bright as last year.

Belleville, Sept. 17th, 1896.

The extremely low prices for grain, fruit and cheese have been pretty evenly balanced by abundant crops and good pasture in this section, but although the prospects are fairly good, still the farmers are buying very carefully, and will not venture into building or extensive improvements unless pressingly needed. We think the times are improving from greater economy generally practised, and therefore do not look for a large fall and winter trade for merchants.

Peterboro, Sept. 17th, 1896.

With good crops and a liberal portion of public money being expended in town for local improvements and in the construction of the Trent Valley Canal, we look for a decided improvement in trade for the coming season.

Peterboro, Sept. 18th, 1896.

In response to your inquiry relating to fall trade, will say that we have orders on our books (bridge material) to carry us over the next six months.

Almonte, Sept. 17th, 1896.

The prospects of the woolen business were never worse, and the uncertainty as to Government policy on the tariff issue adds to the difficulties. The outlook is certainly very bad at present.

Carleton Place, Sept. 21st, 1896.

The low prices for grain and farm produce are the only drawbacks to a good season's business in this locality.

Rat Portage, Sept. 18th, 1896.

In reply to your inquiry as to autumn prospects in this section, the prospects are good for this fall's trade.

AUGUST TRADE RETURNS.

As compared with the corresponding month last year, the Government trade returns for August show little variation. The imports for August, 1895, aggregated \$11,028,665, and for August, 1896, they reached \$11,083,875. During the past month our imports of cottons were valued as follows:—Bleached or unbleached, not dyed, colored, etc., \$17,089; bleached, dyed, colored, etc., \$181,755; clothing, \$18,574; yarn, warp, etc., \$21,750; thread on spools, \$31,536; other manufactures of cottons, \$71,853. The aggregate importations of fancy goods and embroideries amounted to \$179,983 in value. Of woollens, Canadian imports are classed in value as follows:—Carpets, \$31,635; clothing, \$160,825; cloths, worsteds, coatings, etc., \$346,393; dress goods, \$371,334; knitted goods, \$38,140; shawls, \$14,598; yarns, \$15,334; other woolen goods, \$40,506. Manufactured silk goods to the value of \$275,911 were brought into the country. Of hats, caps, bonnets and the like, we imported goods amounting to \$139,577 in value.