

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—From The Draper's Record we learn that the turnover in the home trade is still of a restricted character. The efforts of travelers to give an impetus to business do not meet with much success. In the heavy branches a firmer tone was succeeded by a drop, and this irregularity has greatly upset the market. The intricacies of the cotton market have been compared to the fluctuations in betting at Tattersall's. An advance is welcomed in the linen districts. In view of the wish expressed by Her Majesty Queen Alexandra that domestic goods should be worn at the coronation, cotton manufacturers, as well as those interested in silk and other fabrics, are preparing designs specially appropriate for the occasion. Silk is more likely to benefit by this event, especially in the embroidery and trimming departments, than other fabrics. The mere demand, however, for the coronation ceremony will not in itself furnish, relatively speaking, much employment for machinery. It is to the fashionable example likely to be set, and the amount of attention attracted by the colors, designs and weaves of the designs shown that the British silk trade must principally look for benefit from Her Majesty's desire. As to the condition of the cotton crop it is, as to the United States, not particularly encouraging, according to government report. While better than on the same date in 1899 and 1900 it is worse than on the 25th of August, and a little below the average of ten years. The less favorable conditions are found in Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma; the more favorable in Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, the Carolinas, Missouri, Louisiana, Tennessee, Virginia, Florida and the Indian Territory. In Egyptian cotton the situation is distinctly in favor of buyers. Many of them have taken advantage of the weakness and quite a little business has been put through at what seem to be low figures. The enquiry is chiefly for early deliveries. There is quite a little enquiry for September shipments, but this is of necessity old crop cotton. A peculiar feature of the cotton-piece goods trade is that the shipments from Liverpool far exceed those sent from Manchester by ocean carrying vessels. During the last week of August Liverpool exported 27,755,000 yards of cotton goods to Calcutta alone.

DUNDEE.—The jute market is a shade stronger. Advices from India indicate that the crop is large and the quality excellent. Spinners are buying with caution in the expectation that in October jute will be easier bought. This may or may not be the case, but such is the feeling at present. Jute yarns are quiet. For cops 1s. 3d. is paid for 8-lb common quality, and 1s. 6½d. to 1s. 7d. for 8-lb warps. Heavy yarns show a downward tendency. In hessians only a moderate demand exists, and orders are keenly competed for. Only white wide goods continue to command full prices. The miscellaneous trade in odds and ends amounts to a large proportion of the Dundee jute business. This is of growing importance. The Textile Mercury remarks that it is well that it is so, as Dundee does not in this suffer from the severe competition which forces down ordinary goods. The government has been purchasing largely in flax and tow goods. Unfortunately this rather injures than helps the general trade. The ordinary buyers refuse to increase their stocks at the rates current, and buy only in very small lots "from hand to mouth." The fancy jute trade is very quiet, and prices are cut very fine. Reports of the new flax crop are conflicting. The crop promises to be large, and while the low prices of three years ago cannot be hoped for, the price will probably give way when the new crop arrives.

KIDDERMINSTER.—The carpet trade generally is quiet. One or two mills have resorted to short time, which, it is understood, will be continued for several weeks. This enables manufacturers to press forward their arrangements for next season. Pattern-trying is pretty general, and consumers are likely to have a fine range of designs to select from.

BRADFORD.—There is not the increase in business at this centre after the holiday season which was in many quarters anticipated. There is, however, a more hopeful tone in all departments of the wool trade. Merinos are keeping their price well, but the fall of two years ago is causing dealers to proceed with the utmost caution. The situation may, however, be described as distinctly strong, as all the authorities agree that there is a serious decrease in the production of pure merino wool, and the consumption has been steadily increasing for some time past, and stocks, both of raw merino and the wool in the earlier stages of its manufacture, are not large. In considering the probabilities of the early future it should not be forgotten that when fashion has set in in favor of fine wool goods, there is no other class of wool which can adequately replace pure merino, as from no other wool can the requisite fineness and softness be obtained. In men's wear finer and softer goods appear to be more wanted, and the wearing of numerous and voluminous undershirts by ladies makes it absolutely necessary that the dress material proper must be composed of a light fine fabric, which can only be produced from the finest wools. The demand for combed tops made from the cheaper kinds of crossbred colonial wools has been improving, and this improvement has now enabled holders of combed to advance their prices by some 5 per cent. There is no restriction of the output of these cheap colonial wools, and the production of them in both Australia and South America has attained very large proportions. Mainly on account of this great supply, the price of this raw material has fallen to an unprecedentedly low figure, until to-day it is less than that of average American cotton. Of course, the waste in the subsequent process of manufacture, and the cost of manipulation into yarns of this crossbred wool, is proportionately much greater than in the case of cotton, but, on the other hand, wool is much more durable, and the worsted rags are ground up as shoddy several times after being discarded by the first wearer. This extreme cheapness of the coarser crossbred colonial wools is doing much to popularize the wonderfully cheap all-wool materials of the serge character which are now being produced so largely both in Britain and on the continent, and new styles made from these wools are also being introduced. Spinners report that there has recently been an improved demand for yarns made from colonial crossbred wools, both on home and continental account, and that there is a more hopeful tone throughout this department of the market. Although most classes of English wools continue in quiet demand, there is still a good enquiry for the very best English lustre wools, and the prices of these have advanced fully a halfpenny per pound.

LEEDS.—The woollen trade shows little change, but most of the factories are at work again, though comparatively few have sufficient to keep them going full time. Winter repeats are coming in, but there is as yet no sign of any very active trade. Some prospect of improvement, however, arises from the fact that stocks of certain fabrics are getting very low and consumption must sooner or later stimulate production. Meanwhile there is a fair demand for light weight goods for the Australian market, fancy tweeds and worsteds being mostly in request. The home trade in winter goods shows no sign of expansion. The retailers of ready-made clothing have of late had nothing to complain of, and autumn goods appear to be