

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER—The market has been considerably interfered with by the holidays. The demand has nowhere been of full dimensions and prices have only weakly been maintained. Irregularity has been the rule in nearly all cases. The cotton market has been depressed by the continuance of heavy receipts, which has caused prices to fall by from one to two points. Only a retail trade has been transacted in yarns, and prices in nearly every department are weak and irregular. A moderate demand has continued to present itself for cloth, but at such low prices as rarely to admit of acceptance. It is generally hoped that business may improve after the holidays, but this is not justified by any substantially good outlook at present.

BRADFORD—There has not been much animation in the wool trade, but there is a good deal of quiet buying in both merinos and crossbred wools, and some considerable weights of tops in both these descriptions have been sold during the past few days for forward delivery. Prices, therefore, are firm, but there is no indication of any advance at an early date. There is one feature in the market which seems to point to a possibility of a largely increased inquiry for lustrous fabrics. Prices are advancing and business is increasing in both raw mohair and alpaca, notwithstanding the fact that there is the greatest quietness in the braid trade, in which a very large proportion of both these raw materials are usually consumed. In the yarn trade we have a good many large offers for various kinds of yarn from export merchants at impossible rates, and though, no doubt, some concessions have been made by a few of the most eager spinners, one cannot hear of any actual business of moment resulting.

NOTTINGHAM—As is usual at the close of the year, business is in a somewhat stagnant condition in the lace trade. Manufacturers and warehousemen are, however, looking forward more hopefully towards 1895, as everything tends to show that the state of trade generally is slowly but surely improving. The goods most in request at the present time are caps, aprons, collarettes, and other fancy goods, which are in moderate demand. In ruchings and frillings manufacturers are introducing novelties, for which there has been some call. In Oriental laces a good business has been done, whilst the lace curtain, window blind, and furniture lace departments are moderately engaged with orders for future delivery for the home trade and for shipment. There have recently been large exports of bobbin nets to the Continent, but Nottingham people do not look upon this as an unmixed good, for no doubt in the near future they will be placed on the market in such forms as to compete seriously with Nottingham-made cotton laces. For the Continent, too, large orders have been placed for braids and beadings. There is more inquiry for stiff Valenciennes and Maltese edgings for shipment, and a few good orders have been booked. No fresh demand can be noted for silk laces, which continue very depressed. The foreign competition in this branch is so severe that local manufacturers find it impossible to meet it, and in consequence the bulk of the trade is in foreign hands.

HIDDERMINSTER—The year which has passed away must be regarded, as far as the carpet trade in all its branches is concerned, as a very disappointing one. It is increasingly evident that the carpet trade depends very largely upon the condition of the general trade of the country. Outside our own country we have had very little assistance. The depressed state of trade in the United States, coupled with the great uncertainty with regard to the effect of the Tariff bill—even after it was passed—had a marked effect on this side the Atlantic. The improvement in the colonial trade comes slowly. The reaction from the breakdown of two years ago has not been as rapid as was anticipated by many. There are, however, now distinct signs of steady, if slow, improvement. The same can be said of our relations with South America, and there are indications which lead to the conclusion that the solvency of the country is becoming established upon a better basis than there has

been for several years, though the volume of trade is small compared with what it was some time ago. In our own country it is not difficult to see indications that business has taken a turn for the better. The good harvest has had its natural effect upon the industries of the country; and there is an expansion of trade generally which gives hope and confidence in the future. This will react upon the carpet trade, so that the prospect is that our looms will be much better employed.—*Shuttle*.

BELFAST—In the linen market the aspect of trade has altered but little lately. Although manufacturers are still buying only to supply immediate wants, there has been a considerably larger turnover in both line and tow yarns than has been the case for some weeks past. Very low prices are spoken of as having been accepted for the range of line wefts, but the sales referred to were exceptional, and for a very low quality of yarn. Some makers who were tempted by the low prices quoted for inferior spinnings, and were induced to make a trial of some of them, have been obliged to give them up and revert to the better spinnings. As a rule, prices are unchanged and remain firm at recent quotations. In linen piece goods a brisk business is passing in the coarser end of the trade. Almost all kinds of tow goods and unions are selling freely. For the United States market there is an immense demand for "scrims," but the time of delivery of these is in most cases limited to March. Pales, especially union pales, are in good demand, especially for the making-up trades. White linens are slow of sale, as are also hand loom damasks, but a fair demand exists for power loom damask cloths and napkins. Ballymenas are somewhat easier in price. Apron and pinafore manufacturers are having a good run of trade, and are at present working up to the full strength of their production. In holland goods the Belfast makers have this season been even more fortunate than in former years. The greater part of the London and Manchester orders for holland goods for the coming spring seem to have come to this side of the channel, and the factories have plenty to do to keep up to time with their deliveries. The demand is again stronger for union hollands—cotton warp and linen weft—than for all linen, most of the holland apron orders, indeed, are for the union qualities.

DUNDEE—The tone of the market is better all round. Jute is 5s. dearer—that is to say, sellers ask 5s. more, and £10 5s. is now the lowest for best firsts. Hessians are unfortunately not wanted at any advance, and only very good 10½ oz. 40 in. bring 13½d mangled. Common qualities and light weights are swamped by the Calcutta goods. Flax falls from day to day. The quality of the new crop is variously reported on; but in a few weeks spinners will be enabled to see the flax on the heckle, and to know what they may expect. Flax yarns are offered by bleachers at low prices, and to effect sales a slight concession from the very low prices current would be made. Tow wefts are cheaper than they ever were. This trade is at the moment very unprofitable. The inquiry for linens for the spring trade is better, and the prospects improve. The recovery is not to be sudden, and if real and permanent this will be an advantage. The jute fancy trade extends, and the demand for perfect goods for oilcloth and other materials requiring skill and care in their manufacture extends. Jute carpets of pretty design are wanted, and the demand for cords and ropes for special uses increases.

GLASGOW Fifeshire linen manufacturers are continuing to receive good orders from all markets, and the close of the year is much better than the beginning in regard to orders and outlook. While this is so, there has been no increase in prices for manufactured goods. The Ayrshire lace curtain trade is still improving, and the opening of the year is expected to still further increase the demand. The American orders are steadily coming to hand, and the exports in the early weeks of 1895 will be in pleasing contrast to the early months of 1894. In respect to the winter's home trade, some makers report that it has been the best lace curtain winter they have experienced. The Glasgow cotton yarn market has been very quiet, and any transactions that have taken place have been carried through at prices that are only slightly above the lowest point reached lately. In the South of Scotland tweed trade the last fortnight of 1894, which is now concluding, has not given hopes