

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—The cotton, yarn, and cloth markets here continue in the state of quiescence which has prevailed of late. The cotton market yields no sign of increased animation, and in the absence of this, and in view of the slightness of demand from the most important of our foreign markets, activity as regards yarns and cloth cannot be looked for. Certainly the tendency in yarn is to a falling off in prices. Apparently spinners have but little to justify them in holding back, for the prospects in the immediate future are not encouraging. As might be expected, in most cases spinners are open to discuss terms, the result being that, with the exception of the best marks, prices for yarns are easier. Until the Indian demand improves, the yarn market here—in the absence of important movements in cottons—is bound to exhibit signs of weakness. As regards cloth, the looms in operation are probably not fewer than during the past weeks. Many manufacturers, however, are finding their order books in an unsatisfactory condition. New business has become a necessity, if the machinery is to be kept in motion. Hence a drooping tendency as regards prices is exhibited. Manufacturers, as spinners, are finding that prices cannot be maintained if stocks are not to accumulate. To postpone booking an order is often to lose it, as one's competitors are open to make concessions. The easier terms obtainable have enabled a number of small orders for the Eastern markets to be put through, and have also encouraged buying on the part of the home trade houses. This week, up to date, fewer orders for the smaller foreign markets have been heard of, as compared with some recent weeks. While so little new business has been coming from the great Eastern markets, these smaller outlets have been a godsend to many manufacturers. It is satisfactory to note that the home trade seems prosperous. This fact is attested to both by what one hears and sees in the warehouses, and also by external signs. Among the latter may be mentioned the increased traffic receipts shown by the railways, which, as regards goods, is always a hopeful sign, though perhaps not necessarily denoting actual improvement in the dry goods trade.

BRADFORD.—The increased amount of machinery now running in the Bradford district must be absorbing considerable quantities of wools and tops of various descriptions, but this is being done in a wonderfully quiet manner, and a casual visitor on 'Change here would be struck with the general indifference displayed by both buyers and sellers. Stocks of merino tops do not decrease, and are so heavy that all buoyancy is for the present crushed out of this department of the market, and even crossbreds, though firm, are somewhat slower of sale. Some spinners report more doing in coating yarns, and the demand from Huddersfield is much better, but there is little new business coming to hand for twofold export yarns. In piece-goods the reports from both mill and warehouse are somewhat at variance, as in some quarters I hear of considerable improvement in business in the last ten days, whilst in others there has been less doing and returns are disappointing. The explanation of this state of things seems to lie in the fact that in some districts taste seems to be reverting to some extent to the small jacquard effects in all-wool goods which commenced the season so well, and that tweeds are therefore being rather less inquired for, and so houses are benefiting just in proportion to the supply they can command of what happens to be wanted. For the dress trade in the coming autumn, the vast quantity of low-priced tweeds which are being produced is certainly causing some uneasiness in the minds of those buyers who cater mainly for a high-class trade, and who have largely bought high-priced tweed dress goods, as it seems probable that the next move of the leaders of fashion may be to get on to something as completely distinct from tweed effects as possible. Leading makers here are already preparing some very stylish all-wool costume materials in piece-dyed goods, with a close, smooth finish, intended to supplant tweeds. The improvement in the flannel trade recently noticed still continues, and a business considerably ahead of last year has already been arranged; but it has not been found possible to establish any im-

provement in price. The flannelette trade is quieter, not, I think, as a result of the showing-up of its all-cotton composition, but principally on account of the cheapness of flannel and the low price of wool. In the home trade woollens, business improves slowly, for though orders are being given with greater freedom for fancy suitings and smart cheviot tweeds, cloths of a plain character are very quiet. Some manufacturers are certainly busier than for some time past; but this is not general, and there is still some working of short time. Shipping trade is very quiet, although the prospects of the Canadian trade under the proposed new tariff basis are good, as Huddersfield productions will be benefited to something like 20 per cent.

LEICESTER.—There is not much doing in the wool market, the turnover being unimportant, but prices on the whole are firm. Supplies offering are only moderate, and the consumption shows a steady increase, but as stocks are reduced consumers are content to take small lots to meet immediate requirements. Small lots of the new clip are coming in, and there is every prospect of a heavy business during the next few weeks. Skin wools are cleared off steadily, but colonial wools are rather a dragging business. Orders for yarns are larger, and stocks are under the average. Cashmere and lambswool yarns have a good average turnover, but cottons are flat. The hosiery industry revives steadily, and stocks of light summer fabrics are small. Elastic web fabrics are a dull trade, but there is more doing in specialties for home and Continental markets.

NOTTINGHAM.—A quieter tone prevails in the lace market, the demand for Venise and Irish guipure laces having fallen off somewhat suddenly. The Levers branch is dull. Silk laces are only in very moderate request, and there is no appreciable increase in the sale of tatings, trimmings, and embroideries. Although some firms have good orders on hand for lace curtains, others complain of the condition of trade. Stiff foundation nets are only in moderate request. Bobbin nets for embroidering sell rather slowly at late rates, and the demand for tulles is quiet. Silk veils and falls still sell pretty freely. The hosiery trade is in much the same condition as last week, and manufacturers are not fully employed. Natural wool underclothing sells pretty freely.

LEEDS.—There is not a great deal doing in the woollen cloth trade, although it is satisfactory to note that prices continue steady. During the past week a few good orders have been received for Canada, Switzerland and Roumania. French manufacturers have no longer a market in Switzerland owing to the protectionist policy of their government, and our worsteds and woollens are gaining favor in Roumania every season. Prospects of a much better trade with the Brazils are now particularly bright, and a fair business continues to be done with the Argentine, but room is still left for extension. As to the United States there is nothing but suspense and disappointment. There are no large sales to day of low fabrics for home consumption. In covert cloths and flannels there is no change. For next winter some fairly good orders are given out, but additions will no doubt be yet largely made to the existing ranges of patterns. The turnover in the ready-made clothing trade is now about a moderate average.

HUDDERSFIELD.—Little improvement is to be noted in this market, the attendance of buyers having been small. Vicunas, serges and worsted trouserings have been in good demand, but of cheviots and tweeds only medium and low makes have been much in request. Prices are unusually low in all branches, and the few winter orders which are heard of now and then, it is stated, are taken at a little less than last year's prices. Neither for the Continent nor for the United States is there much doing. The sales to Canada are smaller than they have been any week this year before. Yarn spinners are fairly well employed, but at barely remunerative prices.

GLASGOW.—Varied reports are to hand concerning the South of Scotland tweed trade. Some makers have as many orders on hand as will keep them going for some time, while others state that bookings are very scarce. On the whole it is generally conceded that the trade has not been so quiet for some months. Goods are extremely low in price, but this does not seem to affect the demand