

without paying an advance, prices are keeping quite firm. In English wools further business is reported on American account, both in lustre and demi-lustre wools. There is also additional business in Irish wethers, and in low Scotch carpet wools on American account, and, from what I hear, on account of the slow demand from the Lome trade, they have been able to get in at very low prices in some cases, lower than have been known for a long time, so that when our Transatlantic competitors are protected by high tariffs, and have the assistance of such cheap wool, in some things they will be hard to beat from this side. The export trade in worsted yarns continues quiet, and following on the recent suspensions, there are reports of further weakness in some of the German manufacturing districts. In some special classes of super mohair yarns the home trade demand is very good for making crepons and some other novelties in high-class fancy dress goods. There is no doubt that Bradford makers are making most successful efforts in producing novelties of style and fabric in goods largely composed of mohair, which are making for themselves a permanent place in the highest class dress goods trade. Manufacturers who were in a position to produce largely and quickly novelties in medium-priced fancy dress goods for the coming autumn season are just now extremely busy for America, but should the new tariff bill come into force before the beginning of June there will be a lot of goods kept out in the cold. The houses here who export worsted coatings to the States are also busy getting off the stock which had been prepared for shipment as soon as the American trade opened out, and dyers of these goods are in some cases working day and night. For the home trade there is considerably more doing, and all the makers of high class black fancy dress goods are busy. Some who have made a specialty of fancy corded stripes on bright mohair effects and in repp jacquards are unable to take more orders.

**ROCHDALE**—At present, it appears that orders placed for next season are about upon a level with previous years, but the arrangements generally are likely to be concluded somewhat earlier than usual. Notwithstanding the dearth of raw material manufacturers are content to take orders at the old prices, in the hope that they may yet find some relief in the price of wool.

**KIDDERMINSTER**—No great pressure is felt in the carpet trade, but looms are pretty fully employed, and are likely to remain so. The yarn market just now is in a peculiarly irregular state. The result of the London and Liverpool wool sales has been to harden prices. In some cases prices of yarn are advanced in proportion to those of wool, in others, no alteration has been made, although the old price is now probably below cost. But buyers are not inclined to place orders, and they have, as a rule, a good quantity of old orders yet to come in.

**NOTTINGHAM**.—There is no change in the demand for lace and curtain yarns. Orders are sparingly placed, for which current list prices are demanded, quotations have not been severely tested, as there is no speculative demand either for the lower or the higher counts. Hosiery cottons are weaker in value and orders are scarce. There is a moderate demand for merino, cashmere and other wool yarns. Prices are somewhat irregular in accordance with the demand. Bobbin nets remain as heretofore. Prices are well maintained, owing to the export demand for special qualities. The home demand is slow. Business in some of the fancy lace departments has improved.

**LEICESTER**—The yarn market is active and healthy, and the prospect of higher rates has stimulated enquiries. Lambs' wool, cashmere and fancy yarns sell freely at full rates, and the consumption is above the average, but cotton yarns are flat. The spring and summer turnover in hosiery fabrics promises to be above the average, but the shipping trade is mainly confined to the colonies. The home trade is active and healthy, with large deliveries, while prices are decidedly firmer. Hand frames are fully engaged on orders for army and navy purposes. Elastic web specialties are in very good demand for home and colonial markets, but broad webs are a dragging trade.

**SOUTH OF SCOTLAND**—The South of Scotland tweed trade continues to improve, and manufacturers hope that matters will go as

they are doing at present. Winter orders are being confirmed in a most encouraging way, and makers generally believe that the turning has at last been reached in the long lane of depression. All the looms in the tweed centres are not, of course, running, but the position of affairs is a great improvement on what obtained a very few weeks ago. There is a steady demand for yarns, and wool remains firm in price.

**BELFAST**.—The improvement in the linen trade continues, and the tone of the market is more buoyant and hopeful. Some fair orders for yarns have been placed, principally for the coarser qualities. In the brown cloth market the turnover is in advance of any recent week, and prices are well maintained. A number of substantial contracts were offered at reduced rates, but manufacturers say that prices are hardly remunerative as it is, and hold out firmly for recent rates. The demand for 38 inch power-loom linen for bleaching continues steady, and manufacturers of these are booked ahead for some time to come. Damasks are in rather better request, and cloth for dyeing, and hollands is also in demand at firm prices. In bleached and finished linens there is also a steady improvement. The warehouses have been busy, and shipments across channel have been larger than for a number of weeks past. Orders from home warehouse men have been fairly plentiful and substantial, and the outlook is considered to be very bright. Continental trade generally shows signs of improvement. It is thought the proposed alterations in the United States tariff will hardly have much effect, even if passed into law, upon the finer qualities of linen goods, but will probably affect the coarser linens very seriously.

**LYONS**.—There is more confidence in silk goods circles in Lyons, due to more satisfactory advices from the United States, Paris and London regarding sales of spring fabrics. Reassortment orders for spring have been placed in fair quantities and consequently more activity prevails in the dyehouses. Among the goods ordered, muslins, chiffons, crepe lisse, etc., figure, and the favor for muslin shows no sign of decreasing. Taffetas have also been ordered in plain and changeable, in stripes, checks and plaids. Fancy gauzes are liked and sell in good lots. While there is an improvement in the manufacturing situation it has not been sufficiently important to give hand-loom weavers enough work to do. Fashion seems to favor tissues which are more adapted to be made on the power loom, among which are piece dyed goods. In the better grades of tissues the demand is not heavy. The greater benefit of the improvement is derived by the power looms, which are kept very busy, and there is enough work to keep them going until the fall order business opens. The ribbon market is active with a good demand for fancy effects in stripes, checks, plaids, etc. Plain satin ribbons find buyers in large lots. Velvets are quiet with a small movement for black velvet.

**CREFRID**—The demand for silk fabrics is fair, but has somewhat lessened, compared with previous weeks. Retailers having purchased as much as is necessary to meet the development of spring consumption, are waiting for their stocks to be lightened before asking for more. The home market is in a healthy condition, and a fair business has been done in changeable taffetas, plain taffetas and fancies on taffeta grounds. Checks in louisines are selling. Stocks in this market and in retailers' hands are rather moderate and such as not to interfere with regular business, although some of the oversupply with which 1896 closed has not yet been disposed of in foreign markets, and in London stocks of old goods are larger than they should be. Staple silks are moving regularly, but fashion seems to be more favorable to colors than to plain blacks. The cloak trade is still asking for moire velour, but long delivery orders are not placed by buyers, who prefer to purchase for ready delivery. Some business is also being done in cloak linings. The manufacturing situation has sufficiently improved since the year opened to be called satisfactory. The demand for dress and trimming silks for spring has caused an increase in production in this branch, while the placing of orders for fall delivery has also improved the conditions in the tie silk branch. In the umbrella silk industry business is over on plain goods, but many looms are still at work on parasol fancies, and some reassortment orders for these are expected. The ribbon