

Textiles.

THE CANADIAN MANUFACTURER.

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ALMONTE'S TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

SPEAKING of the advantages of Almonte as a manufacturing town, the *Toronto Mail*, in a recent illustrated article concerning the place says:—"The situation of Almonte is admirably adapted for the character of the manufactories located here, and there are not many water powers in Ontario superior to that supplied by the Mississippi at this point. There are a succession of cascades, with a total fall of 65 feet, which go boiling, seething and racing into the broad expanse of the river below the town. The headwaters of the river are largely controlled by lumbermen, whose principal use of them is to store water sufficient to float logs to their mills. Were these lakes utilized solely for storage purposes the entire year, letting the water out gradually during the dry season, the water power available at Almonte and other towns on the Mississippi would be materially increased—managed as they now are the water frequently fails in the summer months, when the mills are obliged to supplement their power with steam. At its normal height the river supplies here nearly 1,000 horse-power, and it is claimed that with proper control of the headwaters of the river, and the adoption of improved water-wheels by the smaller mills, fully 4,000 horse-power might be made available."

Describing some of the industries of the place, it is said of the Almonte Knitting Factory that it was erected for the purpose of manufacturing knitted fabrics, principally men's and boys' underwear. This is what is generally designated a "three-set" factory—that is, it contains three sets of carding machines and the requisite quantity of knitting and finishing machinery to follow. There are sixty hands employed, and the product averages about 300 dozen shirts and drawers per week. The factory has been run to its utmost capacity for more than a year past. The goods here made stand high for their grade, being manufactured from Canadian wool, and find a ready market.

William Thoburn began the manufacture of fine woollen flannels in 1880, having purchased the buildings and water power adjoining the Canadian Pacific Railway line on the south, and in the very centre of the town. Since then Mr. Thoburn has refitted and enlarged the premises by the erection of a third building, imported the requisite machinery from the United States, and commenced operations. From the very first his enterprise was prosperous, and in 1886 he was compelled to further enlarge his mill and increase its productive capacity fully fifty per cent. The buildings are of brick, roofed with iron, and the machinery now occupies 13,800 feet of floor space, while 5,736 feet of space is used for storage purposes. The mill is run by water power, and lighted by gas made on the place. There are from thirty to thirty-five hands employed, who annually produce about 350,000 yards of flannels of the very best quality, which are manufactured from fine Cape wools, and are in active demand in all parts of the Dominion.

The Victoria Woollen Mills owned by Elliott & Co., are equivalent to what is known as a nine-set mill. The drying of the wool, after having been scoured, is effected by means of cold air drawn through the material by a fan, which is put in motion, like the rest of the machinery, by water power, the wheel used being the "Lefel," for which there is a never failing supply of power from the river. On the first floor is the weaving room, which contains twenty-six looms, mostly attended by women. On the second floor is the spinning room and twister, and also the wrapping room. The machinery here is most ingenious, and it is wonderful to see the precision with which it does its work. On the third floor are five sets of carding machines, one of them being of Platt Bros', Oldham, England, patterns, which cannot be surpassed, and even to an inexperienced eye its action is as perfect as it is wonderful. On the fourth floor are three of Platt's "mules." On the fifth floor is another spinning machine and the wool sorting room. There are employed in the various departments 150 hands, consisting of men, women and girls. From 20,000 to 25,000 yards of finished goods are turned out monthly. The firm also own a valuable mill farther up the stream, which is utilized as a wease shed. The firm consists of Andrew Elliott and John Elliott; the senior Elliott being one of the oldest manufacturers of woollen fabrics in the country, having started in this line in Preston, Ont., in the year 1852.

The Mahew Silk Company, Shelburne Falls, Mass., is filling its second order from England for buttonhole silk.

AMERICAN WOOL INTERESTS.

RECENT reports of the United States Department of Agriculture contain some important statistics regarding farm animals in that country. From them we learn that the number of farm sheep there in February 1887 was 44,759,314, against 48,322,331; in February 1886, a loss of \$3,563,017. The average price of fine washed clothing wove in the United States in 1886 was but 33 cents per pound, against an average of 48 cents for 21 years from 1866 to 1886 inclusive. During the war period, from 1861 to 1866, the average price of fine washed fleeces was 75 cents per pound, and for thirty-seven years, from 1824 to 1861, the average price of the same kind of wool in the United States was 53 cents.

It is not strange, therefore, that the recent great depression in the price of wool has caused a sore and distressed feeling among wool-growers throughout the United States. In Texas many sheepmen got rid of their flocks altogether. In New York State the recent improvement in the wool market came just in time to save many sheep from slaughter. In Kansas sheep were proving very unprofitable, and the flock-masters were reducing their flocks at last accounts as rapidly as possible; and from nearly every State in the Union similar reports were received. We believe this unsatisfactory state of the wool interest is due in a measure to the depressed condition of the woollen industry of the whole world. In all parts of the globe the prices of wool have been low, and the numbers of sheep have decreased in many other countries besides the United States. So low has been the cost of wool abroad that the imports into the United States during the calendar year 1886, in spite of unprecedently low domestic quotations, amounted to 131,263,103 pounds, against 100,000,479 pounds in 1885.

Regarding this question the *Boston Advertiser* says that the depression in the wool interest is general in its character and participated in by other nations, but that the difficulty will correct itself. Already the influence of decreased flocks is being felt in a better price for sheep in all quarters of the world. "The agricultural reports alluded to show," says the *Advertiser*, "that the increase of the wool interest has been one of the marvels of the past quarter of a century. The annual requirement for manufacture is now 6 pounds of wool per capita. In 1880 it was nearly 6 pounds, while in 1860 it was 3.4 pounds. There had been no increase in twenty years previous to the last-named date, as the amount was 3.4 pounds in 1840 and 3.5 pounds in 1850. The proportion of this manufactured wool grown in this country has greatly increased. The home-grown of 1840 amounted to 2.5 pounds per capita; in 1850, 2.7 pounds; in 1860, 2.3 pounds; in 1870, 4.2 pounds; in 1880, 4.8 pounds; in 1885, over 5 pounds.

This splendid development of the domestic wool interest during the past quarter of a century has been due in a great measure to the generous support of the manufactures to the Protective duties upon wool."

THE cotton manufacturers of Blackburn propose to found a technical college as a memorial of the Queen's jubilee.

It is said that Mr. Peter McLaren contemplates starting a mill at Perth, Ont., for the manufacture of woollen blankets.

In six months of the past year about 1,000 head of sheep were shipped from the vicinity of Kingston to New York State.

THE Magog Textile and Print Company, Montreal, have decided to put machinery in their mills for the manufacture of cotton.

THE Canada Cotton Manufacturing Company of Cornwall, Que., have declared a quarterly dividend of one and one-half per cent.

CONSIDERABLE new machinery is being added to the knitting factory at Coaticook, Que., necessitated by the increased demand for goods.

THE knitting mill at Kingston has sufficient orders on hand to keep it running till September, consequently samples have been withdrawn.

MESSRS. HATHAWAY BROS. and H. E. Hess have formed a co-partnership and are now operating the Union Mills at Woodbury, near Princeton.

MR. JOHN CRAIG is starting a carpet factory at Mount Albert, near Newmarket, Ont. He is an experienced weaver, and will carry on the business in all its branches.

THE Thorold Woollen and Cotton Manufacturing Company, Thorold, Ont., have received the diploma and medal awarded them at the Colonial Exhibition held in London last year.

A FIRE occurred in the picker room of the St. Croix Cotton Mill, near St. John, N.B. a few days ago, but was extinguished after a two-hour's struggle. The damage was not very extensive.