

## SOME DRY GOODS CONSIDERATIONS.

The craze for red seems to have extended literally from head to foot, for rumor says that women are to wear red shoes, bright "cockscorn red," and not only red, but purple and green as well.

Violets in blue and pink tints, and so natural that they look like the real article, are favored in millinery, and while they are perhaps the most common, they are the most refined of all the artificial flowers.

Travelling hats are shown in brown, brightened with nothing but scarlet straw rosettes, bows and cockades of fancy rice plait and Hungarian weaves. On the little corporal hats in black, brown and blue, crisp rosettes of green, red and black form all the trimming, while the most advantageous use is made of all shades of gray, blue, lilac, white, and rose straw ribbon in every style.

Skirts ruffled to the waist will be worn by the ladies this summer. The foundation is quite narrow and much gored. There are three ways of putting on the flounces, as preferred. First, a number of narrow ones about four inches wide, then three or five circular ones, and then seven graduated ones, the bottom one twelve inches wide, the other gradually getting narrower to the waist.

As to millinery styles for the coming spring and summer, it is promised that during the warm season ostrich plumes, and shaded ones at that, will be very much in evidence; that only a very few sailors and true alpine shapes are on their shelves. They say indeed that the wide-brimmed hats maintain but a small place in their patrons' affections, and that vivid rose red is the dominant color of the season.

Among the articles of Canadian manufacture to be put upon the market as souvenirs of the Queen's Jubilee, we note that the Toronto Carpet Manufacturing Company is to the front with their "Jubilee Rug." This production is of an interesting design, and should take well with the trade. The design shows four shields at the corners, bearing the names Canada, India, Australia and Cape; the centre bears the national flags, with the rose, shamrock and thistle appropriately worked in round the crown, with the lettering Victoria, 1837-1897.

In the United States textile merchants and manufacturers are not, as a rule, busy or in good spirits. It is a very significant thing that an auction sale on a large scale took place in New York a week ago of cotton and fancy flannels, wide sheetings, 4x4 brown sheetings, bleached cottons, etc. The quantity disposed of at this sale was 17,452 pkgs., valued at about \$1,500,000. As Bradstreets puts it, this sale represented rather the stress of the so-called dry goods trade than an evidence of its satisfactory condition. Clearly enough, the cotton goods trade has not been and is not in a satisfactory state, and it was paralleled, as to condition, by the woolen goods industry for many months. But the latter has recently been stimulated in the States by a widespread demand in an effort to discount the proposed new tariff on wool and woolens, while cotton goods have had no such incentive to induce the public to buy.

There has been some reason to suspect, from the weather of a few days past, that winter was lingering in the lap of spring rather longer than good form would warrant. But now, if birds, spring flowers, bursting buds are to be believed, we are really tasting Spring. Besides, from Thunder Bay to the Thousand Islands harbors are opening, and on some of the lakes steamers already run. But business is backward; enterprise timid. Jones, in Ontario, is afraid of the Dingley bill; Smith, of Quebec, is still more afraid of the Ottawa tariff schedule; Brown, in the Far West, is broken-hearted because he can get no definite assurance of a Crow's Nest Pass Railway inside of two or three years. The manufacturer is not yet sure of his prices for 1897, and the retailer hesitates to buy until he is. Hence, nobody appears busy, except the department stores, which Brown, Smith and Jones unite in heartily denouncing—and no wonder.

Respecting the manufacture of linen in the United States, a recent article in the *Boston Journal of Commerce* says, speaking of the practical monopoly of the linen manufacture enjoyed by Europe. "The efforts of our manufacturers to produce linen goods have been unsuccessful, and consequently, we have been sending the money to supply our needs in this line out of the country. For the fiscal year ending in 1896, the foreign value of these linens amounted to \$14,000,000, on which a duty of \$5,000,000 was paid. It is proposed by the manufacturers that if the linen schedule asked for (35 per cent. on yarn, and 50 per cent. on cloth) is adopted, half of this amount can be produced in this country." A list of mills is given which are reported to be now engaged to a small extent in the manufacture of linen: Merrimack Manufacturing Company and the Boott Cotton Mills, Lowell; Boston Manufacturing Company, Waltham, Mass.; Arnold Print Works, North Adams, Mass.; The Harmony Mills, Cohoes, N.Y.; Renfrew Manufacturing Company, Renfrew, Mass.; Loraine

Manufacturing Company, Pawtucket, R. I.; Star and Crescent Mills Company, Rumpf Bros & Witty, Hatfield & Co., Philadelphia; James S. Gray & Son, Savage Mills, Md. "It will be noticed that in this list are some of the largest and most enterprising mills in the country, and the fact that they have entered into the manufacture of linen is a sufficient guaranty that it is going to be a success."

## CLEARING-HOUSE FIGURES.

The following are the figures of the Canadian clearing-houses for the week ended with Thursday, April 22nd, 1897, compared with those of the previous week:

CLEARINGS.	April 22.	April 15.
Montreal .....	\$ 9,359,845	\$9,757,321
Toronto .....	5,200,652	6,492,484
Halifax .....	987,613	1,342,915
Winnipeg .....	842,051	954,497
Hamilton .....	593,946	197,007
St. John .....	456,599	501,417
	\$17,440,706	\$19,645,641

Aggregate balances this week, \$2,423,837; last week, \$3,235,221.

## ANSWERS TO ENQUIRERS.

J.B., Windsor.—Probably the bank clearings would afford the most conclusive answer to your query how business in the United States in 1896 compared with the previous year? It is, however, of interest to notice that, according to the *Railroad Age*, the earnings of 99,200 miles of railway in America, including, we understand, the Canadian Grand Trunk and C.P.R., were \$523,269,000 in the year 1896, as compared with \$516,040,000 in the year 1895, an increase last year of about one and one-third per cent.

—The affairs of the Massachusetts Benefit Life Association, remain a matter of considerable interest at its headquarters, in Boston, as well as in Canada. Five new directors have been elected to replace the old board, and it is not unlikely that the investigation will be, at least, temporarily suspended. William Lount, Q.C., who has been endeavoring to obtain relief for Canadian policy-holders, who claim that they have been practically "held up" by the company in the shape of excessive and discriminating assessments, is unable to assist them. The Government cannot grant his application to prevent the association from doing business in Canada unless the law is amended. Consequently the special report of the Dominion Superintendent of Insurance will not afford much comfort to the aggrieved policy-holders. On every legal point the ruling is against the contention of the members. It is decided that the maximum of the amount of the premium allowed by the terms of the policies has not been reached; that the Canadian policy-holders are not entitled to be considered a separate class, and that if they were it would not be in their interest to do so; that the company is solvent under the conditions of the Act of Massachusetts, under which it operates, and that there is no reason for cancelling the company's license. As the persons who joined the company years ago wanted cheap insurance, they have had the benefit of it. Now that the company has raised its rates sufficiently to meet its engagements they complain that they have been completely "frozen out." They would see, if they allowed their experience to teach them, that if they really want insurance against poverty in old age they must be willing to pay at least what it costs.

—It may be remembered that a singularly low stage of water prevailed on the great American lakes during last summer, occasioning to navigators inconvenience and loss, besides giving rise to much learned discussion and many gloomy predictions, some going so far as to say that this state of things was to be looked on as permanent. The pessimists are baffled, however, by the fact, reported this week by the Montreal Harbor Engineer, that the level of Lake Ontario rose ten inches during March, and is now (April 20th) six inches higher than at this time in 1895 and last year. The prophets of evil did not take long enough or broad enough views, and did not allow sufficiently for the variations of nature in their anxiety and depression.

—The net earnings of the Western Bank of Canada for the year ended with February last were at the rate of more than ten per cent. on the paid capital, nearly the same rate as in the previous year. Out of these earnings, added to the considerable sum brought forward from the year preceding, 7 per cent. dividend was paid, \$7,000 added to Rest (making that fund \$112,000), \$20,000 carried to credit of past due bills, and \$524 carried forward. The report states that the bank's losses during the year under review have been of an average nature, and that the agencies, when last inspected, were found to be in a satisfactory condition.