

but that proposal has been deferred, it being thought best to precede it by urgent pressure for full protection, as we did in securing the complete protection of the main mills and works, which took many years. It was not until within the last three years that we began to drop the risks which either could not be suitably protected, or which the owners did not see fit to protect. That is the proposed course on storehouses. We urge every member to act at once. Renewal at present rates or rejection of the risk will depend on conditions at the expiration of the policies in the year 1900, when more positive action may rightly be demanded by those who have protected their storehouses, if any then remain unprotected where sprinklers can rightly be called for.

Foreign Textile Centres

MANCHESTER.—Holidays in the weaving departments of the cotton trade interfere with production. There has been a remarkably large exodus of operatives and others this season to the various pleasure resorts on the coast and in the Isle of Man. Buyers of cotton goods continue to find manufacturers extremely firm, no matter how obstinate may be the attitude of some of their foreign customers. The spinning sections are also in a healthy condition, the finances of the limiteds being in a more satisfactory condition than has been the case for some time past. There have been few features of importance or interest to note in the cotton markets recently. It is a long time since such a spell of fairly good business took place without its having a highly stimulating effect upon mill building. Little of this, however, has as yet occurred, says *The Textile Mercury*. Perhaps half-a-dozen mills throughout Lancashire floated during the past two years would be the full count. It would almost seem as if bitter experience was bearing fruit in a crop of discretion. The same may almost be said of the weaving districts. Though all the looms are now well under engagement there is little if anything said about extensions. The time for them may soon come in both departments, but evidently it is not yet. The pressure upon this country to extend has undoubtedly been relieved by the considerable extensions upon the Continent and in the Far East. In India, China, and Japan, it would seem, however, that multiplying the means of production has been overdone, and a pause seems to have occurred. In the meantime our home companies, especially in the spinning division, are, we believe, carefully utilizing the present prosperity in improving the equipment of their establishments, so that when the present prosperity declines they may be in a good condition for turning out their productions at the lowest possible cost. In doing this they are acting wisely, and those who are neglecting it must be considered to be doing otherwise. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce has been somewhat exercised in its mind about the short-reeling of cotton yarns, and the fiasco of its prosecution of a Scotch firm for the offence. The spirit in favor of forcing a legal decision upon the point is growing.

LEEDS.—Recently serges of all grades, mixture twills, and fancy tweeds sold well for immediate consumption. Makers, especially of the latter, are well employed. Higher prices are the rule all around, and there is not much difficulty in getting them from merchants and shippers. The higher ranges of prices for fine worsted coatings are thoroughly established; but on the part of some manufacturers there is hesitation after booking forward orders at current quotations, because of doubts as to whether the stocks of wool in reserve are sufficient for early requirements. Minor cloths and any other cotton warp goods are held heavily by producers, so that there is not

much chance of improvement in prices. Some purchases were made of wool vicunas, Oxford suitings, black diagonals, and fancy trouserings by foreign, London and provincial buyers. It is rather early for winter orders from the Continent, but such orders are now coming through regularly from Eastern Europe. Presidents and naps are secured when offered. It is surprising to a few of the larger makers to find that already they must work overtime. The mantle and costume cloth trades show some improvement, and prices are steadier. The turnover of covert coatings is quite an average, and values are firm. The blanket trade is moderately good, but the foreign market for rugs is very quiet. Worsted yarns are in good demand at full quotations, especially for the super qualities.

HUDDESFIELD.—In Huddersfield business is generally good, and although the United States trade in fine worsteds and woolens seems to be returning, there are some slight signs of improvement even in this department of the market. In the Yorkshire flannel trade business is for the moment quiet, as buyers are hesitating about placing further orders at the advanced rates which makers are obliged to insist upon for all better quantities.

BRADFORD.—The London Colonial wool sales series having been brought to a close the course of prices have been remarkably even from the commencement, when a rise of from 5 to 7½ per cent. was established for merinos, and a fall of practically the same percentage in the coarser class of crossbred wools, as compared with the previous sale. All sections of buyers have retained their interest in fine merinos throughout the sales, and probably German, French and home buyers have taken up about their usual share of this class of wool offered, but the Americans only acquired about 2,000 bales throughout the series, although all this was of a fine character. As compared with the quotations ruling in Bradford at the time the London sales opened, the prices cannot be considered to have more than confirmed the rates of our local market, but in the last ten days both topmakers and spinners have been able to command better prices for both tops and yarns made from fine colonial than was possible before the sales opened. For the benefit of buyers of fabrics composed of merino wools it may be noted that a year ago, although a rise in prices had set in some weeks before, the price of 60 merino tops in Bradford was 20½d. per lb., whilst to-day their quotation is 27½d. to 28d. per lb., at which holders are very firm. The fact that no very great advance has been established for merinos since the commencement of the recent sales in London has been advanced as a reason why a retrograde movement may be expected to set in; but stocks in both spinners and topmakers' hands are certainly not large, and that both spinners and manufacturers have, as far as possible, been keeping out of the market rather than buying in such a way as would force prices up beyond a legitimate level. Manufacturers both in this country and abroad, says *The Drapers' Record*, are finding it extremely difficult to establish a basis of prices for the new spring buying season which gives them advances equivalent to that of raw material, but all makers seem agreed that only on this advanced basis can the business for next season's dress goods be put through. In such goods as fine worsted coatings for men's wear practically the whole of the advance in fine wools has already been conceded by those buyers who have fixed up their ranges for the 1900 season. The prices of the coarser kinds of crossbred colonial wools were certainly some 7½ per cent. lower than at the previous sales, and this decline brings them back to practically the lowest point reached this year, which was lower than had previously been known. There has, however, been no further fall in this market; in fact, there are distinct indications of a desire to buy at these reduced prices by several very large consumers, and there is undoubtedly a very large business being