MILLS AND MARKETS

FLUCTUATIONS IN COTTON

REVIEW OF RAW COTTON TRADE.

Comprehensive Resume of the Movement of Cotton During the Season—Number of Causes Produced the Decline in Prices From Which the Market is Just Beginning to Recover—Higher Prices Extremely Likely—Arguments in Favor of Bullishness—The Southern Planter is Improvident—Other Commodities Increase in Price Out of Proportion to the Staple Crop Prices.

In its late review number The Textile Manufacturers Journal contains a most interesting and enlightening article on the fluctuations in the price of raw cotton during the past year, tracing the varying causes which superinduced the decline in prices and assigning well-defined reasons for the likelihood of better figures in the future. The article is as follows:

That the demoralized trade conditions of the past year and the almost steady decline in prices have created a situation in the cotton market which promises a period of constantly increasing activity and price improvement, has undoubtedly been quite a general opinion in trade as well as speculative circles, but development toward the close of the year appeared to be raising a question as to whether there had not been a premature expression of this confidence in ultimate results through the medium of speculation in both spot cotton and contracts.

EARLY SENTIMENTAL BULLISHNESS.

From the high prices which were current at the beginning of the cotton trade season, 1907-08, when cotton in the interior of the South was selling around 12 to 13 cents, quotations have declined until during the past fortnight. They ranged between 8 and 9 cents in the interior and from above 12 1-2 cents early in September, 1907. Contracts in the New York market have declined to around 8 1-4 cents. The season of 1907-08 started with sentiment bullish on the general activity of mills, even though conditions, owing to over-production, were already shaping themselves for the business depression which followed the financial panic—and as a result of the moderate crop outlook. But the high prices at which the crop started to be marketed yielded with the development of the banking troubles, and while in January there was a brief revival of bullish sentiment, as a result of an easier money market, the spread of business depression abroad and the slowness of the recovery from the acute phases in the domestic goods situation, soon halted the advance, and with the exception of another brief advance during the spring, as a result of unfavorable reports regarding the start of the crop in certain sections, the declining tendency was not checked until early in October.

This level investment buying of both spots and contracts entered the market, and while accumulating indications of a large crop led to another setback early in October the record-breaking absorption of Southern offerings again came to the support of the market, and by the end of November prices were nearly a cent up from the lowest, in spite of a continued heavy movement. But the prediction of a rapid increase in trade demand following the presidential election was not fulfilled. European trade conditions did not mend much with the settlement of the Liverpool strike, and during December the New York market lost most of its gain, while spot cotton sold at the lowest level of the season, owing to a falling off in trade demand and continued free offerings from the South.

MODIFICATION OF BULL SENTIMENT.

It has been the falling off in the demand for spot supplies in the South during the month of December and the continuous tendency of the market, resulting from the failure of the Southern markets to respond to bullish overtures on the part of speculation, that has caused the modification of bullish sentiment mentioned above. It is apprehended for instance, that the enormous buying of spot cotton since the beginning of the new crop movement has been largely for the account of merchants and middlemen in anticipation that the South would begin pouring after the first four or five million bales had been marketed, and also in anticipation of a quicker revival in general business than has materialized, and that with these interests buyers filled up and the South continuing to offer cotton on a liberal scale, the situation may be such that there will have to be further liquidation and a still lower price level before an upward movement can develop. On the other hand those who remain true to previously formed opinions find cotton around present prices is on an investment basis, bearing in mind the recent fall in spot demand is due to not merely the usual falling off in business preceding the holidays, but that the new year will bring with it a much better demand from mills and at the same time find the situation relating to the South on the basis of people better able to hold it.

THE CROP OF 1908-09 SEASON.

The crop started during the season ending September 1st was 11,821,566 bales. According to the figures of the International Spinners Federation the world's spinners took some 500,000 bales less of American cotton for the season than they actually used, notwithstanding the fact that short time was more or less general after January 1st, 1908, thus reducing their stocks to about that extent, and the visible supply of American cotton at the end of August was 975,000 bales in round numbers, against 1,356,000 bales for the same time the previous season. The cotton season beginning with the first of last September therefore, started with stocks of raw cotton in the hands of spinners about 900,000 bales behind those of the previous year and with a visible supply of American cotton about 400,000 bales less than last year. At the same time, and while no trustworthy data exists as to these matters, it was generally believed and is still more or less generally conceded, that the curtailment in the production of cotton goods during the winter, spring and summer of 1908 had been accompanied by a very decided reduction in the volume of goods in the hands of jobbers and retailers. The new season was starting with mills resuming operations on a more normal schedule, and with an easy financial situation following the cleaning out of the previous autumn, while so far as this country was concerned, the farmers had produced large grain crops, for which they were securing very high prices.

ARGUMENTS FOR BULLISHNESS.

This, then formed the basis for the support which developed around the low prices of the early autumn. It was argued that no matter how large the crop of American cotton might be, there would be a demand for every bale of it at the price, and while speculative sentiment in the New York market continued bearish until nearly the middle of October, every decline brought about by operations in futures was promptly checked by the stability of the Southern markets, while the strengthening of the New York contract, as a result of the September and November revisions, finally discouraged bearish operations for the time being.

Undoubtedly, the demand for speculation which supported the market during the logical period of depression—that is, during the time when the new crop should be the greatest weight upon prices—was partly due to the fact that the cotton offering was of such excellent grade and staple, and that the premiums on the better grades were so small, as compared with recent years. Cotton that was selling, say 10 cents a pound over middling in 1907, was offered at something like 4 cents a pound over middling, so that the decline on these grades was even greater than that shown by the quotations for middling cotton and contracts, and there can be little doubt that they were bought very freely and shipped to warehouses at consuming points here and abroad to be held until required.

NEW CROP MOVEMENT, SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER.

Beginning with September 1st the new crop movement up to the middle of December has approximated 7,713,405 bales, against 5,817,115 bales for the same time last year, and spinners' takings during this period have been 4,344,384 bales, against 3,713,401 bales for the same time last year. And right here it should be noted that the figures given as spinners' takings are not actually "spinners'" takings, but cotton taken out of the visible supply for any purpose whatever, and either received by spinners or placed in uncounted warehouses. Both the into sight so far for the season and the takings are the largest on record. In 1904, the first year when the yield was over 13,000,000 bales, the into-sight up to this time was 7,471,000 bales and takings were 4,042,000 bales.

These figures certainly suggest that the cotton taken has represented much more than the mills have required during the period, and tend to confirm the opinion that a great deal of it has been purchased for investment. The falling off in demand since December 1st suggests that investors are satisfied with their present holdings, while the attitude of the South suggests that there is still plenty of cotton available, and the question of the immediate future as to whether the demand from spinners will improve sufficiently to absorb further Southern offerings at the present level of prices, or to aid in an advance should the South start a holding movement. The mill is not likely to find much competition in the South, for the investor is already filled up with the better grades—the cream of the crop, neither is the South likely to find offerings from these buyers competing to fill the demand from spinners except at an advance, and it would seem that much may depend in respect to the market for the next three months on whether there is the abrupt falling off in the movement that will be necessary if the government's estimate of the crop at 12,920,000 bales, exclusive of linters, is not a mis-statement of the yield.

HIGHER PRICES EXTREMELY LIKELY.

Taking a broader view of the future, very strong arguments are available in favor of ultimately higher prices. In the first place people who are in a position to know of such matters claim that cotton between 8 and 9 cents in the South is not a satisfactory crop. They claim that at such a price the actual margin is not as much as it was several years ago at 8 cents. In this connection it is pointed out that corn is now selling at from 60 to 70 cents a bushel, which during the years of low cotton prices could be secured from Kansas by the cotton planter at a cost of about 25 to 40 cents, that a good mule could then be bought for, say $125, would now cost about $225, that flour has advanced about 100 per cent., that there has been a similar advance in provisions, that labor is higher, in fact, that everything put into the making of the crop costs more, while diversification of crops is better understood and likely to be more importantly followed. In other words, the bull of to-day believes that unless there is an advance in the price of cotton between now and the next planting season the acreage will be reduced, for which reduction he points out, there is a precedent following a season of low prices. When, in addition to this, he believes that stocks of manufactured goods are not burdensome, that spinners reserves have been allowed to run down materially, and it is commercial history that such periods of depression as the trade has just passed through are usually followed by a boom which is all the healthier for a gradual development, his purchases of the next crop in Liverpool, New York and New Orleans at prices meaning about 8 cents or lower in the South, are easily understood. And in passing it may be stated that more than one Southern planter is buying contracts along these lines, and is looking to these contracts rather than to his cotton crop of next season for his income.

THE SOUTHERN PLANTER IMPROVIDENT.

On the whole, the events of the past year have a tendency to show that Southern planters as a class are not provident. After several seasons of very remunerative prices, the South started marketing the crop of this season in need of funds. The holding movement which was so pronounced in the Southwest at the opening of last season has not been in evidence. Some little holding for higher prices has been reported in the Eastern belt, but taking it as a whole the South has marketed its cotton as rapidly as ever in the history of the trade, notwithstanding the mass meetings held for the purpose of inducing a refusal to market below 10 cents in the interior. For a time the night-riding movement caused some anxiety, but, fortunately for cotton growers, appears to have passed over without reaching any important proportion, and while the price of cotton has been made—as it must be made under modern business methods—on the plantation it has been made by the buyer rather than the grower. As this is written mail advices reach the New York market that Memphis naturally will be in a better position to finance the remainder.

Regardless of the past and future course of prices, the year has been a noteworthy one in the cotton trade, owing to the reforms that have been made, or are under way, and which have grown out of the agitations against the various exchanges. This agitation has resulted in a much better understanding of the real functions of the exchange as a gatherer and distributer of market information, as a protection to merchants through hedge business in futures, and it has also set on foot an improvement in the management and methods of the exchanges, while at the present time the Department of Agriculture is working in the direction of establishing an official standard of grades, with a bill now in the House directing that these standards be made compulsory. Much confusion has grown out of the vast differences in the grades as put up in the various markets, and while such a thing as absolutely uniform grading of cotton with respect to body and staple, at any rate, is probably impossible, the establishment of official standards for white cotton should prove of great advantage in the trade generally.

COARSE YARNS AND FINE YARNS

Southern Spinners Likely to Get a Bad Deal in Tariff Adjustment—Fine Yarn Men Will Get Protection and the Coarse Yarn Spinners Will Not—Coarse Yarn Mills in the Majority in the South—Ways and Means Committee Given Wrong Impression of Southern Conditions.

To the Editor of The Observer:

It looks to the writer as though the Southern cotton yarn manufacturers are going to get a bad deal in the tariff adjustment. As the matter has been so far presented to the tariff commission, New England is looking after its interest and asking for an increase in rate on fine yarns. If this increase is granted it will also protect the few fine yarn spinners of the South, as well as the New England spinners, but the bulk of the Southern yarns are coarse yarns, under 30s, and there seems to be no effort made whatever to impress on the tariff commission the necessity of tariff protection for these coarse yarns. Now certainly cotton manufacturing in the South is in its infancy, as compared with New England, and if the tariff is to protect infant industries, the coarse yarn mills of the South should have their protection. Mr. C. Minot Weld, president of the New England Cotton Yarn Company, presented a statement to the ways and means committee, which statement said, up to the 20s count, the old tariff was all right, above 20s greater protection was desired. The American Wool and Cotton Reporter of December 31st states that Mr. R. M. Miller, Jr., representing the fine yarn spinners of the South, spoke along similar lines as those followed by Mr. Weld and that he heartily concurred with Mr. Weld's statement of the situation. It therefore looks as though it were up to the coarse yarn spinners of the South to protect their interest before the ways and means committee. During the recent depression it was easier for the fine goods mills of the North and South to operate than it was for the coarse goods mills, which makes it look as though the coarse mills certainly need as much tariff protection as the fine mills.

Again, according to the writer's observation, during good times and bad times fine goods mills have been able to pay higher wages and make more money on each dollar invested than the coarse goods mills. Now, if the fine goods mills, North and South, are to secure additional protection, and the coarse goods mills secure nothing, the fine mills will have increased advantage in handling the labor problem as compared with the coarse goods mills. Now, if the coarse goods mills attempt to secure the increased tariff protection, they are going to have a harder fight ahead of them than the fine mills. Where are our coarse Southern yarns used? They are used principally in New England, New York, Philadelphia and Ohio, which section is the home of the protection idea, but they do not want our coarse yarns protected because it would raise the cost of their raw material. These yarns go into the making of carpets, tapestry, upholstery, towels, table cloths, curtains, etc. They also go into mixtures of woolen goods and worsted goods, etc. Now the woolen and worsted manufacturers of New England, New York, Philadelphia and Ohio naturally want low-priced wool and there is considerable agitation for low tariff on wool because it enters into the manufacture of their goods, and naturally they do not want anything that would tend to increase the price of the coarse cotton yarns entering into their product. As the matter now stands, the fine yarn manufacturers in the North and Middle States will secure increased protection, and at the same time buy our coarse yarns at the old low prices.

Tariff revision is a "log rolling" proposition where each section and each industry must take care of its own selfish interests or it will not be taken care of. New England and the north Central States are primarily manufacturing communities and they want high tariff on their manufactured product and low tariff on their raw material such as hides for New England to make boots and shoes out of; wool for New England, New York, Philadelphia and Ohio to make woolen and worsted goods out of; free lumber, because those same sections have cut off all their lumber; coarse cotton yarns, because these yarns are raw material to the carpet manufacturers, the hosiery manufacturers, the tapestry mills, the towel mills, woolen and worsted manufacturers, etc.

Now, why does not the coarse yarn manufacturer of the South need protection? Has not the rate of wages in coarse yarn mills in the South increased 15 to 30 per cent. in the last ten years? The last tariff adjustment was in 1898 and was adjusted for the then prevailing rate of wages. If our wages have advanced from 15 to 30 per cent. since 1898, the coarse yarn manufacturers need additional protection, and I respectfully submit that it is harder for a coarse yarn mill in the South to make money under present conditions than it was ten years ago, when the last tariff revision was made.

Now unless the coarse yarn spinner of the South gets busy on this proposition at once, he is going to be left out in the cold. You will remember about two years ago when Congress amended the immigration laws, the manufacturers of the South got a cold deal and all the satisfaction we could get was the statement from some of our Southern Senators and Representatives that Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, had fooled them as to the meaning of the new immigration laws.

Mr. Weld's statement submitted to the ways and means committee shows that the tariff on 20s, according to the 1898 laws, was 6 cents; and he wants this to be continued at 6 cents, while he asks that the tariff on 30s and finer be advanced anywhere from 25 to 40 cents. What do the facts show as regards importation of yarns? Mr. Weld's statement shows that in 1898 129,924 pounds of 20s were imported, while in 1907 449,057 pounds were imported, an increase in importation of 246 per cent. What also do the facts show as to 30s? The tables show in 1898 136,192 pounds and in 1907 230,128 pounds, or an increase of 200 per cent. in importation. If the 20s increased 246 per cent., while the importation on 30s increased 200 per cent., why do 30s need an increase of tariff rate of 25 per cent. while 20s require no increased tariff rate? While this situation holds as regards 20s and 30s, the percentage of increase is much higher on the finer counts, the increase on number 60s amounting to 60 per cent., the increase on number 70s amounting to 70 per cent.

As a coarse yarn spinner, I feel that it was all right for the fine yarn spinners to speak for themselves and ask for additional protection, provided they had left the matter open for the coarse yarn spinner to present his own case; but as the matter now stands, the ways and means committee has the statement of the fine yarn spinner to the effect that the coarse yarn spinner needs no additional protection. I would like to hear your opinion, and the opinion of some of our coarse yarn spinners, on the above proposition.

HARD YARN SPINNER.

MR. J. L. KEITT'S PLAN.

South Carolina Farmers Discussing New Scheme For Financing Cotton Crop—Repeal of Lien Law Favored.

Special to The Observer.

Anderson, S. C., Jan. 15.—The Anderson County Farmers' Union has elected the following officers to serve for the ensuing year: J. B. Douthit, president; L. S. Clinkscales, vice president; S. A. Burns, secretary and treasurer; J. M. Broyles, door keeper; executive committee, U. E. Seybt, J. P. Glenn and J. M. Broyles; delegates to State Union at Columbia January 20th, S. A. Burns, J. B. Douthit, L. S. Clinkscales, T. T. Wakefield, J. B. Watson.

Much time at the annual meeting was devoted to discussion of the plan for financing the cotton crop that is being urged by Mr. J. L. Keitt, of Newberry, and the delegates to the State Union were instructed to favor it in that body. The plan, in brief, provides for a fund to be raised by levying an assessment of 10 cents a bale, to be supplemented by loans of business men, the fund so raised to be used in holding off the market all the "distressed" cotton, so that only one-twelfth of the estimated crop may be put on the market in any one month. The plan also contemplates storing cotton in warehouses so that the farmers may, through their business agents, deal directly with the mills, instead of with the brokers.

The sentiment of the meeting was strongly in favor of the repeal of the lien law, and the delegates to the State Union will make themselves felt and heard on the matter. They will be in Columbia while the Legislature is in session.

HESTER'S COTTON REPORT.

Figures For First Half of Present Month Are Under Those For Same Period Last Year, But the Season is Considerably Ahead of 1907—Supply to Date is 9,673,182 Bales.

New Orleans, Jan. 15.—Secretary Hester's weekly cotton statement issued today shows for the 15 days of January a decrease under last year of 34,000 bales and a decrease under the same period year before last of 282,000. For the 137 days of the season that have elapsed the aggregate is ahead of the same days of last year 1,958,000 and ahead of the same days year before last of 450,000.

The amount brought into sight during the past week has been 308,362 bales against 314,999 for the same seven days last year and 441,593 year before last.

The movement since September 1st shows receipts at all United States ports 8,687,018 against 5,618,903 last year, overland across the Mississippi, Ohio and Potomac rivers to Northern mills and Canada 325,474 against 325,413 last year; interior stocks in excess of those held at the close of the commercial year 726,042 against 410,896 last year; Southern mills takings 1,073,000 against 1,079,002 last year. These make the total movement since September 1st 9,491,835 against 7,434,214 last year.

Foreign exports for the week have been 320,417 against 310,101 last year, making the total thus far for the season 5,276,091 against 4,430,397 last year.

The total takings of American mills, North, South and Canada thus far for the season have been 2,632,393 against 1,913,666 last year.

Stocks at the seaboard and the 29 leading Southern interior centres have decreased during the week 158,909 bales against a decrease during the corresponding period last season of 84,982.

Including stocks left over at ports and interior towns from the last crop and the number of bales brought into sight thus far from the new crop, the supply to date is 9,673,182 against 7,782,229 for the same period last year.

BRADSTREET'S REVIEW.

Spring Orders Are Being Booked and the Outlook More Favorable—South a Little Backward.

New York, Jan. 15.—Bradstreet's to-morrow will say:

Changes in the general business situation are largely favorable. Spring orders are being placed in fairly liberal quantities at the larger Eastern centres, and traveling salesmen are sending in conservatively optimistic reports.

Exceptions to the quite general rule of slow but steady improvement are furnished by cities in the Southern cotton belt, where trade is still backward and where confidence as regards the future is not so marked.

Lines especially favored this week at retail were heavy wearing apparel, footwear and coal, while cotton goods are more active at first hands at large Eastern centres. Heavy sales of print cloths have been made at Fall River and some printed goods are a quarter of a cent higher. Export trade in cottons to China has improved, and takings of sheetings since January 1st are estimated at 25,000 bales.

Business failures in the United States for the week ending January 14th were 316 against 329 last week, 431 in the like week of 1908.

FEW ORDERS FOR YARNS.

Quiet Following Holiday Rush Continues—Some Signs of Improvement.

Secretary T. W. Crews, of the Hard Yarn Spinners' Association, reports the following orders filed with the office of the association during the past fortnight:

Date Order.	Description.	Pounds.	Price	Terms.	Deliveries.
Jan. 9	12-2 tubes	10,000	16	5&3	5 to 10,000 pounds weekly.
" 11	16-2 warps	8,820	17½	"	Prompt.
" 5	20-2 "	1,600	18½	"	February 1st to 15th.
" 4	20-2 "	8,400	18½	"	Prompt.
" 5	30-4 "	7,500	18½	"	Prompt.
" 5	20-2 "	20,000	18½	"	2,000 pounds weekly.
" 7	20-2 skeins	1,596	20	"	Prompt.
" 12	30-2 "	10,000	20½	"	Commence last of January.
" 8	12-3 "	5,000	16½	"	Commence at once.

T. W. CREWS, Secretary.

JOBBERS URGE DELIVERIES.

Manufacturers Appealed to For Quicker Shipments.

New York Commercial.

The quickness with which buyers have taken hold on spring lines, is causing some jobbers considerable uneasiness regarding deliveries from the mills. In most instances jobbers were late in placing spring orders, and as a result, their deliveries will be equally late. This fact is being brought home to them in many ways, and urgent requests for earlier deliveries than contracts call for, are going forward to manufacturers. A good many mills have all the business they can handle up to March, and are not in a position to help out jobbers to any extent. Other mills which were not so successful in booking spring orders, are now reaping the benefit of the present demand as a result.

More buyers are coming into the market each day, and the first requests are for goods on which early deliveries can be made. All lines of piece goods are moving, from plain staples to the more pronounced fancy lines. Orders are increasing steadily on silks, cotton dress fabrics, dress goods and linens. On underwear and hosiery a good business is being secured, especially on lines of lightweight, colored hosiery for early spring needs. While the demand is steady, and growing, buyers are careful in placing their orders. Prices and the quality of goods offered are being thoroughly gone into in addition to the question of shipments.

Business in the Tefft Weller Co.'s establishment yesterday, in the way of store trade and mail orders, was reported as the largest for any one day since the opening of the new year. Many buyers were in evidence, and had good orders to place. Hosiery lines were taken freely, in both plain colors and fancy effects. Linens and white goods were also in active demand, with requests for prompt shipments on the orders placed.

BRIGHT OUTLOOK FOR MILLS.

Stocks Never Lighter at This Season and Prosperity Visibly Ahead.

American Wool and Cotton Reporter.

The experiences of the past eighteen months are fast being forgotten and the first quarter of 1909 will not pass before textile manufacturing will have resumed normal conditions, and so far as can be seen into the future the prospects are bright for a long period of prosperity that will encourage a substantial increase in our productive equipment in both cotton and wool. Already plans are prepared for several new cotton mills, and these will probably be in operation before the year closes. It is safe to say that the cotton manufacturers entered the new year with less stocks of finished goods than ever before, and the same may be said with the greatest degree of certainty regarding the manufacturers of worsteds and woolens. Unlike the close of panic periods in the past, there is no depressing accumulation of goods to be thrown on an uncertain market, and for that reason prices can be held firmer and worked to a higher level without danger of checking the increasing demand. Many lessons have been learned during the past eighteen months that will prove of value in the future, and at the present time the merchandising end of the textile industry is on a more businesslike basis than at any time in the history of textiles.

SUGAR AND RICE REVIEW.

New York, Jan. 15.—Interest in the sugar market the past week has chiefly centred about the Cuban situation, which for a time showed a firmer tendency on reports that rain was retarding grinding of the cane but subsequently weakened again when the weather became more favorable. There are now 111 centrals in operation on the island, receipts being heavier so that if the estimate of 1,397,000 tons is reliable the pressure of the crop should effect prices. Brokers for Cuban shippers, however, claim that the yield of cane is poorer than expected and may lessen the ultimate results. Local refiners buy their raw sugar on a scale down so there is nothing surprising in the purchases this week at a 3,735 cent basis for shipments within the next month. Owing to the light meltings the refineries are quite well supplied for current needs in the way of raw sugar and may pursue more of a waiting policy in the future.

The business in refined sugars shows the customary January dullness, and expectations in some quarters of improvement after the holidays having been disappointed despite the low price of 4.50 net, price quoted all interests. Distributors complain of poor collections and reduced consumption incidental to the trade depression, while the elimination of speculation under the new selling terms is also not conducive to other than hand-to-mouth buying. The American has made some concession, however, to wholesale grocers, permitting assortments of sugar to be mailed the same day instead of accompanying the contract. It is hoped that the rapid marketing of domestic beet sugar by eliminating this competition will clear the way for a good business next month.

The local rice market continues quiet, grocers buying from jobbers only as their needs require, there being little inclination to anticipate. The cross town wholesalers are taking Honduras sorts despite the fact that Japans are much cheaper though the country shows more interest in the latter price. People in the trade here comment on the tendency of the Southern mills to turn down offers suggesting that the bottom prices have been reached and that improvement will accompany any revival of the active demand. The receipts here of late have been liberal and assortments are now good, although Honduras fancy heads are none too plentiful. The reports of active buying in the Southwest from the West and other sections suggest to some brokers that the New York market will later on have occasion to regret its lack of foresight in not purchasing at prevailing prices.

Review of Cotton Market.

New York, Jan. 15.—The principal support for cotton is the strong and active spot markets at home and abroad. To this more than to anything else an advance in "futures" must be attributed.

Back of it all is the consumer. He is taking immense quantities. A good deal is for immediate use and much is simply to replenish reserve stocks which were drawn on so freely last season that they had got rather low. Big spot sales continue in Liverpool. Manchester reports a better China demand with rising prices for silver. Latterly its trade with India and the Mediterranean has increased. New York's trade with China is also larger. Prints have advanced and print cloths are strong. Also it is worth while to note that wool is active and firm and raw silk stronger.

Exporters of cotton at the South find much of the available cotton accumulated at the ports. Interior markets are so strong they can hardly be touched. Meantime dealers and exports are under heavy agreements to supply mills at home and abroad with cotton for January-February shipments and the ports are being searched for cotton for rapid shipment. Freight room for about 40,000 bales is said to have been engaged for shipment to Liverpool. The stock of about 148,000 bales of certificated cotton here is supposed to be mostly owned by Philadelphia interests. The exports continue large. The total keeps about 740,000 bales ahead of the same time last year. Spinners' takings are over a million bales ahead. Bears stick to 14,000,000 bales as the probable size of the crop; bulls say 13,000,000 to 13,500,000.

Meantime Liverpool continues to liquidate straddles by buying March and May. Large spot merchants have bought March and May in some cases to cover shorts. New Orleans has bought and several of its large operators express decidedly bullish convictions. The South generally shows a more bullish temper. It seems more inclined to hold back cotton. Wall Street buys, but finding little response from the outside public confines itself to trading for moderate terms. Chicago has bought. New England spinners are buying July and October.

R. F. Coble Goes to Locke Mills, Concord.

Concord Times.

We learn that Mr. Robert F. Coble, who for several years has been superintendent of the Southern Cotton Mills at Bessemer, will soon return to Concord to take charge of the Locke Mills as superintendent. Mr. Coble was for a number of years superintendent of the Odell Mills, and is recognized everywhere as a splendid mill man. He has many friends here who will be glad to welcome him back to the city.

Belmont Mill Starting Up.

Gastonia News.

The Mejestic Cotton Mill at Belmont is now beginning to run through cotton and expects to be running full blast by the 1st of February. The building is 125x340, one story, and will have 10,000 spindles. It is one of the most up-to-date mills in Gaston county.

Improvements at Mount Holly Mill.

Gastonia News.

Work is rapidly progressing on the addition to the Woodlawn Cotton Mill at Mount Holly. The addition being built is 100x75, one story. The building is now ready for the roof. The mill will add 22 spinning frames.

Electrocution vs. Hanging.

Danville Bee.

The State of North Carolina is about to follow Virginia's example and substitute electric execution for the ancient method of hanging a man by the neck until he is dead. The rapid growth in favor of the electrocution method is a testimonial to its humanity, and to the wisdom of having executions private. It was long regarded as a deterrent measure to have criminals executed near the scene of their crimes and the awful penalty of the law thus brought home to others. The refined sentiment of every community, however, revolts against making this most awful form of vindicating the majesty of the law a spectacle, and it is certainly not elevating or refining to witness these executions. We trust that our neighboring State will adopt the newer plan.

Offering For Earthquake Sufferers From Thompson Orphanage.

To the Editor of The Observer:

I notice in this morning's paper that you say that the offering from the Methodist church at Mocksville for the earthquake sufferers "is the first you have noted as coming from any Protestant church in the State." On January 3d we took up an offering for the same object at the chapel of the Thompson Orphanage, amounting to $1.13, a check for which I herewith enclose; not so much, as I told the children, for the real assistance that it will give as an expression of our sympathy for our suffering fellow-beings. I have been holding the offering because I did not know to whom to send it. If you will kindly forward it, I will esteem it a favor.

W. J. SMITH, Supt.

[This offering is noted with pleasure.—The Observer.]

Red Buck.

Kenansville News.

Mr. Red Buck Bryant, that versatile writer and genial soul of The Charlotte Observer, is giving his paper the best there is in Washington during the sessions of Congress. He has tact as a newspaper correspondent and any journal is indeed fortunate to have H. E. C. Bryant on its staff. The man knows news when it is news and he knows how to word his articles to make them attractive and entertaining. For many years he has trod the paths of the wide-a-wake correspondents of the State and nation and has always written well of men and things. He carries sunshine along every day and cheers his friends day by day.

Mrs. Adelaide Smith Celebrates 90th Birthday.

Special to The Observer.

Scotland Neck, Jan. 15.—A few days ago Mrs. Adelaide Smith, relict of James N. Smith, celebrated her 90th birthday at her home near Scotland Neck. For a long stretch of years reaching far back into ante-bellum days the home of Mrs. Smith has been well known for its marked and open-handed Southern hospitality. The good and cultured woman who has been mistress of this home for so many years retains in her beautiful old age all her faculties and still enjoys good health.

Wadesboro Express Agent Overworked.

Wadesboro Messenger and Intelligencer.

Mr. J. G. Riddick, express agent here, complains that since prohibition went into effect at Wilmington, he is almost submerged every day with shipments of booze from Virginia to be transferred here to go to points on the Atlantic Coast Line between Wadesboro and Florence, S. C. The whiskey to be transferred already averages about 200 gallons a day and is steadily increasing in quantity.

BABY'S VOICE

Is the joy of the household, for without it no happiness can be complete. Angels smile at and commend the thoughts and aspirations of the mother bending over the cradle. The ordeal through which the expectant mother must pass is such that she looks forward with dread to the hour when she shall feel the thrill of motherhood. Every woman should know that the danger and pain of child-birth can be avoided by the use of Mother's Friend, which renders pliable all the parts, assisting nature in its work. By its aid thousands of women have passed this crisis in safety. $1.00 per bottle of druggists. Valuable book of information to women sent free. THE BRADFIELD REGULATOR CO. Atlanta, Ga.

MOTHER'S FRIEND

LENOIR.

A Town That is Coming Along by Leaps and Bounds—Manufacturing Doing It.

Lenoir Topic.

While the recent depression in financial matters has to an extent arrested the growth of our town, yet we doubt if few towns in the State have made as great strides forward since the beginning of 1908 as Lenoir. In 1901 Lenoir had a population of 1,284. At the beginning of this year the population was approximately 3,500, while to-day we have in excess of 4,500. This shows a gain of more than 500 during 1908, notwithstanding the fact that it has not been a good year for the influx of people to towns. In 1901 Lenoir became essentially a manufacturing point. Since then it has added seven furniture factories, three cotton mills and various other manufacturing enterprises. During 1908 a chair factory, one cotton mill, wagon factory and a bent wood factory have been added. The splendid office building of the First National Bank has been completed at a cost of $25,000. A gravity water system that draws its supply from the pure water of the mountains at an altitude of nearly 2,000 feet, has been installed, together with a first-class sewerage system at a cost of $80,000. Improvements on the streets to the amount of $20,000 have been accomplished. Several new buildings, business and residence, are in contemplation and will be in process of construction during the beginning of 1909. Among them is a modern office of the Lenoir Realty and Insurance Company. During the year $465,000 was subscribed and paid in to incorporated enterprises alone, and practically every dollar of this amount was home capital.

TRIAL OF GREGORY BEGUN.

Wadesboro Man Who Killed His Wife Says He Knows Nothing About It—Insanity Being Pleaded.

Special to The Observer.

Wadesboro, Jan. 15.—The Gregory wife-murder case was taken up in Superior Court here to-day, the entire day being occupied with hearing witnesses. Solicitor Robinson made out a strong case. A number of neighbors swore that Gregory, to all appearances, was sane the day of the murder. Attorneys for the defense plead insanity and ask for acquittal.

Gregory was not placed on the stand. He claims he has no knowledge of the murder. He remembers incidents of his arrest and preliminary trial and has talked of them since returning from the hospital for the dangerous insane at Raleigh. He consults with his attorneys and is apparently at himself. He looks the picture of health. The case will probably go to the jury Saturday about noon.

WOOD ALCOHOL ROUTE.

Some of the Asheville Negroes Going That Way.

Asheville Citizen.

Speaking of the statement in yesterday's Citizen to the effect that two deaths this week were directly traceable to the use of wood alcohol, in the absence of whiskey, a well-informed professional man stated yesterday that he knew of cases where imported bay rum had been used to produce an alcoholic effect. The speaker stated that in his opinion the poorer negroes of the city were playing with death when they satiated their craving for liquor with wood or even pure alcohol. "They ought to be taught," he said, "and the press is the best medium of teaching, that they may as well take strychnine or prussic acid as wood alcohol. And I understand that the initial use of the stuff creates a craving for more, and the victim generally gets it until his heart finally stops beating."

The Cherokee Indians.

Asheville Citizen.

The Secretary of the Interior has approved a census roll of the eastern band of Cherokee Indians, most of whom reside in the western part of this State, taken for the purpose of deciding what persons are entitled to participate in the distribution of the fund held by the Department of these Indians. A payment of $20 per capita is to be made from a fund now in the American National Bank of Asheville. One thousand nine hundred and thirteen persons will receive this sum each.

They Want to Sleep on It.

Concord Times.

Several ministers and other citizens of Concord appeared before the aldermen last Tuesday to ask the board to join in the request of the Ministers' Association and the temperance interests of the city in asking the Legislature to establish a medical depository here to which will be confined the legal sale of whiskey. All the members of the board were present, but no action was taken that night, as they wanted some time to fully consider the matter.

FOOD FOR A YEAR

Meats	300 lbs.
Milk	240 qts.
Butter	100 lbs.
Eggs	27 doz.
Vegetables	500 lbs.

This represents a fair ration for a man for one year.

But some people eat and eat and yet grow thinner. This means a defective digestion and unsuitable food. A one-dollar bottle of

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equals in nourishing properties ten pounds of meat. Your physician can tell you how it does it.

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