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## SKIRTS

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vancing prices there will be plenty of

gaps to fill in the early months of the year. From the earliest period in history until almost the close of the eighteenth century linen was one of the most extensively and widely disseminated of the domestic industries of European countries. The preparation and spinning of yarn gave occupation to women of all classes, and the operations of weaving gave employment to large numbers of both sexes. The industry was most thoroughly developed in Russia, Austria, Germany, Holland, Belgium, the northern provinces of France and certain parts of England, in the north of Ireland and throughout Scotland. In these countries the importance of the industry was generally recognized by the enactment of special laws having for their object the protection and extension of the trade.

The foundation of machine spinning of flax was laid by John Kendrew and Thomas Porthouse of Darlington, who in 1781 secured a patent for a mill or machine upon new principles for spinning yarn from hemp, flax or wool. These machines, as imperfect as they were, attracted much notice and were introduced in various localities, both in England and Scotland, into mills fitted specially for flax spinning. By innumerable successive improvements and modifications the inventions of Kendrew and Porthouse developed into the perfect system of machinery with which at the present day linen is manufactured.

Progress in adapting flax fibres for mechanical spinning and linen yarn for weaving cloth by power loom was much slower than in the corresponding case of cotton.

#### Waking Up in Woollens.

There has been no slackening up in business in woollens since election time. There was a time before that when things looked very bad. At one time it "was either a case of fill the shelves or nail up the shops."

With the election over there were very few merchants inclined to nail up. Taft sort of looked good to them and most merchants took a chance on returning prosperity, even before the first of the year, and started filling up the shelves. Very soon mill chimneys again blackened up the landscape and the smoke, acting as a tonic on the ultra conservative buyers, impelled them to take a chance with the rest, so that now the mills have all they can handle.

"Right now there is not a cloud on the horizon in the woollen industry," remarked one of the biggest sellers in the country a few days ago, and when his attention was called to the impending tariff revision he declared that the chances of menace from the tariff in the woollen business are so remote that they cannot be referred to as a cloud. The orders now piling into the mills are naturally for next winter's goods and will be disposed of by the manufacturers next summer.

By that time these same empty shelves will compel buying of 1910 spring and summer stock, so that even should there be immediate action on the tariff it would not interfere with the woollen business for a year at least. But woollen men are confident that whatever tariff changes are made affecting wool will be dated so far ahead that their effects are not worth worrying about just at present, when the trade is in the midst of one of the greatest booms it has ever known.

"So don't refer to the tariff as a cloud on the woollen business," remarked the aforementioned giant of the industry. "The only thing resembling a cloud in our trade just now is the cloud of smoke from our chimneys, and that's the kind of a cloud we like to have with us always."

Velvets. This is a line distinctly favored by the vogue of the latest styles of fall wear. Velvets will be worn so extensively in the autumn that there is no reason why it should not be the best year in some time for those whose financial interests are in velvets. Not only is velvet high in favor, but velveteens and corduroys also have been taken up strongly.

There are many things to be said in favor of velvet. It is an admirable fabric for hard wear. In fact all three, velvet, velveteen and corduroy are extremely durable. The vogue for velvet dresses and gowns is matched by that for hats in velvet. These things create a demand that is very pleasant for the business man to contemplate.

#### Blankets and Comforters.

A coming comforter is a wool filled quilt with sateen figured designs. It is fluffy, light in weight and warm. There also are nice silkoline comforters in dainty designs, silk bordered and interlined with fluffy cotton. Dimity spreads, light in weight, which can be laundered, will be popular for summer use and in cottages.

Summer flannel blankets, very thin like those used in the tropics and abseer, will be popular in this country the coming spring and summer. They will have pink and blue borders.



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