

FOREIGN NOVELTIES.

By our Special Correspondent.

The novelty of the times in Bradford black-goods for dresses is unmistakably the Roxana weave, Figs. 1 and 2. Roxana cloths or those that closely imitate them, are made of hard and lustrous yarn. Merino mats and looks dull in this elaborate 12-shaft construction. English wool or coarse cross-bred gives a smart fabric full of character and suggestive of a repp broken into fragments. Any kind of decoration in mohair may suitably be built upon the ground, or floats of warp or weft may be left to form a figure. Half a dozen Bradford mills are hard at work upon Roxanas, and the reception of the novelty, already favorable, is expected to gain in popularity as time passes. Properly treated the fabric is firm and likely to retain good shape throughout its life, but the presence of broad figuring thrown too much upon the face leads to more flabbiness than could be desired. In finishing, the face must be singed clear and the pressing must be great enough to bring up the maximum of lustre.

The impression one receives, on seeing Roxana at first, is that some ingenious reverse-twists have been used. Closer scrutiny shows that the irregular tying of the cloth and the quality of wool are alone responsible. The regular range of price is from 35 cents to 50 cents per yard in 44-inch width. Another cloth of 12 shafts called indifferently "Canvas" or "Hopsack," with a mohair splash warp effect is also popular. Its appearance is rougher than Roxana and it is at its best in a wiry wool. Many other variants upon the parent idea are expected and with so

much scope for change in ground and figure there is hope of a long run. In cross-bred worsteds for suitings the weave is being tried experimentally.

Zibeline fabrics are in their last ditch. Popularity has reduced them to qualities so debased that the trade has revolted. The nap and knicker are in full vogue. The fan-

Venetian tweeds are variegated with occasional splashes of cotton slub in contrasting colors, and dyed herring-bones are relieved with mohair slubs of self-color.

All the patterns one sees show signs of the disposition to escape from regularity and flatness. Designers are all using a free hand, and so-called plain goods are touched with the hand of fancy.

An Irish made linen, Fig. 6, that has had a

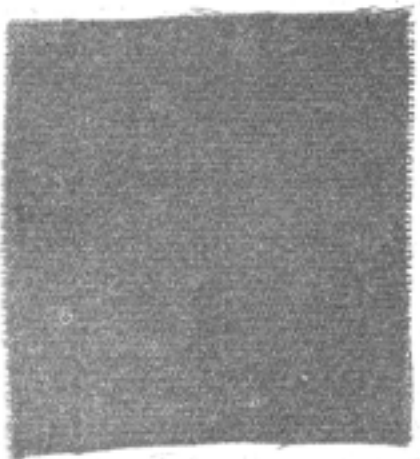


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

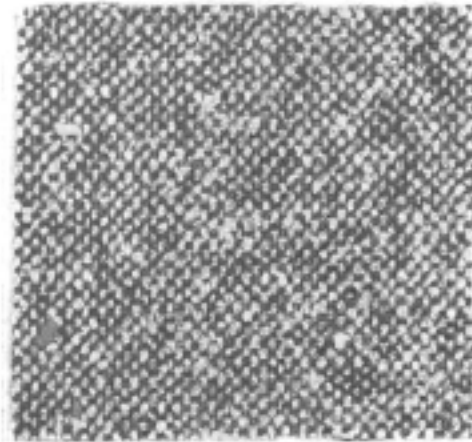


Fig. 3

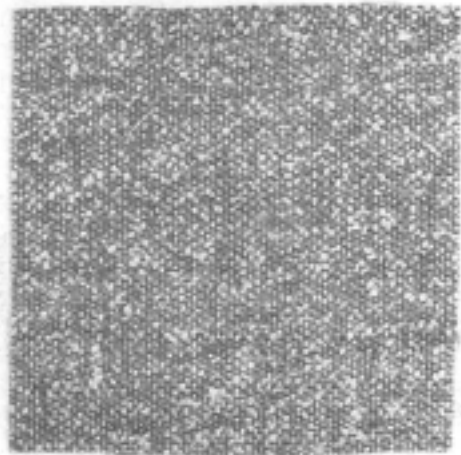


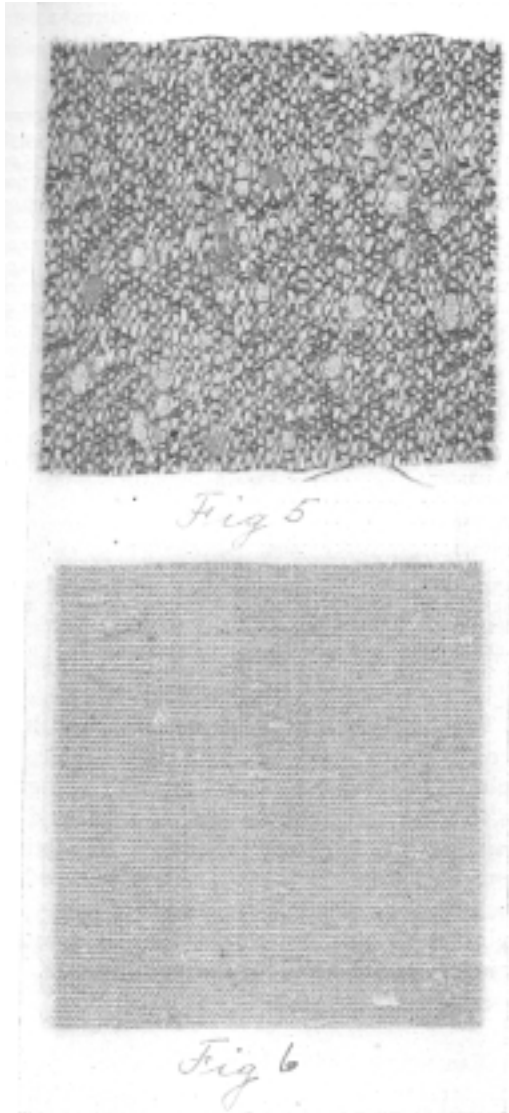
Fig. 4

ciest of fancy yarns are used in composing certain costume cloths, both colors and twists are blended richly.

On the other hand the simple tweed known as the "Donegal," Fig. 3, and neat knickers in white upon mixture grounds of all colors. Figs. 4 and 5, are greatly appreciated. Smart

summer run, is being bought still more largely for the spring of 1904. It is an absolutely simple little thing and exceptionally well fitted for summer needs. The warp is

colored and the filling white with the irregularities of spinning. In width the cloth is 28 inches and the prices vary between 8 and 20



cents per yard. The cheaper sorts contain more sizing than do the better.

Eccentricity has seized upon the standard Bradford mohair figure. Ever since the birth of the crepon there has been a steady trade in mercerized goods, wherein the figure is cast into bold relief upon the surface. Floral designs are in the smallest possible demand despite the neatness of the few that are shown. Unconventional oddities, small, frequent and

broken, are doing best, Fig. 7. Mill prices for cotton-warped fancies are around 33 cents for 44-inches width. From some remarks dropped I gather that silk is to be tried in lieu of mohair. The issue of the experiment should be interesting since it is easy to dissolve silk quite away in the mercerizing bath.

An unusual cloth of French origin has put in an appearance. It is known as a "seal ripple." A rich seal effect is obtained by "gigging" the surface and laying the brilliant fibres along the length of the piece. The honey-comb ripple comes from the loose tying of the weft, which allows the face to be



dragged into wave form. Except as the sensation of a season the article can scarcely have a great sale despite its surprising cheapness. Three grades shown to me were priced 37, 50 and 62 cents per yard, and the appearance of each was truly luxurious. Probably a limited demand for various trimming purposes may be expected. The regular cow-hair and cotton plush made in our heavy woolen district at approximately the same prices, is far inferior to this flimsy fabric in beauty.

In men's tweeds a handsome effect, which is credited with novelty, is obtained by introducing a four-line stripe of silk. Very good noil silk or cheap schappe may be used and, varying with their thickness, from two to four ends should be used as one. The twill breaks the stripe and if old gold, cream, subdued

blues or crimsons are used upon harmonizing grounds, a suiting of some distinction may be obtained. For various reasons it is better to use silk than mercerized cotton for this purpose.

The patents (English) of the Cravenette process of rainproof finishing have expired. Undoubtedly the system is admirable for its own classes of material. For some goods it is hardly regarded as so suitable. Its operation depends solely upon the application of waxes of high melting point. In one other successful process the cloth is treated to a preparatory or mordanting bath in liquids. A combination of lead acetate and alumina is used in one patent process, the lead being thrown down and not entering the cloth. Afterwards the fabric is waxed by a film of extreme fineness. There is a grave objection to the introduction of sugar of lead or saponifiable fat into piece-goods or simpler measures of proofing against rain would answer. It may be noted that simultaneously with the sale of the Cravenette concern to the Bradford Dyers' Association the original patentee took out further specifications. Showerproof finishing is an art that has not yet reached finality.