

As we predicted, if any change was made it must almost of necessity be on the lines this country had travelled, and we are therefore not surprised to find, according to the summary furnished by the *Times* correspondent, that the Bill regarding the amendment of the present Factory and Workshops Act is grounded on the resolutions of the recent Labour Conference, and in those parts which relate to the employment of women and children is almost identical with the English Factory and Workshops Act. The former law, which enacted that workmen were not bound to work on Sundays, is amended to the effect that workmen employed in mines, salt works, quarries, foundries, and other similar branches of industry are prohibited from labouring on Sundays or holidays. On Sundays such workmen must have 24 hours' rest, and at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide 48 hours. Workmen engaged in certain handicrafts may not work more than five hours on Sundays or holidays. In the case of certain trades, where a press of work takes place at certain seasons of the year, the police authorities are empowered to extend the hours of labour in cases where the nature of the occupation does not admit of a stoppage of work. The prohibition of Sunday labour can with the consent of the Federal Council be extended to other occupations by Imperial order.

These proposals are excellent, and will work a revolution in the domestic and social life of German workpeople, the consequences of which will be advantageous to them in every respect if the best use be made of the leisure and the opportunities thus afforded of intellectual and social improvement. So far as the provisions stated relate to adult working men, they go beyond those of our own labour laws, but not beyond what our common law or ancient statutes provide. The freedom with which our laws permit working men to organise, and which is perfectly proper, has enabled them to make their own terms upon these matters with their employers.

The Bill next deals with the employment of children, young persons, and women. In regard to the regulation of the employment of children and young persons it is proposed that the former should not be employed under 13 years of age, unless they have completed the requisite attendance at primary schools. The hours of labour should be fixed for them at six hours, and for young people under 16 years of age at ten hours *per diem*, with a pause of at least half an hour. In spinning factories and certain similar occupations exceptions may be permitted, but the total hours of work per week must not exceed 36 in the case of children, or 69 in the case of young people. These proposals will bring the regulations affecting the employment of these sections of the working classes almost upon a level with those affecting our own. As regards the employment of women, it is proposed that it should not occur between the hours of 8.30 p.m. and 5.30 a.m., nor after 5.30 p.m. on the days preceding Sundays and holidays, and that women over 16 years of age should not work more than 11 hours *per diem*, with a pause of at least one hour at mid-day. Such women as have household work to do should be allowed to leave work half-an-hour before mid-day. No woman should be allowed to return to work within four weeks of her confinement. Under exceptional press of work permission may be accorded by the police authorities for the employment of women over 16 years of age up to 10 p.m. for a period not exceeding 14 days; but the total number of hours of work per day must not exceed 13. The superior authorities and the Federal Council

should have power to permit further exceptions. There are some of these regulations that might with advantage be embodied in our own acts, especially that relating to mothers. "With reference to the protection of workmen against danger to life, health, or morals, the new Bill proposes that employers should be bound so to arrange the workshop machinery as to obviate all danger to life or health. Ample accommodation should be provided, and machinery should be fenced in and all danger to life minimised. As far as the nature of the occupations will permit the sexes should be separated, and ample accommodation for each should be provided. Regarding the regulation of work, it is proposed that within four weeks of the amended Act coming into force each employer should be obliged to issue and hang up in his factory regulations regarding the hour of commencement and ending of work, and the pauses; the time and manner of the calculation and payment of wages; the amount of notice to be given before dismissal, where such period is not already fixed by law, and a list of the grounds for instant dismissal without notice; the punishments proposed, their nature and extent if by fines, the regulations as to payment, and the purposes to which they will be devoted. Punishment calculated to hurt the self-respect or injure the morals of workmen should not be permitted. Fines should not exceed double the amount of a day's wage, and should be devoted to the benefit of the workmen." Such is the summary of the *Times* correspondent of this section of the Bill. There are some points in it which admit of serious question, but it will be better to leave any comments until details are to hand or the Bill becomes law.

Letters from our Readers.

The Editor does not necessarily endorse the opinions of his correspondents.

COTTON GROWING IN THE WEST INDIES.

(TO THE EDITOR OF *The Textile Mercury*.)

SIR,—Enclosed with this I send you a letter received from a resident in one of the British West Indian Islands, asking for information and advice in respect to growing cotton in the above Colonies.

As this is the second letter I have received from residents in the above Islands asking for information on the same subject within the last two years, and as good cottons seem to get scarcer every year, it seems a pity that the offer of these, our own colonists, to supply us with cotton equal to the bulk of American grades and better than some of them, should pass without notice. The two pods he refers to are from different species, but both are a good class. One of them evidently belongs to the Brazilian species; the seed is knitted together in the kidney form, and the staple is somewhat harsh, but no harsher than the Brazilian on the Liverpool market, while it is equal to most grades of this class. The other pod belongs to the American green seeded species or variety. The staple is soft and silky, averaging over an inch in length, yet these are called "wild cottons," that is, the plants grow in a wild state without cultivation or attention. We have it on record that the cotton from these Islands once stood well in the estimation of English cotton spinners. Can you, Mr. Editor, account for the imports having nearly fallen off altogether?—Yours truly,
JOHN BUTTERWORTH,
21, Blakelock-street, Shaw, near Oldham.

JOHN BUTTERWORTH, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—Permit me to take the liberty of introducing myself to you as an unfortunate sugar planter seeking for some other industry to take the place of the sugar cane, which for many reasons I feel compelled to relinquish. I have been recommended cotton-growing, and looking about for some advice on the subject, I came across a letter of yours on the "West India Cotton" at the Colonial Exhibition of 1886, published in Sir Augustus Adderley's Report on the Products at that Exhibition,—so I resolved at once to address you, and to apologise for my intrusion.

Would you, therefore, kindly inform me what kind of cotton you would recommend me to grow, so as successfully to compete with American grown cotton in the Liverpool market? (2.) What might probably be the highest as well as the lowest prices that the West India cotton would bring in Liverpool, and what might be the chances as to prices for the next few years? I have at the moment several dozen cotton trees on my estate, and I have no doubt that my soil is suitable—for the trees continue to bear year after year (*i.e.*, the same tree) whilst in America (Southern, U.S.) I hear the tree has to be planted every year.

I venture to forward you two pods of cotton grown here, and I do not know the names of either. Would you advise me to grow either, and may I finally ask you to recommend me some work on the culture and preparation of cotton for the English market?

I feel, dear sir, that I have intruded on you, but I knew that the generous nature of an Englishman never or seldom withholds a helping hand to his fellow man.—Again apologising, I remain, dear sir, faithfully yours,
J. COX FILLAN.

Wall House Estate, Dominica, B.W.I.,
27th March, 1890.

Designing.

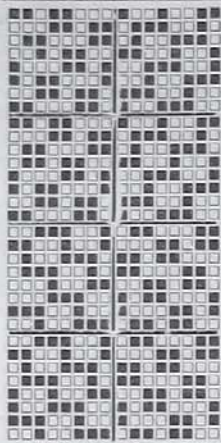
NEW DESIGNS.

COLOUR AND WEAVE EFFECTS.

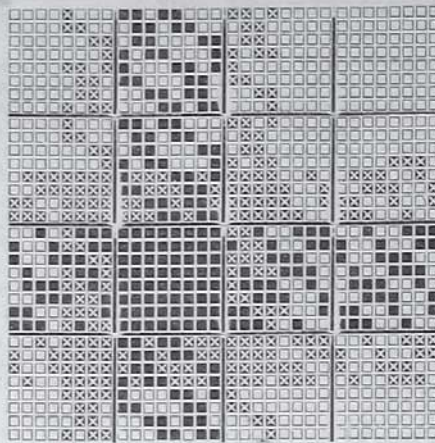
Some time ago we referred to the likelihood of colour playing a prominent part as a successor to the large twill effects, etc., in the worsted trade, and now colour and weave effects are being extensively adopted therein. The weaves used are, as a rule, simple twills, and large checks or stripes are produced by variation in the colour, to which form is given by the weave similar to the effects shown in *Designs 90, 91, 92 and 94*.

These Designs are furnished as suggestions for application to woollen goods. The improvement that has taken place in the production of the finer sorts of woollen tweeds during the past ten years, in respect both of build and colour, is marvellous. The production of hard, uncongenial fabrics seemed at first to be aimed at; the true use of the woollen thread, as we now understand it, being in most cases unappreciated. Manufacturers evidently thought, as the public refused their soft, beautiful doekings, etc., that what they sought after was a hard, bare cloth—in fact, a woollen cloth as nearly like a worsted as possible. Up to a certain point a woollen cloth may be—in many cases with advantage—rendered something like a worsted. But with the woollen thread as then spun, *i.e.*, a typical woollen thread, a cloth made with this idea simply possessed all the bareness of the worsted and received no compensation in the way of smartness.

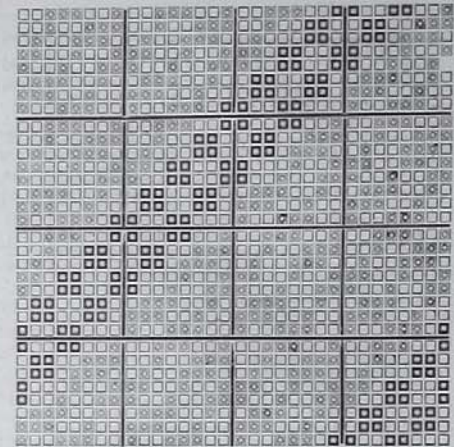
The West of England cloths have for years been noted as some of the best examples of their kind, and these cloths are in reality perhaps as near the worsted as the woollen, but smartness is imparted to these fabrics by means of excellent colourings and fine yarns. The yarns used in these goods are rendered almost like worsted, *i.e.*, the fibres are made parallel by roving previous to spinning. When the modern condenser was introduced into the woollen trade many years since, it made little headway at first; in fact, manufacturers put in the machines, and then took them out as doing unsatisfactory work. This was entirely due to the manufacturers not understanding the principles of their trade. The condenser turned off the slubbing as much finer than the old carder and piecener, as Platt's condenser turns off slubbing finer than the ordinary condenser now, and thus the slubbing required less drawing and spinning. But if less draft be given to a sliver, we cannot expect to get the fibres as parallel as the fibres in a sliver where much draft has been given. This fact seems not to have been grasped by the manufacturers, and therefore a return was made to the old carder and piecener, which in many cases resulted in trouble to firms for years to come. And yet, strange to say, we believe that in one or two



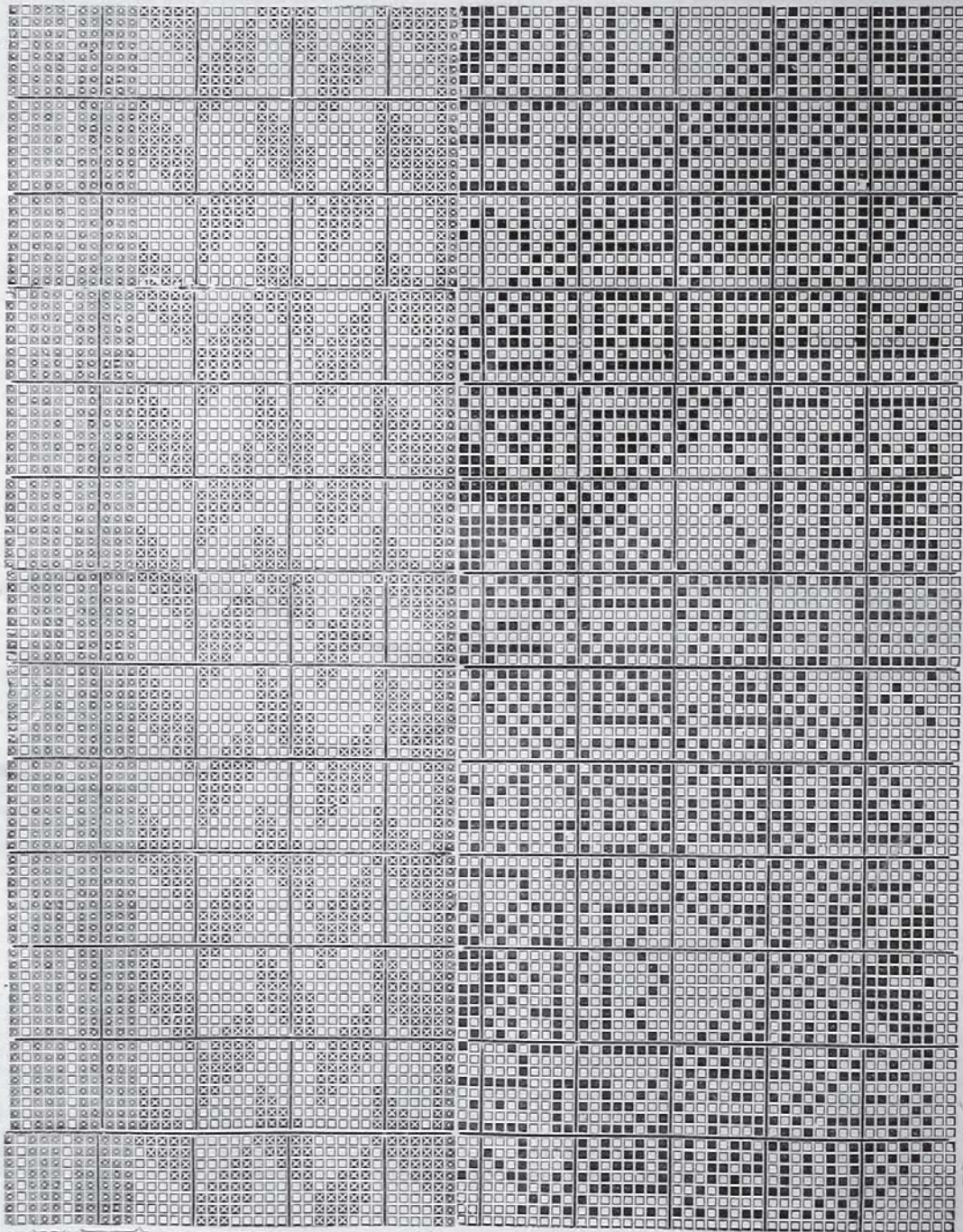
PEGGING PLAN FOR DESIGN 93.



DESIGN 94.



DESIGN 95.



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INDIAN SILK COUNTERPANE.