

step toward taken in the wholesale manufacture of costumes for the female sex. It is singular, when the rapid changes in the temperature of Canada are considered, that so convenient a system has been so long the peculiar advantage of the male sex. The progressive merchant must watch the growth of this addition, for it will have a direct bearing on the quantity of medium and low-priced dress materials sold at retail. Together with these influences, which belong exclusively to the dry goods trade, must be considered the general facts that in many sections agriculture has not given the average return, that Canada as a whole has not recovered from the effects of past years of business depression in the same measure that prices of manufactured articles have advanced, and that both of these facts will operate to reduce the volume if not the amount of business.

These, then, being some of the known forces that enter and lend their support either to increase or decrease the business to be done, are we any nearer a basis for securing a fair share of it? Let us return to the illustration of a good military commander again. Among the active forces toward victory that he would adopt when a battle was eminent would be, first, occupation of the ground. Next to having bought the right things, priority in the time of placing goods on sale is the condition

whose efficacy to win success is the most important. And of course this power is still further increased when it is used with wisdom at the commencement of the season. Does not the importance of the start increase as the race grows shorter? And what merchant is there who does not see that the times for regular and profitable modes of selling dry goods grow shorter each season? Though the chief result aimed at is the future gain throughout the season, there are immediate returns from such wide awake methods. Those who buy

early are mainly provident, prosperous people, wanting the choicest articles, for which they are ready to pay a fair price. It is a pleasure to sell the goods they choose, and to anticipate the advertisement and further sales they will make. To secure this trade two methods of informing the public require to be used simultaneously. As a medium abroad there cannot be in this case, where speed is the chief point, anything else that will equal the daily press. A plain announcement, with short description, a few figures and technical names, to serve as a guide and introduction, will be enough. The display of the goods, to be productive as a means at home, should coincide in the most accurate way with the announcement, so that probable purchasers can at a glance recognize them from what they have read. It is a hard matter, when so many new things are pressing for notice, to confine the work to a complete display of one or two lines, but if they be well chosen and the display made attractively, the result is larger than by distributing energy over a greater number. With this advantage gained, the merchant will find much of the chance element removed. What he has

won will serve as an impetus to more good work, and this system continued throughout the season must produce the greatest possible result.

THE FAST ATLANTIC SERVICE.

Sir Charles Tupper yesterday had an interview with Mr. Chamberlain as to the fast Atlantic service, says *The Montreal Gazette* of July 31st, and there can be no doubt that the project is now in a more promising position than has been the case for a long time back. Those who have followed Mr. Chamberlain's utterances since he became Colonial Secretary will have noticed that he has more than once declared himself in favor of improving the means of communication with the colonies. It is known that Lord Ripon was a strong supporter of the improved service, and has left a memorandum in its favor at the Colonial Office for Mr. Chamberlain's benefit. If Lord Ripon had his own way, he would probably have recommended a subsidy, but he had the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with, and Sir William Harcourt was never eager to commit the Government to expenditure which promised no immediate return in the way of votes. The Salisbury Government is in a stronger position, and will not be so much concerned as Lord Rosebery's Administration was in keeping itself in existence. Mr. Chamberlain is a person of great weight in the new Ministry, and will soon be beginning to show his invariable activity in his new department. An Imperial subsidy for a fast service between Canada and the Mother Country will be one of the first things to suggest themselves to him, and if he asks for it he will most likely get it without further question. The project is one which commends itself naturally to a Unionist Government, which prides itself on its aim of strengthening Imperial unity, and, in view of Lord Ripon's memorandum, it is not likely



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that the Liberals would offer any very serious opposition to the money being voted. Not that it would matter much if they did, but as the subsidy, though not exactly in the nature of a gift to Canada (for it would be of benefit to both parties), is still granted at the request of the Dominion Government, it is just as well that it should be given with the consent of both sides of the British House of Commons.

NEVER CANCEL ORDERS.

"We never cancel an order," said Mr. David Guthrie, of Paterson & Co., the wool importers, Montreal. "That is the firm's invariable rule, which has been adhered to for years. If someone else went to a man who had bought from us the day before and offered wool at a cent a pound lower we could not cancel the order so as to enable him to take advantage of the cent. I see no reason why a similar rule should not be applied to sales by the manufacturer and the wholesaler. Wool being a raw material does not make it any easier to maintain this rule, for the principle is the same in all cases."