

world as the commercial traveler. That, he said, was a broad statement, and the Board of Trade and Chambers of Commerce might contradict him, but he contended that no body of men, if they were suddenly taken from the face of the earth, would so totally demoralise all the forces that went to make up the human society and the riches of the community. Ultimately, on the motion of Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. T. E. Wing, and supported by Mr. Ingham, it was decided to form a league in Hull.

### THE MUSTARD PLASTER AND THE DRUMMER.

Mr. and Mrs. Whiffen were on their way to the Hot Springs, where Mr. W. intended to get relief for his rheumatism in the baths. At a way station a drunken traveling man boarded the train and was put to bed in the berth next to Mr. and Mrs. W. by the porter. Shortly after, Mr. W. woke up with a dreadful stitch in the side. Like a good dutiful wife Mrs. W. arose and went to the lavatory to make a strong, mustard plaster with which to relieve the pain of her liege lord.

On her return she pulled the wrong curtain aside and placed the plaster upon the stomach of the senseless, drunken drummer. Then she went to the lavatory, washed her hands and returned to her berth, getting into the right section and finding Mr. W. asleep.

Finally a loud groan was heard, then these words: "Oh, my stomach, my s-t-o-m-a-c-h, oh-h-h!" This was followed by "I'll never touch another drop as long as I live. Oh, it's burning a hole in me; oh-h-h!"

By this time heads were peeping out from behind curtains and the porter was on his way to the traveling man's berth. Of a sudden out came the bed clothes from the T. M's berth, and a cry of "Oh, my, there's my stomach! I'm dead!" The exclamation was topped off by the mustard plaster being thrown out on the isle of the car. The porter then grabbed the drummer and shook him until awake. During the first stages of sensibility he muttered, "Oh my stomach is gone, gone!"—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

### THE DRUMMER'S SCHEME WORKED.

Said a St Louis drummer the other day: "I have struck a snap which I think should be patented. For several years I have had to end of trouble with my tailor and other creditors who for some unaccountable reason seem to prefer cold cash to gilded promises. Last fall I wanted a couple of new suits, but I didn't have the ready cash with which to get them, and I knew that I would experience difficulty in buying them from my tailor and paying for them with good intentions. Still, that is exactly what I did.

"I found an old bank book that I had used years before when I had a small bank account, and now did a little bogus bookkeeping on the side. I deposited a few hundred

dollars one day and against it placed several checks the next, and so on, bringing the account up to date. As the result of my handiwork, the book showed a slight balance of about \$30,000 in my favor. The book itself I placed in the inside pocket of one of my coats, which I sent to my tailor to be repaired.

"A week later I called for the coat. Whew! what a change was noticeable in my tailor! He was all smiles and obsequiousness.

"By the way, Mr. Blank," he said, "don't you want a suit or two? I have an elegant line of goods in stock and I am sure I could please you."

"Oh, no, I guess not," I replied with a yawn. "I'd like the suits well enough, but I guess I'm too poor to get them just now."

"Well, why should I waste words to finish this story? I got the suits eight months ago, and the bill for them hasn't been presented yet."—Ex.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS?

The business world of to-day hears a good deal of the commercial traveler. It sees a good deal of him, too. He is in evidence at all times and places, and does not hide his light under a bushel. He "magnifies his office," and is disposed to let his employers know that there is some doubt, as between them and himself, who is "boss." This is hardly surprising, either, when importing houses can be heard to allege that they could not do business nowadays without commercial travelers. But lest the "drummer" should be too conceited, we may tell him that numbers of good houses are strong in the feeling that the system of selling goods by men on the road is expensive, unsatisfactory, and fast becoming, to use the words of one house, a "positive nuisance."

A letter, which we print in another column, asks whether the system of "tipping" or "squaring," practiced by commercial travelers on customers or others, is as prevalent in all lines of trade as the writer of this letter finds it. We can tell him that it is a tolerably regular thing in the business with which we are most familiar, for salesmen, aye, and principals, too, to make proposals to employes, showing that they may be benefited (pecuniarily) if they will recommend to their employers the goods of so-and-so, and decry those of the other fellow. It is not only the Murphys at Ottawa or elsewhere who practice on government employes such disgraceful tactics as the papers are filled with lately. Apropos of this business, we find in the last issue of the American Stationer the following letter, signed "I":

"Permit me to suggest that you invite correspondence on the subject of travelers' expenses, the average cost per week, not including freight charges on trunks, and whether items such as cigars, amusements,

laundry and wines are allowed by the respective houses. I think that this would be a very interesting subject for the stationers and other dealers to have before them."

We have reason to think that there are many employers of traveling salesmen who, in the present era of extreme competition and reduced profits, find one of the most serious problems in this question of travelers' expenses.

There is a large section of the great body of commercial travelers who pursue the even tenor of their way sensibly, calmly, and without the splurge that seems nowadays to attend the career of so many people, whether "on the road" or in the quieter domain of private life, or even in the distinguished—and shall we say exacting?—purlieus of the Civil Service. To these no portion of our present remarks will apply. But if our commercial salesmen wish to stem the current of mercantile opinion that is setting toward relief from the unfavorable and expensive features of their calling, they will aim to economize. There was a time when the traveling commercial could do the magnificent with champagne and all the etceteras. Representatives of the newer and more pushing houses vied with those of older and perhaps richer houses in impressing customers with the belief that lavish expenditure was the criterion of excellence in "the house." Those were days of big profits, which are now, for the most part, things of the past.

We shall probably never reach a stage where bribes, call them by what milder term we may, shall be unknown. Human nature is not proof against adroit manipulation. Railway conductors, hotel-keepers and functionaries of various kinds are not always beyond the influence of tactical management, nor can we expect buyers to be uninfluenced by such means. When business is active and money is easily made, principals are less solicitous about the methods employed. But at a time when profits are slender, while the expenses of business tend to outrun them, the manufacturer and the merchant is apt to scan very closely the expenses of his establishment. At such a time, too, the employer is more careful to insist upon controlling his business rather than to permit his men upon the road to control it for him, as some modern salesmen are apt to think they do.—Exchange.

### A GREAT SCHEME.

A movement was started sometime ago, in the States, with the object of bringing about a reunion of commercial travelers from all parts of the commercial world at the World's Fair, Chicago, in 1893. The scheme was taken up with the greatest enthusiasm, and now it has assumed a definite shape, committees having been formed, and the first steps taken towards a permanent organization. In Great Britain the project has, we understand, been received with favor, and it is likely a strong delegation will be sent over from there. Canada will, no doubt, be strongly represented also. The scheme is worthy of support as most beneficial results may be anticipated which at present cannot be foreseen.