

## COURTESY AS AN ELEMENT OF SUCCESS IN BUSINESS.

In a recent issue of the *Michigan Traders Journal*, an able and exhaustive article appeared under the above caption, from which the following extracts are taken and presented to our readers for their attention:

"Among the manifold items of advice tendered in print, referring to the relations between dealer and customer, politeness is mentioned as the principal means of building up and retaining a profitable business. This may not consist so much in language, action or dress; though each is a part of what may prove attractive to most people. Outside of all this there is a certain subtle something which no writer can describe or account for, that goes into the make up of a truly popular salesman and may easily be recognized by nearly everyone at first sight. When once noticed or felt, however, it remains a permanent impression of such a pleasing nature that one is always glad to duplicate the favorable sensation at the earliest opportunity.

Politeness is a virtue not always easy to practice in this age when so many customers are a continual provocation to the exercise of an opposite manner. Too many are in the habit of considering one who sells goods as a common enemy, whom it is lawful to circumvent, even at the expense of truth. They accordingly decry the quality of goods, hector, contradict and abuse the one who for the time happens to be the unfortunate victim to their bad manners. In the face of false statements made to serve a purpose, or coarse, insulting insinuations, the average dealer or clerk deserves all credit he receives for keeping his equanimity under pressure. But when people of a higher moral tone, equally lacking the spirit of true courtesy, use their whims and preverse fancies as scorpion whips to goad the hard-worked employes, who vainly attempt to please, the Mark Tapley of trade becomes a conspicuous figure, entitled to special merit.

"Among the large number who in the way of business are brought in contact with the public, politeness finds expression in various ways. Yet the ways of some who really mean to please do not always attract nor conciliate. The quiet, even tempered business man with no pretence to polish can win the approval of the public where pompous and overbearing civility is sure to fail. He will also have an advantage over the one whose politeness is for revenue only, and whose business tag is visible through all of his pretence. For, like a garment, genuine courtesy looks best on the person that it best fits. As in the different shades of color in the garment it proclaims the tone of the wearer as well as the personality.

"No refinement of manner, however, can gild a bargain in the eye of a purchaser the second time if the goods first bought have not proved to be as represented. In the competition of seasonable or fashionable goods the tendency is in advertising, to tempt the customer

by statements that, while technically true, create a false impression and pave the way to disappointment. The gilt of polite behavior cannot make these varnished temptations always pass current in open market. When found lacking in the intrinsic value of truthfulness they are often discounted more than the alloy denotes, because of the damage done to confidence. The most important thing is to have whatever is done or said in the way of good feeling or kindly personal attention be at the time just what it is intended to secure.

"The influence of refinement and surface polish upon trade is felt mostly in certain lines and to a limited degree as an incidental attraction. It is not the main feature that dominates the avenue to commercial success. But when business is conducted wholly through personal contact and solicitation the best manners and most polished address win against all competitors.

"In this money getting age, men often forget, in the rush for wealth, gems by the wayside that, if seen and gathered, would enrich the possessor by making his material gains more available for permanent happiness. The small courtesies that smooth the asperities of trade—the sterling honesty of purpose that would rather give or lose than take another's disadvantage—the sweet charity that places in needy hands unnumbered and unrecorded gifts prompted alone by an impulse that knows no change through fear or hope of reward—and above all that happens in the vicissitudes of commercial life, the right way as blazed by conscience is the only true way to final success—these are the "gems of purest ray serene" without which no business man, though possessed of technical knowledge and insight into human nature beyond the ordinary, is perfectly equipped for his calling."

## HOW'S BUSINESS.

Whether or not your business will be a success depends largely upon your will. If you are of a morose disposition and are constantly examining adverse circumstance, adding to it the weight of your doleful impressions and throwing it on the failure side of the scale, you are pretty certain to tip the balance in that direction. On the other hand, if you seek for the elements that make for success and make them weighty with pluck and determination, throw them on the right side of the balance and keep them there, you will be very likely to keep the beam tipped in that direction. Even if a merchant's affairs are in a pretty shaky condition, he can reverse matters by a heroic exertion of will power. This is well illustrated by the influence of the mind over the body. The state of mind of an invalid influences largely his recovery from disease. Where the mind is cheerful and the patient can be influenced to believe that recovery will be speedy advance towards health will be far more rapid than those of a melancholy turn. And again, where the patient makes up his mind with firm determination that he will get well, this result usually follows; while the converse is frequently true.—*Commercial Bulletin*.

## SHIPWRECKS OF A YEAR.

We hear much of the finely modeled ships that are built from time to time, but little of the many vessels that are lost. Occasionally public interest is excited by heroism displayed in saving a shipwrecked crew; but in many cases the loss of a good ship is only indicated by a line or two in the list of casualties in the daily papers. Who, for instance, would think that last year sixty eight vessels, the larger proportion ships, sailed from some port or other, and according to Lloyd's annual return, never again were heard of, and these, too, were fairly goos-sized crafts. What of the crew?

The story can never be completed—the stuff may be but guessed at. And Britain and her colonies have more than their fair share, for while we make up half of the total losses, we contribute 28,500 out of the 49,100 tons which has thus passed out of record. The total of wrecks, too, seems large—1,086 vessels of 619,916 tons, but it must be remembered that there are probably afloat on the high seas over twenty millions of shipping, which fact, although it increases the surprise that so many vessels should be lost without any news, indicates generally a fairly low ratio of loss—3 to 4 per cent tonnage. It may be accepted as a testimony in favor of steel that of the total tonnage lost only 12 per cent was constructed of this metal, while 41 per cent was of iron and 47 per cent was wood and composite vessels.

As to nationality, we find that the "death rate" of tonnage on Britain's fleet is 2.67 per cent, and of the colonies 3.13 per cent. The highest rate is attained by Norway with 5.24 per cent; Russia being next with 3.49 per cent, and Sweden with 3.35 per cent; while the lowest rate is Spain, with 1.65 per cent. The sailing shipowning States comes highest. Britain has a heavier loss to ships than steamers—3.90 per cent of the former against 2.30 per cent of the latter, her total losses for the year being 315 vessels of 282,912 tons.—*Engineering*.

## THE LABOR OUTLOOK IN GREAT BRITAIN.

A cable report from London says: "The labor outlook in the large manufacturing and shipbuilding centres of Great Britain is very threatening. A crisis is probable in the cotton trade that promises to have more widespread results than any of the previous troubles that have occurred between the masters and operatives. And in the shipbuilding trade of the Clyde only one-third of the berths are occupied, and no new orders are in hand. It is said that 15,000 hands who were employed in various capacities about the yards are idle, and those who are still at work are working on short time. To make matters worse for the employees, the masters have now decided to make a general reduction in wages and have announced that engineers, iron foundry and shipbuilders will henceforth receive 10 per cent. less money for their labor than heretofore. This reduction is to take effect on October 10.

The Clyde miners have also been notified that their wages will be reduced 6d per day on and after the 10th of the current month.