



THE DUTIES OF SALESMEN.

Editor DRY GOODS REVIEW:

WE find some very strange statements in the DRY GOODS REVIEW, and it is evident, to one trained to the business, that these statements do not come from one who has had a practical counter training. Some time ago you had an article on the duty and necessity of salesmen or women having a knowledge of the stocks under their charge. This you illustrated by a highly colored pen picture of the lady matching the ribbon. If that article was inspired it must have come from some very smoky corner in dreamland. In your last issue you have an article "Hints to Employes," where you pen-picture a New Jersey episode. Mr. Editor, is that not overdrawn and too thin? You can just fancy this New Jersey store with only one salesman, who seems to be perfectly indifferent to all his surroundings, and more particularly to the wants of his customers. I think that the writer of that article must have gone into some tobacconist's at some cross-roads, away from civilization.

After rapping the employes over the knuckles in that peculiar fashion, embellishing your remarks with such artistic pen pictures as your New Jersey experience, you must have a fling at the employers, taking them to task for their apparent inhumanity.

In your hints to employers you have drawn a wet blanket over the article to employes, by its inconsistency. You asked to have chairs provided for employes when they have nothing to do. You might have added lounges, cigars and dime novels to make the thing complete, and then have Parliament petitioned to enact a law for the carrying out of these reforms.

Now sir, who ever heard of a dry goods clerk who has been trained to the business, that during his hours of labor needs ever be without something to do? The selling of goods must be paramount in the minds of every dry goods clerk, but that is not all. He has his stock to keep in saleable shape. He has to learn the values of the different goods entrusted to his care, and literary idiosyncrasies only tend to hurt young men and poison their minds with other matter than their duty to themselves and their employers.

I am sure even you would consider a farmer insane who would provide chairs and umbrellas for his hands in the harvest field.

They are laborers in the battle of life, and deserve the same maternal nursing as the dry goods clerk. I am sure salesmen of spirit would not thank any employer for introducing chairs for their use. How effeminate it would make them. It is a well-known fact that the less work you have to do the less you want to do, and the introducing of chairs would soon so demoralise the business, that indolence would be at a premium. If this will bring out an intelligent discussion on the duties and relative relation of employer and employe it will have attained a very desirable end.

Yours, etc.,

SALESMAN.

St. Mary's, Sept. 1.

[We are glad to hear from our correspondent, who has as much right to his opinions as we have to ours. No doubt the

arguments lately quoted from a contemporary, to which "Salesman" refers, are intended to apply to the young girls in large city stores more than elsewhere. Yet, we do contend that a good salesman anywhere is good property, and should be well treated so as to be as fresh at 5 p.m. as at 10 p.m. A lounge and a cigar are not necessary to effect this. As to the general question of the relations between employer and employe these columns are open at any time for such a discussion, and we shall be glad to hear from "Salesman" again.—EDITOR DRY GOODS REVIEW.]

CAUTIOUS BUYING.

IN looking over the columns of a Chicago contemporary the other day, the following item caught the eye: "It cannot be too emphatically stated to the dry goods merchants of the west that they will make the mistake of their lives if they fail to give full and prompt attention to buying fall stocks. Their very act of buying freely will be enough to re-open the cotton and woolen mills and create the coveted link of confidence."

This is intended to meet the situation in the States, where business is bad, and dealers are doubtless afraid to purchase to the usual figure in view of the threat to alter the currency system.

But the remark has interest for us, too. In this country there has been noticeable in some quarters a tendency to buy less than usual this season. Caution is a good thing in its way, and THE REVIEW is no friend to overloading. But the merchant must take care not to fall into the other trap. Remember that holding back is a game that the customer can play at as well as the dealer. If you haven't the goods when the notion to buy seizes the customer, the chances are against a sale later on. The season changes, and the man who wanted underwear, or the woman who wanted something bright for a blouse, may decide to do without. Catch the early trade, especially in dull times, is a good rule.

BIG SALARIED TRAVELERS.

The salaries earned by some of the foreign travelers of the Bradford houses are very large. A gentleman, says The DRAPERS Record, who had a dispute with his present principals, made overtures to another Yorkshire house to represent them throughout the world, and the terms asked were £600 expenses, £1,000 salary and 1 per cent. commission. He produced proofs that his average annual turnover was £90,000, and, provided he was able to do the same turnover for his new firm as for his old, which there was no reason to doubt, both being old-established houses of similar standing, his net income would not have been less than £1,900 per annum. The gentleman referred to speaks seven languages fluently, including English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. He asserts that as safe a trade can be done in Persia as in Birmingham by one who knows the ropes.

A CHINESE DRUMMER.

It is announced that a British firm, which does a considerable business with the far east, is about to try the experiment of appointing as a commercial traveler a Chinaman. It is said that this native "trade drummer" will spend the next winter in exploiting the Celestial Empire on behalf of the firm in question, and that he will carry with him a well chosen assortment of British textiles. The experiment will doubtless be watched with interest.—Textile Mercury.