

HOW TO MAKE MONEY.

Every merchant is supposed to be in business for the purpose of making money, at least that is what people think, says the *Commercial Tribune*, yet how many of them are working for the benefit of their landlord or some firm who has made a reputation on a certain brand of goods, and who generally allows the trade to sell it on a small per cent? A grocer who is a good salesman can sell anything he desires—we do not mean snide goods by this remark, but we mean the public is not so much wedded to a particular brand as people think. If a manufacturer expects to make all the money out of the goods they sell, and do not want to allow the merchant even a fair per centage, the merchant by a little extra talking can sell other goods in place of them and make money. It is ridiculous and nonsensical to handle goods simply for the sake of handling them. If you can not make money on them, leave them alone. If you find you have to keep them in stock, do so, but never sell them unless a customer demands it. Always push the article you can make money on, and instruct your clerk to do likewise.

MISREPRESENTING GOODS.

There is little question but what, theoretically, the average merchant subscribes to the highest ethics of shopkeeping. He finds, indeed, a certain moral satisfaction when giving his concurrence to the opinions of speakers and writers on trade topics, who assume to teach from an elevated point of view, and though it is a question when, after all, in the practical application of such theories, there is not a great deal of divergence from the theory itself, possibly the temptations to have a lower code of business ethics than what is conceived to be absolutely just, has its strongest force in the matter of representing goods to customers.

An esteemed English contemporary suggests that "there is a song of a not very elevated character which carries the refrain, 'It's all right, if you love the girl,' and we fear," it adds, "there may be here and there a tradesman who sings as a lullaby to his own conscience, 'It's all right, if you sell the goods.' But is it? Is it even all safe and prudent and good policy?"

While this may be regarded as shifting the question to a much lower plane, it has the advantage of attracting more attention. Our English contemporary argues that the chief reason for a lowering in ethical consideration of the practical side of this question is that "we all know how to live uprightly and won't, whereas we do not know how to make fortunes, and wish we did." It, undoubtedly, is true that business morally has a much better chance if the odds are in favor of its paying a dividend in hard cash.

The solution of this question in a way that deals fairly with the consumer and satisfies him, and justifies the merchant's own conscience, even when tried rigidly by the standard of the highest business ethics, is to handle only good goods.

We have no question that a man is a better man, better satisfied with himself, better contented with his business, more

successful in his business, more popular with his customers, and more likely to obtain larger custom, if he sells goods that he does not feel he is compelled to misrepresent in order to "make them move." Good goods at fair prices, when put into practical effect, therefore, satisfies not only the moral but the material side of the merchant's life. There can be no possible reason why a merchant should not adopt that motto as his own and put it into practical operation. Poor goods at any price do not pay in the long run. Good goods at a fair price always pay. — *Michigan Tradesman*.

ABOUT SIZES.

In shirts, one size is one-half an inch in length of the neck-band. With this should be associated the length of the sleeve, since men of the same size necks vary widely in the length of their arms. The best stock shirt manufacturers make six lengths of sleeves, and the figures indicative thereof are usually stamped under the size mark of the neck-band. In custom shirts many other measures are taken, but the neck-band is the one used in naming the size. In collars and cuffs one size is one-half inch in their length. In undershirts one size is two inches in the measurement around the chest, men's ordinary sizes ranging from thirty-four to forty-four. A size in drawer consists of two inches in the waist circumference, the range being from twenty-eight to forty-four. In vest, coat, and overcoat one size is one inch in the chest measure, but the dimensions for a coat should be taken over the vest, and for an overcoat over the coat. In pantaloons a size is one inch in the length around the waist, but the inseam measure also is usually employed, and its variations are likewise noted as one inch to a size. In glove—in kid, and other snug-fitting leather goods, a size is one-quarter inch. The measurement is taken for stock gloves around the full width of the palm, but conjoined with this must be some judgment as to other proportions. In heavier street gloves the sizes sometimes go by half inches, while in most fabric gloves the differences are not carefully adjusted, since the elastic character of the materials renders this alike difficult and less necessary. These latter are designated as 7, 8, and 9, or by outer figures, indicating naturally an inch to a size; but the differences are not so great, being probably about a half inch to a size. In hosiery one size is one-half inch in length of the foot. Between this fact and the shoe sizes some confusion arises in people's minds, since in shoes a full size means a difference of one-third of an inch in length. This is not expressed as one-third, but in even numbers—6, 7, 8, 9, 10. The figures do not represent the actual length of the foot, as do the sock sizes, but start from an arbitrary base, thus avoiding the use of fractions in the expression.—*Ec*.

The British Columbia Iron Works Co., of Vancouver, purpose increasing the capital stock of the company from \$50,000 to \$250,000, by the issue of 4,000 shares of new stock of \$50 each.

DRY GOODS MEN COMBINE.

A combination that represents a gigantic dry goods trust has been formed by the leading importers and jobbers of New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Already the firms included in the agreement have promulgated a circular which cuts down the discounts to retailers and shuts off all bonuses and concessions to the trade, such as dating bills ahead. A second step is naturally the reduction of employees' wages, and this has already been decided upon by a majority of the New York houses which are parties to the combination.

The New York houses which have signed "the gentlemen's agreement" are the H. B. Claflin Company, which does a business of forty millions a year; Hilton, Hughes & Denning, who conduct the establishment founded by the late A. T. Stewart, the merchant prince; E. S. Jaffray & Co., Sweetser, Pembroke & Co., Mills & Gibb; Tefft, Weller & Co., Lee, Tweedy & Co., and Dunham, Buckley & Co.

The Philadelphia members include every large dry goods firm in that city. Hood, Fouldrod & Co., the house in which Postmaster-General John Wanamaker is a special partner; Sharpless Bros., Baily & Co., and Wood, Brown & Co., are members. The big Boston houses include Jordan, Marsh & Co., Morris, White & Co., and Shepard, Norwell & Co.; and in Baltimore are Hurst, Parnell & Co.; Hodge Bros., and Armstrong, Cator & Co. The yearly business done by all these firms amounts to nearly half a billion dollars, it is said.

The members of the combination say that the Chicago firms and the large conservative New York houses, like Arnold, Constable & Co. and James McCreery & Co., are with them in spirit. Although they have not signed the "gentlemen's agreement," they are working on the same lines as those who have.

An attempt at a similar combination was made some years ago, but the compact was broken in so many individual cases that the embryo trust fell through. Last spring, Townsend Sharpless, of Sharpless Bros., of Philadelphia, succeeded in forming the dry goods men of that city into a close combination and then he went over to New York and began missionary work there. He was so successful that by June 1 eight of the largest houses in New York had signed a pledge which is expressed in the circulars sent to customers all over the country, which limited time bills to sixty days.

During the past twenty-five years, it had come to be the practice in the trade to give 7 per cent. discount on regular goods. Competition became so active that bills were dated thirty, sixty, ninety and even one hundred and twenty days ahead. This practice enabled the retailer to take advantage of the discount for cash and the ten and thirty days' discounts while he was really enjoying three and four months' time. The "Gentlemen's Agreement" has put a stop to that. The signers to the agreement have also pledged themselves not to give a bonus to salesmen. This was one of the methods employed to secure orders, the so-called "salesmen's bonus" going directly to the customer.