

## THE SPOOL COTTON COMBINATION.

The mills and buildings of the various firms in the great cotton thread association of Great Britain, if put side by side, would extend from Toronto Bay nearly to Bloor street, and these buildings are from two to six stories in height. Illustrations of them are given in the mammoth fall number of the *Drapers' Record*, a compendium of information and opinion about the drapery trade that is nothing short of wonderful. First of these thread establishments described is the Ferguslie mills of J. & P. Coats, Limited, at Paisley, by the River Cart. Mr. James Coats, the founder of this firm, was a handloom weaver a hundred years ago, and his wife used to sew muslins, employing several women thereat. In 1826 he built a small factory to make thread, and extended the works as the demand increased, which was vastly greater after the sewing machine was invented. These mills now cover an area of 60 acres and employ 5,000 hands, the steam-power of their twelve engines being 14,000 horse. The capital of the company is £3,750,000 sterling, and it has establishments at Pawtucket, U.S., and in Montreal.

The firm which has become Messrs. Clark & Co., Ltd., of Paisley, originally manufactured silk heddle twine, but the raw material ran short in consequence of the operations of Napoleon, who destroyed all the silk he found in Hamburg. Mr. Peter Clark then invented a method of making fine cotton yarn by doubling it on the principle of rope cables. This proved a great success. A demand sprung up for this class of manufacture and a factory was erected at Seedhill, Paisley. From that time the industry rapidly developed, machinery and steam power were introduced, extensions and additions were made, until the Anchor Thread Mills now consist of five enormous mills, whose three tall smoke stacks and tower-like buildings indicate a wondrous industrial activity. The steam engines employed in these factories are amongst the largest and finest specimens of mill engineering in Scotland. The factories of John Clark, jr., & Co., Ltd., of Glasgow, whose annual output is a very large one, are also connected with this firm.

Still another of the great thread-producing houses has Paisley for its headquarters, Kerr & Co., limited, which has the letters N.M.T. for trade-mark. But compared with the foregoing two, this is a modern concern, having been established in 1868 by two brothers, Mr. Robert Kerr and Mr. John P. Kerr, previously power-loom weavers; and although they continued their original business, their time and energies were chiefly directed towards making their new venture successful. The founders of the firm all died within a period of six years, and as practically all the shares were held in trust for the children of the late Mr. J. P. Kerr, his trustees entered into negotiations with Messrs. J. & P. Coats, Limited, which resulted in that firm purchasing the shares and acquiring the business of Kerr & Company, Limited, as from August 1st, 1895. Messrs. Kerr's works at Underwood, Paisley, are well equipped, and so recently as 1892, new triple-expansion engines of the latest and most approved type were put down, and other extensions and improvements made.

But the Scotch were not allowed to monopolize the cotton thread trade. The business of Messrs. James Chadwick & Brother, Limited, at Bolton in Lancashire, was founded in 1820 upon a modest scale, but their mills now cover upwards of ten acres. The buildings are fire-proof and have Grinnell Sprinklers to protect the machinery and contents. The spinning mill is a vast structure containing 8,000 mule and ring spindles. A branch establishment at Staveley, near Windermere, gives occupation to 100 hands, whose sole business it is to make the bobbins which are used in the spinning mill. The machinery has been erected on a colossal scale, one engine alone, which has been christened the "Iron Duke," of between 1,800 and 2,000 horse-power, having a fly-wheel seventy-five tons in weight and 24 feet in diameter. In addition to the home industry, branch factories in Russia, the United States, and Canada, give employment to three thousand hands.

The mills of Messrs. Jonas Brook & Bros., Ltd., are situated at Huddersfield, Eng., and were started about 1810 by Mr. Jonas Brook, who, with his father and brothers, introduced the manufacture of sewing cotton into his native county, and pitched upon the quiet little valley of Meltham, about five miles from Hud-

dersfield, in which to try his experiment. Factories were built and the foundations were laid of a town which has now a population of 5,000. In addition to the Meltham mills the firm have one at Holmfirth, and altogether about two thousand hands are employed, more than two-thirds of them being women and girls.

## WHY ONE STEAMER IS IN COMMISSION.

A certain corporation in Chicago owns a large freight steamer, and recently the stockholders were called together to decide whether the steamer should be laid up or not. At the meeting the stockholders unanimously voted that she be kept moving. No two of the stockholders agreed as to why she should be kept moving, but they were all in business and each one had his reasons, and they were as follows:

The vessel agent because he wanted to charter her.

The master because he wanted to sail her.

The groceryman because he wanted to supply her.

The coal man because he wanted to coal her.

The ship chandler because he wanted to furnish her.

The tug man because he wanted to tow her.

The dry dock man because he wanted to dock her.

The insurance agent because he wanted to earn the premium.

The surveyors because she might have to be surveyed.

The marine lawyer because she might get into collisions.

They all agreed, that with a fearless and active master, activity with loss was more profitable than inactivity without loss. Of course everybody connected with the steamer was good, even the insurance companies, and in case she should be lost all would feel sorry, even the insurance companies, and so she is kept moving.—*Marine Review*.

## BUSINESS METHODS IN NEW ORLEANS.

New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Within the past five or six years there has been a remarkable change in the methods of handling business. Nowhere has the change been more marked than in this city. Formerly it was a custom, especially in the large wholesale houses, to sell on long credits. Naturally the prices were put away up in order to counter-balance the risk of losses which attends such a system. The new way is to sell for cash, make a small profit and to conduct operations on a gigantic scale. The evolution has been accomplished with greater rapidity here than in most other large American cities, nor is yet altogether complete, so that there may be seen the anomaly of great business houses running on the new basis side by side with small firms pegging along in the old rut. The contrast is not the least singular of all those contrasts for which the Crescent City is renowned.

## FOUR TRADE ABUSES.

FAKE SALES, EAGER INSURANCE AGENTS, LONG DATING AND POOR DRUMMERS.

The following paper is contributed to the *Dry Goods Economist* by J. P. Rothman, of Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

The wrongs and abuses of trade are many.

First—And greatest of them all is that of the unscrupulous hawkers and peddlers that drop in a town over night and are allowed to open up a "bankrupt" or other fake sales without paying a dollar, in the way of taxes or other benefits, to a town or city. They sell the poorest class of goods obtainable and impose on the ignorant purchaser who thinks his home dealer is getting rich too fast.

Second—Insurance agents too anxious to do business with such customers. Every honest retail merchant ought to cancel every policy that he holds in such agent's office, which would remedy this very quickly, as the honest merchant is in the majority.

Third—Long dating is another drawback to good, substantial business methods. It handicaps the man who intends to pay his bills. With the present system of dating a man can do business pretty nearly a year without making a payment, so you can see the chances for fraud in this direction. Goods should be sold only on short time.

Fourth—Jobbers sending out incompetent salesmen work very much to the detriment of the better class of retailers. A salesman who is not posted in the lines that he represents cannot sell to the experienced retailer; so what is he to do but sell to anybody that will buy of him, which will be the merchant that just starts in to sink his little boodle, and during the process is hindering legitimate trade? The remedy is, hire better men, sell goods closer, and just what the locality is in need of. You will then have fewer losses.

## THE ELECTRIC WIRES.

The Court of Appeals has decided that the Legislature, which creates municipal corporations, has also power to define what privileges, necessary to the carrying on of their business, gas, electric and other companies may enjoy in a municipality's streets. This will be regarded as a grievance by some; but it does not in the least alter the corporation's duty in the matter. The carrying, for the use of the citizens, of gas, electricity or any other force or power, of general convenience, is as legitimate a use of the streets as any other. It is the council's business to make such provision in the matter as will secure the desired end with the greatest economy and least inconvenience. Failure to appreciate this fact in time has led to the recent unnecessary litigation, and may in the future result in undesirable plans for conduits or other underground means of carriage of electric wires, etc., being adopted. For this, however, the companies are not to blame. The matter has been one of public discussion for years, and ample notice has been had that it would have to be dealt with in Montreal. If the companies, when they are ready to put their wires underground, find the corporation is neither prepared with a plan for them to work on nor willing to formulate one, they are right in going ahead on their own responsibility. Neither the courts nor the law are to be blamed for a municipality's unreadiness. It should be the council's duty now to do what it can, in co-operation with the companies, to devise a system that will secure the end desired most cheaply and effectively.—*Montreal Gazette*.

## COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

There is a plain-spoken and very entertaining chapter in Defoe's "Complete English Tradesman," dealing with commercial correspondence, and the essentials of it are thus summed up: "A tradesman's letter should be plain, concise, and to the purpose; no quaint expressions, no book-phrases, no flourishes, and yet they must be full and sufficient to express what he means, so as not to be doubtful, much less unintelligible." We need not stop to criticise or to amplify this conclusion, and only bring it forward to ask how it squares with a lithographed circular issued by an eminent mantle house to introduce a fresh traveller in these terms: "Here is not a Goliath in strength or stature, but little and good. You may safely place great confidence in him. He will faithfully endeavor to serve you. I hope you will kindly favor him with a look, and send him on his way rejoicing."

## UP-TO-DATE MEDICAL ADVERTISING.

Visitors to Paris will be familiar with the advertisements with which the walls of the *chalets de necessite* and such-like useful structures are liberally supplied. From a perusal of these they learn that certain diseases can be cured by Dr. X. (dr. Speaks English, *sic*) in a surprisingly short time and with the greatest ease. But it has been reserved for the present year to show us the length to which such effrontery can go. On the drop-curtain of a certain theatre there may now be read, between two other advertisements relating to beer and pincenez, the following: "Docteur Medecin Specialiste, vingt-cinq annees de pratique, de midi a neuf heures du soir." Then follows the address.—*Lancet*.

—The average daily consumption of water in London during July from the city's pumping stations and from other sources of public supply was 231,606,427 gallons. For a population estimated at 5,604,966, this represents a daily consumption per head of 41.32 gallons.