

POLITE ATTENTION BEHIND THE COUNTER.

To Editor of the B.C. COMMERCIAL JOURNAL.

In your issue of May 31st, under the above heading, was an article which very much surprised me until I came to "the writer has had many such experiences." Well, he must be a very poor judge of human nature when he employs such men, or he must be one of those fawning men who expected a clerk to turn his other cheek to get a second smite. I have been a clerk for over fifteen years in the business and was never yet accused of impoliteness, though my patience has been often taxed to the utmost. Some ladies will come to the store not once but many times during the week just to see, and of course the clerk will exercise all his powers of fascination to induce them to buy, and yet ineffectively. It does not take a very brilliant salesman to discern the buying trader, and I should ask the gentleman how he would feel if a clerk, while matching a piece of goods which would perhaps benefit the treasury 25 cts. and more than likely consume half an hour, would see another lady standing by desiring to make some more extensive purchases and getting impatient at the delay? Now such a clerk cannot feel very easy as he is likely to lose that sale by some other man being disengaged, and hence many clerks get a little irritated while being thus hampered. I have always made it a point to curb my impatience till the customer was gone and then let fly my steam—not in swearing, as I never swear, but in pity for such women who have not the common sense to know that many clerks depend a good deal on their sales. There are lady shoppers, who are tired at home and want a little exercise, make the store the object of their cure. They will tell the clerk they do not want to buy but would like to see so and so. In the meantime, they become engrossed in some pretty fabric or notion and will never think of extricating the clerk to allow him to wait on some of the many customers who want to buy, and should he unfortunately happen to leave them, he may be pounced on by such a "gentleman" or floor-walker and told to get his hat. For what? Just for benefitting the house. As these shopping ladies are in every city and are the bane of the dry goods clerk, I have seen some first class salesmen sent off for that alone. Again, a merchant will sometimes not consider his clerks as anything but machines, will never try to gain their respect, and think that by so doing he gets more out of them. Quite the opposite. The successful merchant will have clerks long in his employment, and win their respect by kindness and concension. Such men feel pleasure in advancing the interests of their employer, and perform their duties with cheerfulness and satisfaction. Many times when I knew I acted for the best interests of the house, I was snapped at before a customer, to the detriment of the business and the lowering of the employer. The latter too often takes advantage of his position, loses his temper and a good man at the same time. It requires a sympathy between employer and employee, and I would respect the man who would dismiss

his clerk at once if not suitable to him instead of holding him to satisfy his brutal temper.

P. J. W.

Alberni, Vancouver Island, June 26, '02.

TO FOSTER ORIENTAL TRADE.

Speaking of the announcement that the Dominion Government will shortly appoint a commercial agent at Yokohama and another at one of the ports in China, the *News-Advertiser* says: The trade which has already been developed between Canada and the countries on the eastern shores of the Pacific amply justifies the grant of the subsidy by the Imperial and Dominion Governments and the large expenditure in the building of the steamers. At the same time there is no doubt that the business can be largely extended when the people on both sides of the Pacific are better informed as to what either has to sell which the other needs. To facilitate the intercourse and afford commercial information will undoubtedly tend to extend the trade, and the appointment of resident agents will be of much assistance in these matters. It is, of course, to be presumed that a judicious selection will be made in the appointees, and that they will be men well informed on commercial subjects and with zeal enough to take an interest in their duties.

One advantage which the appointment of such agents will afford will be the opportunity which Canadian merchants and manufacturers will have of obtaining reliable information as to the prospect of their wares finding profitable sale in the different cities of Japan and China. The increase in the number of articles now exported to China from San Francisco compared with what was the case when steam communication across the Pacific was first established shows that there is a market there which it will pay to cultivate. At present a prospective shipper must either go himself, send an agent, or trust to the information supplied by firms who may themselves be interested in a trade similar to that in which he proposes to engage. With a resident Canadian Government agent, the merchant or manufacturer will have a source of information not only perfectly trustworthy, but one specially designed for his benefit and aid, and the result of this action on the part of the Government can scarcely fail to yield most important results.

CONCERNING DYNAMITE.

Very few people have a correct idea of what dynamite is, of what it is made, and the uses to which it is put. To the French belongs the honor of its discovery and its practical use.

Nitro-glycerine is the force of all high explosives. Dynamite is the name most usually given to those explosives, though other names are sometimes used.

Dynamite is simply nitro-glycerine mixed with various ingredients. Nitro-glycerine is made by mixing sulphuric and nitric acid with sweet glycerine, the same that is used by the ladies to prevent chapped hands. Mixing the acids and glycerine is where the great danger lies in the making of nitro glycerine. The mixing tank, or agitator, as it is called by dynamite makers, is a large steel tank, filled

inside with many coils of lead pipe, through which, while the mixing is in progress, a constant flow of ice water is maintained. This flow of ice water is used to keep the temperature of the mix below 65 degrees, as above that point it would explode, and a hole in the ground would mark where the factory had been. The nitro-glycerine is stored in large earthenware tanks, which are usually sunk in the ground to guard against blow or severe concussions.

The other ingredients for making dynamite are: Nitrate of soda, which is found only in Chili, carbonate of magnesia, and wood pulp.

Dynamite is put in paper shells, usually 1½ inches in diameter and 8 inches in length, and weighs about one-half pound to each shell or cartridge. It has largely taken the place of black powder for blasting, as it is many hundreds of times stronger, and consequently more economical. It is used chiefly in mining all kinds of ores, coal and rock, and submarine blasting and railroad building. Without its aid many railroads, especially those crossing the Rocky Mountains, could not have been constructed; without it Hell Gate in New York harbor could not have been destroyed, and without it the miner, at prices now paid for mining ores, could not earn his bread.

Dynamite will not explode from any ordinary fall or jar; it will burn without explosion, and freezes at 42 degrees, 10 degrees above ordinary freezing point. The bomb of the anarchist is made of metal or glass, and filled with pure nitro-glycerine, arranged so as to explode by severe contact with any hard object. These bombs are, of course, never made by any reputable dynamite factory.

Five or six millions of dollars are invested in the manufacture of dynamite in the United States, and its use is constantly on the increase. The fumes of nitro-glycerine produce intense headache, which can be cured by taking a very small dose of it internally. —*Detroit Free Press.*

THE COUNTRY STORE.

The country store may be passing away in some localities, especially in the immediate vicinity of the large cities, but if so, it is being transplanted to some virgin soil. A trip through the rural districts anywhere will show the country store to be as numerous and prosperous as ever, although the city grocers are making raids on its reserves by sending out solicitors in wagons. There is evidently a mistake somewhere in the statement that the country store is passing away. What is called the country store in the east is better known as the general store in the south and west, and it can be said that there never were as many general stores as there are now. Indeed, the methods of the country trader are coming to be quite generally adopted by the city stores, and there are many localities in which trade lines cannot be sharply defined. The farmer who has to drive in a long distance does not always want to run from store to store, but prefers to make all his purchases of one merchant, thus avoiding a duplication of accounts as well as a loss of time. The country store will exist and flourish as long as farmers continue to follow the pursuits of agriculture. —*Exchange.*