

THE CUTTER.

The *Grocers' Criterion* says: Many smart storekeepers think it is an enterprising piece of business to undersell their competitors, but we have an idea that more harm is done to the business of a town by this system of trading than profit is made out of it. The minute a merchant begins to cut prices it demoralizes the entire business of a town, for it compels the other merchants to fall in line and to also sell their goods at a reduction in order to hold the trade of their customers. In the aggregate they do not sell many more goods than they would otherwise have disposed of if price cutting had not prevailed, for as a rule customers do not buy more goods than they require for their wants and necessities. Price cutting produces ill feeling and leads to reckless rivalry and results in disaster.

Our advice to our readers is not to cut prices when it can possibly be avoided. If a rival in town inaugurates the system go and have a friendly talk with him and show him the folly of the course he is pursuing. There is neither sense nor reason in doing business without a profit, and the selling of goods below cost is frequently an act of downright dishonesty, for it not infrequently results in the defrauding of creditors and the closing out of an establishment at 10 and 20 cents on the dollar.

SALMON.

There is no change in the situation. There is no market to-day, for the very good reason that the stock is reduced to the smallest volume ever known at this time of the year, and it is now entirely in the hands of the jobbing trade, who as a rule are holding their small stocks very firmly regarding the local situation as a very strong one and considering salmon good stock to hold.

There could be no occasion for any alarm locally, however, for the reason that the stock here would hardly tide over until the opening of a new season. Just at the present moment, both locally and through the interior of the state, the distributive demand seems to be particularly active, and the present order of trade will just about exhaust the stock by the time the first net is set for salmon in April.

The prospect for the new season never was brighter than it is to day, and it is the general calculation of the industry that the season just opening will prove a memorable one in the history of salmon packing on this coast, and there is good reason for these sanguine expectations of a season of satisfactory accomplishments in the thorough organization of the industry which has been effected through the united and harmonious action of the packers.

The Alaska packers have been organized for several seasons, but this year they pursue a different plan from any that has been followed heretofore. They have organized a great stock company that includes all the Alaska packers, save one or two of the little ones who are not strong enough to interfere with the plans of the company, and in the coming season the Alaska pack will be made and handled

practically as if it were the product of a single cannery. Under this new arrangement, it is of course possible to very materially reduce the expense of packing and to largely increase the profits of the packers. There is good reason then for their hopeful anticipations.

The Columbia River packers have an organization that will attempt operations on the co-operative plan the first time this season. It will find success in its earliest efforts, and there is good reason now to say that the industry on the Columbia never again will fall into the condition into which it had lapsed a few years ago.

The British Columbia packers likewise are thoroughly organized. The three organizations will co-operate as far as they can in the coming season, and the practical effect of this course will be such a unification of industrial interests as never before has been seen. It is to be reasoned that a season of the most flattering order of experiences is just before us.—*S.F. Herald of Trade.*

COSTLY RAILROADS IN SOUTH AMERICA.

The Oroya railroad over the Andes, connecting Peru with the basin of the Amazon, will be open to traffic soon, according to the announcement. This road, although but 200 miles long, has cost about \$50,000,000, and it was begun twenty-six years ago by Henry Meiggs, the story of whose extraordinary career reads like a romance. Its construction was stopped by the ruin of Peru in the Chilean war, and it has finally been completed through the efforts of Michael Grace, brother of ex-Mayor Grace, of New York, who succeeded in "financiering" the enterprise in the English money market. The opening of this railroad is considered an event of very great commercial importance, inasmuch as the next century will witness an extraordinary development of South America. As a feat in railroad engineering, this road is perhaps the most wonderful on record.

HOW GOLD IS SHIPPED.

La Bretagne, which sailed from New York for France recently, carried as a part of her cargo over \$3,000,000 in gold. "In shipping gold," says the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, "apparently as little care is taken as in shipping oats. On the west side of the New York sub-Treasury building is the gold vault. This vault is divided into compartments for storing the precious metal, and the total capacity of this vault is \$72,000,000. When the coins are received at the Treasury they are put up in bags, each holding \$5,000, and when delivered to purchasers the gold is counted by the bag.

"The bankers who buy the gold for shipments do not count the coins; they take Uncle Sam's word for it that each bag contains its \$5,000.

"Barclay & Son, the truckmen who handle the gold for nearly all the shippers," continues the *Advertiser*, "had an ordinary open truck ready and the bags were carried from the Treasury doors and loaded up. Four or five armed men ride on the truck to the bank, where the bags are again counted and put in strong kegs

(not quite so large as nail kegs) which hold \$50,000 each. Then the kegs are sealed by the banks and the same truckmen take the kegs to the steamer, when they are placed in the strong room and a guard is kept over them night and day until the kegs are delivered into the hands of the consignees. This strong room is usually underneath the cabin in the centre of the ship, and is accessible only through the officers' quarters."

The gold shipped by La Bretagne, weighs about six and one-half tons. The cost of shipping it is very heavy. For cartage the cost is \$1 per keg, and for cooerage \$2 per keg. The rate charged by the steamships is one eighth of 1 per cent. of the value and the insurance is one-tenth of 1 per cent., which make the total cost of transportation about \$2,310 per \$1,000,000.

A TORONTO DRUMMER'S NERVE.

A Toronto drummer had borrowed \$10 from a Dundas merchant, and for a year had been calmly destroying all the angry duns which the merchant sent. One day the Dundas man went to Toronto blazing with rage, and determined to order his winter goods from another firm.

He walked into the drummer's office with fire in his eyes. But it had no effect on the agent. The latter grasped his hand, and inquired about all the folks.

"That's all right," said the Dundas man, "but will I have to take my money out in bluff?"

"My dear fellow," said the agent, "I must confess I am ashamed of myself, but really the matter always seemed to slip my mind. I cannot tell you how badly I feel about it. Just step this way and I will get it for you."

Then going to the bookkeeper he said: "Just let Mr. J. have \$10, will you, Fred?"

The bookkeeper handed over the money without any trouble, and the Dundas man became very strongly of the opinion that he had made a mistake in forming such an unfavorable estimate of the agent. His manner changed, and, after talking awhile, the two became as close friends as ever. The Dundas man finally gave his order and went home, satisfied that he had made a mistake and atoned for it.

In due time the order arrived. With it came the bill. The Dundas man looked it over, and when he reached the last item opened his eyes very wide. This was the item:

To borrowed money.....\$10
The Dundas man now gets his orders filled elsewhere.

Saskatchewan settlers are agitating for the erection of that district into a province.

It is stated on the authority of an officer of the Reading Coal and Iron Company that coal is to be reduced from 25 cents to 50 cents a ton on April 1.

The London Board of Trade has joined in the agitation in favor of the Government assisting in the establishment of a fast Atlantic steamship line.

Dr. Norvin Green, the lately deceased president of the Western Union Telegraph Company, left a fortune of \$750,000 and no will. Under Kentucky law, one third of this goes to the widow, the balance being divided between his six children.