

FOREIGN TRADE—CONCERNING OUR NEIGHBORS' TASTES.

A gentleman who has travelled much and has a large interest in American export trade said, in conversation the other day, that the principal drawback to a wider extension of American commerce in certain parts of the world is that manufacturers in the United States do not sufficiently study the wants, the customs and the tastes of their prospective customers. "For example," he said, "a certain American firm sent some electrical goods, which were decorated in green, to Japan. They did not sell any. No Japanese would bring such things into his house; it would mean an invitation to the evil deities. Green is an evil color in Japan. What a Japanese wants is red things. Upon this simple matter of color rested the failure of that manufacturer to succeed in export trade."

A German employer of labor said: "I like American machines so far as their performance of their work is concerned, but they demoralize my men. They come here in sober colors of paint and with no bright parts. The men who tend the machines do not have any brass to keep clean, or any surfaces to rub, and they get lazy. The German workman needs to be kept busy with things of this sort."

Here, now, are some practical instances of what the American manufacturer must learn before he can attain the widest success in the new field of foreign trade. Do not send to Germany catalogues in the English language, or to Japan things decorated in green, or to the Isthmus of Panama anything with blue spots on it. Make the foreign machinery buyer understand that every part of every machine is replaceable and interchangeable with others. Study the characteristics of the people to whom the goods go, and, instead of laughing at their prejudices, turn them to advantage. Take especial care in the packing of export goods, both to insure against breakage, and because of the fact that certain people wish goods packed in a certain way. In some parts of the world economy is so closely observed that the nails are drawn from packing cases and the lumber used over. To these people the proper sort of lumber and the right kind of nails should be sent. It looks as if we need in this country a commercial kindergarten in which such information as the above may be taught to those of a curious and enquiring mind for their everlasting benefit and profit.

The foregoing is from the Electrical Review. But we shall print below what The Philadelphia Ledger says on the subject of foreign trade, heading it "How Not to get Foreign Trade:"

If to our door should come a peddler selling goods, but without either goods or samples, and, in a language unknown to us, he should describe what he wished to sell and give the lengths, or weights and prices, still in the same language, should we be likely to buy? And then, if we, in a language of which he was ignorant, should tell him what we did want and what we were willing to pay, would it be surprising if we received "Clarke's Commentaries" in three volumes, or a duplex, double-back action door mat and electric bell combined? All this seems absurd, but when one of our Consuls urges upon the State Department that if our manufacturers wish to succeed in the Italian market, the lists of goods should be in the Italian language, that the Italian weights and measures should be used, and the travelling salesman should speak the language of the desired customer, does he not present exactly the same situation?

WOMEN AS ADMINISTRATORS.

Occasionally we hear of women showing unusual capacity in commercial or financial directions. An instance is furnished by an American journal in the person of Miss Baumgarten, of Ohio. Of her The Cincinnati Enquirer says: "Pittsburg enjoys the distinction of having the only woman in this country, or even in the world, who is at the head of a large steel and iron works business. The woman who holds this unique position in industrial circles is Miss Y. R. Baumgarten, who is at the head of the Pittsburg office of Joseph Joseph & Bros., of Cincinnati, dealers in rails, scrap iron, and railway supplies. She is in sole charge of all the business there, which, by the way, is the largest done at any of the branches of the company, and amounts to over a million dollars a year. She buys and sells, inspects, superin-

tends the shipping, and, in fact, does everything that a man would have to do under the circumstances."

United States journals do so thoroughly enjoy, and apparently believe the boasts they often make that their country has the smartest people, the most wonderful institutions and the "biggest things" in the wide world, that one hardly cares to depress them by a little enlightenment as to other countries. But the case cited above happened to remind The Monetary Times man of a woman he had the honor of meeting this month in Montreal, a gentle and graceful, yet a keen and forcible business manager in a position of great responsibility. This is the lady known as "Sister Charles," her full designation being Soeur Charles de la Providence, Superieure Provinciale of the Hospital St. Jean de Dieu, at Longue Pointe, Montreal. The institution in question is an asylum for the insane of the Province of Quebec, and has, or will have when completed 2,200 inmates. According to an arrangement made with the Provincial Government the nuns are charged with the care of the insane. Several years ago it became necessary to provide new premises to house the growing numbers, and the erection of the present huge "Hospital" was begun.

A friend in Montreal describes to us the skill with which the business of construction, the purchase of material and supplies, has been conducted by persons supposed to be mere recluses. He says: "The Mother House of the Providence Nuns is in Fullum street, cor. St. Catharine. There the "councils" are held, and important matters agreed upon. But it is correct to say that the ultimate decision, the bargaining with tenderers, the settlement with contractors, is in the main left to Sister Charles and Sister Maximilien. To the latter one must go for settlements, while the former signs the final documents, be they notes or cheques. And very shrewd, methodical persons they are, with a clearness of head and an acquaintance with mechanics and economics that one does not expect in Sisters of the long black robe.

In this huge building are corridors four hundred feet in length, one east, one west, with twelve separate three-story "pavilions," as the buildings are called, for females, and twelve for males, and two more corridors of 860 feet each. A range of buildings on different levels as you ascend the slope includes the Administration Building, the Chapel, the Power House, the Electric Car House (for an electric car service connects outlying parts of the premises), and the kitchen. The construction and fitting of all these called for big contracts, whether for stone and cement, for structural iron, for Safford radiators, steel-clad baths, metallic roofing, modern ventilation and the most approved heating. And a series of isolated cottages is part of the plan—these to be erected at a later day.

The architect of this immense structure is M. Hypolite Bergeron, who has been some 25 years in the service of the Nuns, and the foreman steam-fitter is M. Oscar Pare, formerly of Boston. There are also officers in charge, the one of the electric power of the buildings, and the other of their steam power. No more clear eye and capable brain is to be found around the Hospital, however, than those of Sister Charles, whose acquaintance it is a privilege for any visitor to make.

—Among the sudden deaths of Canadian business men quite lately, perhaps none was more unexpected than that of Mr. Edmund Morris, inspector of the Ontario Bank, who expired on Sunday last at his residence just after he had come in from a walk. Mr. Morris had long been an active figure in banking circles, and had many friends throughout the country. He was for many years manager of the Ontario Bank branch at Guelph, and was appointed to the office of inspector of the bank in 1890, since which time he had resided in Toronto. He was a son of the late Hon. James Morris of Brockville, and a brother of the late James Morris, Q.C. His age was 66 years. Three of the sons of the deceased gentleman have entered the banking profession, Mr. Murray Morris is manager of the Imperial Bank, Calgary; Mr. James Morris, manager of the Ontario Bank, Alliston, and Mr. Harold Morris is in the Dominion Bank at Toronto. The other sons are: Robert S. Morris, broker, Hamilton; Captain Edmund Morris of the 2nd Devonshire Regiment, now serving with Colonel Thorneycroft's mounted infantry in South Africa.