

THE "DRUMMER."

Young, strong, alert, bright eyed, he goes his way with a self-confidence unsurpassed by a popular preacher, and an audacity unequalled by a beautiful woman. The nerve and elan of the commercial traveler, on a charge, or in the sack of a captured town, come up to those of any African hunter in the whole French army. Most emphatically he has nerve—especially when he comes to make out his bill of expenses. His footsteps are good to follow in when one goes a journeying. His business is to know mankind and their ways, for, by knowing them, he gets about the best of everything going—even gets the best of bright men sometimes. He knows which hotels have the softest and cleanest beds, the most inviting table, the daintiest service, the prettiest and neatest handed chamber maids. He is on familiar terms with conductors, cooks, hotel clerks, stage drivers, waiters, train boys and other persons important to the itinerant. He also knows where the best tippie is to be found; but, to the credit of his discretion, he it said, he is usually abstemious, though seldom austere, and sometimes tectotally abstinent. For, contrary to a current impression, he is not given over to the service of a certain great personage whose wages is death. There are even pious men in his ranks, class-leaders, who can supply a vacant pulpit in a country village when the pastor happens to be absent of a Sunday. One of his marked characteristics is his youth; and he has all of its virtues and some of its faults—others he has overcome. He is not all young, to be sure, for some of him are middle-aged men, married, who must see wife and babies at least once a week. But for the most part young blood riots in his veins, and he has the hope and high courage which it carries. He realizes that he is the coming merchant prince, and seeks by hard and honest work to hasten his promotion. He is a missionary, carrying into remote country districts the latest styles in slang, trousers and chewing tobacco. He is also a past master in the art of coaxing, as girls and country traders sometimes find to their cost; though he usually treats both with consideration—unless they are too confiding. Some temptations it takes a hero or saint to resist, and he is neither saint nor hero. At times he awakens awful jealousy in the breasts of rural swains, and they look upon his gorgeous raiment with envy; but generally they are fast friends, and swap lies and brass watches in a sociable way. Through much travel, he becomes cosmopolitan in his tastes. All dishes are familiar to his palate, from corned beef and cabbage to salmis and ragouts. Even hash he does not disdain when he has confidence in the cook. For the most part, he finds the plainest food the best, and fights shy of dishes like the salvey charlotte russe, which at some country inns is esteemed a luxury, instead of the affront to both palate and stomach wise men know it to be. He rarely refuses to cut a watermelon. Above all, he believes in this great and glorious country with all his heart, never wearies of chanting its praises, is willing to fight for it, lie for it, and, I dare say, if need be, die for it. When he goes strange countries for to see, he upholds the honor

of his own, and gazes about him upon marvelous sights with the stoicism of a red Indian, the *nil admirari* air of a finished dandy; though he is free from the weakness of refusing to ask questions, and where business interests are concerned immediately becomes "an animated interrogation point." One more, and perhaps most distinguished trait must be mentioned: He is a great story teller, and carries a full line of anecdotes, good and bad, in standard goods and novel both, every trip; for his business is to interest men and so lead them to look kindly upon him and his wares. While not denying that some of these little tales have a breadth and freedom of expression reminding of the "merrie gestes" jovial monks in old times told in the refectory, and trouweres and jongleurs in both cottage and hall—tales like those the pious Valois Princess and promoter of heresy wrote for the edification of the men and women of the sixteenth century I demur to the idea that they are generally vile. Almost all are humorous, to be sure; but though some be as rank as a bit of mouldy cheese, the most are as bright and clean as a newly scrubbed milk pan, and convey as wholesome stuff.—*Portland Press.*

THE BUSINESS MAN AND HIS CLERKS.

The world credits the American business man with being industrious and careful, and to those qualities, quite as much as to his native shrewdness, is attributed his wonderful success. He is a worker in all that word implies, and all unite in accrediting to him a closer attention to the details than is given by men of other countries. Employes overlook this fact, and they look upon their employer as a man who has profited by their labor, not stopping to think of the hours of toil and trial that he has passed through. The workman has his fixed hours for labor, and when the day's work is done his mind is not tormented with thoughts of the morrow; but with the employer there are no stated hours for work, his only limit is the few hours not given to sleep.

The hours in his shop when superintending his work are his easiest hours. His severest toil is that of providing ways and means for conducting his business. To do this he must find customers, watch commercial affairs, look to credits, see that the work produced is such as will sell well, guard against waste in every department, be ready to meet competition without loss, and to systematize the workings of the factory and office that loss will be reduced to a minimum, and the office will always be provided with funds to meet all demands upon it. His life is one continuous round of labor, and the closer attention he pays to the details, and the more prosperous the business, the better it is for the workmen. Then, too, the more active the man, the closer his connection with his business and with his relationship to his workmen, and the less friction between employer and employe.

The question of household suffrage is likely to lead to riotous demonstrations in Belgium.

HOW TO COAX TRADE.

Let us take up the subject of calling attention to other goods than those asked for. Clerks should be coached in this field and in small stores where merchants themselves do this to a considerable extent, they can take some lessons to good advantage. There is a very great difference between placing a customer in an embarrassed position with reference to an article which she is being shown and drawing her attention to its excellent features and in an off-hand way pleasing her.

The attention and pains you show in trying to supply your customer's every want makes established trade. The customer who becomes nervous and has to just tear herself away from you that she may not buy what she has no earthly use for, is not going to have the pleasantest feelings when she realizes the situation she was placed in in your store. A great evil is reflected through those unpleasant feelings. An ever-present desire to enter your store, whether for a spool of thread or for a purchase amounting to \$25, is the spirit you should cultivate.—*Dry Goods Economist.*

NATURAL WOOD FINISH.

The popularity of the natural wood finish should insure greater care than is exercised by most builders in the selections of panels having a rich grain. A very large majority of the panels now used show a central cut of grain, but the balance of the panel shows nothing but the edges of the growth rings. This is due to the manner in which the logs have been sawed, they being slabbed from the side, and the nearer the cuts are to the heart the narrower the grain surface. There are methods of sawing whereby the logs can be cut to show a rich grain, whereas if cut in the old way they lack in color and character. Oak panels show to the best advantage when cut to show the medullary rays—that is, when quarter-sawed. The few central boards of an oak log show these even when cut in the old way, but they are entirely lost on the edges with the outer plank. Ash depends upon the crossing of the lines of the growth rings for its richness, and the best results can be obtained by cutting from four sides. This method does not give wide plank, but there need be no trouble in securing those twelve to fourteen inches wide, which is a fair average for the width of panels. The outer, or what is known as the "sap," portion of both ash and oak is softer than the heart; and being more porous, it absorbs the filler, and in most cases shows a different tint than the more solid wood. Oak in particular turns dark, and many panels are spoiled by the dark, muddy strip along the top and the bottom edges of the body when finished. A crooked log sawed so as to cut across the curve will give a much better selection of boards than a perfectly straight one, unless the latter is sawed diagonally across from end to end. By resawing, good boards could be cut from some of the straight, thick plank now in the market, and the loss would be trifling as compared with the advantage in appearance arising from increased richness of the grain.