

"A few days ago I was shown sixteen letters from sixteen firms, all well known in their line in America. On twelve of these letters there was insufficient postage; most had only a two-cent stamp to carry them. This meant that the Birmingham man who wanted to buy from some of these American firms had to pay double the deficiency in postage, and his frame of mind and opinion of American business methods can be imagined. Steamer mails from the United States frequently arrive after business hours on Saturday, and if there is deficient postage, letters will not be delivered at hotels, etc., until Monday, and the travelling representative loses time waiting for home instructions much oftener than could be realized by anyone not aware how general is the failure of American firms to pay full postage. One American house tells its agent that a deficiency of postage is a guaranty that a letter will be delivered to the right party, as no one else would pay the postage penalty in order to get the letter.

"If an English or a continental house sends a telegram, a letter always follows, even to points near by, containing a copy of the telegram. Very few United States houses do this, even with cablegrams, and a failure to deliver means loss of valuable time. If a letter is sent to a foreign point, a letterpress copy follows by the next steamer as certainly as the second of exchange follows the first.

"Very few American houses are as systematic, and it is conceivable that a letter may be more valuable than a money draft.

"With bills of lading, the European house does not depend on the triplicate copy forwarded by the shipping agent, but itself sends the duplicate copy to the consignee, retaining the original. American houses are constantly neglecting this, and American goods are constantly being held up in foreign custom-houses.

"If a United States house wishes to be successful in foreign trade, it must place its business in the hands of some responsible member of the concern who will look after the details. It should not be merely an incidental part of the regular business transactions."

THE PRODUCTION OF CAMPHOR IN JAPAN.

The production of camphor in Miyazaki, Kagoshima, Oita, and Wakayama prefectures, which amounted to 4,000,000 kin (5,333,333 $\frac{1}{3}$ pounds)* in 1894 and 1895, the price being quoted at from ninety to 100 yen (\$47.69 to \$52.99) per picul (133 $\frac{1}{3}$ pounds), has been considerably reduced of late. This year's output so far only amounts to 1,200,000 kin (2,133,333 $\frac{1}{3}$ pounds), quoted at from forty-one to forty-three yen (\$21.70

*1 kin=1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds avoirdupois.