

PRICE MARKS ON GOODS.

On this subject a correspondent writes as follows: "Secret markings for describing the cost and selling prices of goods in country stores, while some storekeepers prefer such a method on account of the privacy of doing business in that way, are not recommended by numerous merchants in the larger cities. This latter class claim that there is more profit in an open display of at least the selling price, and a few go so far as to confess the truthful margin of profit to anyone who in good faith chooses to ask for it. Whether it is advisable to go so far as this, on general principles, may be an open question, but it is pretty well established that it pays to mark all goods so far as the selling price is concerned, in plain figures which any customer can see without asking the question of the salesman. The reasons for this practice are that the customer in seeing the price plainly marked feels assured that he is not being deceived by the salesman and no advantage is being taken of him or her because they happen at the moment to be wearing pretty good clothes. This latter particular, as odd as it may appear, is a feeling which prevails more or less among the whole people. Customers feel this way because of an old practice in former years by a certain class of more or less unscrupulous dealers who 'sized up' a customer and packed the price on according to appearances. While this usage is still in vogue with a certain class of Shyllocks, who should be shunned by honest people, the system, so far as it prevailed as such, has practically been abolished; nevertheless, mothers remember the old abuse and frequently warn the members of their families not to enter a store too well dressed. Plain marking of the selling price removes at once all this peculiar dread, and assures the customer that he is getting as good terms as anybody. People do so hate to be cheated that everything done by the storekeeper calculated to remove all agitation on this subject eventually redounds to his credit."

SEEK LEGAL ADVICE.

It would be well for everybody, especially retail merchants, to refuse to sign documents such as bills of sale, leases, etc., until legal advice has been procured and a full knowledge has been obtained of the contents of the documents to which the signatures are desired. A very effective weapon in the jobbers hands is the bill of sale. The guileless retailer is requested—as a mere matter of form—to affix his name to it to secure a small debt, and generally does so without the slightest hesitation or knowledge of its contents, or fear of what the consequences may be. In another column mention is made of an action which has been begun by a retail grocer against a jobber, who sold up the former on a bill of sale, procured, it is alleged, as many such documents usually are, through deceit and in consequence of the utter ignorance of the victim. We believe very few bills of sale would be signed by retail grocers if every member of the trade would seek legal advice before taking so great a risk. As a rule only slow payers are requested to give such

security to their debtors, but many retail dealers have their periods of stringency, when it is hard sledding to make both ends meet, yet afterwards pull through all right and finally attain prosperity. If at such times of temporary difficulties the retailer succumbs to the persuasions of the adroit and often unscrupulous collector, and signs away his business—for that is what the giving of a bill of sale practically amounts to—his career is summarily cut short by a sheriff's sale, and the retail business knows him no more; whereas, if a lawyer had been consulted at an expense which, compared with the loss of his means of livelihood, would have been nominal, the dealer's signature certainly would never have been affixed to so fatal a document. Leases and mortgages often contain provisions, smothered in a verbose and intricate construction that either escape the non-legal eye, or, if seen, are not clearly understood, and the consequences may be very annoying, even disastrous, to the merchant who is tightly bound by the document so easily signed. Legal advice is not difficult to find, nor is it so expensive relatively, at least—and it certainly should be more often resorted to by retail merchants when there is occasion to enter into agreement with other parties and legal documents require signing.—*Merchants' Review.*

NOT ACCORDING TO THE BILL.

A feeling of deep disappointment pervades the United States, and apparently Canada is the cause of it. When both parties in the Republic concentrated their forces on retaliation, and gave the tail of the British lion an extra powerful twist, they expected to see the animal jump. That is what they paid their money for. The Democrats parted with their individuality, and meekly supported His Majesty Benjamin the First in putting on the Sault Canal tolls for that very purpose. The intention was to furnish a meal for the tail twisters composed of the British lion, and the President certainly got ahead of his rivals in preparing the feast. But to the consternation of them all the animal is not slaughtered, and the banquet has to be declared off. Instead of getting ready for death, Canada seems to be remarkably cool and unconcerned under the imposition of canal tolls. Business goes on as usual. The banks open their doors daily. The street cars run (except on King street, Toronto). The farmers go on taking in a fine crop. There is no sign of panic, and the popular pulse beats easily. The tail twisters were promised devastation; it has not come, and they want the gate money back. It is a sad case, and we can offer no comfort to the sorrowing. But, in all seriousness, do our United States friends know who it is they are trying to coerce? Have they not some personal knowledge of nations which spring from the British stock? Do they not know that if their Congress were to impose tolls as high as the sky, stop the bonding privileges, and harass Canada in every possible way, this country would bear the wound, and still refuse to be crushed? Every unfriendly act of our neighbors simply causes national spirit here to run higher. *Toronto Empire.*

INGOT COPPER.

In its issue of Aug. 5, the *London Daily News* considers the copper situation after this manner:

"What the natural position of the copper market may be, nobody knows. There is always a combination, and usually a counter-combination, among buyers and sellers; for business in copper on the metal exchange represents only a very small proportion and that mainly speculative, of the trade in the article. It is well known that dating from July, this year, American and European producers who control together four-fifths of the world's supply of copper, have entered into an arrangement by which, in return for a slight reduction in the output of European mines, the American producers engage to keep down their exports according to a sliding scale, which will begin to operate when the exports tend to exceed 40,000 tons in one year. According to recent advices, the exports will not reach that amount during the next twelve months, and seeing that the average imports into France and England alone from North America have been 30,000 tons per annum during the last three years, the restriction is an important one. In favor of this combination, it is to be said that no attempt has been made to regulate the price of copper, but only to make such a regulation as will convince buyers that the market will not be flooded with new copper and so depressed. All legitimately interested in the copper trade find an understanding desirable, but the lesson learned more than three years ago, when the French copper ring broke up, has been borne in mind by those concerned, and no further effort to manipulate the price is now made. A good deal of stress is laid just now upon the undoubted fact that the visible stocks of copper in England and France have tended to increase during the last four months. At the end of April the visible stock was 53,328 tons, and is now 59,738 tons, the result mainly of an increase in supplies. Accordingly the price of copper has been weak. The recent increase in stocks has been taken to mean a continued tendency to increase."

CREMATION.

Says Dr. R. Heber Newton, as quoted in the *Urn*: "For many years I have thoroughly believed in cremation—on a variety of grounds. Having tried to make my life one of usefulness to my fellows, I object to the possibility of injuring any one after I am dead. The thought that what I cannot takeaway with me to a higher form of life is to be left as a means of poisoning life, is abhorrent to me. I prefer that my body shall be so disposed of as to put this out of the question. The religious objection has always been nonsensical to my mind. Believing thoroughly in a life to come, I have not the slightest notion of that higher life being conditioned in any possible way by the way in which we get into it. Nothing but the stupid prejudice of a blind orthodoxy could allow any notion of this kind to have weight. In so far as it does have weight, it ought to be exposed and ridiculed. I have also, for years, had the intensest horror of thinking any one dear to me undergoing the noxious process of decomposition, as we have made sure that it shall be made noxious by our whole mode of interment. I want those I love to pass from this life to a higher life without any such abhorrent decomposition of the form once dear to me. On every hand cremation has commended itself to my judgment, and I am sure that it is destined to prevail in the future. I expect to be disposed of thus myself, and do not know of any expression of opinion which I could offer that could have more weight than this."